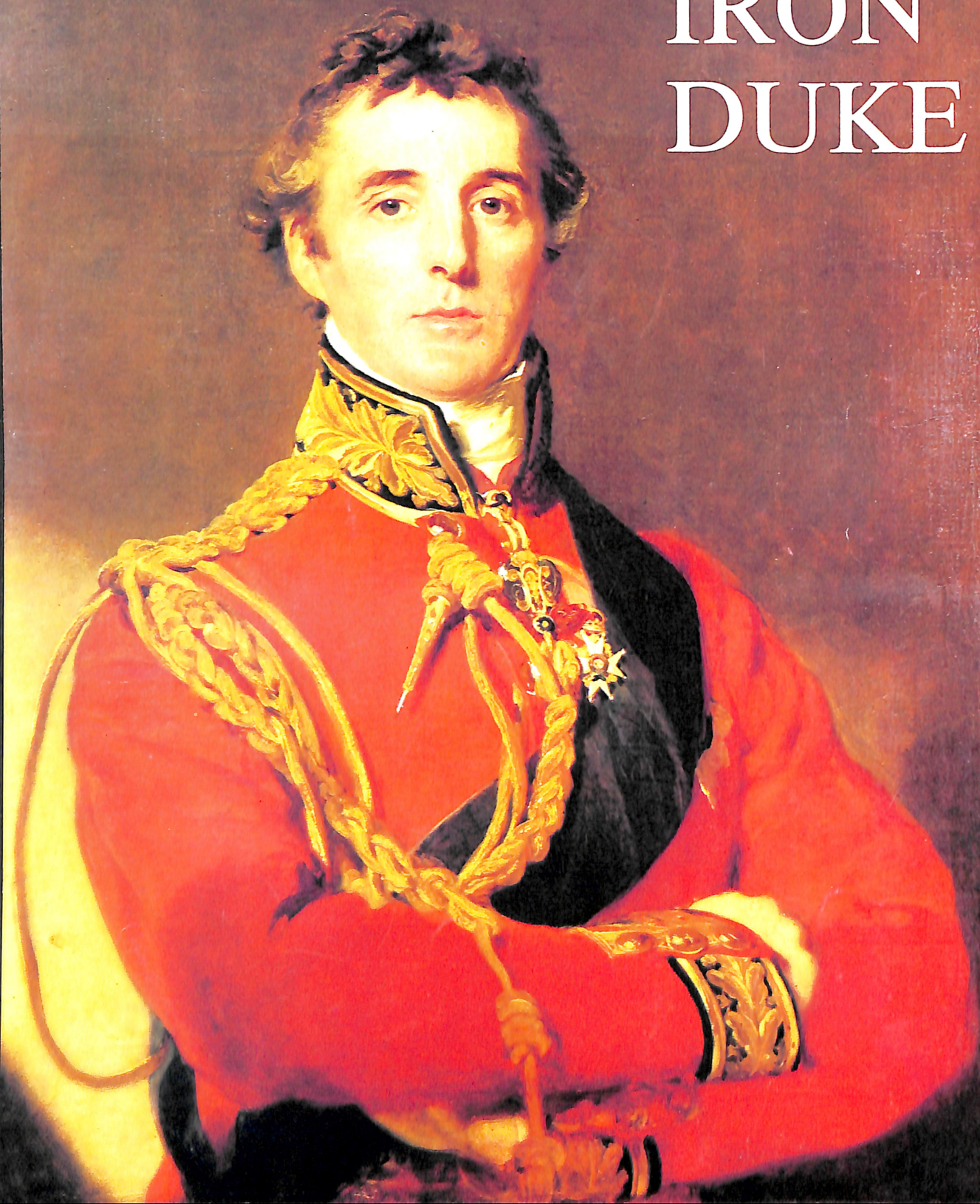


AUTUMN 2003
No. 252

THE IRON DUKE



THE IRON DUKE

The Regimental Journal of

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S REGIMENT

(WEST RIDING)

Dettingen
Mysore
Seringapatam
Ally Ghur
Delhi 1803
Leswarree
Deig
Corunna
Nive
Peninsula
Waterloo
Alma
Inkerman
Sebastopol
Abyssinia
Relief of Kimberley
Paardeberg
South Africa 1900-02
Mons 1914
Marne 1914, '18
Ypres 1914, '15, '17



Hill 60
Somme 1916, '18
Arras 1917, '18
Cambrai 1917, '18
Lys
Piave 1918
Landing at Suvla
Afghanistan 1919
North-West Europe
1940, 1944-45
Dunkirk 1940
St Valery-en-Caux
Fontenay-le-Pesnil
Djebel Bou Aoukaz 1943
Anzio
Monte Ceco
Burma 1942, '43, '44
Sittang 1942
Chindits 1944
The Hook 1953
Korea 1952-53

Vol. LXXVIII

Autumn 2003

No. 252

BUSINESS NOTES

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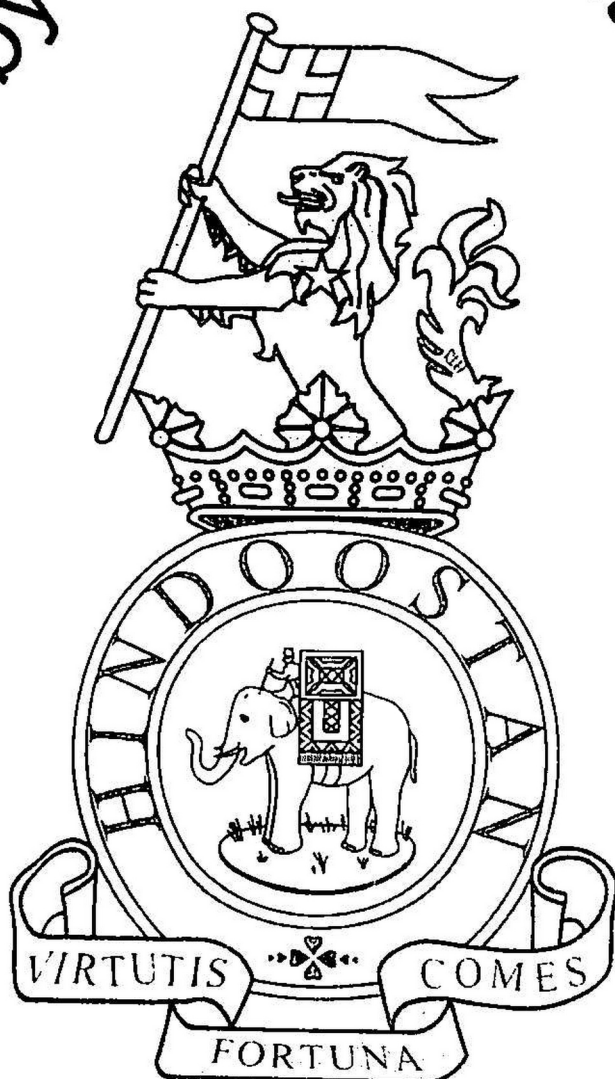
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THE REGIMENT

The Colonel-in-Chief

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Colonel of the Regiment

Major General Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter, KCVO, OBE

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Assistant Regimental Secretary: Major R. Heron

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*Belfast Barracks,
BFPO 36.*

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Adjutant: Captain M. C. A. Palmer

Regimental Sergeant Major: WO1 M. Taylor

East and West Riding Regiment

CO: Lieutenant Colonel M. A. Lodge

DWR TA Companies:

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Deputy Honorary Colonel: Charles Dent Esq, DL

Officer Commanding: Major M. K. Hunter

Fontenay Company (South Yorkshire)

Deputy Honorary Colonel: Colonel J. Fox, TD, DL

Officer Commanding: Major L. K. Whitworth, QGM

ARMY CADET FORCE - DWR

Yorkshire (North & West)

D Company Detachments

OC: Major P. Cole

Halifax

Huddersfield

Spen Valley

Keighley

Mirfield

Skipton

Thongsbridge

Humberside and South Yorkshire

C Company Detachments

OC: Major I. MacFarlane

D Company Detachments

OC: Major A. Hudson

Barnsley

Darfield

Birdwell

Wath on Dearne

Wombwell

Endcliffe

Thurcroft

COMBINED CADET FORCE - DWR

Giggleswick School CCF

CO: Squadron Leader P. C. R. Andrew

Leeds Grammar School CCF

CO: Squadron Leader R. Hill

Wellington College CCF

CO: Major E. J. Heddon

ALLIED REGIMENT OF THE CANADIAN ARMY

Les Voltigeurs de Québec

*Manège Militaire,
805 Avenue Wilfrid-Laurier,
Québec, Canada. G1R 2L3*

Honorary Colonels:

Colonel Marcel Jobin, CM, CQ, CCSS, CD

Lieutenant Colonel Marc-André Bélanger, CD

Commanding Officer:

Lieutenant Colonel François Dion, CD

ALLIED REGIMENT OF THE PAKISTAN ARMY

10th Bn The Baloch Regiment

*Peshawar Cantonment,
Pakistan.*

Colonel: Major General Kaizad Maneck Sopariwala

Commanding Officer: Lieutenant Colonel Muhammed Siddiq Akbar

AFFILIATED SHIPS OF THE ROYAL NAVY

H.M.S. Iron Duke

BFPO 309

Commander P. Carden, RN (w.e.f. September 2003)

REGIMENTAL ITEMS FOR SALE

The following items may be purchased from the General Secretary of the Regimental Association, RHQ DWR, Wellesley Park, Halifax, HX2 0BA.

Item	£	Add p&p
Blazer badge	12.00	.50
Bow tie - silk	8.50	.50
Buttons, regimental, medium	.55	.50 per set
Buttons, regimental, small	.55	.50 per set
Cap badge	1.50	.50
Cravat	7.00	.50
Cuff links - button design (on card)	26.00	1.00
Cuff links - button design (presentation box)	29.00	1.00
Cuff links - silver gilt elephant	17.00	.50
Jersey - wool/acrylic mix (cap badge)	27.00	1.10
Ladies brooch - silver gilt (combined badge)	25.00	1.10
Lapel badge, (pin or clutch fastener) brass finish	1.00	.50
Lapel badge, (pin or clutch fastener) coloured enamel finish	2.00	.50
Officers' Dinner Club tie - silk, hand made	22.00	.50
Paper weight	6.50	1.10
Regimental History 1702 - 1992	10.00	5.00
Regiment magazine	2.00	.50
Regimental tie	5.50	.50
Regimental tie - silk	11.00	.50
Regimental tie - silk, hand made	20.00	.50
Short History of the Regiment - 2002 edition	3.00	.50
T.A. History	18.00	3.85
Tercentenary brochure	5.00	1.20
Tercentenary plate	30.00	5.00
Tercentenary trinket box	75.00	5.00
Wall plaque	15.50	1.20
Zippo lighter	9.50	1.10
Also - Fine art prints (size 28.5" x 20.5")		
Alma	12.50	
Waterloo	12.50	2.50 per set
Sittang Bridge	12.50	
Signed copies: (limited editions)		
Alma/Waterloo (signed by Colonel in Chief and artist)	60.00 pair	2.50 per set
Sittang Bridge (signed by survivors present at the unveiling and the artist)	30.00	2.50

Cheques/postal orders to be made payable to: RHQ DWR

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The Lord Mayor of Bradford, Councillor Allan Irvine Hillary, in Bradford City Hall with the Korean Veterans on Saturday, 7 June 2003.

Photograph by courtesy of Andrew McMillan (see page 95)

Regimental Headquarters

Regimental Notes

OPERATION TELIC

The following messages were sent to the Commanding Officer and all ranks of the 1st Battalion in Osnabrück on the dates shown:

Message from the Colonel-in-Chief

"I send you this message as you return from Iraq. As one who has served in the same theatre of operations in another conflict, I have watched with great interest your various movements. You have distinguished yourselves over the last four months in a highly demanding environment. You deployed at minimum notice and I have heard nothing but praise for the way you have adapted to changing circumstances. I am very pleased and proud that you have upheld the fine traditions of the 33rd during this operational tour. I know your families will be pleased to see you home and they in their own way have set a fine example too. I am also aware that you still have a company on operations in Kosovo and I wish them a successful tour. I wish all of you returning from Iraq a well deserved leave and I look forward to visiting the Battalion in the autumn, when you will be able to tell me all about your notable exploits."

The Duke of Wellington

28 June 2003

Colonel-in-Chief

Message from the Colonel of the Regiment

"This week that part of the Battalion that served in Iraq goes on leave after its operational tour. So, before you go, I would like to underline the pride with which I and many others watched your progress throughout the campaign. Since your return a few weeks ago I have heard nothing but praise directed towards the Battalion. That this is well deserved is obvious, but you should all be conscious of your contribution to the continued "solid" reputation of the 33rd and 76th in our nation's history. There has been much controversy in the press, but nothing can detract from the exemplary fashion in which the Battalion deployed and conducted itself over the four months of the campaign. Well done; in fact, bloody well done!

You can now go away on leave with a spring in your step and I wish you a happy and fulfilling time wherever you may go, but drive carefully and look after yourselves. I think you should give a thought for those who are slogging away in Kosovo, an altogether less glamorous role than yours but nonetheless just as important. I look forward to seeing you all again in Osnabrück in the autumn."

Evelyn Webb-Carter

22 July 2003

Colonel of the Regiment

VIRTUTIS FORTUNA COMES

HONOURS AND AWARDS

We send warm congratulations to Lieutenant Colonel S. C. Newton MBE on the award of The Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service on completion of his duties in Sierra Leone.

APPOINTMENTS

Captain J. Greenlee assumed command of D Company, Yorkshire (North and West) Army Cadet Force on 1 May 2003, in place of Major P. Cole. We welcome Captain Jim Greenlee and wish him well. To Major Peter Cole, who commanded the Company for nearly ten years, we send our warm thanks and best wishes for his next appointment on the County Headquarters Staff.

EDITORIAL

Active Service

The Editor of our Regimental Journal occupies a privileged position, because he sits at a fulcrum, poised somewhere between the historical performance and the current performance of the different elements of our great Regiment. Normally, perhaps, he has more opportunity than others to see the latter in the context of the Regiment's long history.

However, we have all recently celebrated 300 years of the Regiment's service and readers will find that several contributions to our Autumn Issue report activities in the context of the Regiment's history.

We commemorate the active service of our 1st Battalion in Korea fifty years ago, manned, it should be remembered, very largely by conscripts. We are very pleased to be able to publish the personal account of one of them, Corporal Jim Richards.

We celebrate the safe return from active service of today's all-regular Battalion and we are glad to publish the full reports we have received from some twenty of its members, from Commanding Officer to Private Soldier. We record, too, the contribution of our Territorial soldiers through an article from Lance Corporal Rosemary Armitage.

We note that our Colonel-in-Chief also saw active service in Iraq, in 1941, and we are grateful for his permission to publish an extract from his first hand account.

Shortly before his return to Osnabrück the 1st Battalion Chaplain, Padre Pat Aldred, wrote as part of his contribution to the Battalion's notes: "...We were all reminded on 28 May that conflict for the Dukes is nothing new, as we came together as a Battalion to commemorate those brave soldiers of the Battle of the Hook. It was a humbling experience for many of our soldiers. Fifty years ago, while the country was celebrating the conquest of Everest and the Queen's Coronation, men of the Dukes were fighting one of the major battles of the Korean War. Their bravery was not lost on us who were in Iraq, as we remembered that they

were men from the same backgrounds as us, of the same age and from the same towns. We have not faced the same conflict as them, nor have we had to make the greatest sacrifice, but we took time to remember them and salute them with a Service and the Last Post."

Major Ian Wilkinson AGC (ETS), who was attached to the 1st Battalion in Iraq as an interpreter, has written: "...perhaps I can give an honest impression of the Battalion from the standpoint of an outsider. Having said that, the first point I would make is that I did not feel like an outsider for very long. There were very few formal introductions, but the friendly and open nature of the Battalion made such introductions quite unnecessary. Everyone I met gave an impression of straightforward friendliness, cheerfulness and a highly-developed sense of humour. Infantry battalions are meant to be clannish, it is fundamental to their strength. But the Dukes' sense of identity is inclusive, not exclusive. Not everyone originates in the West Yorkshire of the regimental title, not everyone is from Yorkshire, nor do all soldiers come from the United Kingdom. However, all are most certainly "Dukes".

Regimental pride is generally understated in the Battalion (nothing wrong with that) but it manifests itself in the desire to perform well; for section, platoon, company, and ultimately regiment. The soldiers are well motivated and when necessary tough, but there is no overly aggressive culture influencing them. The tasks that the Dukes were required to perform whilst I was with them were not glamorous but they were demanding. The common sense approach of all ranks seemed to me to strike the right balance. They were clearly very professional soldiers and the local population judged the British Army, and in a very real sense, Britain, according to their actions.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time with the Dukes. I had an interesting job that involved me working with all ranks. I won't bore the reader with anecdotes, but will describe what for me was perhaps the key moment of the tour. At the close of Waterloo Day, after inter-company rivalry, laughter and relaxation the Drummers played to the Battalion and assorted visitors. Everyone stood transfixed in the same way doubtless as their forebears had done for over three hundred years. As I looked at the many Battle Honours listed on the drums and watched envious American soldiers take dozens of photographs, I felt very much part of the Regiment; and I was very proud of it!"

We know that much has been achieved by many Dukes on active service, but, experience suggests that there will always be more to be done, not only by Waterloo Company of the 1st Battalion still serving, let us remember, in Kosovo, but also by our Territorials, still in the Gulf, as well as by the next generation of Dukes facing the always-changing challenges of the future. May they too be imbued with the characteristics identified with such clarity by Major Ian Wilkinson.

J.B.K.G.

KOREA - FIFTY YEARS ON

We are grateful to Lieutenant Colonel Walter Robins OBE for providing this report. Ed.

On Saturday 7 June, just over a hundred ex-members of the 1st Battalion who served in the Korean conflict, plus about eighty partners, assembled in the very impressive Bradford City Hall prior to the Annual Reunion Dinner of the Regimental Association in the nearby Hilton Hotel, to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of the Hook and the end of the Korean War.

Some, with their portly figures, greying hair, or the lack of it, did nothing to assist the identification of old friends or comrades not seen for many years; but numerous mini-reunions, with much vigorous hand shaking and wondrous recollections were soon taking place. Drinks and a selection of attractive small eats were served by the friendly City Hall staff.

The Lord Mayor of Bradford, Councillor Allan Irvine Hillary, gave a very warm and welcoming speech in which he paid tribute to the actions of the members of the Regiment in Korea and, in particular, the vital part played by the hundreds of very young National Service soldiers who formed the greatest part of the Battalion. He also asked that those who were killed or wounded should not be forgotten. The Lord Mayor went on to say that the close links established between Bradford and The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, who have the Freedom of the City, are a source of great pride and pleasure to all in the City and the surrounding area.

The Colonel of the Regiment welcomed the Korean Veterans and their partners and thanked them for attending. He then thanked the Lord Mayor for attending the Reception, for the generosity of the City in allowing the use of the City Hall as its venue and for the work of the staff. The Colonel thanked the Lord Mayor for the kind remarks on the Regiment contained in his speech and went on to endorse his comments on the actions of the 1st Battalion in Korea, especially those on the part played by the many young National Service soldiers. The Colonel said the Regiment valued greatly its close links with Bradford and that the help, support and kindness of the Lord Mayor, the Council and the people of the area during the Tercentenary Celebrations of last year was much appreciated.

The Reception concluded with a group photograph taken on the staircase of the City Hall along with a degree of good-natured banter. The Veterans and their partners then moved across the road to continue their celebrations at the Reunion Dinner. It is hoped that a copy of this photograph will be published along with this brief report. *Editor's Note: we are very pleased to be able to publish it as our Frontispiece. The names of all those who attended are published on pages 94 and 95.*

On the night of the battle, the Hook position was occupied by 10 Platoon of D Company. This position was overrun in the initial Chinese assault when the Platoon Commander, 2nd Lieutenant Ernest Kirk, and a number of others were killed. Other members of the Platoon were badly wounded and taken prisoner. The Platoon Sergeant, Joe Perin, died some years ago, but nine surviving members of the Platoon, including

some of the ex-prisoners of war, attended the Reception led by ex-Corporal (later Sergeant) George Pickersgill MM. A turnout equalled by only one other rifle platoon.

Perhaps the fact that the Platoon to suffer one of the highest casualty rates in the battle was so well represented at the Reception says something of the spirit and fortitude of the Battalion and of 10 Platoon in particular.

W.R.

WHO WON THE TUG OF WAR?

The sudden deployment of the Battalion to Iraq left families of the Battalion somewhat shocked. They were prepared for a period of separation from their husbands/fathers when the Battalion returned to Kosovo in May. This was to be for a six-month tour and they were not due to return until November. Instead, it was a deployment next week into the inevitable war zone of Iraq and they had no idea when they might return. For some the more sinister thought will have entered their minds.

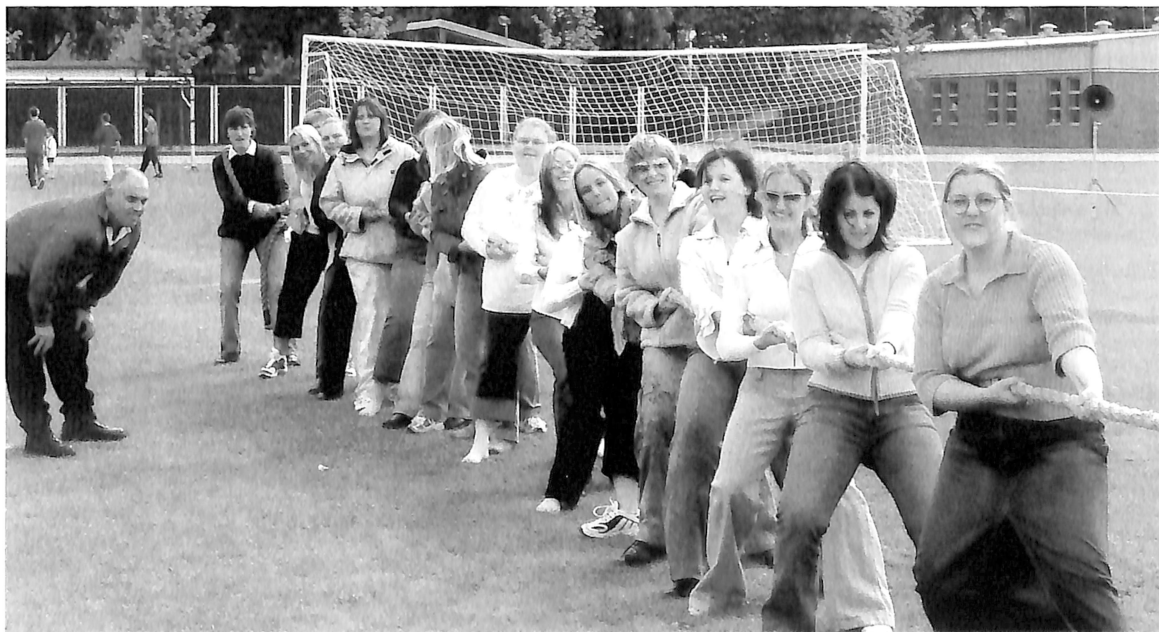
As soon as I heard of the deployment I realised that Osnabrück must be the focus of my attention, so I resolved quite soon to get out there. A quick call to the Brigade Commander and it was in principle arranged. During these first tense weeks communication with the Battalion was negligible, because their sudden move on the lightest of scales into a theatre with limited communication assets anyway meant that they were to have no strategic or welfare communication for some considerable time. Security was a factor and all mobile telephones were blocked but, inevitably, this put an additional strain on the families.

Louise Bruce, the CO's wife, was a stalwart in those early days and quickly pulled everything and everybody together. Richard Chadwick, as 2IC designate, took

charge of the Rear Party which, of course, included Waterloo Company of 110 men that were to deploy to Kosovo in May. Our (for Celia was to come with me) visit was to take place in mid-May and it was not long before we boarded an Air Berlin Friday evening flight to Munster Greven and were met by a slimline Tony Sutcliffe now in charge of Rear details.

We stayed with Louise who immediately impressed us with her enthusiasm and energy. She had organised a Families' Day for everyone the next day. It was immediately clear that the families were in good order. The war was virtually over and the wives knew when their husbands were coming home. Miraculously none had been killed or wounded - an incredible feat to my mind. Our day's programme was to be a busy one; I went to be briefed by Tony Sutcliffe and Sam Humphris who had just returned from Iraq. It was fascinating to pore over the maps and see what sort of area the Battalion was responsible for. It was by now (mid-May) vast. Meanwhile Celia in the good company of Ben (now the man of the house and very self-assured), Amy (representing the calm and collected part of the family) and Louise went off to judge a motley collection of animals and even insects. The 'most good looking' prize went to the praying mantis and the 'most well behaved' went to a dog resembling the Hound of the Baskervilles - all good fun!

I joined in time to see a multitude of activities laid out on the sports pitch where eleven months previously we had held 'the Party of Parties'. There were stalls selling ices, hot dogs, stalls offering every conceivable competition like 'How Steady is Your Hand' (after the night before) for which I, for one, am too old. A treasure trove and face painting were popular attractions - so was the beer tent! There was a marvellous turnout of wives, children, friends and rear party personnel. It was a warm,



The victorious wives' team.

balmy day with just a hint of rain in the air. The centre of the arena was home to a dancing display nobly led by Amy, a mini rugby match played by 7-11 year olds and we all smiled when Ben Bruce scored a try. I had never seen this junior form of rugby where tackling is confined to the pulling of tags on the boys' waist and I was impressed by the energy and skill displayed by these nippers. Soon, after a hearty barbecue lunch, to watch the tug of war which was won hysterically by the wives! Before you think how pathetic the men, you should realise that the girls' team numbered sixteen and their combined weight would have done justice to a Warrior! The day had been a huge success and as ever there is a man in the background who made it all work and Sergeant Leen from the Welfare Office was that man: well done! We heard from many of the families of their worries and concerns but were pleased to see their positive and optimistic attitude. We were also moved to meet little Holly Goodall who is fighting leukaemia, having been diagnosed the week the Battalion left for Iraq. The calm way in which her mother talked about the trials of such a fight was humbling.

All too soon the party was over and I was whisked off to have a cup of tea with the Brigadier and then return to prepare for the evening party. Louise and Tony Sutcliffe had organised a wonderful party in the Sergeants' Mess for all wives and members of the Rear Party regardless of rank. It was a happy evening, with many a laugh, although I am hard pushed to remember every story. I have vague memories of a crisis to do with Tia Maria (I mean the drink, not a wife!) and some muddle over ties. But we left at midnight very clear that all was indeed well in Belfast Barracks. We had to leave at about 6.00 a.m. the next morning to get back for the Windsor Horse Show and I remember being rather curious as to why I was wearing a regimental sports tie to which I don't think I am entitled. It had been a thoroughly worthwhile trip and great fun. We thank Louise, Tony Sutcliffe and Martin Ness for making us feel so welcome and organising it all. It was good to see the girls winning the Tug of War. In a way they have won many other things over this difficult time, including our admiration.

E.J.W.-C.

1st Battalion

Commanding Officer's Introduction

It is with a tremendous sense of pride that I can report the safe return of the Battalion from Iraq. We have been back in Osnabück for two days and have received the most fantastic welcome home from the families. There is a wonderful feeling of satisfaction of a job well done and the anticipation of a long summer leave. I know it will be short lived, as we turn our attention to the preparation for the Training Year in 2004 and the likelihood of another Operational Tour, but we will enjoy the moment.

Never part of the original order of battle, the Dukes deployed to the Gulf with no notice in rapid order, initially to look after Prisoners of War. If there is a record for breaking notice to move I suspect we now have it. From our arrival, we had little time to take stock of the situation; hit by the flies, heat and sand, the men had no time to acclimatise, as War came within days and we were taking cover from the first Scud attacks. Sweating bodies crammed into makeshift bunkers with the Dukes cracking jokes, too rude to mention, and often muffled through respirators, but we definitely won the morale competition amongst the force assembled in Camp Rhino. We were glad to be moving quickly and crossed into Iraq on Day Two of the War right behind the US attack into Umm Qasr, skirting the enemy positions and witnessing some serious air power as we moved forward to set up the POW camp. Nothing could prepare us for receiving 500 prisoners prior to construction and a frantic 48-hour period ensued during which a camp was secured, built and prisoners processed. During this period it quickly became apparent that, as the Army advanced, militia activity was seriously affecting the Division's ability to operate. The professionalism and capability of the Battalion was

quickly recognised and only a few days into the War we forged a new role for ourselves, securing the difficult and dangerous terrain occupied by the Fedayeen and militant forces who were still loyal to Saddam. As a result Battalion Headquarters and Alma Company were rapidly redeployed to patrol Safwan and the Main Supply Routes. With little protection, equipped in light order and with only soft skinned vehicles for mobility, we operated alongside the 1st Armoured Division for the rest of the War. A combination of patrolling, arrest and search operations and escort tasks quickly secured the area. During this time Burma and Corunna stayed to provide security around the POW camp and conducted aggressive patrolling to disrupt enemy activity, also with considerable success.

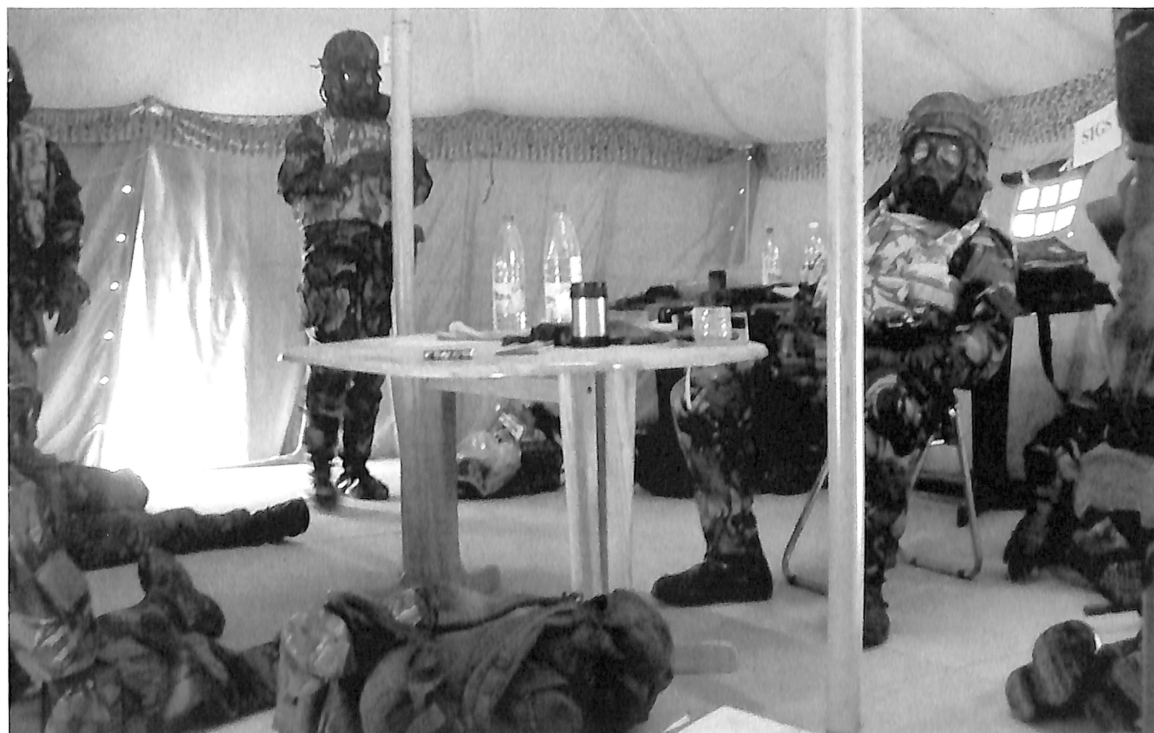
Shortly before the attack on Basra, and two weeks into the War, the Battalion took over the town of Az Zubayr and joined the Challengers and Warriors of 7 Armoured Brigade to conduct a relief in place with The Black Watch and 2 RTR. By now we had regrouped the Battalion (Burma and Corunna were delighted to be moving from the POW Cage) and received a number of attachments including an Armoured Recce Squadron. Remembering that Fortune Favours the Brave, we became the first troops in theatre to remove body armour and helmets and set about restoring the security in a town of some 400,000 people, while only a few kilometres to our east the battle for Basra had started. We spent the rest of the War in Az Zubayr, building patrol bases, patrolling the streets, conducting raids and successfully thwarting militia activity. By the end of the War we had been under command of 102 Logistics Brigade, Divisional Support Group, 3 Commando Brigade and 7th Armoured Brigade (twice).



The CO's 'O' Group - Az Zubayr (Fort Chindit)

Left to right, standing: WO2 Stannard (Ops WO), Capt Palfrey (7 Brigade LO), Capt Dick (OC Dettingen Pl), Capt Humphris (RSO), Capt Payne (IO), Capt Frear (MTO), Capt Belcher (2IC US Civil Affairs Team), Capt Renihan (RAO), Capt Aldred (Padre), Capt Pigg (QM Tech), Capt Milne (RMO).

Sitting: Capt Molnar (US media team), Capt Garner (Ops Officer), Major Thomas (QM), Major Fox (OC Alma), Capt Palmer (Adjutant), RSM Taylor, CO, Major Holroyd (2IC), Major Goodwin (OC Corunna), Major Vallings (OC Burma), Major Thorpe (OC US Civil Affairs Team), Capt Bradley-Walker (OC LAD).



CO 1 DWR ready for anything.

Post-War Iraq presented massive challenges and the Battalion had a significant role in securing and rebuilding a desperately rundown and lawless country. Conducting numerous raids we sought to restore order and defeat the militant threat, thereby allowing us to set about repairing the town's key utilities. Having removed the Ba'athist command structure, it took time and patience to reengage the local Iraqi authorities and facilitate their activities. Through the establishment of a Town Advisory Group, rapid progress was made and Az Zubayr is now a thriving town with full market activity, fresh water, electricity, education, hospitals and sanitation now all up and running. The civil police, who we spent time recruiting and training, now work alongside military patrols and the overall security environment has improved considerably.

In mid May our Area of Operations expanded to cover some 10,500 square kilometres of Southern Iraq. Burma Company was left as the only company on patrol in Az Zubayr. Alma Company took over our southern area, including the towns of Umm Qasr, Umm Khayyal and Safwan, Corunna took over the Western Desert including the entire key oil infrastructure, retraining as a Desert Patrol Company and deploying on long-range patrols. The Battalion also took under command J Battery of 3 RHA and responsibility for the Al Faw peninsular. The pace of life remained hectic and these additional areas of Southern Iraq had to be developed along similar lines to Az Zubayr. While Battalion and Company Headquarters were very much focused on assisting the Iraqis to rebuild their country, the soldiers spent long hours establishing a safe and secure

environment through patrolling, arrest and search operations, vehicle check points and gathering intelligence. This worked well and we made several excellent arrests and weapon finds. Enemy activity is now at its lowest ebb and as we left we were moving rapidly to a situation where British Forces could start to hand over some control to the Iraqis.

It has been a huge privilege to command the 1st Battalion in Iraq, our soldiers have been quite simply magnificent and their conduct has been exemplary. Their Yorkshire grit has been fully tested in the extreme heat and harsh conditions, but they have coped superbly and greeted the rapid deployment and changing circumstances with good humour and the utmost professionalism.

Although the bulk of the Battalion are now back from operations, Waterloo Company are now deployed as the Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Company in Kosovo. They have made a tremendous start in this professionally-demanding task (akin to a Company COP capability) and reports from their training and early operational success are excellent. The Company return in November when the Battalion will be finally complete for the first time since March. 2002-2003 has certainly been busy, exciting and highly unpredictable; I expect 2004 to be much the same. Whatever the challenge the Dukes have responded in style and I am pleased to say that the Battalion has a reputation for flexible, honest, hard working, professional soldiering and has received much praise for our performance this past year.

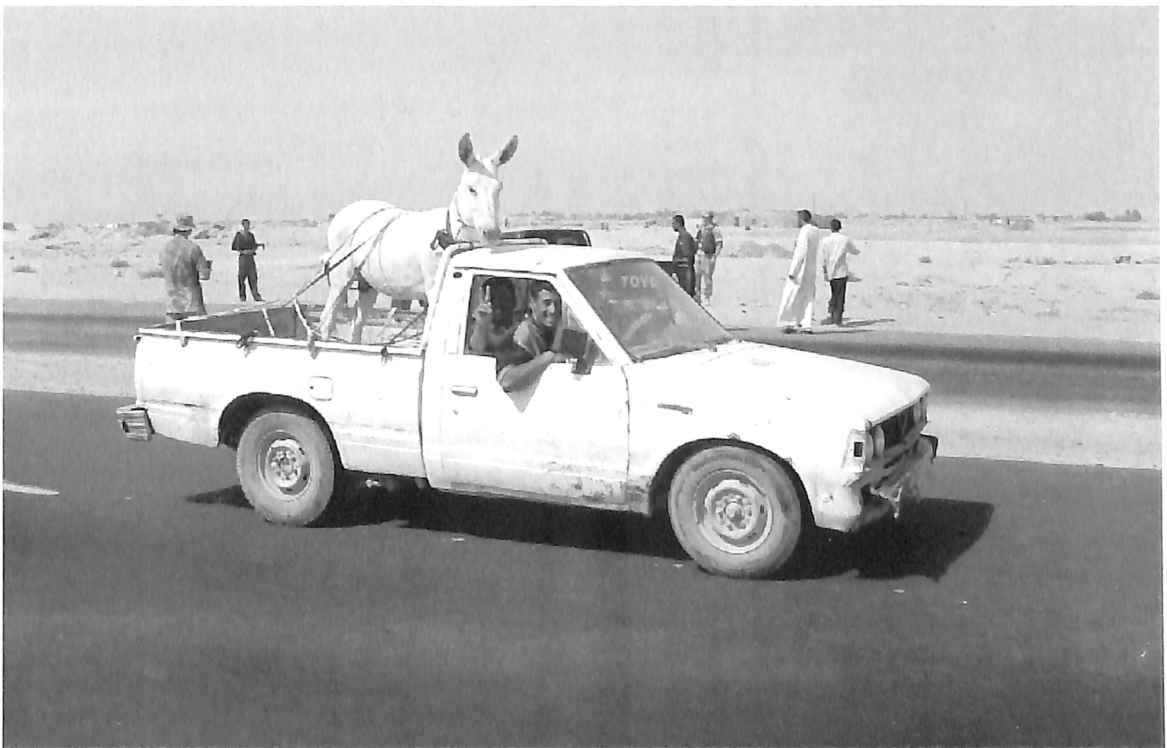


Town Council 2

The CO chairs one of the early Az Zubayr town advisory group meetings. The battalion Second-in-Command wonders whether they'll be finished in time for rugby special!



WOI Regimental Sergeant Major M. Taylor (left) takes over in the field.



An everyday sight in Khor Az Zubayr!

ALMA COMPANY - OPERATION TELIC

Deployment and In-Theatre Preparation 11-21 March

On 11 March 2003 (three days after finishing our pre-Kosovo training); the CO called the Battalion into the gym in Osnabrück to tell us that we were deploying to the Gulf as a Prisoner of War (PW) guarding Battalion. Initial shock was followed by a flurry of excitement. Not quite the return to Op Fresco speech that many were expecting! Eighteen hours later the Recce Group were in the air (courtesy of Lufthansa Business Class!) and within three days all commanders were in theatre. By Monday 17 March (sadly no time or opportunity for a St Patrick's day Guinness) Alma Company were complete in Camp Rhino, Kuwait. In between, Osnabrück had sold out of sun cream, toilet roll and deodorant; the men had worked all hours to get all the kit we could scrounge loaded and the commanders in Kuwait had started to come to terms with the enormity of the coming task. Building a PW camp that would potentially receive up to 16,000 PWs in the first few days of the war (if the Iraqis conformed to the operational analysis plan), at the same time as we were processing the PWs, was likely to be quite a challenge.

Mission rehearsals for Alma Company consisted mainly of practising erecting tents - not quite the bayonet between the teeth stuff that some of the boys had been expecting! Our first task at the PW site would be to assist in the construction of the tented camp which was why we had to press gang the older and bolder members of the Company into demonstrating the forgotten art of putting up 18' x 24' tents. We filled the days with NBC drills, anti-ambush drills, low level tactics, first aid and a raft of injections. The Anthrax jab and our anti-nerve agent tablets managed to make most people feel fairly ill and there is no doubt that those who brought extra toilet paper with them were at an advantage. Thursday 20 March is etched in everyone's memory. We had a large number of Scud alerts that day and as the time slowly passed we all became more and more tense, although our masking and taking cover drills became very slick! A lot of young Dukes grew up very rapidly during the course of the day. What was encouraging was that, whilst we were sat in the Scud bunkers with our respirators on, all the banter was delivered with a Yorkshire accent - other occupants of the shelters were noticeably quiet!

The Move Forward 21 - 22 March

On Friday 21 March, after a moving service by Padre Pat Aldred, we left Camp Rhino and hit the open road heading north to a holding area in the desert some 30 kilometres south of the Iraqi border (fittingly called holding area Waterloo). We passed a US Patriot missile battery on the way - a welcome sight as they had been our guardians over the previous few days. Alma Company, along with the rest of the Battalion, dug in and there was a huge sense of relief that we had escaped the Scud target that was Camp Rhino. The lessons of the last few days had clearly been absorbed as the trenches were deep and built with a great deal of care! The boys felt slightly more in control of their destiny as they brewed up and caught up on some sleep.

We expected to stay in Waterloo for a few days, until the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) of the US Marine Corps had cleared the way through Umm Qasr for us to move on to the objective that would become the PW camp. Imagine our surprise when shortly after last light we got the order to move up to the border and get ready to move on to our objective early the following morning. A very hurried pack up (bearing in mind we were still inloading ammunition at this stage) and night move to within two kilometres of the border focussed everyone's minds on the task ahead. As we dug in again the firefights in Umm Qasr were clearly visible and the battery of 155mm AS90 guns a couple of kilometres to our rear kept up the pressure on the Iraqis in the town. Occasionally we could see the flash of explosions on the Al Faw peninsula to our east as depth fire supporting 3 Commando Brigade's landings went in. This, combined with a night of cold winds and rain, ensured that only the most hardened of Alma Company managed to get any sleep. Shortly after first light it became clear that Umm Qasr was far from clear. The Battalion, led by Corunna Company, swung west along the border berm for about five kilometres before swinging north across the border through a breach created by 26 Armoured Engineer Squadron (or so the shiny new sign welcoming us to Iraq said). Strangely enough there seemed to be a huge sense of relief within the Company once we crossed the border - so far so good!

The Prisoner of War Handling Organisation (PWHO) 22 - 25 March

Alma were charged with the inner cordon and handling any PWs that may have been captured by 15 MEU, whilst Burma and Corunna Companies were to secure the outer cordon. It quickly became clear that the objective was already secure, but 15 MEU had about 380 PWs and about 50 civilians on the objective. The site itself was centered on a 500 foot high TV mast with a number of buildings at the base some two kilometres from the western edge of Umm Qasr. 15 MEU gave us a very quick handover and were gone: heading north for subsequent ops. The following two days were hell on earth for Alma Company! We had to guard the PWs we already had, attempt to segregate them by rank, assist our friendly neighbourhood interrogation team, as well as establishing the process and facilities required to receive, document and hold PWs. Although the PWs were largely compliant, the task was extremely manpower intensive. Just before last light on 23 March 938 PWs were delivered by 21 coaches from the 7 Armoured Brigade areas of operations! Alma visibly sagged for about ten minutes then got stuck in to the task of 'conditioning' the masses. The process involved unloading from coaches into the holding pens, a full search by our men, documentation processing in accordance with ICRC and Geneva Conventions, medical assessment, issue of a blanket, dish, spoon and water before finally being escorted to the 500 man PW cages. All this whilst most parts of the system were still being constructed around us. Alma worked tirelessly and some 15 hours later had finished - just in time for a



PW Camp 2

The initial holding pen whilst the PW cages were built.

few more coaches of PWs to arrive - a real boost to morale! Late in the morning of 24 March Alma and Burma Companies changed roles and we ended up on the western cordon. This was fantastic news for us, as it meant that the soldiers could start to get some rest when not on shift in the observation posts (OPs). That evening we received a warning order that Battle Group (BG) Main and Alma Company would move forward to conduct protection operations in the Divisional rear area the following day. Whilst I was getting this brief, Corporal Draycott's section claimed first (unconfirmed) blood for the Dukes. Private Tomkins had observed a group armed with Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPGs) out to his front and sent a burst from the GPMG in their direction. They had quite sensibly gone to ground, but when one of them re-appeared and aimed his RPG towards the OP, Private Tomkins delivered two well aimed shots and saw his target drop. A sweep at first light on the 25th revealed nothing, but due to the unexploded ordnance and mine threat Corporal Draycott didn't stray off the obvious tracks in the area. We were released from the cordon during the morning and prepared to move north. The Company busied itself by 'liberating' any kit we thought might come in handy during the next few days - Colour Sergeant Brennan proved that there was far more shiny kit waiting to be liberated than any of us had previously suspected!

Rear Area Security - The Divisional Support Group (DSG) 25 March - 4 April.

After another short notice, rapid move we arrived at the DSG not long after dark. The lads immediately debussed and went to sleep despite a storm of biblical proportions raging around them. A number of soldiers

were almost swept away in the downpour and by first light on the 26th everyone was sodden and caked in mud. Life at the DSG was good news. We were very pleased to have escaped from the prison camp and, despite the fact that we were very busy with lots of short notice taskings, it was back to things we knew - vehicle check points (VCPs), foot and vehicle patrols, arrest and search operations and convoy escorts. We had a number of successful operations during this period in which we recovered large quantities of weapons, ammunition, money, drugs and arrested a number of ne'er do wells! The presence of Alma Company certainly gave the DSG and 1 (UK) Armoured Division Main HQ a warm cosy feeling that they could sleep safe in their beds. I am not sure who was most intrigued by the other - the men of Alma were baffled by so many officers in the same place without any SNCOs to look after them and the assorted Staff Officers could not come to terms with the speed that a Duke can dig a high quality trench, clean his rifle, eat his dinner and smoke 20 cigarettes - whilst managing to swear with every third word!

During this period we began patrolling the town of Safwan (where the 1991 Gulf war peace agreement was signed) near the Kuwaiti border in berets (the first British Army unit in theatre to do so) and started to court the media. As the media were not allowed to move towards Basrah they spent lots of time patrolling with Alma and in particular 2 Lieutenant Shand, Sergeant Lister and Lance Corporal Winchurch sold their souls to CNN (well, they were very attractive ladies)! Following a successful search and arrest op in Safwan on 1 April we started to settle into routine. Someone must have tipped off the GOC because that night we

received a warning order to move to the town of Az Zubayr in order to relieve the Black Watch so that they could push on towards Basrah. In the space of a week we had been Theatre Troops, Divisional Troops and were about to be part of 7 Armoured Brigade.

Peace Support Operations in Az Zubayr 4 April - 2 May.

On 3 April the Alma Company command group (oh, and CO's Tac!) moved up to Az Zubayr to be heartily welcomed by the Black Watch. They (and the 2 RTR battlegroup in the South of the town) had fought hard to gain lodgements in the town and subsequently pacify the place. Both battlegroups had lost soldiers to enemy action and the Black Watch certainly had the look of men who had had a baptism of fire over the previous days. The atmosphere in the town was extremely tense and the thought of a couple of very lightly equipped light role Dukes' Companies taking over from two Armoured Battlegroups was fairly daunting. The Alma Commanders got straight to work and were out on familiarization patrols with the Black Watch within the hour. The remainder of the Company arrived early on Friday 4th and started foot patrols immediately. Strange to think that it was almost fifty years to the day that the Black Watch and the Dukes were conducting relief in place on The Hook! Our arrival coincided with a large increase in temperature, which meant that patrolling in body armour and helmets cut patrol tasking time down to about an hour. After a Chinese parliament the soldiers decided that they would patrol on foot without body armour so that they could get around the town and also send the message to the locals that the fighting was over - the plan seemed to work. By 6 April the Battle Group were back together for the first time since the PW camp. Alma were responsible for the north of Az Zubayr, Burma the south and Corunna the critical oil infrastructure to the west of the town. Our main focus became delivering humanitarian aid pending the arrival of the various aid agencies (at the time of writing we are still awaiting their arrival!) and establishing a safe and secure environment within which the coalition could start nation building. Delivery of water from tankers became a large part of Alma Company life, and after days of shouting and high blood pressure, we pretty much taught the people of Az Zubayr the value of a good old fashioned British queue! Sergeant Brighthouse also formed his own Company of Iraqi children who regularly formed up for drill lessons when they saw him on patrol! We continued to find large quantities of arms and ammunition and took a softly softly approach so that the locals were confident that we were there to help them. In addition to this, we attempted to engage the locals in solving their own problems, so that it would be easier for British forces to disengage when the time is right.

Expansion and the Reconstruction Phase 2 May - 28 June.

With the warfighting well and truly over (at least in the British sector), 1 (UK) Armoured Division began to restructure and arrange for the extraction of 3 Commando Brigade and most of 16 Air Assault Brigade.

As a result, the Dukes were required to massively expand our area of operations in order to take in the 3 Commando area. This change would see the three rifle companies being responsible for some 9500 square kilometres of Iraq by the middle of May. On 2 May Alma Company handed over our part of Az Zubayr to Burma Company and assumed command of a new area to the south. This largely rural area included the town of Khor Az Zubayr (about 30 000 residents) and a number of key oil and gas installations. Zulu Company of 45 Commando gave us a good handover (as they had done in Kosovo some two years previously) and had calmed the area considerably. On 9 May we took over more desert and the town of Safwan (about 35,000 residents) from B Squadron of the Queens Dragoon Guards and on 19 May we took over the port and town of Umm Qasr (a town of strategic importance, as it contains the only deep water port in Iraq with about 45,000 residents) from 23 Pioneer Regiment. For those readers that have served in Northern Ireland, Alma Company is now responsible for a piece of ground slightly larger than South Armagh with about twice the number of people in it (though thankfully most of the locals are much friendlier)! On 9 May we also moved to Az Zubayr Port, which had been occupied by 3 Commando Brigade. This was a very welcome change - the men now live in a huge hangar with a breeze blowing through it and shortly after we moved in the Quartermaster started fresh rations. Since then the food we have received has been outstanding and everyone is putting back on the weight they lost due to heat, hard work and the diarrhoea and vomiting (D&V) bug that was prevalent in Az Zubayr town.

With such a huge area and with three fairly major towns the ninety men of Alma Company became even busier! Routine was quickly established and revolved around long hours in vehicles, as well as numerous surge operations into the towns and oil installations. Whilst the men were busy creating a secure environment and helping train the fledgling Iraqi police force, the OC had become (not through choice!) heavily involved in the humanitarian side of things. Each town established a town advisory group which was responsible for getting the infrastructure of the town and surrounding area up and running again. This meant the OC becoming the Crown Prince of Khor Az Zubayr, the Mayor of Umm Qasr and the President of Safwan. Long hours in endless meeting with the town committees and the US civil affairs experts are now the order of the day. Progress has been slow but steady: water is now flowing and electricity is on most of the time. The World Food Programme has started its aid deliveries and very slowly the contractors hired by the US Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance are starting to appear and make plans for the long term repair of the fabric of Iraq. The really difficult times are only now starting - understandably the Iraqi people are desperate for elections and are full of questions about when they will happen and what form their new government will take. The Coalition Provisional Authority are in the process of creating policy for future elections, but as they are focussed on starting the process in Baghdad there is some delay in Basrah

province which seems to be further along the road to recovery. There is no doubt that 40 Regiment Royal Artillery will have a busy tour!

Whilst all this has been going on the men have been arresting looters, confiscating illegal weapons, administering first aid and generally reassuring the public that their country is now free and getting safer by the day. We also managed to commemorate the Battle of the Hook with a very moving service from Padre Pat Aldred and held a sports day to celebrate Waterloo Day. Waterloo Day was closed with a stirring rendition by the Drums and a very welcome barbecue (although the alcohol-free beer we were issued was truly disgusting).

At the time of writing we are a week away from flying back to Osnabrück and everyone is looking forward to getting back to family and friends. Alma Company deployed to Op Telic with a large number of youngsters - there is absolutely no doubt that they are all returning home as men. It is reassuring to know that when the chips are down every Yorkshireman (and Fijian!) still contains the same fighting tyke that he did

generations ago! I would like to finish with a heart-felt thank you to the families and the wider regimental family for the unwavering and total support we have received whilst we have been out here. We appreciate that wives, girlfriends, parents and children have probably worried far more than we have, but everyone in the Company has been able to give their all to the effort out here knowing that everyone at home has been behind us. The odds on a post Iraq Dukes baby boom next April are shortening every day! We will probably also be in trouble with the dentist, as we have received tons of sweets from home during the tour!

After some well earned summer leave (and no doubt lots of tales of daring do across the pubs of Yorkshire), we will be back to the grindstone as we re-acquaint ourselves with armoured warfare (and the odd German ale!) ready for the training year in 2004. Details in the next thrilling installment...

Major P. R. Fox
OC Alma Company

A PLATOON COMMANDER'S VIEW OF OPERATION TELIC

Having finished the Armoured Infantry Platoon Commanders Course on Friday 7 March my mind was about as far away from events in the Gulf as it could be. Instead I was looking forward to a week's leave and the freedom of London to celebrate finally completing all my training. Then out of the blue the call came from

my OC, Major Paul Fox, to inform me that I would be joining the Battalion immediately for the eleventh hour deployment to the Gulf. After a quick call to the girlfriend to tell her that the barbecue with her parents that weekend would, alas, have to be cancelled I made a grateful escape to Osnabrück!



A Company: 2 Platoon in Az Zubayr (Fort Chindit).

We deployed just a few days later arriving at Camp Commando just outside Kuwait City, from where it was all to begin. My main effort for those first few days centred on recognizing who was actually in my platoon, as well as winning the constant fight to keep hydrated. Although temperatures were a paltry 30°C, still they represented a significant change from the vile winter weather we had been used to.

The seriousness of the situation that lay before us only truly hit home on our fifth day in theatre. It was during a Company NBC lesson that without warning a missile hit the vehicle park. Miraculously nobody was hurt but the atmosphere within the whole camp changed markedly. What followed was to be a particularly unpleasant 24 hours of near constant Scud warnings which triggered the, with hindsight, rather comical 'immediate action drill' which involved diving into the nearest trench or bunker! My first proper O-group as a platoon commander took place under these tense conditions and, despite being punctuated by several dashes for cover, it was otherwise uneventful! I must have been asleep during the lesson given at Sandhurst which described the textbook 'first meeting with your platoon'.

These strikes by the Iraqis brought the whole coalition forces' plan forward by 48 hours and we soon found ourselves rolling towards the border. The men were very glad to get moving and spirits lifted the further we were away from what seemed Saddam's principal Scud target!

After a sleepless night spent in shell scrapes in the desert, we at last crossed the border to carry out what would be the first of our many tasks - to set up a PW camp just outside of Umm Qasr. It was certainly a surreal sight as we took charge of some of the first few hundred prisoners of war to the accompaniment of a protracted bombing campaign not two miles to the east of us, as 15 Marine Expeditionary Unit routed out the last of the hard line resistance. For the rest of that week the pace of life was hectic and as a battalion we were stretched to the limit. For myself, the junior platoon commander, it was certainly a baptism of fire, but one that would stand me in great stead for the rest of the operational tour. Not only was I able to bond quickly with my platoon but the responsibilities thrown my way demanded that we achieve an early and productive understanding.

By this stage the war effort was progressing well and Alma Company, together with Battle Group Main, soon received orders to push forward to guard and secure the

area around the Divisional Support Group's location. Glad to move forward, the men were pleased to be moving onto what they deemed more glamorous tasks, and indeed so it proved. Alma Company enjoyed some considerable success here including finds of several small arms and missile caches, achieved through the monitoring of all movement in and out of Basrah. This success continued once the Battalion was reunited in Az Zubayr, where we faced the complexities of a hostile urban area for the first time.

Certainly the atmosphere in Az Zubayr was tense when we first conducted the relief in place of the Black Watch. They had had to fight their way into the town and had met unexpectedly fierce resistance. Fortunately, however, we quickly managed to adopt a softer stance, whilst dominating the ground through regular foot and mobile patrolling. For myself, the experience of leading multiple patrol teams in a hostile area where weapon and UXO finds were commonplace was both testing and exciting. We remained in Az Zubayr for a little under two months and witnessed huge changes there. Our softer stance paid dividends, as we were able to both reassure the local population as to their safety and encourage them to resume normal life as far as was possible.

For the final six weeks of the operational tour Alma and Corunna Companies together with Battle Group Main moved south to Az Zubayr Port from where we took over our new area of responsibility (AO). The new AO for Alma Company encompassed the strategically important port town of Umm Qasr, together with Safwan and Khor Az Zubayr. Once again our main priorities centred round the domination of the area and the securing of certain key sites seen as important to the economic regeneration of the area. This phase of operations was characterized by a near constant battle against 'the looters'. Frustrating at times due to the amount of manpower required to mount the necessary static guard deterrents, the looters did not have things all their own way and several became some of the first guests of the newly opened Basrah Prison, courtesy of some quick work by the lads!

Our time here nearly over, I think we can all look back on what has been a pretty successful operational tour. For my part it has been the best possible start to Battalion life and may well prove a hard act to follow.

2 Lieutenant A. J. Shand
OC 2 Platoon

BURMA COMPANY - OPERATION TELIC

Deploying to Kuwait

On Tuesday 11 March 2003 the Battalion had only just returned from two weeks' Kosovo training in Sennelager, in preparation for its intended six-month deployment to the Balkans, when it was given the order to deploy to the Gulf. The Company had to be in Kuwait with all its equipment, ready for its unpractised role of Prisoner of War (PW) handling duties. The Company was filled with a mixture of excitement and nervousness that helped focus the mind and fuelled the energy

required to ensure that we arrived in Kuwait in good order. I remembered a briefing I had sat through at Sandhurst on the realities of war. In particular the speaker made the comment that one should always be ready for war, as it was likely to summon you before you knew it. How true these words proved to be and with only eighteen hour's warning to get on the aeroplane I wished I had paid more attention. In fact so rushed was my packing that I realised in Frankfurt airport that I had not packed any lightweight socks. The only shop open

was Harrods and I paid £38.00 for a pair of pure cotton lightweight socks. I wore these socks everyday for the first two weeks rinsing them each night and they have been worth every penny. I look forward someday to giving the realities of war lecture at Sandhurst!

Our arrival in Kuwait was somewhat bizarre: visibility was down to 15 metres, due to an almighty sandstorm; it was not until the next morning when it had cleared that we became aware of the sheer size and scale of the war effort. Our mounting base called Camp Rhino was some 30 km north of Kuwait City and it was surrounded by even larger American Camps that dwarfed us. However, we had much to do and PW training started immediately. The remainder of the Company arrived on 17 March and it was clear by the news that they were going to get little if any time to acclimatise and conduct training, as we had been told that we needed to be ready by the weekend. The operational security was so tight that we really did not know exactly what day we would be crossing into Iraq. The Company had been extremely well trained in dealing with such levels of uncertainty with its experiences on the Fire Strike trying to second-guess the strike action. In fact we were so comfortable with uncertainty that lads created the new Regimental Motto "It's the not knowing that keeps us going".

Back to the War - three days before we crossed into Kuwait we learnt that our freight had been diverted to Saudi Arabia and would not be with us in time. We had no ammunition, a few vehicles, no radios, we were all suffering from the heat and the anthrax vaccinations, which made one feel very groggy for 24-48 hours. Colour Sergeant Flitcroft and his team worked tirelessly along with the rest of the QM's Department to beg, borrow and procure the necessary equipment to get us ready in time. The Americans were talking a big game, forecasting mass capitulation, that provided some relief to our ammunition and equipment states, but our preparation was still ongoing, concentrating on NBC refresher training and PW handling. Between 18 and 20 March we continued training and preparation of our equipment and on 19 March we received an incoming Seersucker missile attack landing just outside the Camp. This attack turned many of our lads into men and sharpened everyone's efforts. The next forty-eight hours saw us donning our respirators and NBC suits some eighteen times. The temperature during the heat of the day was in the mid thirties and it was very difficult to achieve any battle procedure as we were constantly rushing to the nearest claustrophobic bunker to wait for the all clear. So regular were the alarms that OC Burma gave his orders for the move forward into Iraq in a bunker and when the alarm went off we all just put our respirators on and continued. On Thursday 20 March we got the order to move forward to Holding Area Waterloo some 40 km short of the border. Everyone was very relieved to be out of Camp Rhino and the Company dug in and awaited the call forward. The NBC alarms continued although less frequently and at times we were digging in full NBC suits and respirators. The only thing that made this different to a training exercise was that there was an atmosphere of team

spirit, urgency and selflessness from private to officer at levels that I had not witnessed before. By this stage the NBC alarms had become so annoying that I pitied any Iraqi soldier who came into our fields of fire.

The War

At 2200 hours 20 May, just as we had settled in for some rest, the Battalion was called forward to a further Holding Area on the Kuwait/ Iraq border. We moved up in the early hours of the 21st and again dug in. At 0500 hrs we crossed Border Crossing Point Three and headed towards Umm Qasr. Our mission was to provide security and assist in the construction of the PW Camp some 4 km to the West of Umm Qasr. The US Marines (15 MEU) were still attacking the strategic port of Umm Qasr and had already captured 500 POWs at the location where the PW Camp was to be built. The Company's task was to provide the Western Cordon and as soon as we arrived we started to dig in for the third time in less than 24 hours. Progress on the camp was rapid and by day two PW cages had been prepared for 2000 prisoners. Burma Company then relieved Alma Company guarding and processing the PWs in the cages. At this stage we were the only PW Camp up and running and we were receiving prisoners from all units in Iraq. In the next 24 hours we had processed 2000 PWs and still had a further 600 to process. In effect a platoon plus was guarding a small Brigade's worth of PWs. The pressure on the soldiers was immense, as there was little time for meals and sleep was non-existent. It was remarked that we would have been better off the other side of the wire as sleep and rations were plentiful. The Company then came under command the Queen's Dragoon Guards Battle Group, as Alma Company and the Dukes' Battle Group Headquarters were re-tasked to protect the Main Supply Routes in the Divisional Rear. Once the initial backlog of PWs had been processed, life became more routine and we moved back out onto the outer cordon to live and operate out of our shellscrapes for the next two weeks.

Conditions were tough and the soldiers were magnificent in maintaining their professionalism in a difficult environment. Each night a number of PWs would try to escape through the wire and our soldiers on the outer cordon would quickly catch them and return them to the cages. This continued until the cages were reinforced with ditches and a more thorough wire entanglement. The NBC alarms continued during this period, but only sporadically, although one night we received another Seersucker attack, again landing just outside the camp. The Company patrolled forward regularly and made a number of weapon and ammunition finds and on one patrol Corporal Hutty found a mortar with ammunition recently positioned and poised for an attack on the camp. He observed the site and two Iraqis were subsequently arrested by his section. Fortunately the camp was not targeted again and I have little doubt that this was down to the effectiveness of our patrols in deterring RPG and mortar attacks.

Peace Support Operations

On 5 April, Grand National Day, Burma Company was called forward to regroup with Dukes Battle Group in Az Zubayr in order to release much-needed combat power for the planned attack on Basrah. The Company area of operations was the southern half of Az Zubayr and our mission was to restore law and order and set the conditions for a secure environment. The Company relieved A Company of the Light Infantry in the former Civil Affairs building and within four hours of arriving they had departed. The situation in Az Zubayr was tense and it was clear that in order to win the hearts and minds of the 350,000 occupants it was necessary to get on the streets in berets without body armour and interface with the locals. Within four days the atmosphere had changed and there was mass support for all our activities. However, the situation in town was still concerning; there were no schools operating, the shops were all closed, the electricity had been off for a month, there was no water supply and no employment. At night there were in the region of 50 - 60 reported shots fired and looting was rife. Each evening approximately 100 - 150 persons would gather at the gates of our camp offering information about the former Ba'ath Party and its key players. The Company chose the first six Iraqis that could speak English and employed them as interpreters. They have been with us ever since and have been essential to our success in the town. In the early weeks in Az Zubayr Burma conducted numerous house raids detaining former regime players and criminals in order to restore law and order. Meanwhile the Battle Group Headquarters supported our efforts by establishing a Town Council to implement the essential utilities such as water and electricity.

The Platoons rotated around Urban Patrols, Deliberate Operations and Guard / QRF. The operational tempo was furious and the thermometer was rising by the day. The platoons took to their new tasks readily and through our previous experiences in Northern Ireland, Bosnia and Kosovo they were able to conduct very successful raids, VCPs and confidence building patrols. The expectations of the Iraqi people were high and it was a constant battle to keep our progress in line with these expectations. Every soldier was aware of the importance of maintaining the support of the locals and that every action on the ground was being watched and judged. Due to this understanding and the excellent leadership of the Platoon Commanders and Junior Non Commissioned Officers their conduct was exemplary.

On 17 May the Company Area of Operations increased to the whole of Az Zubayr town and its surrounding 400 sq kms. The expanded area included one of the three oil refineries in Iraq, an oil pumping station and a chemical factory, which was the sole producer of chlorine in Iraq. All of this with only 100 soldiers stretched our resources and ensured there was never a dull moment. These strategic installations needed to be guarded from looters and we found ourselves manning static locations and unable to patrol

and interdict any terrorist activity. The solution was to train Iraqi Security Guards to relieve us from these static tasks. The CSM, WO2 Nick Wilson, and a small team set about training the former oil police and other keen volunteers. Within two weeks all of these installations were guarded by Iraqi Security Guards and our soldiers were back on the streets conducting framework operations. Our operations also took a change in emphasis, as we now concentrated on surging areas during the night in order to interdict the organised crime and tribal feuds that resulted in gun battles.

Prior to the war Saddam emptied the prisons of all its criminals and this fuelled the looting situation. The major criminal activity within the area was copper smuggling whereby pylons would be scaled, the lines cut, which were then picked up by another team and passed on to a further group who would smelt the lines into copper sheets. These sheets would then be smuggled into Iran and Kuwait. Platoons set up reactive operations along the pylons lines and were hugely successful in capturing the gangs at work. At the same time the Iraqi police was being reformed and much of our time was spent taking the former regime police out on patrol and trying to bolster their confidence and conduct their business within the law. The Iraqi police have been successful, particularly in the recovery of stolen vehicles, and their local knowledge has been useful. However, it will take time to change their mindset and their public perception.

The Company's success over the last ten weeks is best illustrated by the following results:

Persons arrested:	208
Vehicles Impounded:	60
Weapons Seized:	119
Company Raids Conducted:	14

The situation with only seven days left in Az Zubayr is very different to how we found it. The schools are all open with exams starting tomorrow. The markets in town are flourishing and new shops open everyday. The average shots reported each night is between four and ten. The pensioners are receiving their pensions and 350 Iraqi Policemen are back on the streets. The Law Courts are up and running after the Company ran a \$25,000 refurbishment programme and the prison in Basrah is now receiving criminals. 160 Iraqi Security Guards are guarding key installations and the Company have arrested 75 persons involved in copper smuggling. Elections have been held to elect new headmasters of the schools and a manager of the hospital. It has been a rollercoaster of change, uncertainty and complexity, but this progress has only been delivered through the professionalism, selflessness and determination of the Burma Company soldiers. Their enthusiasm, humour, intelligence and dedication have made this difficult tour an incredible experience and thoroughly worthwhile.

Major T. G. Vallings
OC Burma Company

A SECTION COMMANDER'S VIEW OF OPERATION TELIC

The Company arrived in Az Zubayr on 4 April after a hectic two weeks PW handling in Umm Qasr. The mood in town was one of fear, apprehension and uncertainty; the people were unsure of how long we were to stay, the memories of celebrating too early from the last war were still etched in their minds. The lads were raring to go and looking forward to the challenge of the streets, a short handover from the Light Infantry and it was time for the Dukes to hit the town.

The heat at the time was bearable and we concentrated on foot patrols, the sections remaining on high alert as they patrolled through the unfamiliar side streets in town. The cries of 'Mister, Mister; Water, Water; what's your name?' These will long remain in the memories of everyone that ever walked the streets. With a population of 400,000 there was plenty to do. It was not long before the lads had their first weapon find, awareness also needed to be paid to the high levels of UXO. Quickly, the workload increased and we all found ourselves operating on our reserves, as we tried to maintain a constant presence in town.

The Platoons rotated through a series of guard, operations and patrols. Everything except guard was eagerly awaited, probably due to the fact that long hours in the sanger over a 48 hr period were demanding. It is credit to the lads that they managed to remain focussed, especially as the temperature rose; they did an excellent job looking after the security of the camp.

The threat from members of the old regime was still ever present; the Company's main effort was to gain intelligence that would lead to the removal of these people. Some members of the Company found themselves on patrol with Special Forces as we recced a suspected player's house in town. Sadly the raid did not happen; however, they followed thick and fast thereafter, with the Company doing a total of fourteen house raids on suspected players. All Platoons took the lead role in many dawn house raids; these proved extremely exciting and got the old adrenalin pumping.

One of the craziest periods on the streets was delivery of humanitarian aid packages. Water drops resemble something more akin to feeding time in the savannah. Not a pride of lions, but more a pack of hyenas as they descended on the water trucks. As we battled to hold the crowds back and keep order, men, women and children would sneak past and attempt to jump the queue. Corporal Hutty, (the 'judge') had an impromptu shower as the pumps turned on prematurely; he forgot his shower cap on this occasion. Trying to remain calm was the biggest test, yet the people got the much-needed water. Still the cries of water, water echoed in our ears!

As the tour continued, so our area of operations grew larger, till the Company was providing security for the whole of Az Zubayr. Our focus now switched to the copper smuggling which was proving big business. Looters would climb the pylons and cut the wire, a dangerous activity but one that gave the lads the opportunity to get in the mind of the criminals and set up reactive operations. The Platoons had many successes and managed to apprehend more than seventy copper thieves. The lads soon got used to thinking like the criminals and, by using VCPs with strategically placed cut offs we could soon predict the smugglers' pattern and greatly increased our chance of success.

The tour has been extremely challenging, testing, tiring and exciting; everyone involved has gained a huge amount of experience. The guys have learnt a great deal in a short period of time and remained focussed throughout. We are all ready to get home, with a feeling that we have achieved all we set out to do. Looking back on the tour it has been fantastic opportunity, but we now look forward to seeing our families and friends who have supported us 100% during our time away.

Lance Corporal Sharp
Burma Company

CORUNNA COMPANY

It is a great honour to be writing these notes as Officer Commanding Corunna Company, having taken over the reins during the OpTelic deployment to Iraq in early May 03. I inherited a professional, cheerful and motivated Company, all of whom have grown in stature, confidence and experience during our time in Iraq.

As well as losing the OC, Major Nigel Goodwin, to the clutches of QMG's organization, a fond farewell was bid to CSM WO2 "Paddy" Buckingham who has gone (at last) to the G4 cauldron of RQMS. CSM Buckingham's inimitable style, wit and highly professional approach will be sadly missed by all the Company and I would like to thank him for the advice, guidance and continuity that he provided during my early return. His replacement as CSM Corunna is CSM WO2 Stannard, who escaped the Operations Warrant Officer job in early June and has already imposed his will on the Company and I know is looking forward to his two years with Corunna. On completion of Op Telic

we will also lose the CQMS, Colour Sergeant Hind, a more dedicated, energetic and amusing man it would be difficult to find, and he will be a sad loss to the Company but moves on promotion. We also say farewell to the old Corunna stalwart Sergeant Schofield, Platoon Sergeant 9 Platoon, who is posted, on promotion, to the Army Apprentices College (Harrogate) as CQMS. Likewise Sergeant Ledingham moves to Burma Company as CQMS from 8 Platoon. In a similar vein the Company Operations Officer, Captain Rob Scothern is posted to the Royal Military College of Science for an in-Service degree and OC 7 Platoon, Lieutenant Doug Nelson is posted to Infantry Training Centre Catterick. Special congratulations should go to Corporal Campion on his well-deserved promotion to Sergeant, a Rifle Platoon slot beckons.

The story of Corunna Company's war is being covered from a Private Soldier's perspective, by Private Pritchard, later in these notes, however, Corunna

Company's deployment began when the OC, Major Nigel Goodwin, arrived in theatre with the Battalion Recce Group on Wednesday 12 March 03. The advance parties quickly joined the R Group and main bodies so that by 16 March the Company, with the exception of the CQMS' party who were delayed in Azerbaijan and UAE, was complete. Our initial tasking was the provision of security to one half of the PW Holding Area, planned to be constructed some 2 kms West of Umm Qasr. Our role was to support the Battalion in the setting up of the Cages and the overall security. Briefings were given, training completed on PW handling and refreshers conducted on NBC drills, Rules of Engagement, mine-awareness and mission rehearsal. Initial indications were that G Day would commence on Friday 21 March. The war started in earnest on Thursday 20 March.

Whilst aware of the air campaign, Camp Rhino, some 70 km South of the border, seemed relatively safe. This perception was rudely dispelled when a Seersucker anti-ship missile struck the Camp at c1000hrs Zulu. The rest of the day consisted of a series of Scud attacks and alarms. Information was passed down that Patriot missiles had destroyed four Scuds that had been fired in the direction of the Camp. It came as something of a relief when the Company was ordered to go forward to Holding Area Waterloo at 0700hrs Zulu on Friday 21 March.

The Battalion's move North was led by Corunna Company. Whilst uneventful, unconfirmed reports suggested that Camp Rhino was again almost struck by a missile shortly after departure. Initial orders were for the Company to move to the holding area for 24 hours then move up to an assembly area South of the Berm and just 5 km short of the border. After digging in and providing local security, it became apparent that 15 Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), who were clearing Umm Qasr, had taken 250 PWs and needed assistance whilst they continued to clear the town. Eventually, after forty minutes' notice, Corunna Company led the Battalion up to the assembly area. After three hours of listening to several firefights and the guns of 29 Commando Regiment, orders were given to cross the border. The 2IC of the QDG met Corunna Company at Gate 3 on the border and led the Company, closely followed by the rest of the Battalion, to the PW Cage location 2 km West of Umm Qasr. Elements of 15 MEU had secured the immediate vicinity and held some 250 PWs. The Company deployed to the eastern perimeter and dug in.

For the first five days in Umm Qasr 15 MEU engaged the remnants of Iraqi resistance. This included several air and aviation strikes throughout the town. More impressive was the artillery mission fired over the camp at the town, resulting in one drop short landing approximately 700m in front of our position and two 500lb bombs being dropped on the town. Whilst the Company continued to improve field defences and provide work parties, the Cages were established. On Tuesday 25 March Battalion HQ and Alma departed to provide security to the Divisional Rear Area. QDG BG took over from Battalion HQ in setting up the camp. The Company was bolstered by a troop from 12 Battery

of 12 Air Defence Regiment, but also had increased responsibility in that we took over running the administration of the Cages. The troop was given responsibility for the task with the OC and CSM commanding the operation. This coincided with the first riot from one of the 500 man cages. Whilst 8 Platoon stood by to provide a robust response, CO QDG acquiesced to the PW demands for more cigarettes and water. At the same time there was a mortar and RPG attack on the camp. The firing point was identified by the OC some 1.5km south of the Camp. Both rounds overshot by some 400m. The riot finally petered out after some five hours. This type of disturbance became a common occurrence, albeit on a smaller scale, for the duration of our stay. Eventually, the running of the internal administration fell to 12 Battery and the Company concentrated on security, the establishment of more permanent field defences and a VCP on MSR Sioux Falls which ran east - west on the northern perimeter of the camp.

Militia and Fayadheen activity in the area continued. There were sightings of two armed groups reccing the area and a number of shots and small attacks in town. One attack on a Coalition Force (CF) convoy was witnessed by Sergeant Ledingham's patrol on the outskirts of town. The failure to identify the exact firing point amongst the rubble prevented follow up action. In addition to the mortar attack, a Seersucker was fired from Basrah in the general direction of Umm Qasr. Another streaked some 50m over the position and landed in Kuwait, hitting a shopping centre. Whilst the impact area was not definitively identified, it was estimated to have landed some 5 - 10 km west of the PW camp. The area around the camp was littered with munitions and unexploded ordnance. Patrols discovered a great deal of weapons and ammunition during routine external security patrols. Of note was a find of several RPGs, prepared for firing, and mortar rounds by Lance Corporal Eccles and a find of a primed mortar laid onto the camp and some sixty rounds of 81mm ammunition by Second Lieutenant Crawford. It was estimated that this had been set up for an attack on the camp that evening. During the EOD detonation of Lance Corporal Eccles' find a WOII from 12 Battery thought he was under attack and fired four rounds at the patrol and EOD team before being debriefed.

The PWs were not completely passive. A number either tried or attempted to escape during the Gunners' tenure in charge of the Cages (leading to the phrase - 'if you want to do a runner, be guarded by a gunner'). During a particularly fierce rainstorm, which flattened all the PW tents, it was estimated that some ten PWs escaped. Whilst our role was the external security, it became a frequent occurrence that teams were sent out to capture escapees. During our last week in the camp the Americans arrived and gradually began the construction of the Theatre Internment Facility (TIF). Whilst the UK PW Cages were intended to hold 6000 transiting PWs for six days, the US site was a long-term site for some 24000. In the end the UK camp held some 8500 PWs for two weeks. Once the US formally took over the entire site our role ended.

On 5 April, in the space of two hours, we were given four possible taskings. The Company tasking began the next day. The Area of Operations (AO) consisted of a large rural area, a platoon sized guard task and two urban areas. The platoon task was the security of an oil and gas storage facility and a Gas and Oil Separation Plant (GOSP). Designated 'The Crown Jewels' before the war started by CF, the threat to this key part of the oil infrastructure came from militia and fayadheen attacks. Any sabotage to the plant would have resulted in a major environmental disaster. This was highlighted by a fire, caused by farmers tapping into an oil pipeline, at another gas and oil site which could have exploded. After cordoning off the area it eventually burned itself out within two days. Urban patrolling was conducted in a residential area, nicknamed Barnsley. This consisted of relatively smart oil workers' homes and impoverished slums. The locals seemed friendly enough, although it was apparent that many had supported the old regime in order to obtain well-paid jobs in the oil industry. Similarly, a large chemical production plant to the South of the AO boasted neat housing, a school and clinic for the 5000 workforce, most of whom were Ba'ath Party members.

The build up of an intelligence picture was hampered by the language barrier, improved by the use of Language Assistants (LAs), and the lack of street names and comprehensive mapping. Initial patrolling was aimed to improve security and interdict militia activity. This quickly incorporated arresting looters. Dealing with looting without a police force and method of imposing punishment caused difficulties. In the end, persistent looters were sent to the PW facility in Umm Qasr via the RMP detachment. Looting consisted of the taking of anything that was not tied down, from vehicles, to generators, to sheets of corrugated iron. Nothing was considered valueless. Armed looters succeeded in clouding the boundaries between looters and armed insurgents. Locating Ba'ath Party Headquarters, possible meeting locations and identifying the houses of known and possible players was also a high priority. Many locals were happy to pass on information and also to point out players. Our difficulty lay in the fact that these informants were often motivated in getting rid of competition for future local power struggles and to get even with neighbours over old rivalries. Arrests and house searches were only conducted following hard, corroborative evidence.

Within a week membership of the Ba'ath Party was not considered an immediate arrestable offence. Weapons and ordnance littered the AO. Finds of intact T55s and MTLBs fully stocked with ammunition were commonplace along with missile stocks, small arms and support weapons ammunition and CF UXOs, such as intact cluster munitions. Each family also seemed to have the family AK47s and RPGs. Searches were also conducted for underground PW camps (intelligence suggested PWs from the 1991 war were held in the area) and for the bodies of the ITN reporters who were abducted earlier in the war. Concurrent with the G2 and G3 operations, G5 (civil affairs) was of equal import. The locals had stocks of food provided by the Regime before the war, but were desperately short of water. Local sources were identified, but initially stocks were

provided at distribution points. Water tankers would move into the town and an escort of a multiple would control the distribution. Control was something of a loose term, as locals literally fought to get to the head of the queue. Lieutenant Pearce and Sergeant Ledingham found out the hard way that "form an orderly line" did not translate into Arabic. Clinics and schools were also located and their state of disrepair assessed.

On 14 May Corunna Company inherited a Brigade size Area of Operations that equated to the same size as Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cumbria combined; including the strategically vital Rumaylah Oil Fields and processing plants as CF vital ground. The distance alone has been a communication, vehicle and manpower challenge, you could imagine the logistical problems my much-travelled CQMS faced. The key threat within the AO has been looting and sabotage of the Oil Installations, particularly now that the crude oil is being pumped through the myriad of vulnerable pipelines. In response, Corunna Company has deployed a Platoon permanently in the town of Rumaylah to dominate the urban area and provide a G5 focus whilst also deploying five-day Long Range Patrols to patrol the 800 square kilometers in depth. These have been considerably testing in the searing 48°C heat but extremely successful in capturing and deterring the looters and thieves. Indeed the Company has made over 100 arrests and seized over 80 weapons and 35 vehicles. The Company has also trained some 750 Iraqi Oil Security Guards to take over the key point protection of the Oil Infrastructure (handing responsibility for Iraq back to the Iraqis), whilst also winning the battle for the hearts and minds of the locals in true Dukes fashion with wit and general good humour, aided by the imagination and energy of our Civil Military Liaison Officer - Sergeant "Paddy" Walsh. The real testimony to the success of the tour in human terms however is the naming of a baby after a member of the Company - Mohammed "Quirk" Albarrih, it has a ring to it I'm sure you'll agree.

Major Malcolm Norman
OC Corunna Company



Sergeant Major Stannard conducts a mines awareness lecture in an Az Zubayr school.



Corunna Company long range patrol teams in Fort Chindit Az Zubayr.

CORUNNA OPTAG TRAINING, MARCH 2003

Following a busy period of Op Fresco duties in Rotherham, Corunna Company then began preparing for a Pan Balkans tour in earnest. The Company was given a short period at the end of February to carry out pre-Balkans training, before participating in a two week Optag Pre-Balkans package at Sennelager Training Centre (STC).

During our own week-long training period, Corunna carried out a number of Training Objectives, including first aid and fitness. We paid particular attention to brushing up our incident management skills, which involved use of the 4 C's (Confirm, Clear, Cordon and Control) by the junior commanders.

Under the direction of Lieutenant Pearce, Corporal Moore and Corporal Roberts scenarios were set up which involved Private Travis' (8 Platoon) role playing a Kosovo Albanian carrying an unexploded mortar bomb, near a small rural village. A KFOR patrol, consisting of four Corunna soldiers (including a commander) would be approached by Travis and have to react to the situation as it developed. The results of this scenario, which was altered slightly for each patrol, were impressive at this stage of the Company's training. Of particular note was Lance Corporal Walker's (7 Platoon) effort, where he demonstrated good use of the 4 C's, particularly in his control of the soldiers manning the cordon which he erected around the Unexploded Ordnance (UXO).

It was fairly obvious by the end of our week's training that the Fresco training and the fire-fighting duties themselves had contributed to the development of small group cohesion within the fire team strength patrols, as well as an increase in the confidence of the Junior Commanders to take control of the situations they were confronted with. This boded well for the formal training package that was to follow.

The formal two week training package at STC commenced with two days of lessons, in order to teach Mines awareness, Basic Albanian and Serbo-Croat,

Rules of engagement and the use of interpreters. The latter was organised by an OpTag Colour Sergeant and included a practical scenario where two interpreters (an elderly man and an attractive young female) would approach a main gate security guard with a problem. The private soldier would then attempt to tackle the situation and then call for assistance from his section commander, who in turn would, if required, call for his Platoon Commander. The most memorable scenario involved the elderly man demanding compensation following a Dukes soldier allegedly impregnating his daughter (who was present with him). The scenario was handled both professionally and tactfully by the gate sentry and then the section commander, until the Platoon commander was called to the main gate to resolve the problem. The platoon commander, Lieut Edward Smith's first reaction, following an outline of the complaint by his section commander, was to say 'Congratulations' to the female interpreter, much to the delight of the spectating company.

The rest of the package consisted of a Bosnia Exercise and a Kosovo Exercise before a 24 hour Battalion final exercise. The Company conducted themselves admirably throughout the exercises. There were similarities between all of the exercises, for example each involved the construction of patrol bases, which Corporals Hardy and Rowlands became very good at. From these patrol bases the Company provided a guard force, a Quick Reaction Force and various types of Patrols. The patrol taskings for the Bosnia scenario revolved around a rural setting and included smuggling interdiction, weapon amnesty operations, and various cordon search/arrest operations. The Kosovo scenario and Battalion final exercise, involved Corunna Company having an Urban platoon base and small Rural base, as well as a separate Company HQ location with the remainder of the Company. Serials mainly involved the testing of the JNCOs in their incident management techniques and included the extraction of

a casualty from a minefield, the evacuation of casualties by a helicopter Incident Response Team, dealing with UXOs, shootings, other criminal activities and crowd dispersion. The Urban part provided the platoons with the opportunity to practise gathering and processing intelligence and to mount Cordon and Search/arrest operations on the back of information they had gathered by interacting with the role-playing civilian population.

Although we did not take part in a Pan Balkans tour to Kosovo or Bosnia, I think it is fair to say that the OpTag package and even the fire-fighting training enhanced our ability to deploy to Iraq with such short notice and perform so well in the incidents we were confronted with, particularly when we moved onto the Peace Support phase of Op Telic.

Captain R. Scothern
21C Corunna Company

OPERATION TELIC - A PRIVATE'S VIEW

Well, we had just finished a fairly demanding two weeks of OpTag and now ready to face a six-month Quick Reaction Force tasking in the Balkans. That was until Wednesday 12 March when we received a dramatic change to the year plans. After hearing and reading about it for so many months US and British troops were heading to the Middle East to liberate Iraq and the Dukes had received a late invitation. We were now given less than a week to prepare for our departure to the Gulf. On hearing this news I think the feeling among most of us was a mixture of excitement, fear and apprehension. We were going to take part in a war that we expected to be watching on TV from a safer place.

After days of medical briefs and training we were all off to the Gulf. The Commanders flew out on 14 March, then there were two flights for the rest of us on 17 and 18 March. After arriving in Camp Rhino in Kuwait (Just north of Kuwait City) we had several days of low level training and briefs, this was welcomed by most of us as we were attempting to acclimatise to the massive heat change. From day one we all realised that the heat and sandy conditions were going to affect the speed and the success of our part of the operation. After hearing so much bad press about our equipment in these conditions, we were able to test it for ourselves.

On Wednesday 19 March and we had another training day, mainly concentrating on NBC as this was the main threat. As we were coming to the end of a round robin of lessons, suddenly a whistling sound of some sort of missile was heard, and then it came into sight about 300m from where we were sat. It exploded about 20-30ft in the air leaving a white smoke. Having been scared for about a second, everyone whipped on their respirators and ran for the nearest concrete bunkers. I can safely say that even if they didn't admit it everyone feared for their lives at some point in those five minutes of panic. We spent the rest of the day running from one bunker to another one, as there were countless Scud warnings. On Friday 21 March we moved up to a holding point midway between the Iraqi/ Kuwait border where we stayed until the early hours of the morning. We then moved again to the border. By now each man had dug at least three shell scrapes and we were all exhausted. We held back waiting for the Marines to clear the way into Iraq, before we could move into our position, just 2km from the town and set up the security for the engineers to start the building process for the PW camp.

Early morning on Saturday 23 March the Marines had made enough headway for us to move across the boarder to Umm Qasr. We moved across with serious caution, as the threat was still big. As we drove in a lot

of civilians stood watching us, this made the journey more tense. We had to dig more shell scrapes in order to provide perimeter security. The initial plan was to build the PW camp in 24 hours but the construction of the camp took two and half weeks to get to the point where we could move from our shell scrapes into tents. Everybody was in a very low morale in those two weeks. Things started getting better by introduction of a NAAFI and cookhouse, at least we did not have to be on rations anymore.

One of the major problems is that we could not get in touch with our families and girlfriends to let them know that we were okay. The mail system came into place though it was slow and few people were receiving mail. While on perimeter security we had seen some of the best firework displays, which were mainly done via US Naval and Air force. We spent one more week there and then handed over the responsibility of the PW handling to the Americans.

Our next move was to the town of Az Zubayr, which is about fifty minutes north of the PW camp. Alma Company was guarding camp Chindit in Az Zubayr, we went to help with security and run Operations and patrols from there. It took us about two days to settle in before we started different duties. Our task consisted of foot patrols, mobile patrols, QRF and three days guard at Crown Jewels (an oil storage station).

As soon as we started foot patrols, children swarmed around us. At times this was irritating. Guard was quite tiring, as we had to do eight hours, especially in the midday heat. Mobile patrols were quite good because we got to visit different areas and it was a refreshing change from walking. Guard at Crown Jewels was the best, as it had a dip tank to cool off when it was too hot, this was definitely a morale boost for us. While in Crown Jewels we did guard, QRF, mobile patrols as well as rest time. At camp Chindit in Az Zubayr we had an opportunity to phone our families and friends and this was quite a relief for our families at home who were worried about us.

Half way through our time at Az Zubayr we moved from war fighting role to peace keeping role, which meant we were helping civilians gain their normal lives. During several search operations in the local area we found numerous weapons and ammunition, the only problem was that the people caught were taken to the PW camp and set free within days. After a while we had to move and take over several oil stations known as GOSPs. The GOSPs are in Rumalya about 40 minutes north of Az Zubayr. Our tasks included guarding the GOSPs and training local armed guards who were to

take over the guarding responsibility, while we provided mobile patrols in order to control the massive oil looting that is still going on. We spent about one month in these GOSPs; we also educated locals about the threat of mines and UXOs. Training the guard was hard due to communication problems even though we had interpreters.

Having handed over all GOSPs except one (Manchester), where we were conducting patrols from, we were now concentrating on five day Long Range Patrols (LRP) around the GOSPs to ensure everything was running smoothly. It provided us with a chance to mingle with the locals as well as other Coalition

Forces. Everyone enjoyed these patrols as we got out and about in Southern Iraq and got to see the actual desert.

As we got to the end of the tour we moved to Az Zubayr port after the Marines had left. In the port there was Internet access, a better cookhouse, EFL, numerous phones and a gym. Everyone's morale was high as it was coming to the end of the tour.

This has been a successful tour with its ups and downs, but it is an experience we will never forget.

Private Pritchard
Corunna Company

HOOK COMPANY - OPERATION TELIC

On Tuesday 11 March the QM's department was busy in Osnabrück preparing the Battalion for deployment to Kosovo in early May on Op Valero - this was in addition to having a small team back in Yorkshire looking after a fleet of green goddesses and twenty locations dotted around South Yorkshire which were being used by the Dukes for Op Fresco. It came as a shock when the Commanding Officer addressed the Battalion that afternoon saying that we were to deploy to the Gulf by the weekend to assist in PW handling. It was an even bigger surprise when the Recce Group (including the QM(T) and RQMS(M)) disappeared at 0600 hours the next day on a civilian flight and the QM then took a small G4 team back to the UK to handover Op Fresco to the 9/12 Lancers with a 48 hour turn round. In addition, 118 Waterloo Company soldiers were preparing to deploy for a six month tour to Kosovo on Op Oculus.

Meanwhile the CQMS parties were frantically packing a meagre B vehicle fleet, which had been procured from units all over Germany, with everything but the kitchen sinks, respirator checks in the gas chamber, zeroing of weapons and issuing of stores. Packing, unpacking and re-packing courtesy of the RLC movers ensured a frenetic five days' work prior to outloading onto two Antonov aeroplanes at Hannover Airport. After kissing the dog and patting the wife the main body flew out to Kuwait on Monday 17 March making 406 DWR personnel deployed in theatre. It quickly became apparent that there were major G4 headaches converting an Armoured Infantry Battalion into a light role Battalion. Eighty per cent of the armoured fleet had been previously transferred to 7 Armoured Brigade for their armoured battle groups to use. The bedfords and landrovers that were procured at short notice were not all in a roadworthy condition. It then came to light that the two Antonovs were denied overflight of Kuwaiti air space and had to land in the United Arab Emirates. The landrovers were onward moved by C130 Hercules and the bedfords moved by boat into theatre. This resulted in the Battalion moving forward from the forward operating base at Camp Commando, an American Base in Kuwait which had been our home for a few days, on the evening of Thursday 20 March (D day) having just received their vehicles and equipment and no time for proper battle preparation. With ammunition natures arriving just in

time, courtesy of RQMS Birkett, whilst the Battalion were in holding area Waterloo twenty miles South of the border at Umm Qasr waiting to move forward to the PW Camp just over the border.

As soon as Umm Qasr had been cleared of enemy forces a frantic week was spent in the dust and rain at the PW Camp, building the holding cages as well as attempting to outload stores, set up an echelon and feed and water the battle group amidst what looked like chaos all around.

The third move was to a tented area when we deployed to co-locate with the Divisional support group (DSG) twenty miles further north for ten days. We were classed as Div troops here so we could loan stores and tentage from their Q set up, in addition to what we had managed to liberate from the PW camp. In front of us the attack on Basrah was being planned.

Ten days later we were on the move again relieving the Black Watch in an old prison camp on the outskirts of Az Zubayr, which was far too close to the front line! This was (we thought at the time) to be our final location so we set about making it habitable.

As with the previous location we were centrally fed on ten man compo with the chefs working miracles in extreme temperatures of up to 76°C in the tented cookhouse.

We were using deep trench latrines which quickly became fly infested and D + V swept through the camp. The highlight of the tour was the eventual arrival of portaloos, with the QM receiving a standing ovation from the rank and file. The only good thing that could be said about this location is that it was 3 km from the brigade support squadron, so was handy for collection of stores. Five weeks later it was confirmed that we were to move to Az Zubair Port as the TAOR was expanding due to 3 Commando Brigade returning home.

A G4 team was dispatched to the camp under the QM's direction to live with the marines for a week with the intention being to "prof" what we could from them. This was satisfactorily achieved and once they moved out a mass spring clean and reconstruction phase was conducted to make a first class location which will shortly be handed over to 40 Regiment RA.

The Operational Welfare package has now kicked in with Sky TV and fridge/freezers as well as cardiovascular sports equipment being delivered. In

addition, contracts have been activated for skips and portaloos along with thirty civilian labourers for the cookhouse. In addition, fresh rations are now freely available from the UK, complete with plastic eating utensils, a small white fleet for the MT platoon and IT equipment for the Regimental admin office staff.

To conclude then, Op Telic has been a massive G4 challenge, but thankfully I have been blessed with staff capable of dealing with the many unforeseen dilemmas.

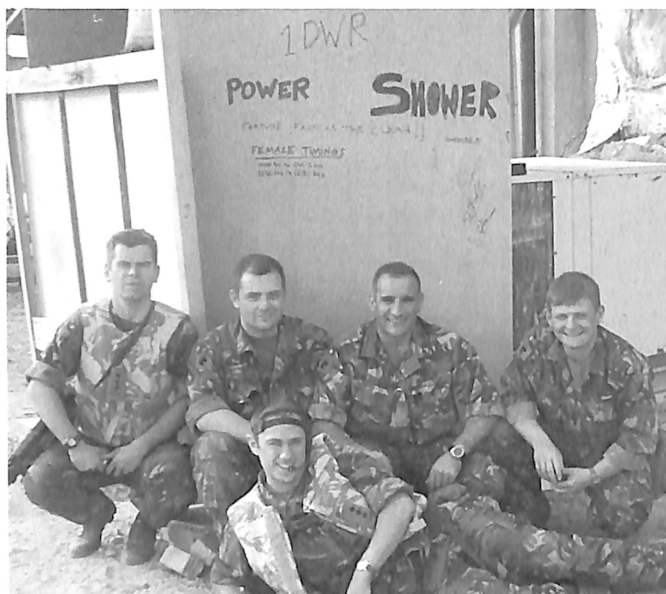
Major B. J. Thomas BEM
Quartermaster



Az Zubayr Port. Left hangar - Alma Company, centre hangar - Corunna Company, right hangar - cookhouse. BHQ behind centre hangar.



The QM's department at Az Zubayr Port.



Queuing for the shower

Left to right: Captain Humphris (RSO), Sergeant Morgan (Int Sgt), Staff Sergeant Corner (PTI), Colour Sergeant Holdsworth (CQMS Hook Coy) and, lying in front, Captain Payne (IO), with Az Zubayr's first power shower.



It works!

REGIMENTAL ADMIN OFFICE ON OPERATION TELIC

In the admin world we are always told that the three weeks prior to a deployment are extremely busy and that the AGC Detachment must focus and get their priorities right. We were lining ourselves up for the three week rush prior to our Kosovo tour when we were handed a three day rush courtesy of 'No 10'. I won't bore our infanteer readers with the details (I am sure most readers have sought out this article first!) but will say that lots of bits of paper were pushed around and handed out and, although it will have appeared that "the clerks were doing a lot of fannying around in BHQ", everyone was deployed in good order on the admin side due to a lot of hard work. In the background of this maelstrom of activity the RAO was busy working out what to put in his Bergen and how to get extra fags out to theatre.

Our first task in theatre was to provide ten of the Detachment to the Prisoner of War Handling Organisation (PWHO). This was the largest unit contribution in theatre. The two teams of five photographed and processed some twelve thousand PW in round the clock shifts for two weeks before returning to the Battalion in Az Zubayr. This task complete, three were returned to Germany to help out the very busy Rear Party and the remainder were despatched to their companies and departments, apart from one individual Private 'Arkwright' Biyau. He was selected to man a new 1 DWR venture - the Battalion Shop called 'M&Ms' (munchies and morale) - his main task being to shift the newly created EU toiletries mountain. At the last stock check it would appear that a new order will

have to be put in for re-supply when the Battalion move on from Warminster in 2008! Against the backdrop of PWs and toiletries the Detachment have ensured the lads and lasses have received their mail, phone cards and cash. However the main effort was to produce a team capable of winning the Battalion volleyball competition. The team breezed through to the final but, on the day, scooping, poor refereeing and a shortened last game served to leave a very mixed bag of talent as Battalion champions.

Whilst the majority of the Detachment were in Iraq, the rear party as always were going about their business to ensure a plethora of issues were dealt with in Osnabrück. All they have to look forward to are exaggerated stories of daring whilst issuing phone cards and sorting of mail in a hostile environment! Their unsung contribution has not gone unnoticed however. Two of the Detachment who should not be forgotten are Corporal Obbard and Private Tawakilai who are supporting Waterloo Company in Kosovo - we know they have the biggest challenge but also know they are up to it.

A number of congratulations are due since our last article: RAOWO WO2 Pauline Herron posted in on promotion to WO2; FSA WO2 Jake Malcolm posted in on promotion to WO2; Regt Acct Staff Sergeant Bri Gardner selected for WO2; Lance Corporal Wood promoted to Acting Corporal and Corporal Pat Audas selected as Captain of the AGC Offshore Racing Team.

Captain D Renihan, RAO

THE MEDICS ON OPERATION TELIC

Well, the medics had the dubious honour of being the first Dukes to have a contact. Right at the beginning, when the Prisoner of War Handling Camp was being set up we, were crashed out to an Iraqi civilian who had a gunshot wound to the head but was still breathing. By the time we got there he had unfortunately passed away. We moved him onto the side of the road and covered him. We had just stepped onto the road to get back into the ambulance and were asking each other "I wonder who shot him?" when some rounds came whizzing our way. I dived behind the ambulance for cover as more rounds came through. "Ma'am get down!" my medics shouted. They need not have worried; I had hit the ground quicker than you could say knife and was busy eating sand in the ditch! We had somehow managed to get involved in the fight for Umm Qasr. The Americans were sending in some heavy stuff but the Iraqis seemed to be holding their own. There must have been a sniper somewhere who was targeting us. None of us could see him but the rounds kept coming. Eventually after some heavy bombardment all went quiet and we scrambled back into the ambulance to make good our escape. The ambulance still holds the scars of that attack - it has a ricochet mark on the side, slightly low and to the left of the Red Cross. They obviously need more target practice!

Thankfully things quietened down for us after that. As we weren't on the front line, we did not have many fighting casualties, but we were kept quite busy with the normal DNBI - disease non-battle injuries. In the heat people were struggling with dermatological things - lots of rashes and reactions to the heat and sun. Then came the horror of the dreaded D&V. The diarrhoea and vomiting bug swept through camp swiftly taking no prisoners. It was a common problem in 1 Div's area. There weren't many who escaped. Most people had some form or another. It has to be said that we are still waiting for the RAO to get it. He is now known affectionately as "The Cockroach" because he has a cast-iron constitution. Captain Humphris, RSO, had prepared signs "The Roach is Dead" but we haven't used them yet! Once the virus is let in it travels around until everyone has been affected. Although our standards of hygiene were high and the chefs had an excellent set up, the flies caused a major problem with

the spread of the disease and it is thought that it is the introduction of fresh rations that starts it. Interestingly, the Americans and the Marines who stayed on convoys were not badly affected.

The Dukes are strong infantrymen who were busy doing a good job and didn't really have time to be ill. We were in theatre early enough to become accustomed to the heat as the temperatures rose and so we did not have a big problem with heat injury.

Certainly we have been busier since arriving in Az Zubayr Port and providing medical cover for the new-in-theatre Supply Regiment who moved into the adjacent hangars. They were clearly suffering the effects of not acclimatising and having to work in temperatures in excess of 45°C.

Some of the medics have been able to get out onto the ground and provide cover for the long-range patrols that Corunna Company have been doing. This has been mutually beneficial. Corunna have enjoyed the security of a medic so far from our main base and the medics have enjoyed the chance to get out and do some "real" soldiering for a while.

All of us have gained valuable experience on this tour. Some of it was hard. It was heart wrenching to see many injured children from mine strikes or burns. We don't carry any paediatric kit and could do little for them, except life-saving procedures and transporting them to the hospital. Medics theatre-wide have been hampered by the lack of kit and there are moves afoot to implement the introduction of paediatric trauma kit into the medical modules. Although I packed quite thoughtfully, I had soldiers and trauma in mind and not children.

I have enjoyed working with The Dukes as they truly are professional soldiers. They have all made me feel welcome and it would be an honour to do another tour with them.

Our return to Germany will be busy with keeping up to date on our medicals and vaccinations and the mammoth job of transferring all the information from our Operational Medical Record to the main records at the medical centre. Not to mention the Regimental Boxing and the preparation for next year's training.

Captain A. C. Milne
Regimental Medical Officer

DETTINGEN PLATOON - OPERATION TELIC FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Many readers may be wondering who and what exactly Dettingen Platoon actually is. The story is long and winding but I'll attempt to be brief. In late December 2002 amid the gathering clouds of war, rumour and speculation about Gulf War II, 1DWR was tasked to provide an Armoured Infantry (AI) Platoon to the force being assembled to conduct Operation Telic. The Platoon was drawn from across the whole Battalion. Initially we were supposed to deploy with 1RRF, then uncertainty crept in about whether we would be needed at all. The situation changed completely as we were tasked to be the Defence Platoon

for 7 Armoured Brigade Headquarters (the Desert Rats). Despite the very unglamorous role, the 'dream team' would be going to Iraq - pity about the rest of the Battalion tangled up in Operation Fresco or Kosovo training. Or so we thought...

Steadily the build up of coalition forces concentrated itself in the Kuwaiti desert. The lads responded with their usual cheerful banter and observations. The incessant heat, frequent sandstorms and all too regular NBC alerts made it a testing environment to live and train in. Fully trained up and eager to get on with the job in hand, the news broke of the deployment of the

1st Battalion. It brought mixed emotions, especially for those who might have had illusions of only a select handful wearing the Gulf campaign medal on the next Battalion muster.

The first casualty of war is not the truth; it is a warning order. Having been on six hours notice to move, the Platoon deployed in 45 minutes! To finally put a matter of some debate to rest - I can confirm that Dettingen Platoon's first warrior (WR) crossed the border before the rest of the 1st Battalion. It deployed with a remote rebroadcast detachment crossing at the American H Hour. The remainder escorted the Brigade Commander's TAC group and the two respective Brigade headquarters. Not exactly the tactics you get taught on junior Brecon or Platoon Commanders' Division. Employing AI tactics to unconventional tasks in unfamiliar circumstances was extremely challenging, but, as ever, Dettingen Platoon embraced it with vigour. This was made easier by the soldier's flexibility, the NCO's hasty planning and the Platoon Commander's orders scribbled on his ever-present cigarette packet.

Shaibah Airfield proved to be our home for some time whilst operations to seize Basrah were conducted. Corporal Claydon's observation post in the Air Traffic Control Tower was outstanding, although the height must have confused him, as he was continually piping up on the net, '...is that outgoing or incoming, eh?', despite having been briefed that a battery of 3RHA was located behind his position. The WRs found themselves a new role as 'battlefield taxis'. More senior officers and top brass bottoms have graced our WR benches than anyone could have imagined. 'Dettingen Taxis' managed to make new friends with some Hereford chaps and Intelligence teams and consequently the

Platoon undertook a number of secret, covert black operations...that mostly involved...battlefield taxis! However in Basrah a number of hidden skills came to light, notably the speed and agility with which Sergeant Simms and Corporal Shuttleworth were able to 'acquire' and hot-wire a car to enable covert teams to blend in. Being sniped at, whilst with IIG and then subsequently dodging wide sprays of chain gun proved to be another highlight. Having successfully 'fought' the Battle for Basrah, we were again called upon to baby-sit Brigade HQ. This involved the move to and occupation of Saddam's Basrah Presidential Palace grounds. Folklore says that an Englishman's home is his castle - in the case of Dettingen Platoon this was to prove true. Our marbled floored, ornately painted ceilings, complete with en-suite bathrooms 'home', probably worth £1.5 million on the UK market, was a fitting retreat for the battle-weary heroes of Dettingen Platoon. Obviously we still had to stag on and needless to say 'Dettingen Taxis' did a brisk trade.

As Peace Support operations began to develop we managed to re-unite ourselves with the 1st Battalion. We proved a bit of a novelty; being armoured and actually having been trained for the deployment. We established ourselves as a pseudo-Recce Platoon but being flexible enough to take on a number of other tasks, such as, raids, searches, observation posts and camp guard! As the temperatures rose and the threat declined, WR wasn't the perfect transport solution. Our subsequent issue of cut down Land-Rovers (known as WIMIC) dramatically improved our mobility and ability to move inconspicuously. Obviously the photo opportunities increased too. By now the green eyed monsters of the rifle companies had firmly focused on



Corporal Oldale (Dettingen Platoon) with 'Corunna'. Each Warrior in the Platoon was named after a Duke's rifle company.

the 'sunshine platoon'. However we did prove ourselves to be a credible Battlegroup asset. We conducted a number of successful raids based on the surveillance we had done and hauled in significant quantities of weapons, uniforms and prohibited items. In the course of this work, we also managed to dodge a few bullets, Corporal Claydon having the first confirmed Iraqi kill. Despite a heavy workload, the platoon never lost sight of its key objective - a deeply bronzed body. Dettingen Beach at Az Zubayr Port proved a popular social spot on slack afternoons.

With hindsight I could have never foreseen such an unpredictable and fluid operational tour. The way the soldiers have reacted has been fantastic, demonstrating

a robust keen-ness for soldiering, flexibility and above all an uncompromising will to get the job done. The Platoon has often found itself in unfamiliar circumstances, doing jobs that they weren't really trained for. It has been a considerable honour to command this particular handful of soldiers on operations and I publicly acknowledge this privilege. Operation Telic has proved the flexibility of WR, reiterated the determination of Yorkshire soldiers, the value of recce and the tedium of camp guard duties. One final lesson, never believe anyone when they say, 'you'll get the kit in theatre'...you don't!

Captain S. J. Dick, OC Dettingen Platoon

WATERLOO COMPANY

Last Summer it all seemed very simple; the Battalion had been warned off to deploy to Kosovo as a Balkan Reserve Force and, as part of this commitment, a company would be committed to providing a specialist capability for Kosovo, the ISR (intelligence, surveillance and recce) Task Force. The decision was taken by the Commanding Officer that whilst Somme Company would provide the majority of the personnel for this role, we would be re-inforced with soldiers from across the Battalion. Hence Waterloo Company was reformed.

Events conspired to make the training and deployment of Waterloo Company a lot harder than we initially envisaged. Our training was significantly reduced as a result of the commitment to Op Fresco (the Fire Strike). Consequently the Company did not form up until January and our training was compressed. The second unforeseen complication was the short notice and rather unexpected inclusion of the rest of the Battalion in the Op Telic. Effectively, at a time when we were in the latter stages of planning and training for our deployment, the umbilical cord between the Battalion and us was rather abruptly cut! Ultimately we overcame the problems, had a tremendously successful period of build up training and managed to deploy in good order.

The pre-deployment package consisted of an intensive period of in-house training and a series of external specialist courses for all company personnel. The pleasing result of this role so far has been the development and progression of the young private soldiers and team commanders on our establishment. The work we are undertaking is very much a 'Section Commander's War' and a great deal of responsibility is heaped upon the shoulders of some relatively junior Dukes. To a man they have coped admirably and all of us have been tested both mentally and physically over the last six months.

The Company is structured on two platoons that provide a total of sixteen operational teams. The platoons are supported by a HQ and CSS detachment that are both considerably larger than the traditional structure. There have been significant changes in Kosovo over the last few months. The most important change for us is that the Multi-National Brigade Centre (MNBC) passed from British to Scandinavian control.

Overnight the British commitment to Kosovo was reduced to just 360 troops (of which we provide one third). Therefore we live in a truly multi-national environment. The Company's commitment is Kosovo wide and we conduct concurrent operations in each of the four remaining Multi National Brigade areas. It is because of this geographical spread that the Company has such a large slice of support staff to sustain and control the operational teams.

The Company is accommodated in Slim Lines, this camp is literally right next door to Peninsula Lines where the Dukes were based on their last tour to Kosovo. We share the lines with a host of other nations; saunas are scattered all over the place and reindeer regularly features on the menu! We are sustained by a British National Support Element (NSE) and in difficult circumstances this organisation has done a fantastic job in providing the Company with the support it needs to focus on operations. The Dukes also provide a number of catering, QM and REME personnel who work within the NSE structure.

Operating over such a large area and with so few British Troops in theatre has created many challenges over the last couple of months. However, the work is extremely interesting and we are in the privileged position of spearheading a new role in a very much-changed operational environment.

Major P. J. Wilson
OC Waterloo Company

Waterloo Day in Pristina

18 June is a date important to any soldier who is part of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment and, in spite of a busy schedule, Waterloo Company commemorated the day in some style.

Waterloo Company forms the main part of the ISR Task Force, based at Slim Lines in Pristina and includes 112 soldiers from the Regiment. These soldiers have overcome the disappointment of not serving alongside the rest of the Battalion in the Gulf to undergo a difficult and challenging tour in Kosovo. Everyone has shown a professional and tireless approach to the job in hand. However we were still keen to find time to remember the history of the Regiment, colleagues past and present, and the families left at home.

The day began with a small service conducted by Padre Helin of the Finnish army. It included prayers of remembrance for those that have served in the Regiment, as well as prayers for those in the Gulf and the families left behind in Germany and Yorkshire. Major Wilson read the Regimental Collect and Corporal Coulson recited a quote from the Duke of Wellington at the Battle of Waterloo (Corporal Coulson had just been informed that he had been selected for promotion to Sergeant). The service ended with a solo rendition of Amazing Grace by Padre Helin (with vocals and guitar), followed by a blessing (I am quite sure this was a Regimental first and is likely never to be repeated!).

In the evening we held a barbecue and invited guests from across the British community and other nationalities in Kosovo. As always, the Dukes soldiers took full advantage of an opportunity to have a good time and the evening was a huge success.

The day was a fitting way to remember and celebrate Waterloo day. There was much comfort in the knowledge that the rest of the Regiment would be doing a similar thing elsewhere. In a year when the 1st Battalion has sustained two major commitments in two very different theatres this was a poignant reminder of the importance and significance of the Regimental Family.

Captain F. Bibby, 2IC Waterloo Company

REAR PARTY

It was my second day in command of Hook company. "The battalion is deploying to Iraq, you're not going. You will command the rear party." "Yes sir, okay" I heard myself say as I walked dreamlike from the CO's office. "I want you to be the unit emplanment officer." "Get us out there." Barked the 2IC as I passed his door. "Yep, fine." "This is yours mate" smiled OC Alma company as he slipped the Field Officers file and mobile phone into my hands. As I walked into my office the phone was ringing, it was a message from 1 (UK) Armoured Division informing me that, as the Conventional Forces Europe Officer, I was being given formal notice that the Russians were coming to inspect "a unit in Osnabrück in the next 24 hours." "How much better can this get?" I mused. "The military police are here to see you sir." "Thank you Sergeant Major, send them in." It was Tuesday 11 March 2003. So began the Dukes' Rear Party and Hook Company's contribution to the second Gulf War.

140 Members of Hook Company (including our LAD) are currently deployed in Iraq. The rear party is approximately 150 on paper. A high proportion of this figure is soldiers away on courses, long-term sick or soldiers awaiting discharge. We have received over thirty new recruits (all under 18 years of age) and therefore unable to be deployed on operations. This has caused a problem in the form of how to keep a platoon of fit eager young men active and interested. The problem was solved by instigating a challenging and progressive training programme. Included in the programme were the basics like weapon handling, support weapons, map reading, NBC, rules of engagement, physical training etc.

We have also managed to get some of the Rear Party away on adventure training, primarily skiing in Bavaria and partaking in a range of water sports at the nearby British Dummersee yacht club. We have had success in the army athletics championships in the UK. Private McVeigh won the junior 800m final and Private

Burkinshaw won the junior pole-vault final; his personal best equals the army record. Congratulations go to both of them and thanks to Sergeant Percival (LAD REME) for recognising their talent and organising their travel and accommodation. On to other matters: in May we hosted His Royal Highness, Prince Phillip Duke of Edinburgh; we had a very welcome visit from the Colonel of the Regiment and Lady Celia; we have had visits from the whole fleet management team, Commander 4th Armoured Brigade and many more; we have supported the annual Queen's Birthday cocktail party and beating the retreat hosted by the British Ambassador in Hanover.

We have supported the Osnabrück Garrison open day (the Dukes' team won the physically demanding gun run race) we have organised two emotional welcome home parties for the Op Telic boys and girls. Overall, it is fair to say the Rear Party have been kept fairly busy. The whole Rear Party experience has been a team effort from start to finish. I cannot possibly praise every individual who has contributed. The following are worthy of special mention: Captain Martin Ness and his welfare team, Sergeants Bates and Leen; the senior NCOs of our LAD under the leadership of Warrant Officer Class One Pete Gaylard; my Company Sergeant Major, Ian Bottomley; the Master Chef, Staff Sergeant Arrundale and his team; Sergeants Blake, Mason, and Jones; Corporal Hyde and his gym staff; Staff Gardner and his team of administrators; Lance Corporal Petty and the MT section and any one whom I may have overlooked: YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE.

In summary, although we on the rear party did not share the dangers and discomforts of those members of the Battalion who served in Iraq, our thoughts and prayers were always with you.

Welcome home!

Major A. J. Sutcliffe
OC Hook Company

OFFICERS' MESS

Funnily enough, there haven't been too many Mess parties over the past four months. With the Recce Group whisked off to Kuwait at less than a day's notice there wasn't even time for a pre-deployment party (though by

the time you read this there will have been several post-deployment parties!). Readers can rest assured that determined efforts by the Subalterns ensured that no bar stock was left before they flew out to sunnier climes.

There have been a number of additions and losses for the Mess over the past couple of months. We welcome 2 Lieutenant Andy Shand who has literally had a baptism of fire - he was in Iraq just over a week after finishing his Platoon Commanders course! We also congratulate Captain Martin Ness on his commissioning and welcome him and Eileen to the Mess. As if getting commissioned wasn't enough he even got to escape from Iraq to take over as Families' Officer in Germany. We bade a sad farewell to the Battalion Second in Command, Major Richard Holroyd, Juliet and family. Richard flew back from Iraq (taking Basrah belly with him!) to spend a week packing his house and then went straight to the Army Personnel Centre in Glasgow where he is now the desk officer for King's Division Officers' postings. We also said farewell to OC Corunna Company, Major Nigel Goodwin, who left us from Iraq

to take up the post of QMG's briefer in Bath. More importantly, we welcome Georgia who was born whilst Nigel was still in Iraq - our congratulations to Ann and Nigel and we hope that Georgia is sleeping through! We welcome back Richard and Sarah Chadwick and also Malcolm and Heidi Norman and their families. Captain Sam Humphris has moved on to become an instructor on the Platoon Commanders' Battle Course and we hope he and Ellie enjoy their time in Warminster and subsequently Brecon, when the course moves there in early 2004. Finally, we saw Major Andy Jackson move from Hook Company to become a Retired Officer working at HQ 4th Armoured Brigade - he has been replaced by Major Tony Sutcliffe - good luck to both in their new posts.

Major P. R. Fox
PMC

WOs AND SERGEANTS' MESS

Kirk to engine room: "Scottie we need more power"; "Captain she canny take it, one more deployment and we'll all be blown to small pieces". Kirk: "I've had an idea Scottie, if we put things inside the water bowser we will fit more on to the Bedford!" Scottie: "It might just work sir!"

Similar conversations to this enabled the Battalion to deploy to Iraq with four days' notice. Once again life in the engine room has been more than a little busy; with better cause than usual the Mess has, in its usual modest fashion, helped to facilitate this deployment, although it has to be said that there wasn't a lot of choice in the matter! Fever pitch has been a feature for some time now but I'm sure no one would want it any other way.

Mess life has been quiet due to our comings and goings, although it could be argued that entertainment has been there, it's just that you have to know where to look for it. Events such as Sergeant Wroe lasting just three days before 'going down' in the sun proved the source of much hilarity, tinged with a serious side of course. Then there is always the combined total for weight loss across the Mess, providing a major talking point, competition has always been a healthy component of high standards, but when it comes down to competing to shift 'Christmas weight' the front runners are Sergeants Fulton and Jenkins. Each having lost a metric ton. Competition for weight gain on return is the flavour of many conversations across the Mess: 'A moment on the lips, a lifetime on the hips!' has been said many times.

The king is dead! Well, working in the Families' Office anyway. Long live the new king! The Mess has seen the change over of RSM whilst in Iraq, in what must be a first since the Second World War, the handover of RSM has happened whilst the Battalion has been at war. It is with respect and gratitude that we say farewell to Captain Ness, who has been a very steadying influence on the Mess, having led us through the Tercentenary and fire fighting on to the war in Iraq in a very professional way. It is with respect that we congratulate him on his commission and wish him well in his new position as Families' Officer. RSM Taylor has made his presence felt immediately, and, like his

predecessor, his common sense, no nonsense style has been very calming. We look forward to the next two years of his tenure.

The Mess also wishes luck to WO2 Paddy Buckingham on his appointment as RQMS, and to WO2 Stannard, his replacement in Corunna Company.

Such was the desire to go to war, some Mess members accepted jobs in a lower rank to deploy, this for some Platoons has been a very real bonus, Sergeants Taylor and Conley have both had an excellent tour and will soon be restored to their positions on return from Iraq.

Whilst deployed we have learned of eleven promotions to Sergeant across the Battalion. We welcome this news and look forward to hearing from Mr Vice at the next dinner night.

Although I alluded to entertainment being scant, the Waterloo day festivities did go very well. Competitions such as cooking an egg on your head go to the outright winner Colour Sergeant Hind, who seemed to achieve the feat in a surprisingly short time. This, together with the supreme accolade of lookalike contest winner, Colour Sergeant Moroney, and his dual entry as Wayne Rooney and Poncherelli from the hit seventies show Chips, cannot go unmentioned. Cunningly, Sergeant Schofield seemed to pop up in every sport competition, and as Colour Sergeant Rutter puts it: "he could beat anybody over a yard!" Even me!

Jokes aside, the Mess has had little chance to get together during the tour, as commitments have been high and opportunities have been low. We have experienced much change in this past few months through appointments and personalities to promotions and it all makes for an interesting time on our return to Germany, something we all eagerly await.

Before closing, it is important to remember our members currently in the Balkans who I intend to keep informed of events leading up to their return in October. The social calendar will be busy until their return and busier still after.

Final thoughts rest with wives and families of Mess members who have shown great patience during this hectic period. Many thanks to all.

WO2 N. Wilson. PMC

WATERLOO DAY, 18 JUNE 2003

On Wednesday 18 June 2003 the Battalion celebrated Waterloo Day at Az Zubayr Port in Southern Iraq, with an afternoon of sports, good food and beer (alcohol free of course).

The day started at 1400 hrs in the blistering heat of around 47°, with companies doing their best to enter teams into all the events organised. Unfortunately, due to operational commitments, a number of soldiers from the companies were unable to join the fun and missed out on a great day.

The event was centred on the sports pitch (a big sand pit) in the area of the port, with teams from the companies entering the following knockout competitions; six-a-side football, tug of war and table football. The culmination of the day was the final of the Team Volleyball Competition, which had been ongoing throughout the tour.

The first event to conclude, and probably the most contested was the Tug of War Competition. Teams from each company battled it out to leave only sixteen men standing, and a match away from being the Champions. The final match proved to be an overwhelming result for Hook B, overpowering Alma by two pulls to nil. Hook B, captained by Sergeant Baguley of the LAD, were crowned Waterloo Day Tug of War Champions 2003.

The Six-a-Side Football Competition was no less competitive, with teams blooding each other in an effort to take the Waterloo Day Crown. Ten minutes each way on a difficult pitch and soaring temperatures, not just from the sun, made for a very tough competition. After a full afternoon of aggressive and skillful football, Alma

B and Corunna A (the Battalion Football Team) made it though to the final, with Corunna A winning by two goals to nil. A score that did not reflect the standard of football played by both teams.

Whilst the competitions were ongoing outside, the heat of the competitive spirit was not lost inside, with pairs taking part in the Table Football Competition. Twenty-one teams entered, paying two dollars per entry. Teams battled it out in a very intense and wrist aching event. Finally, two teams emerged to go head to head in the final. "Team Orca" (US Army Civil Affairs Team) finally proved the stronger, beating "Thanks for Coming" (Alma) in a very close final. "Team Orca" very kindly donated their winnings of \$27 to the Holly Goodall Appeal. Entry fees were split, one third to the runners up and two thirds to the winners.

The day's sports were finished off with what could only be described as a marathon Volleyball Final. Teams had been battling it out throughout the second half of the tour, for a place in the knockout phase of the Team Competition. Although teams found it hard to play all their games, four teams qualified to play on Waterloo Day and a chance to take the title. The semi finals saw the elimination of the "Sandbaggers" (Alma) and the "Untouchables" (QM's Dept), with the "Weasels" (formally known as BGHQ) and the "M&Ms" (RAO's Dept) going through to the final.

An extremely intense first two games left the score one game all. The final game for the match was played to eleven points, with the "Weasels" finally gelling and convincingly winning the final game by 11 points to 2, and the match. Although the RAO's did believe that they would have won, if the game had been played to twenty one points, a few more of the decisions by the referee had gone their way and if the ball had been leather, not PVC.

In addition to the team knockout competitions, companies also took part in the Chain of Command Relay, which saw each rank within the company complete a series of tasks in a relay style format. The relay started with the Private Soldier completing a simple run, negotiating hurdles, to the Officer Commanding tackling the same route wearing skis, blacked out ski goggles and a helmet, with an egg on top. The event proved fun for all concerned, especially the spectators, with the final results being:

1st - Hook (BGHQ)	3rd - Alma
2nd - Corunna	Also ran - J Bty RA

After the prize giving, which was conducted by the Commanding Officer, the Drums Platoon gave an excellent display to the Battalion, demonstrating control and rhythm that was perfectly executed. With the sports events concluded, all that was left to do, was eat. The long awaited barbecue was a perfect way to finish an excellent day, with the RCWO and staff providing an outstanding meat feast and gateau, all timed to perfection. The day was a great success, enjoyed by all and was only achieved by the support of the QM and his Department, the RSM, the Chefs and all the Battalion PTIs.

SSgt (SSI) M. Corner, APTC



Sergeant Baguley of the LAD encourages the Hook Company team.



The Weasels (BGHQ) v the M&Ms (RAO's Department). The CO, Lieutenant Colonel Bruce (left), and RSM WO1 Taylor lining up for a shot.

PADRE'S POINTS - OPERATION TELIC

With only a few days' notice the Battalion found itself heading off to war. As with any conflict, emotions were running high. Of course there was excitement and pride but, mixed with it, a good dose of fear and trepidation, as no-one could guess what the next few days would bring. As the first missile exploded within our camp, the truth dawned that this was going to be no exercise and we were in it "for real". Many ask what a Padre's role is and if it is compatible with going to war; the answer for me, after these few months, is that Padres are still needed and should be where our men are.

As the war started and we prepared to head over the border from Kuwait to Iraq, I was privileged to lead the soldiers in prayer. Very rarely will a Padre ever have to pray with the men before going into the unknown and so it was probably one of my most poignant memories of the conflict. Even in the high tech battles of the 21st Century, many soldiers still turn to God in prayer and, in that sense, the scene was set for the next few weeks. The army of today needs to be fit to fight and that

surely includes our physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing. The Dukes are some of the fittest soldiers in the army!

Armed, not with a weapon, but with letters and cards written to loved ones, 'just in case' I made my way across the border. Soldiers are seldom 'greedy' for church but that doesn't mean that we have no faith. Faith is more than turning up on a Sunday or shouting about our beliefs, as I have come to learn over the years. That is not to say that church attendance has been poor. It certainly hasn't. Most Sundays would see between thirty and forty people coming to services. Easter Sunday was a real highlight for me with a packed church, a Fijian choir and ten baptisms! Altogether seventeen people have been baptised during this operation which has been great to see.

We were all reminded on 28 May that conflict for the Dukes is nothing new, as we came together as a battalion to commemorate those brave soldiers of the Battle of the Hook. It was a humbling experience for

many of our soldiers. Fifty years ago, whilst the country was celebrating the conquest of Everest and the Queen's Coronation, men of the Dukes were fighting in one of the major battles of the Korean War. Their bravery is not lost on us who are in Iraq as we remembered that they were men from the same backgrounds as us, of the same age and from the same towns. We have not faced the same conflict as them, nor had to make the greatest sacrifice, but we took time to remember them and salute them with a service and the Last Post.

Padre Pat Aldred

AN INTERPRETER ATTACHED TO THE DUKES FOR OPERATION TELIC

At 11.20pm on 27 March 2003, when the Army realised that Iraq might, just might, be full of foreigners, I got a phone call from the Duty Staff Officer at HQ 2 Div and was directed to take part in Op Telic as an interpreter. I had studied Arabic some thirteen years ago at the Defence School of Languages and the system, being far more efficient than I imagined, had caught up with me. Never, ever, volunteer for a language course.

I normally work in the Army Education Centre in Catterick responsible for Officers' Education (the stress keeps me awake at night). Despite twenty years' service and a variety of operational tours I had never spent more than a few days with an infantry battalion. A three month attachment to the Duke of Wellington's Regiment was bound to be interesting. I knew that they recruited from Yorkshire and liked rugby, but coming from neighbouring Co Durham, I am not prejudiced.

The preamble over, what can I say? There seems little point in describing my role as an interpreter, but perhaps I can give an honest impression of the Battalion from the standpoint of an outsider. Having said that, the first comment I would make is that I did not feel like an outsider for very long. There were few formal introductions, but the friendly and open nature of the Battalion made such introductions quite unnecessary. Everyone I met gave an impression of straightforward friendliness, cheerfulness and a highly developed sense of humour. Infantry battalions are meant to be clannish, it is fundamental to their strength, but the Dukes' sense of identity is inclusive, not exclusive. Not everyone originates in the West Yorkshire of the regimental title, not everyone is from Yorkshire, nor do all soldiers come from the United Kingdom. However all are most certainly 'Dukes'.

Regimental pride is generally understated in the Battalion (nothing wrong with that) but it manifests

I write this, with just a few days before our return to Germany, I look back on our time here in Iraq I find myself being grateful for this experience in some ways. It is an old adage of war that some of our soldiers came out here as boys and will return as men and, I guess, we have all changed in some ways. The Dukes can be proud of their achievements over here in playing their part in the war and helping to win the peace. I know that I am proud to be called their Padre!

itself in the desire to perform well; for section, platoon, company and ultimately, regiment. The soldiers are well motivated and, when necessary, tough but there is no overly aggressive culture influencing them. The tasks that the Dukes were required to perform whilst I was with them were not glamorous but they were demanding. The common sense approach of all ranks seemed to me to strike the right balance. They were clearly very professional soldiers and the local population judged the British Army, and in a very real sense, Britain, according to their actions. From conversations with the local populace it was abundantly clear that the image presented by the Battalion was a very positive one.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time with the Dukes. I had an interesting job that involved working with all ranks. I won't bore the reader by recounting anecdotes but will describe what for me was perhaps the key moment of the tour. At the close of Waterloo Day, after inter-company rivalry, laughter and relaxation the Drummers played to the Battalion and assorted visitors. Everyone stood transfixed in the same way as doubtless their forebears had done for over three hundred years. As I looked at the many battle honours listed on the Drums and watched envious American soldiers take dozens of photographs, I felt very much part of the Regiment; and I was very proud of it!

Major I. Wilkinson
AGC(ETS)

Footnote by OC Alma

A warm thank you goes out to Major Wilkinson as he proved to be invaluable on many occasions. His leadership helped guide Dukes' soldiers on quite a few occasions and he is no mean shot with the general purpose machine gun! Not bad for a teacher - 8 out of 10!

ARMY RUGBY UNION TRAINING CAMP, AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

Selection for the Army Squad to tour Australia and New Zealand was one of the long-term goals at the start of the 2002/3 season. Thankfully my efforts were rewarded and a place on the training camp in the Southern hemisphere granted. The aim of the training camp was to best prepare team Army for the forthcoming inter-services championship.

Having not played much rugby with the Army prior to selection, I was unaware of the level of seriousness, intensity of training and attitude of both players and

coaching staff. I soon woke up to life in the Army Squad, as the dedication, focus and professionalism of both players and coaching staff was a joy to be part of. Although physically draining, the level of rugby intelligence and practice-to-performance based training could do nothing but further improve my ever-expanding game. For the players to be surrounded by two coaches, a manager, a physiotherapist, an administrative supervisor and a conditioning coach indicates the way Army rugby has moved forward in recent years.

The itinerary was hard, full of big games, brutal training sessions and the fulcrum to which the entire camp was to be balanced - the Test Match against the New Zealand Army in Wellington. Despite the Test Match being the squad focus, there were two major hurdles to overcome prior to the big day. These came in the form of the South Army in Linton, on the South Island and the North Army in Palmiston North.

The training had gone well, personally and as a team, and as a result had secured my place in the starting line up for both fixtures. The Army started its preparation perfectly, with convincing victories on both occasions.

Now that the standard had been set the Test Match against the New Zealand Army became more and more important. The training didn't ease up and the short period of time between games flew past. Preparation for the Test Match was slightly disrupted by visits to the High Commissioner, media stands and coaching with the local school children, however the unity within the squad and the organic will to win was strong enough to keep the mind focussed.

It was a few days prior to the Test Match when I discovered that 1 DWR were to be deployed to Southern Iraq. This was a difficult time for me as I found myself caught between a rock and a hard place, my responsibility to the Battalion and my sense of duty to represent the Battalion and the British Army on the rugby pitch.

Having made the decision to stay in New Zealand, I had to justify my resolution and was under pressure to perform.

Test Match preparation followed its habitual path. The forwards and backs had time to talk over their own individual strategies and roles within the wider team game plan. The physio busied himself with rubs and localised strapping, while the conditioning coach ensured that the squad's nutritional balance was correct. My usual pattern was to get the necessary strapping and then take a walk or find a quiet spot and consider the task that followed.

The British Army had only once ever toured New Zealand and had lost, so it was an opportunity for the fifteen of us to make history on New Zealand soil. With national anthems, the haka and a packed stadium the

scene was set for an epic encounter between two sides that had a lot to prove and reputations to protect.

As it turned out the Army came out winners of an open game controlled largely by the visitors. There were phases of the game that unsettled the Army side, but the men in red pulled together and held on to secure an historic victory.

With the main effort of the training camp secured and many of the training objectives well on their way to completion, Team Army could relax slightly and enjoy the less painful activities New Zealand has to offer! The squad was divided into teams of four, mounted in Multi-purpose vehicles and were allowed to make our own way to Auckland where we were due to fly to Cairns to start the Australian phase. After throwing myself off cliffs, riding carts down the sides of mountains and lounging in natural salt springs we somehow managed to arrive, on time, in Auckland.

The Australian phase of the camp was arranged to polish skills, build confidence and manufacture squad depth for the Inter Services' campaign on return to England.

With the whole squad now in playing circulation, there was a little more time allocated to exploring the wonderful sister country that we found ourselves in. To that end, while in Australia I enjoyed diving on the Great Barrier Reef, white water rafting through the rain forest and exploring the social and behavioural patterns of the local people! On a more serious side, the British Army finished the training camp in style, beating the Cairns Combined Services and Cairns Thunder (the local first division side) convincingly.

The training camp was a huge success. With all that was going on in the world the attitude, professionalism and indeed performance of the squad and the staff was first class. The end product was testament to the excellent coaching received and the management and administration of the players. What we achieved during the camp provided the foundation for the success that was to follow and more than justified my decision to join the Battalion in Iraq at a later date. I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank the Battalion for allowing me the time to take advantage of a wonderful opportunity.

Lieutenant E. W. M. Smith

OPERATION GOODHOPE - 200km SPONSORED RUN

Basra International Airport to Kuwait City International Airport

Having been detached from the Battalion for nearly three months, Dettingen Platoon finally returned to be reunited with close friends and colleagues in mid April. Unfortunately there was some bad news about Holly, the daughter of Sergeant (Knocker) Goodall, who had just been diagnosed with leukaemia.

Most of the Battalion had already raised money to help Holly and, as Dettingen was not around at this time, they wanted to do their own thing to help out. I came up with the idea of a small sponsored run to help raise enough money to send Holly and the rest of the family to Disneyland, Florida. We needed to raise approximately £5,000 for this, so the idea of a small run

went out of the window; it was time for something totally ridiculous, not far from being insane. We decided on the 200km stretch from Basra International Airport in Iraq to Kuwait City International Airport (obviously in Kuwait) in temperatures exceeding 50° (beautiful).

I got the volunteers from across the Battalion they were: Major Fox, WO2 Childs, Colour Sergeant Brennan (all Alma Company), Sergeant Simms, Corporals Shuttleworth and Sykes and Private Phillips (all Dettingen Platoon).

At first glance you'd probably think age was against us, but some of us believed in miracles. Before we could start a bit of training was needed, sometimes 8-12km a



Sponsored run start at Basrah airport.

Left to right: Private Phillips, Corporal Sykes, Corporal Shuttleworth, Major Fox, Colour Sergeant Brennan, WO2 Childs, Sergeant Simms.

day, at different times, in various temperatures. Then all the admin needed tying down, which was a mammoth task undertaken by everyone on the team. In total we needed five support vehicles, twenty-two admin staff and the support of key personnel within the Battalion.

The night before the run was now upon us, however, there was one final twist before we could get started. Burma Company decided to call an operation and needed Dettingen to help out (intelligence suggested that Chemical Ali was in residence in a house in the Burma Company area). This operation included three of the runners and fifteen members of the admin staff. These people were now going to be awake the whole 24hrs leading up to the run (a real bonus). Now it was the day; no sleep, things still to do and 200km in front of us. Not the start I'd been hoping for, but undoubtedly we'd all get through it. Everyone arrived at Basra International Airport at 1830hrs and intended to start at 2000hrs so that we could run through the cool (38°!) of the night. We had a few interviews with BFBS Radio and TV and then got warmed up and awaited the official start by the Commanding Officer.

We planned to run the first 500m together then the rest in 5km legs with OC Alma starting us off. The run had now begun. The temperature was still in its high 30s but we were all focussed and up for the challenge.

The first leg went without a drama, however, the next 5km was across rough open country full of wild dogs and large rubbish fires. This fell to CSM Alma, Big Chad, to do. The task we now had on our hands was to try and persuade him he didn't need his NBC suit on or his body armour and helmet. After ten minutes of pestering he finally gave in and set off on the second leg. Unknown to us, as shown in the pre-run photo, the CSM had packed the wrong running shorts. He must have picked up Private Dick's because they were so tight that they looked like a thong. We'd already been

warned about showing bare skin in Iraq and Kuwait and something like this could jeopardise the whole event. Would the fashion police catch up with Chad or, even worse, would the border police arrest him on sight! Needless to say he is now known as 'sweet cheeks' by those involved in the run. We cracked on and made it to the border by midnight, two hours ahead of schedule, knowing when the sun came up we'd need that time to fall back on. At the half way point we were all in good shape, no blisters in sight and morale was still high. The scenery was nothing to write home about, sand to your left and right, and a tarmac eight lane highway as far as the eye could see. The only thing that caught the eye was the odd camel spider or snake making its way across the motorway.

Daylight was breaking and the temperature was beginning to rise, everyone now was looking forward to breakfast. This consisted of a container meal brought directly from Az Zubayr Port under the direction and control of Corporal (Mouse) Claydon. Yet again there was something around the corner to test us. We'd arranged an RV for the breakfast but that came and went. Then an hour passed, and another, then the dreaded phone call. One of the vehicles had broken down. The other vehicle with Mouse on board contained the breakfast and fresh supply of cold water. This vehicle was missing in action. Last seen on the main dual carriageway heading into Kuwait City. The questions going through my head were: Did he have a map? Did he have comms? Did he actually give a stuff, or was he just going sight-seeing in Kuwait?

It was now 0800 hrs and we only had 30km to go. We'd made unbelievable time and were now hoping to finish by 1100 hrs not 1500 hrs like we'd originally planned. The motorway was now very busy but the locals were polite and didn't bother us in the slightest. It didn't take long to cover the next 30km and before we knew it we had donned our white tee-shirts with Op Goodhope on the front and were together running the last 500m. The press were there to meet us at the finish but there was still no sign of Mouse with our breakfast! Everyone was over the moon when we'd finished. There were some tired legs, but morale was still good and we were all happy that it had gone so well.

In total the run took us 15hrs and 11 mins to cover 189km in temperatures ranging from 38 to 50°. Before we headed back to Az Zubayr Port we all went to Camp Commando near Kuwait City for a shower and a pizza as Mouse still hadn't turned up! In total we raised £5,000 for Holly which is brilliant. I would now like to personally thank the runners, the admin staff and everyone in the Battalion who helped to make this happen, especially the kind donations on the sponsorship forms.

Sergeant P. Simms
Dettingen Platoon

P.S. We eventually found Mouse on the motorway heading back towards Az Zubayr Port, he was only eight hours late. The water was now warm and the breakfast cold.

The East and West Riding Regiment

Commanding Officer's Introduction

Recent months have focussed very much on operations. Operation Fresco started in November and we have hosted a squadron of Royal Dragoon Guards, 22 Engineer Regiment, 38 Engineer Regiment, and 1 DWR in our TACs during the strike periods, and even provided some support staff. I give credit to our TA soldiers who have put up with considerable inconvenience in the long periods between strikes as parking spaces have been occupied by Portakabins and offices have been unavailable for the whole time. The New Year brought the crisis in the Gulf. Several members of the permanent staff were almost called, but eventually eleven soldiers were mobilised of whom five are serving in the Gulf as I write. Domestically our minds have been exercised in developing the Civil Contingency Reaction Force (CCRF) concept, which will call for 500 volunteers based on the Regiment to deploy in the event of a major terrorist incident or natural or man-made disaster. A fascinating study day, which was attended by representatives from the blue light services and the New York National Guard, was followed by some initial familiarisation training. In all this we have not forgotten our warfighting and we have recently completed three weekends of field firing.

Ypres Company has performed strongly over the period taking first place in the Regimental Sports Competition and, more recently, winning Champion Company, which is a great achievement requiring a consistently high standard over the year. Strength and attendance have increased and the company has a full complement of officers which is a rarity these days. Fontenay Company too has played a full part in events, with providing a Guard of Honour at Sheffield for HM the Queen being the most high-profile. Both companies were honoured when the Colonel of the Regiment visited and presented them with copies of the Tercentenary statuettes.

We are now preparing a platoon for mobilisation for service in Iraq with 40 Regiment RA. They report to RTMC on 19 June and will deploy in July. The Platoon Commander is Lieutenant Hunt from Ypres Company and both DWR Companies are well represented. For the rest of us we now enter a period of company training, with the Cadet competition in June being the next Regimental event, followed by the SAAM and annual camps in Otterburn and Bulgaria. The autumn will also see the culmination of our CCRF training, with an FTX at Whinny Hill before achieving full operating capability by the end of the year.

FONTENAY COMPANY (DWR)

Two months into the new training year and Fontenay Company waits eagerly for the result of the latest pay talks between the firefighters and their paying authorities. Will they, we wonder, bring an end to the dispute and with it, an end to the disruption we have had to bear for the last few months.

Although Alma Company is long gone, our accommodation is still very restricted due to the stores we are holding for the incoming unit should there be further strike action.

The four Green Goddesses and the bright red Dennis fire engine sit on our park slowly gathering dust, along with the eight accommodation portakabins, waiting to be brought back into action or put into mothballs whatever the call may be.

Still, training goes on apace and recruiting took a slight upturn with fourteen new recruits coming on strength during the first quarter of the year. Lieutenant Simon Newiss also joined the Company, posted in from Ypres, and a welcome addition to our officer base.

At present, mobilisation issues and the formation of the Civil Contingency Reaction Force (CCRF) are combining to make everyday life more interesting, with new aspects of training being introduced. It all adds to the spice of life and gives our soldiers higher goals to set their sights on.

Corporal Mick Deakin and Lance Corporal John Taylor have been attached to medical units in the Gulf. Although they both seem relatively happy with their lot, they still declare that the major cause of discontent is

the rift between the Regulars and the Territorials that still seems to exist.

Lance Corporal Taylor is now safely back in the UK with Corporal 'Deaks' having to soldier on for a few more weeks, but rumour has it that he will be back in mid June. In fact, even as I write, a number of soldiers in Fontenay sit eagerly awaiting their mobilisation papers as Op Telic 2 gets underway. They could be training alongside Corporal Deakin's replacement.

On the home front, CCRF training is well under way, with callout procedures being practised in preparation for the testing of the Regimental Procedures in July. Forty-seven soldiers from Fontenay have signed up to the CCRF concept and we are confident that more will follow once they realise the importance of the CCRF role and the impact it will have in the future.

On Thursday 22 May 2003, the Queen visited Sheffield and eight soldiers from Fontenay were proud to form the Duke of Wellington's contingent of the Honour Guard. The purpose of the Queen's visit was to open the new Winter Gardens and Millennium Gallery in Sheffield, but she also expressed a wish to meet and spend some time with the families of soldiers from the reserve forces serving in the Gulf. Over ninety family members accepted her kind invitation and amongst them were the mother and partner of Corporal Deakin and Lance Corporal Taylor's wife. A memorable visit for Sheffield and a day to remember for the Honour Guard and for families of the serving soldiers.

Major L. K. Whitworth QGM

YPRES COMPANY (DWR)

As a female Lance Corporal currently serving as a finance clerk in Ypres Territorial Army Infantry Company, here is a personal account of my compulsory call up to Operation Telic One.

It was roughly three months ago now since I received my call up papers, but the way that I felt at that particular moment will always remain clear in my mind. I had just returned from a week's holiday in France and my mother, who had already been informed a week ago, passed me the brown envelope and watched tentatively as I opened it. I remember reading the letter and looking at my mother in disbelief. The words 'compulsory call-out' were going over in my mind and I felt a wave of excitement and fear come over me. This was it, the moment that I had considered many times throughout my TA career had finally arrived, I was actually going to war.

I had one week to prepare myself and say my goodbyes. Firstly I had to inform my employer and find out what his opinion was, to my relief he was very supportive. I tried to keep my mind on my civilian NHS chiropody job for the rest of the week as my mobilisation date became closer and closer.

Saturday morning soon came around, and, bags packed, I left Huddersfield for the Reserve Training Mobilisation Centre at Chilwell. On arrival, there were hundreds of reservists and TA soldiers who had been called up, I soon found myself chatting to other similarly shocked individuals and I no longer felt so alone in this rather bizarre situation which was full of uncertainty. Being the only member of the Huddersfield Territorial Army Centre to be called up in Op Telic One, I felt quite proud and privileged, and whatever the future held for me, I wanted to give 100% effort and be an asset to the new Regiment which I would shortly be attached to. I was at Chilwell for a busy day and a half. On average, four hundred people were going through the system daily, with this in mind the process seemed very organised. We were all split into groups and given our own individual bar code, this enabled us to be zapped in and out of the various mobilisation stations on the computer system. Many people had welfare issues, some failed their medical and dental checks and by the end of the day only a fraction of the mobilised hundreds went on to Grantham or Beckingham for training.

At Grantham I knew that it would be my last chance to make sure all my basic military skills were fully up to scratch. Over the next four days there were four subject areas in which we were all to be revised. Firstly the weapons test, this went okay and the fact that all my seniors were making sure my rounds were falling accurately on the target brought home the reality of the situation. Next were the first aid and vehicle recognition lessons, these were excellent and I was soon building up confidence, at this point I was starting to realise how invaluable my TA training was. The final training we went through was NBC and, with the prospect of going to war against Iraq, I knew that my undivided attention was required in these lessons.

My final evening at Grantham was spent in a lecture room, where we were given a review on Iraq and all the various weapons that Saddam Hussein could use against us. We were then assigned to our new Regiments, I was going to be a clerk with 60 Squadron which was part of 39 Engineer Regiment. After swapping addresses with many of my newfound friends, we were all separated ready to join our new Regiments.

So, off I went to Waterbeach Barracks to help the rear party with the administration of the augmentees; I remained there until the war broke out in Iraq. The rear party was put on six hour call up and a couple of days later we were all flown out to Ali Al Salem Airbase in Kuwait to support the campaign to free Iraq.

Initially, when the missiles were being sent over and NBC alerts were a frequent occurrence, it was all very scary, but once things calmed down and I could get on with my work with fewer distractions, I started to relax and settle into my new environment, in which 39 Engineer Regiment made me feel very welcome.

After spending two months out in the Gulf, I am now very grateful to be back home safe and well. Although I made a lot of new friends who helped me through some tough times, letters of support from family and friends always helped to brighten my day and I thank them all very much.

Lance Corporal Rosemary Armitage



THE TERRITORIALS OF YESTERYEAR

*Major Peter Knight continues his account of his time in command of A Company,
2/6 DWR in 1940/41.*

One day Sybil Forrester asked if I would like to have Gwen to stay and it was so arranged. She came to Edinburgh by train and was escorted to Airth by my faithful batman, Kenneth Ward, who had taken the initiative and made all necessary travel arrangements. Whilst Gwen was staying with us there was an air-raid warning in the middle of the night and we went to the shelter in one of the castle dungeons; I dressed in Gwen's clothes and she in my uniform - this to amuse the daughter of the house. I remember Sybil Forrester was slightly shocked. No bombs were dropped near us, for there was nothing but countryside around for miles. Eventually the Battalion was moved again to the area of Grangemouth and I had to say farewell to my hosts who had been so wonderfully kind to me. I was, indeed, very sorry to leave.

The move was not far from Airth but I was not able to prolong my stay. 'A' Company's duties were to guard the local airfield. One day I was invited to take part in an Army co-operation exercise with the RAF. I reported to the airfield and was kitted up with a parachute and introduced to a Lysander aircraft which had special characteristics. It was not very fast but could take off and land in a short space, I was instructed how to fire the machine gun mounted in the rear cockpit and told by the pilot how to bring it into action. He explained that German fighters came over Edinburgh from time to time on sneak raids. When we took off we flew for a while towards an RV known by the pilot. On the way I kept a sharp look out over our tail and was very worried when I saw an aeroplane above and behind us bank into line towards us and assume what I took to be an attacking position. I yanked the machine-gun back and then forward into its firing position above the level of the fuselage took aim and got off a few shots but, fortunately, I was too slow - it was 'one of ours' evidently practising its 'attack'. My pilot did not seem to take it amiss. We flew on to the RV, found the stripe laid out by the army unit, and dived towards it. My job was to wrap a message in a weighted bag with a streamer and drop it as near the marker as possible. After exchanging a few messages, the pilot practised a low-flying return to base which was particularly exciting and rendered doubly hazardous by the wire of the barrage balloons through which he threaded his way. I think the pilot tried to put the frighteners on me and he succeeded!

Some while after this event I was awakened one early morning from a deep sleep by the CSM who said "Sir the church bells at Polmont are ringing!" The bells were only permitted to be rung if an invasion was threatened. The Company immediately 'stood to' but nothing happened, it was a false alarm. Later the Company moved to another billet near Edinburgh and I was able to secure some lodgings for myself and Gwen who joined me again. Our landladies were two dear old bodies who did their best to make us comfortable. We were all most abashed when the double bed in which we were sleeping collapsed!

The Battalion had secured the loan of some collapsible boats and 'A' Company were to practise a river crossing. We had a new Adjutant and he more or less took charge of the operation. In retrospect it was a miscalculation, as there was too much water in the river, the men were in full kit and we had never rehearsed such an exercise before. Alas, one of the boats overturned, not surprisingly in the circumstances, and a man was lost despite the valiant efforts of the Adjutant, one Keen, to dive for the missing soldier. I went into the water too but we were unsuccessful. I remember several hours later returning to my quarters to be fussed over by the two old dears who did so much to make our stay with them pleasant and they plied me with a scotch from their small store of drink.

The Battalion was again moved, this time from Scotland to Houghton Hall the ancestral home of Lord Cholmondeley in Norfolk. We now had a new CO, Lieutenant Colonel A. E. H. 'Ben' Sayers, an old 'dug-out' who hardly concealed his contempt for Territorial Officers. It was about this time that everything seemed to go wrong. I had a certain affection for Lu, our first CO. I know, in retrospect, that he was too old for the demands of an active infantry Battalion but he was a brave man, spared himself not at all and had our interests at heart. The new CO did not love the Battalion as did Lu. He determined to change the officers, Maurice Hutchinson, the former Adjutant, was the first to go. There were other changes too, I soon became a casualty. I was taken from my company and made WTO (Weapon Training Officer) for a short time, and was then posted to Wellesley Barracks, Halifax. The Battalion did not again see active service or, indeed, long survive as a unit. Together with the 2/7th Battalion they first became armoured regiments and, later still, part of 2nd Armoured Delivery Regiment. For me, however, a new and more interesting life was about to begin.

At this place in my narrative I feel called upon for some further reflections. I have before remarked on the desperate ineffectiveness of our politicians; their lack of perception of German intentions; their grave responsibility for the run down state of our defences; but the Army had a lot to blame itself for. It was hardly ready, in terms of munitions and equipment, for the outbreak of hostilities; there was virtually no armoured capability nor did it seem to me that there was a proper appreciation of the strategies of modern war. We were still imbued with fortress defence - the Maginot Line of the French, the Siegfried Line of the Germans, on which, in the words of the marching song popular at that time: 'We're Going to Hang out our Washing on the Siegfried Line'. We did - eventually!

There were no training manuals, or, if there were, they were not put in my hands. Most seriously of all there were not, in preparation for the inevitable conflict, sufficient well trained officers. There should have been a cadre of good regular field officers and senior NCOs, familiar with the tactics of modern warfare, capable of

taking command of the new Territorial Battalions. Instead, reliance was placed on 'old timers' from the 1914 - 1918 war. I mean no disrespect to them but they were, in my experience, not suitable to take command of young officers and men and inspire and train them as they ought to have done. The officers and other ranks of my old Battalion, the 6th Dukes - out of which the 2/6th Battalion was formed - were a fine lot of men; all were volunteers, young and keen to learn. Much more could have been done to prepare them for the battles that were to follow. All our history shows how familiar is the syndrome. The nation sleeps peacefully, then awakes to a sudden alarm as it is threatened - either by the Spanish Armada, the French under Louis XIV and Napoleon, the Germans under the Kaiser and Hitler - to mention but a few. We gather our forces for the great struggles that follow; the war is over, the battle's won. The great army

is demobilised and forgotten; we go back to sleep again until the next crisis. What a way to govern a nation! As I write we are at it again; at a time when thousands of youngsters are looking for jobs. A start in the modern army might be a better beginning. More encouragingly, when I look around and see the new generation of officers of my own and other regiments I am greatly heartened. I only hope and pray that, whatever restrictions are placed upon the establishment strengths of the Services, the powers that be will carry a surplus of officers and senior NCOs ready for secondment to the formation of new units for, rest assured, there will always be men and women ready to fight for their country. The question is will there be enough trained men and women able to train and inspire them?

to be continued ...

H.M.S. IRON DUKE

I write to you from our latest port of call in Tortola, in the British Virgin Islands. We have been very busy here in the Caribbean, and as we are nearing the end of the deployment as Atlantic Patrol Task (North) (APT(N)), I thought it timely to write with an update of our news, and our plans for the immediate future.

Originally due to leave the UK on 7 February, the ship sailed early from our home port in Portsmouth on 23 January in order to exercise with the French Navy off the French islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique. We proceeded west across the Atlantic only after a number of false starts when Iron Duke was being considered for inclusion in the Task Force for Op Telic, the campaign in Iraq. As soon as we arrived in the Caribbean on 4 February, we learned that the ship was to be diverted back across the Atlantic to participate in Op Keeling, the name given to the deployment of the Over The Horizon Reserve (OTHR) to Sierra Leone. We sailed for West Africa on 24 February, three days after Op Keeling commenced. With Op Telic already under way, the Joint Task Force Headquarters 2 was activated - HQ 19 Mechanised Brigade, led by Brigadier W. H. (Bill) Moore. Op Keeling involved approximately 500 service personnel drawn from all three Services including: JTFHQ 2; the Spearhead Land Element - 2 RGR; HMS Iron Duke; RFA Black Rover (tanker); and supporting troops drawn from various Corps. The task was to keep the peace whilst the UN Special Court of Sierra Leone indicted and arranged several well-known and popular leaders for alleged war crimes perpetrated during the civil wars that raged until 2001 - this was achieved. An unexpected bonus was the chance to forge links with the Duke of Wellington's Regiment by the meeting of Major Mark Robinson, the SO2 G2 in HQ 19 Mechanical Brigade. Mark came on board several times in Freetown harbour, but the Brigadier would not release this valuable officer from the HQ to come to sea! Nevertheless, it was an excellent opportunity to have some contact with our affiliated Regiment. Op Keeling drew to a close on 31 March and Iron Duke was back in the Caribbean as APT(N) by mid April.

One of the principal reasons we were tasked as APT(N) was to conduct counter-drug patrols, and a large number of these have been completed in both the central and eastern Caribbean. One such patrol at the end of June yielded a massive find of cocaine that you may have seen on the news in the UK. Over the period 23-25 June, Iron Duke intercepted an 11,000 tonne cargo ship named M/V Yalta - a vessel which had aroused suspicion in her last port of call. We located, stopped and boarded her in a position roughly halfway between the coast of Venezuela and Puerto Rico in the heart of the Caribbean. The US Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) embarked in Iron Duke and our own Royal Navy Security Team boarded the ship and after some eleven hours of detailed searching found a false bulkhead near the bow. Cutting gear was soon employed to reveal what turned out to be a stash of just over 3.5 tonnes of pure cocaine with an estimated street value in the UK of £250,000,000! The Yalta and her seventeen crew were then diverted to Tampa, Florida for the US Authorities to deal with, and since then she has been taken apart by "destructive searching", but no further contraband has been found to date. There was significant media interest and the video footage, which we forwarded to the UK, received considerable airtime. The CO (Commander Phil Warwick) conducted a number of interviews both recorded and live. As well as coverage on the main TV and radio news bulletins, there was much interest shown from our home port of Portsmouth and our affiliated city of Kingston-Upon-Hull.

What else have we been doing between counter-drug patrols? Another important element of APT(N) is Naval Diplomacy - flying the flag in support of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's aims and objectives in the region. Visits to Key West, Barbados, Montserrat and Antigua featured in April and May. Then another visit to Barbados encompassed a self maintenance period from 6-16 June, which allowed important work to be carried out on the ship, but more importantly allowed some of the Ship's Company to fly their families and loved ones out for a well-earned break.

Refreshed and renewed we launched into patrols once more in mid-June, which led a week later to a visit to Grenada, the "Spice Island", famed for its nutmeg.

The following week saw the 'Yalta Bust' then at the very end of June we visited Dominica, the "Nature Island", which lived up to its name. Here the Dominican government and British High Commission combined to use Iron Duke as the venue for the Queen's Birthday celebrations. This island offered some spectacular walking and diving opportunities, which were seized upon by the Ship's Company. Another patrol in early July was punctuated by a visit to Nassau to help them celebrate thirty years of Independence. Apart from a request to fire our saluting guns thirty times (one for each year) on the eve of Independence Day on 10 July, the ship was not asked to provide too much else and thus most people on board had a relaxing time in the Bahamas sunshine. We have just completed another patrol interspersed with training by Maritime Aviation staff aimed to ensure the standards and practices of aviation in Iron Duke is the best it can be.

We sail from Tortola on 21 July into an eight day counter-drug patrol proceeding due west as we make our way to Jamaica for our last visit in the Caribbean proper - this will be a short visit spent mostly in Montego Bay. Our final patrol commences at the very end of July and culminates in a stop in Puerto Rico for a few hours on 4 August to disembark our US Coast Guard LEDET. As they leave the ship the homeward journey really starts and we can begin counting off the 4,000 miles to the UK. Thus far we have not had to exercise the third main reason for us being here - Disaster Relief. There has been one tropical storm called Claudette, but luckily 'she' did not cause any serious damage. Just recently Montserrat experienced one of its most severe periods of volcanic activity since 1995 when the volcano last erupted. A significant

amount of ash now covers the island, ruining crops and property. Iron Duke remains on standby should she be required to provide assistance. The final visit of this deployment is to the Atlantic Island of Bermuda. We will spend three days visiting the capital, Hamilton, then on 11 August our relief as APT(N), HMS Manchester arrives for the handover of duties. Iron Duke sails for the UK the same day and will arrive in Portsmouth on 22 August.

Summer leave then beckons, followed by an intensive maintenance period in September and October. It is back to sea in November and December, during which hopefully the ship will visit Hull. The CO is keen that each one of our affiliates links up with 'their' ship once we are back in home waters to renew friendships and catch up with one another's news. It would be particularly gratifying to link up with our affiliated Regiment as we have been separated geographically for too long. My relief as XO (2IC) is Lieutenant Commander Bill Dawson who joins in early August; the XO is the 1 DWR Liaison Officer and he will be in touch with the Regiment very soon after summer leave to explore the possibility of getting together.

As is usual every eighteen months or so, it is time for the Commanding Officer to move on. Commander Warwick's relief is Commander Peter Carden, who will join in late September and will no doubt be writing to the CO of the 1st Battalion soon thereafter. Commander Warwick asked me to pass on that it has been his distinct pleasure and honour to serve as the Captain of HMS Iron Duke, and he shall leave with many special memories. Links with our affiliates will feature highly and he looks forward to the ship renewing her affiliation with the Duke of Wellington's Regiment.

Lieutenant Commander R. H. Hawkins RN
Executive Officer & 2IC HMS Iron Duke

MEMORIES OF A NATIONAL SERVICEMAN

FEBRUARY 1952 - 1954

I entered the army on 28 February 1952 as a National Serviceman. All young men at 18 years had to serve two years as a conscript in one of the Services. I was twenty years old, having been allowed to finish my apprenticeship as a plumber before being called up. I joined the Welsh Regiment at Whitchurch Barracks in Cardiff for six weeks' basic training. There were approximately thirty to forty of us in the draft, all from South Wales. After six weeks we were transferred to Dering Lines at Brecon for further training on the mountains and firing ranges.

In June 1952 we were transported to Southampton where we boarded a troopship - the Empire Fowey, and sailed for Hong Kong, via Port Said, through the Suez Canal, Aden, Colombo, Singapore, arriving in Hong Kong after nearly four weeks. We were eventually to join the 1st Battalion of the Welsh Regiment serving in Korea. We trained in Hong Kong from July to September - a very enjoyable and exciting time.

We were based in a camp called "Bees Stables" near a village called Fan Ling in the New Territories. On one

occasion we had to man barricades across the main roads in Hong Kong, armed with pick handles and facing crowds of screaming Chinese who were rioting for some reason.

Another memory of Hong Kong was the training - forty miles, nine hours, overnight marches in torrential rain - wading through paddy fields and swamps and afterwards burning off the leeches with cigarette lighters. This, together with training under fire, all made one think what war would be like.

At the end of September we sailed to Japan, where we were kitted out with battle fatigues at a battle camp which I think was near Kure. We were there approximately two to three weeks and then we sailed to Korea.

As we were disembarking, the 1st Welsh was embarking and returning to Hong Kong for garrison duty. We were then attached to the Black Watch Regiment for a short period until the 1st Battalion of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment arrived and we were transferred to that Regiment.



9 Platoon 'C' Company

2nd from left, back row, Sergeant Kirk; 4th from left, back row, Corporal McKenzie (missing in action); 5th from left, back row, Private Tucker; front row, on the left, Corporal J. Richards.

If I remember correctly, I was in 9 Platoon 'C' Company. The Platoon Commander was Lieutenant Campbell Lamerton and the Company Commander was Major Kavanagh. I was by now a Corporal.

It was while we were in a tented camp behind the front line that we suffered our first casualties. There were rows of large oil drums fitted with taps and mounted on trestles where we would fill jerry cans to fill lamps, tent heaters, etc. One soldier, while filling a can in the dark, holding a tilley lamp, spilt oil onto the lamp and himself, panicked and set himself ablaze. He died later. The other occasion was in the cookhouse tent where one of the cooks, larking about with a mate, accidentally shot him, not knowing that the rifle he had was loaded.

The day we were told that in the evening we were to go into the front line I couldn't believe it was me that was to fight. I can remember my whole body trembling with fright and nerves and I was absolutely terrified. That afternoon the Padre held Eucharist on a hill behind the camp. I went. I had been a choirboy, attending church three times on Sundays but had given it up at 15 years old. Now I really prayed for the first time in my life. Since then I have been a regular churchgoer.

That night we moved into the line - later I was to spend my 21st birthday in the front line. The first position we took over had been held by American troops and in the morning, at first light, I will never forget the sight that met our eyes. In front of the wire was a smooth, steep hill, falling away from us and the entire hill was covered with thousands of American 'C' ration tins, all unopened and all with the same contents - Lima beans in sauce - obviously the Yanks didn't like them.

At various times we took up positions next to Turks, Canadians, Gurkhas, New Zealanders, Australians and Irish. The next few months were so traumatic that the sequence of events has become very blurred and may not be in the correct order.

We were in and out of the line on numerous occasions - three to four weeks in and one week out, for rest, to have clean clothes, to have showers in mobile wash houses and to relax. On one occasion while in rest camp we were invited by the Americans to watch one of their touring shows which had arrived to entertain the troops - it included Marilyn Monroe and Bob Hope!

Our time in the front line was taken up with improving trenches, barbed wire defences, digging new bunkers or, on patrol at night, fighting or recce or listening. There was always the hiding from mortars and shelling day and night. Getting supplies of food and ammunition up the very steep slopes to the trenches was another major job. It all had to be carried by hand, except on one position which we had taken over from the Americans. They had managed to get a Dodge lorry up the hill, had dug it in, jacked the back up, taken off two rear tyres, fitted ropes to the rims and attached a wooden sledge. The engine was then started and supplies were hauled up - very ingenious.

Another memory which has stuck in my mind was when a comrade and myself were resting in a dugout. I was on the bottom bunk and he was on the top one which was level with the trench outside. A shell landed in the trench, shrapnel flew into the bunker and completely severed his left leg. I was covered in blood but uninjured. He survived - he was from Swansea like myself. I met him once or twice after returning home. He had a false leg fitted.

Another occasion I remember was when I was suffering from a bout of toothache. I was told that the mobile dental unit was in the valley behind us, but it was late in the afternoon before I had permission to go down. By the time I arrived they had just about packed up ready to move, but two orderlies gave me a large whisky, held me on the tailboard of the Bedford truck and the dentist yanked the tooth out - the first tooth I lost!

The bunks that we slept on were constructed from the angle irons which were used for securing the barbed wire and these were laced across time and time again with telephone wire until a hammock-type bed was formed.

The winter was now upon us and, to this day, if I am asked what I remember about Korea, the answer is the cold. It was unbearable at times. There was a constant icy wind with way below zero temperatures. The fur around the hoods of our anoraks was white with frozen breath; you dared not take your gloves off and handle a gun as your skin would freeze to the metal.

When on listening patrols from 'stand to' until dawn, lying in snow the whole time, unable to move or speak, I do not know how we survived. The cold was feared more than the Chinese snipers. The bread was frozen solid - it could not be cut, raw eggs were frozen solid, tinned foods and water constantly frozen; you were permanently tired and drowsy, men would just fall asleep on guard duty because of the cold. Work in the trenches had to stop, as the ground was too hard to dig - a pick would just bounce off it. Still we got through without too many casualties - these occurred through shells or mortars, snipers and fighting patrols.

Every day there would be the noise of American aircraft bombing and straffing the enemy positions. On one occasion they got it wrong and dropped a line of napalm bombs on our side of the valley. Fortunately they fell in front of our trenches about 100 yards away.

At intervals along the line, Centurion tanks were dug in just behind the crest of the hill; they would move forward a few yards so that the turret would be above the crest, they would fire a few rounds and then move back. The noise of these explosions when nearby was deafening.

After the cold weather we had the rain - more of a monsoon. It washed away the bunkers and the trenches, or they filled up with water; earth defences collapsed or were washed away; we were up to our knees in mud for days on end attempting to repair them. There was no shelter, no way to dry out clothes, we just sat under our poncho capes hoping for some warm food and a drink. Eventually it ended and we had a few quiet months in different positions in the front line, until we took over the position known as 'The Hook'. It had a reputation for being a dangerous spot with constant shelling and sniping and, if I remember correctly, only a matter of 100 yards from the enemy trenches, but, with an extremely steep valley between us - the foot of the hill in front could not be seen from the machine gun positions. The shelling continued every day for weeks it seemed and at night we were forever repairing defences, renewing wire, digging deeper trenches with the constant threat of attack always with us; we had been

warned it would happen and all we could do was wait. It had a huge effect on us as young men; there was no respite - explosions all day and working at night; the shelling was terrifying and left us cowering for cover and trembling with fear. Every night at 'stand-to' I wondered - is it coming tonight?

Then, before 'stand-to' on the night of 28 May 1953, the attack came. We were not prepared. At about 7.00pm all hell broke loose. A friend of mine from Swansea, Brian Pounder who was in 'A' Company, had called over to collect local newspapers which my mother sent me weekly - he started to run back to his company when two Chinese popped up in front of him - I had a sten gun and fired at them - they disappeared and he rejoined his company. After that he always said I saved his life, but I don't think of it that way. We are still friends and I see him occasionally. By now shells, mortars and machine guns were all firing and exploding everywhere. We were told that the Chinese had surprised us by crossing the valley the night before and they had hidden all day at the foot of the hill where we couldn't see them, but I cannot confirm this. We managed to get into our machine gun positions and started firing in the arc and field of fire we had previously set out. There was myself with the Bren gun, my No.2 was another Welshman named Tucker from Newport and two South Korean soldiers who were attached to us. By now we knew that the Chinese were in our trenches so I ordered the two Koreans to guard the entrance to our bunker and to let nobody in - the entrance was at our backs when firing the Bren - they were to shoot or bayonet anyone who tried.

Time now vanished, the light had faded but the hills opposite and in front of us were lit up by hundreds of mortar flares; we could see the enemy troops streaming down into the valley between us; they were banging drums, blowing trumpets and screaming - it put the fear of hell into me. We just kept firing - we could see them coming up the slope in front of us but fortunately they never quite reached the wire in front of my position.

At some point there was a scream and commotion from the entrance behind me; it appeared later that a sergeant from another platoon had attempted to enter and one of the Koreans, not recognising him, bayoneted him in the arm - he screamed and disappeared, probably thinking we were Chinese.

By now the trench outside had partially collapsed with the shells and mortars exploding, but the machine guns on either side of us were still firing as we were. How long this went on I don't know, but it must have been early morning, though still dark, when a shell or mortar exploded right in front of our firing slit; shrapnel came through the opening and it smashed the flash eliminator of the gun barrel and a piece embedded itself into the wooden butt of the gun which protected my face but small pieces struck me on the underside of my right forearm, nose and cheek. Although bleeding badly I was not seriously hurt. However, poor Tucker, who had been on the side of the explosion, was wounded in the arm and shoulder quite seriously. The Koreans bandaged him as best they could and helped him into a corner of the dugout. One of the Koreans took over as No.2 and we kept firing, albeit slower than before.

By now the noise of the shouting, trumpets, rifle and machine gun fire, Chinese 'burp' guns, mortars and shells was deafening; we could see our artillery shells landing on the Chinese positions; flares were still lighting up the sky but we could not see any more of the enemy advancing. It was at this point that I realised I could not hear properly - the explosion outside had affected my hearing - it passed over after a few days, but I have impaired hearing to this day.

Slowly things began to quieten down and as dawn was breaking there was only spasmodic gunfire. I told the two Koreans to clear the entrance and we crawled out, helping Tucker. We met reinforcements from another Company coming along what was left of the trenches. We were helped down the hill to where there were helicopters and lorry ambulances and Red Cross jeeps evacuating the wounded. Tucker and myself were taken to a tented field hospital about three miles behind the front line (just like the American TV show M.A.S.H.!) I returned to my unit after a few days but I never saw Tucker again. After this the Regiment was taken out of the line to a rest camp.

If my memory is correct we had about 20-30 killed and a much greater number wounded. It was at this time, after the tension and terror of the previous few days, a sudden feeling of depression took over and I started thinking 'had I killed?' It was a feeling of guilt that stayed with me for years, wondering if I had killed someone. Slowly it drifted into the back of my mind and, eventually, was almost forgotten until I started this diary of events.

While we were in the rest camp a number of us were chosen to fly to Japan on R&R leave. This proved to be traumatic because we were taken to an American air base, debussed and told to form a column to board this immense plane - I think it was called a C34. Other lorries pulled up and American troops were jumping out. The people in charge put up a barrier in front of the British troops and allowed the Americans to board first. They filled the plane so we had to wait for the next one. The plane taxied away and took off. After we had been waiting approximately one hour we were told that it had crashed into the sea, killing everyone on board. There must have been 200 or more soldiers on that plane, so we were lucky not to have boarded it. A smaller plane came along - a Dakota - but by now we were not very anxious to board. However, we did - each soldier with a parachute strapped to his back and we were told to pull the ring if things went wrong. We sat on wooden benches down each side of the plane. When it took off the plane sounded as if it would shake to pieces and the wind came whistling through holes where rivets had been, but it got us to Tokyo in the end. In Tokyo we were put into a rest camp called Ebisu; we had clean clothes, we sat down to fine meals, there was no getting up in the morning, out late at night - we had a fantastic week. Tokyo was a magic place. We visited the Emperor's Palace and park, the main shopping area called 'The Ginza' where we bargained for presents to send home. After Korea it was heaven - I will never forget my week's R&R in Tokyo - then it was back to Korea.

Another event I remember was the Queen's Coronation in June 1953. The Americans gave their daily ration of ice-cream to the Commonwealth Division to celebrate.

By now we were back in the front line and rumours were circulating that a cease-fire was likely, but we were kept busy, as always, improving defences and on patrols and at this time of the year it was the heat we had to contend with. Eventually, in July, the cease-fire was signed and at a certain time a signal was given and all 'D' Company and 'C' Company climbed out of the trenches, as did the Chinese, and shouted and waved to each other. I have a photograph of this - it was a very emotional moment and I thought "I have lived through it, I'm going to live, I'm not going to get killed". After the cease-fire we had to dismantle the defences and get as much of the materials as possible back to collection points. There was frenzied activity for weeks on end and during this time we had one or two casualties due to bad luck, etc. One was a medical orderly helping to demolish a bunker when a grenade rolled out of a sand bag and exploded behind him, killing him instantly. Another instance was when the habit of pushing .303 rounds into sandbags to use as a coat hook went wrong - a soldier, doing this, because the bag was hard, hit it with a stone - the round exploded and the case burst open like a flower and went right through both his cheeks.

We eventually moved back to sail to Gibraltar but first we had a memorial service for our dead. I have a copy of the Order of Service. We left Korea on the troopship 'Asturias' - a far more luxurious ship than the one we had sailed out on, but at one point dysentery broke out and we all had to bare our buttocks in front of Queen Alexandra's nurses and have injections in both cheeks - extremely painful and embarrassing!

At this time, myself and the other Welsh lads were hoping we would not have to land at Gibraltar, but would continue on home as it was nearing Christmas and our service would be up at the end of January, but no luck. We disembarked and marched to our barracks - one was on the level near the docks and the main road and was called the Casements. The other, where I was, was halfway up the hill but I can't remember the name. We had a pleasant time in Gibraltar. We were able to get Visas and cross to Spain on visits to Algeciras, Cadiz and a ferry to North Africa. One incident which stands out in my memories of this time was when some of the warships of the American 5th Fleet anchored off Gibraltar and the sailors came ashore on leave. One evening in a pub called 'The Trocadero' a number of the Dukes were having a drink when some of the Yanks came in. Very soon voices were raised and the next thing fighting broke out. It was like a wild west film - chairs, tables flying and, being a small chap - only 5'2", I tried to keep out of it and stood on a bench in the window facing the street. Suddenly I went through the window and landed on the pavement outside right at the feet of the Military Police who had just arrived. I was confined to barracks for seven days and I hadn't done anything!

Eventually the time came to fly home. We were only allowed to take a certain weight in luggage and as we all had presents and bottles, the runway was littered with steel helmets, spare boots, haversacks - anything to reduce the weight. We flew to somewhere in Southern England and then got a train to Halifax to be demobbed after approximately two weeks. We were civilians again - a truly remarkable two years that will always be with me.

My time as a National Serviceman has stood me in good stead as the years have gone by. One never forgets the comradeship of fellow soldiers especially when we were faced with situations like 'The Hook'. On release

from the two years' full time service, we were on reserve for a further three years and in August 1956 I was recalled to serve in the Royal Engineers Inland Transport at Southampton because of the Suez Crisis. What logic there was in recalling me into this branch of the forces I shall never know. We were supposed to be ready to sail invasion barges out to the Suez Canal, but it never happened. I was at a camp at Marchwood until after Christmas 1956, and then demobbed again and that was the end of my military service.

Jim Richards, ex Corporal DWR
(22636241)

LEADERSHIP

We conclude the extracts from Colonel Peter Mitchell's talk on Leadership which was given in September 2002:

From Korea the Battalion was posted for two years to Gibraltar, with a mass of ceremonial duties, lots of sport and the main problem was preventing the soldiers (and young officers) from getting into serious trouble through boredom. Soon after our return to the UK, the Suez Crisis blew up and we were sent to Malta, followed by a year in Cyprus chasing Eoka around the Troodos mountains. This was followed by a quiet two year tour in Palace Barracks, Hollywood, during a relatively peaceful period in Ulster's history - little did we know how large a part the Province was to play in our future lives. In 1969, while we were in Hong Kong as part of the Garrison and I was 2IC to Charles Huxtable; the Colonel GS from MO1 came out to visit and during discussions in the CO's office about the then current riots in Ulster said that he was planning on a twenty year deployment in the Province. We were astonished and somewhat disbelieving, but he was certainly correct, if somewhat optimistic, in his assessment.

You will all have served in Ulster, probably more than once, and I know little of the current situation on the ground, but I thought you might be interested in how things were in the early days. You will recall the events which had led to the deployment of large numbers of troops to the Province with the IRA trying to set up No Go areas in the cities, and generally attempting to destroy the British will to hold onto the Province. To give you the scale of the conflict in those early days; in 1971 the Army lost 42 men, in 1972 this rose to 104, before dropping back to 58 in 1973. On top of this were the significant numbers of RUC and UDR killed, both on and off duty. In March 1973, I took the Battalion on an accompanied tour to Ballykelly, which, many of you may know, was a RAF Coastal Command base until 1970. We were part of 8 Brigade which was responsible for the very sensitive city of Londonderry with Battalions in the Creggan, City Centre, North Ward, plus a resident Battalion on the Waterside - a total of seventeen sub-units.

My main responsibility was to support the RUC in County Londonderry (Police Division P), which had a particularly nasty IRA bunch based in the Bellaghy

and Toomebridge area. I also supported Division O in County Antrim with an interest in what happened in the Glens and also the UDA stronghold of Larne. Our deployment was as follows. One company looked after the country areas, less Dungiven which had a separate platoon-sized base in the police station, a second company was responsible for the Brandywell area of Londonderry, nominally under command of the City unit, but actually semi-independent because of our lengthy and deep knowledge of the area; one company guarded the camp and married quarters, and provided a reserve and the 4th company was on leave, training or available for the unexpected!

We worked very closely with the RUC and I had regular and close relations with the two Divisional Superintendents, while the IO worked very close to the MIO who in turn was in the confidence of Special Branch. As you will all know, the intelligence scene in Ulster is murky at the best of times and in the early days we were all trying to find how best to work together and overcome some very real difficulties. Information, which was our lifeblood, tended to fly around, coming in from every direction and it was difficult to assess the relative merit of various reports, but I took the view that the RUC SB were more likely than anyone else to know the truth. After all one of their officers was a catholic who had been at school with the leaders of the South Derry Brigade and was an unbelievably brave man, who met informants in isolated areas during the night not knowing if he had been betrayed and set up for ambush. We had many dealings with 1 and 5 UDR, mainly by coordinating patrol activities; the UDR was still a young force at the time, and had many links with the disbanded B Specials, an almost entirely protestant force regarded with suspicion and fear by the catholic community.

You will understand that this was very much a company commander's situation. In the County the Company HQ was based at Magherafelt and had two platoon bases in other villages, cooperating with the local RUC and the UDR company. Day to day patrols and road checks were carried out by subalterns and junior NCOs, and the Recce Platoon occasionally mounted surveillance operations, some lasting a number of days. The aim of all this being to dominate the area as much as possible and inhibit terrorist movement and planning.

Communications were a constant worry; routine calls to the various bases were easy enough, either by landline or the battalion radio net. But difficulties arose once troops left base and became mobile. We overcame some of the worst problems by erecting a permanent rebroadcasting station on a peak in the Sperrins, with a further station on the Mull of Kintyre, nevertheless difficulties did arise during incidents or in unplanned deployments and these led to some infuriating misses. There were at least two occasions when we had significant IRA leaders in our hands, but they were released on both occasions because of the weak communications, which did not allow Battalion HQ to intervene in a complex situation facing a junior NCO, much to my fury.

I suppose that one of the greater problems we faced at that time was the unreality of having our families with us, but with the rifle companies away for at least 50% of the time and at constant risk of being shot at or bombed. We had about 120 wives in station, many of them young girls who had never left Yorkshire before, some who had held down responsible jobs at home and there was no opportunity to work, other than in the NAAFI. So the welfare and entertainment of the families was a very important issue, since unhappy wives quickly led to unhappy soldiers and all the problems that arise from that.

In summary, it would be fair to say that we left Ulster after 18 months feeling that we had contributed something to stabilizing and maybe even improving a very tricky situation. It was definitely a junior officer, junior NCO situation with tactical and diplomatic skills having to be learnt fast. The role of company and battalion commanders was to provide the correct organization, ensure that intelligence was given the highest priority, and to provide a sound administrative basis for all the activities, i.e. keep everyone as happy with their lot as possible. I believe that this experience over three decades has made the British Army the standard by which others should measure themselves in the peacekeeping/internal security role, and has been a great training ground for junior officers and NCOs.

In the mid '80s I spent three years in Israel as the Defence Attaché. As always, this was a period of tension; Israel had just invaded Lebanon and was occupying part of Beirut. They spent the next few years trying to find a way out of the morass and there were any number of crises along the northern border and I watched it all with interest. Anyway, I thought you might be interested in the Israeli system of selection of leaders at that time, and I doubt it has changed much in the essentials since then.

Israel has universal call up for males at 18, and most, but not all, girls. At initial assessment, those qualified for flying training and having the other required abilities are taken away. The air force is the most important element in Israeli defence and is poised to react at extremely short notice to any incursion, bearing in mind that Syrian air bases are only a few minutes flying time from Tel Aviv. Pilots are never publicised and most reluctant to be photographed.

The remainder go off to basic training, during which the best are selected for NCO training. From these the best again are chosen for officer training, and required to extend the normal two years' service to three. Once commissioned, extension contracts are offered to individuals ranging upwards from one year, depending upon ability, requirements of the system etc, and this creates the regular cadre. Within this basic framework there are additional selections for special forces, elite regiments, intelligence and so on.

The result of this process is that the IDF has the best and brightest the nation has to offer, which is the reason why so many senior Israeli politicians have a successful military background, such as Sharon, Barak, Rabin, Dayan, all of whom had been senior generals. It is probably worth mentioning that Brigades are commanded by full Colonels aged in their early 30s, so the system is rapid and efficient - they can't afford failures. There is a downside to this, which is that in war the loss rate of leaders is high, for example, it is standard operating procedure for a tank commander in battle to stand up in the turret so that he can see what is going on in the sandy and dusty conditions of the middle east. Incidentally, the IDF does not allow female soldiers into combat situations. This is as a direct result of their experiences during the 1947/48 war of independence, when for manpower reasons they had girls fighting in the front line and discovered that the natural reaction was for the men to act protectively towards the girls in combat, thus diverting some of their attention from the battle resulting in reduced unit effectiveness. I feel confident that this experience was taken into account in the recent MOD study on the matter.

The Oxford Reference Dictionary defines a leader as "a person or thing that leads, a person followed by others" and I would like to end by offering you some personal thoughts on what I believe makes a good military leader:

1. **Competence.** It surely goes without saying that a leader must know what he is doing, and perhaps it is more important his followers must believe he knows. We do not want the men to follow their leader out of a sense of curiosity!
2. **Integrity.** No one is faster than the British soldier in picking up the bluffer and the weak character.
3. **Determination and Willpower.** A leader has to possess the willpower and stamina to keep going in adversity.
4. **Decisiveness.** The ability to keep one's head when all around are losing theirs, and to assess and rationalise rapidly a complex situation. It is not for nothing that I was told as a young man that in a crisis I must do something, even if in the end it turned out to be wrong.
5. **Communication.** The ability to convey his thoughts and ideas ensures that a leader can tell his subordinates not only what has to be done, but also the reasons why it is important.

6. **Humanity.** There was a most interesting article in the Spectator a few weeks ago written by Paul Johnson in which he discussed the impact of will and self-restraint upon world leaders. He made the point that Hitler and Saddam are both recent examples of leaders with enormous will in superabundant quantity, but matched by a wide range of weaknesses and a surrender to primitive passions, which led both men to grossly inhumane acts and, in Germany's

case, led to the destruction of the regime and the state, and in the case of Iraq is likely to lead to the same tragic ending.

Of course every leader has these qualities to a greater or lesser degree, together with others, such as courage, sense of duty, ambition, energy and a sense of humour, but the most successful have the one ingredient over which none of us has any control - Good Luck.

P.A.M.

ACTIVE SERVICE IN 1941

In the winter of 1940/41 The Household Cavalry Regiment (1st HCR) was based in the Jordan valley.

It was a wet winter, living in tents was not too comfortable and the horse lines got very muddy.

There was also the last great mounted exercise ever to be undertaken by British Cavalry in the Plain of Esdraelon, which involved the whole of 4th Cavalry Brigade and about 2,000 horses.

The Colonel-in-Chief describes one operation in which he was involved as a young officer in 1941.

We publish this in two parts.

PART 1 - THE RELIEF OF HABBANIYA

Early in 1941, we heard that we were to be mechanised along with the rest of the Cavalry Division. We were told that all the horses over 15 years old were to be put down in our camp areas and the remainder would be sent to Horse Transport Companies in Egypt. We heard later that many went to Greece for the campaign there and were lost to the Germans.

One of the saddest days I can ever remember was when, in February 1941, I had to take fourteen old horses of my troop into the Judean hills and shoot them. Those lovely old black horses, which had taken part in all the great state occasions of the last ten years or so, including the 1936 Coronation, ended their days on a bare, bleak, Palestinian hill to become fodder for vultures and jackals.

Luckily there wasn't too much time to mourn the horses as, during the weeks that followed, our lives, from the most senior officers to the most junior troopers, were taken over by courses in driving and maintenance, the Morse code and its use with a keyboard, wireless use and procedures and other aspects of our future role as an Armoured Car Regiment.

During this time we also received some ageing 15cwt Morris trucks on which to practise our new-found skills. One must remember that at that time very few of the troopers had any experience of D&M, let alone the intricacies of a wireless set. That they learnt so much in such a short time was a great tribute to their determination to master skills far removed from those they had learnt in the riding school.

At about this time and not very far away across the desert, which lies to the east of Jordan, a sinister situation was unfolding. Early in 1941 a German Political Agent, one Dr Gruber, was infiltrated into Syria and Iraq via Turkey. Dr Gruber's mission was to sow the seeds of anti-British dissension in those countries, so that their regimes could be persuaded to allow German bases to be set up. Gruber's task in Syria was relatively simple. Syria was a French protectorate and opted for Vichy France, which co-operated with Germany. Gruber succeeded in persuading the French

authorities to allow German aircraft to use French military bases such as Palmyra and by early May some had arrived. In Iraq his mission was more difficult. The country had strong political and military ties with Britain. The RAF had an important base at Habbaniya and the lake there was used as a refuelling facility for flying boats on the overland route to India.

British Intelligence was aware of Gruber's activities, but it was nevertheless a nasty shock when three Iraqi divisions, the bulk of the Army, rebelled in early May. A pro-German regime under one Rashid Ali was declared, the RAF base at Habbaniya came under attack and the British Embassy compound in Baghdad was invested with several hundred British subjects inside.

The British acted swiftly. No troops could be spared from Egypt, as the 8th Army was under considerable pressure in the Western Desert, but in Palestine the 1st Cavalry Division was in the process of mechanisation and a force called Habforce was hastily assembled, consisting of the 4th Cavalry Brigade. Habforce's task was to set off from Palestine to cross the 500 odd miles of desert to relieve Habbaniya and the British Embassy and to put down the rebellion. At Mafraq in Jordan it was to be joined by the Arab Legion which that great and good King Abdullah of Jordan had placed under its commander, Colonel Glubb, universally known as Glubb Pasha, at the disposal of the British Government. The Arab Legion recruited from the Bedouin tribesmen of the Badia, the great desert, which stretches from Saudi Arabia in the south to the Euphrates in Syria in the north. Its task was to use its unique knowledge of the desert to protect our long and open flanks from marauding tribesmen and dissident bands of rebels of which one in particular, Fawzi Kawachi, with a well equipped force of some 500 men, was to prove a real thorn in our flesh. The support given by the Legion in the months ahead was to prove invaluable.

That forced march across the desert has never been forgotten by those of us who were there. The searing heat of well over 100°F in the shade seemed to bounce off the black volcanic rock which covered much of the

desert and, combined with clouds of dust and a shortage of water, made this journey, in open 15cwt Morris trucks, a pretty testing one. To my considerable annoyance my dark glasses blew off in a sandstorm which caused me great discomfort to begin with.

Our daily ration of water for the journey for six men was approximately one gallon. These were carried in Chargules, which were canvas bags, that theoretically allowed a small amount of water to evaporate and this kept the contents cool when hung from the side of the truck. Initially we didn't think much of them as they leaked quite a lot, but our old line cavalry reservists, who had served in India, assured us that when covered in mud and sand, they worked quite well. This proved to be the case as they got a coating of sand as we drove along in clouds of dust.

On 12 May we travelled north east from Palestine over the Jordan valley then up the old Iraq Petroleum Company pipeline. On the fourth day we reached Rutbah Wells, well inside Iraq and almost within striking distance of Habbaniya and Baghdad. That evening we were bombed ineffectually for the first time by a single German ME 110 fighter-bomber, proof, if any was needed, that the Germans were already using bases in Iraq and Syria.

The next morning we heard that the Iraqis had lifted the siege of Habbaniya and withdrawn, partly due to the stout defence put up by the RAF and partly, no doubt, because of our imminent arrival. Later that day we reached Habbaniya and took up defensive positions in the wadis leading down to the lake. This was just as well as, shortly after our arrival, we were strafed by a German ME 110 which caused little or no damage.

That evening we were told we could go and bathe in the lake and I shall never forget the sight of hundreds of men tearing off the clothes they had been wearing for the best part of a very hot and exhausting week and racing stark naked, like a crowd of excited schoolboys, into the cool waters of the lake.

We stayed at Habbaniya a day or so enjoying the comforts of the NAAFI and the hospitality of the RAF. There was however one incident during those days at Habbaniya, which was to have profound effects later.

The RAF had a troop of old Rolls Royce-engined armoured cars, equipped with a Vickers' Machine Gun, dating from the first world war. They were used by the RAF for internal security purposes in the lawless tribal areas of the desert near Habbaniya. This troop, during a routine patrol, managed to get two armoured cars stuck in soft sand. Fawzi Kawachi and his band managed to capture and remove one of these cars. A troop of B Squadron 1HCR was sent to recover the other and rescue the crews. They were unable to move it and I was ordered to go to the area with a light aid detachment recovery vehicle and my troop to get the armoured car out and reinforce the B Squadron troop who might well be attacked should Fawzi return.

When I got there I found the B Squadron Troop Leader and between us we got the armoured car out of the soft sand and started off home to our base at Habbaniya. Unfortunately, on the way a Gloster Gladiator of the RAF, out looking for its armoured car, spotted us coming back with an RAF armoured car on tow and strafed us. Sadly B Squadron lost one man, killed before the pilot realised his mistake. We returned to our base without further incident.

to be continued ...

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From: 12 Green Lane
Chislehurst
Kent
BR7 6AG
tc.quire@virgin.net
21 April 2003

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

1 DWR at Makheras : 3-5 March '57 and other operations against EOKA

I hope you can help me to collect historical data on the 1st Battalion's tour in Cyprus against EOKA, in the period 1956-57.

Now that my retirement is getting closer, I have started work on the research for a detailed military memoir about the Troodos and town operations against the gangs.

I hope that my work will serve to provide historians with a clearer account than has been available of the Cyprus campaign, especially as seen by infantry battalions and Commando units.

I did not serve in Cyprus because by the time I joined in 1961 we were being sent to Aden instead, but the campaign was often in the news in 1955-58, and events

involved the serving brothers and cousins and so on of boys at my school in Bridlington.

Field Marshal Sir John Harding and Generals Kendrew and Darling were, I think, architects of the campaign. Starting with the capture and exile of Makarios in March 1956, a series of (I think) brigade-level patrol operations took place in the Troodos to find and break the forest gangs and to release infantry for semi-urban ops against the town gangs. The series was Pepperpot (17-28 May), Lucky Alphonse (7-23 June), Sparrowhawk 1 (1-10 October), Sparrowhawk 2 (11-16 October), and somewhere in this list, Blue Jay (dates not known to me yet).

There were good contacts and good finds. A crucial part of the plan came the brigade's way in March '57 when a 1 DWR patrol bumped the terrorist Afxentiou near the Makheras Monastery. The gang killed a 1 DWR corporal in the patrol and went to ground. A number surrendered during the firefight but Afxentiou fought it out and was killed on 5 March in the hide.

Through your offices as Editor, I hope I can reach ex-1 DWR men who were in that patrol and/or at the firefight. However all the Battalions' exploits throughout that tour are of historical importance to me and I should greatly like to learn of them.

Time is not on my side. A platoon commander who was say 24 in 1956 will now be 71. Time takes us all, even the toughest infantryman.

I hope you feel able to help. Richard Holmes has wished me well and will look over a draft of my efforts when finished.

Yours faithfully
Stephen Jones

Editor's note: If you would like to assist Mr Jones, do contact him by letter or e-mail.

From: 51 Bushey Hall Road
Watford
Herts
WD23 2EE
30 March 2003

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

I hope all is well, Last Thursday, 27 March, there was a mention of the Regiment on the BBC News, on Channel 1 at 6.00pm.

The scene was soldiers spread out on a desert road and the commentary was: "Soldiers of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment carrying out stop and search of people on the road".

Yours sincerely,
Fred Richardson

Editor's note: Members of the 1st Battalion may like to be aware how closely their operations in the Gulf were followed by retired Dukes in the United Kingdom.

From: 297 Gosport Road
Fareham
Hants
PO16 0QF
30 May 2003

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

Having read that the Regimental Depot is now to be converted into a school, I would like to mention the fate of two old barracks once occupied by the 1st Battalion Dukes: Raglan Barracks, Devonport (1927-30), was demolished in the sixties and built over for housing, shops, etc. New Barracks, Gosport (1924-27), will be demolished for housing, shops and businesses.

I thought this might interest the few old Dukes that served in these barracks. My late wife's brother, Desmond Brown, and uncle, Harold Beverley, both ex-Drummers and now deceased, served in both barracks. I joined, aged 15, at Devonport, where I was living.

As I am now 89, I realise there will not be many surviving Dukes of both stations, but possibly a number of those from Devonport will be around.

Yours sincerely
F. Gill (ex Colour Sergeant, No 4610310)

From: 16A Cuthbert Street
Queen's Park, Sydney
NSW 2022, Australia

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

At a time when members of the Regiment who served in Korea with the 1st Battalion are preparing to gather for the reunion dinner and service of commemoration due to be held in Yorkshire on 7-8 June 2003, I have recollected what appears to be an erroneous statement in the 1993 Regimental History.

After a description of the Hook Battle, culminating on 28/29 May, the History states (p.337) that "The Battalion was again in the line some weeks after the battle of the Hook". This is not so, for at least part of the Battalion was soon back in the line.

On the evening of Friday 5 June 1953, I had joined the Battalion with another subaltern, Tom Lawton, afterwards killed in an accident at the Commonwealth Division's Battle School in Japan. After taking my platoon (No.3 of 'A' Company) up to the Hook positions at 0300 hrs on Sunday 7 June, for salvage duties, the whole Company took over Hill 146 (Right Hand Hook) from 1 King's in daylight hours the following day. We occupied positions there until we handed over to 2 RAR (Royal Australian Regiment) on the night of 10/11 July, and after spending the day in a rest area moved up to Naechon the following night to relieve a company of the Royal 22nd Regiment of Canada, the 'Vandooze'. As right forward Company of the Battalion, we stayed in this location until the cease-fire of 27 July, moving out on 30 July after demolishing our positions and retrieving all serviceable stores.

There is also the question of where the other rifle companies were during this period, the last stage of the war.

I had forgotten, and after keeping my marked maps of our part of the line for forty years and then discarding them in a thoughtless frenzy of 'tidying up' in 1993, had no means of knowing. The History didn't help, and it was not until I read Alan Carter's recent book, 'Korea: We Lived they Died' (Bognor Regis, Woodfield Publishing, 1999), that I was enlightened about 'B' Company's movements, to which he had belonged. During our five weeks on Hill 146, they were employed in rebuilding the 'Hook' positions under the direction of the Royal Engineers, after which they moved to Naechon, where 'B' was left forward Company, with us on their right as already mentioned.

I am less certain what 'C' and 'D' Companies did during the period after the Hook Battle, though it has been suggested that they held the reserve positions during the Battalion's few weeks at Naechon.

The purpose of this letter is to record facts within my knowledge (acknowledging Alan Carter's helpful contribution) and, hopefully, to prompt those readers of the Iron Duke who served in 'C' and 'D' Companies in June-July 1953 to relate where their Companies were located during this time, and what they did. Otherwise our knowledge of the four rifle companies' several dispositions will be lost with the further passage of time.

With all good wishes to my former colleagues in the Regiment.

James Hayes

Regimental Association

Patron: Brigadier His Grace The Duke of Wellington, KG, LVO, OBE, MC, BA, DL

President: Major General Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter, KCVO, OBE

General Secretary: Major R. Heron, Wellesley Park, Halifax, HX2 0BA.

BRANCHES

Halifax/Bradford: 8.00pm second Tuesday of each month at the Calderdale NALGO Social and Recreation Club, Northgate House, Halifax.

Secretary: Mr P. R. Taylor, 7 Amy Street, Ovenden, Halifax, HX3 5QB.

Huddersfield: 8.00pm last Friday of each month at WOs & Sgts Mess; TA Centre, St Paul's Street, Huddersfield.

Secretary: Mr J. Armitage, 23 Glenside Close, Edgerton, Huddersfield, HD3 3AP.

Keighley: 8.30pm last Thursday of each month at Pop & Pasty Public House, Bradford Road, Keighley.

Secretary: Mr C. W. Akrigg, 10 Eastfield Place, Sutton-in-Craven, Keighley, BD20 7EX.

London: 12 noon at the Union Jack Club on 14 September (AGM), 18 October (Dinner).

Secretary: Mr K. Jagger, 26 Digby Road, Barking, Essex, IG11 9PU.

Mossley: 8.30pm first Wednesday of February, April, June, August, October and December at The Conservative Club, Mountain Street, Mossley.

Secretary: Mr G. Earnshaw, 32 Cawood Square, Brinnington, Stockport, Cheshire, SK5 8JS.

Sheffield: 8.00pm second Tuesday of each month at Sergeants' Mess, Endcliffe Hall, Sheffield.

Secretary: Mr G. B. Anderson, 72 Stanington Road, Malin Bridge, Sheffield, S6 5FL.

Skipton: 8.00pm second Thursday of each month at The White Rose Club, Newmarket Street, Skipton.

Secretary: Mrs M. Bell, 39 Western Road, Skipton, BD23 2RU.

York: 8.00pm first Monday of each month at the Post Office Social Club, Marygate, York.

TERRITORIAL AND SERVICE BATTALIONS' OCA

5th Battalion. *Secretary:* Mr J. T. Payne, Flat 2, 24 Cambridge Road, Huddersfield, HD1 5BU.

9th Battalion (146 Regiment) RAC. *Secretary:* Mr T. Moore, 229 Rochester Road, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 4TW.

* * * * *

ANNUAL REUNION DINNER

This year's Reunion Dinner was held in the Hilton Hotel, Bradford, on Saturday 7 June 2003. Following the Reception in the City Hall to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War, 314 Dukes and partners sat down to dinner. The Toast to the Regiment was proposed by Lieutenant Colonel H. S. Le Messurier. Colonel Hugh served in the 7th Battalion during WW2, he was Adjutant of the 1st Battalion in Korea and commanded the Yorkshire Brigade Depot 1962-64. The Colonel of the Regiment responded. The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress were guests at the Dinner.

The Korean Veterans present were:

1st Battalion - A Company

Harold Brown, 1 Pl	Cliff Morton, 3 Pl
Barry Forster, 1 Pl	Bill Oliver, 1 Pl
James Hayes, 3 Pl	Roy Sallis, 3 Pl
Geoff Holliday, 2 Pl	Robert Smith, 2 Pl
Douglas Hopewell, 3 Pl	William Smith, MT
John Keatley, 2 Pl	Bob Spence, 1 Pl

1st Battalion - B Company

Alan Carter, 5 Pl	Alan Hitchen
Peter Chester, HQ	Kenneth Jenkins, 6 Pl
Ken Fetch, 9 Pl	Walter Johnson
William Galvin	David Miller, 4 Pl
Pete Harley, 6 Pl	Tom Rothery, 5 Pl

1st Battalion - C Company

Trevor Appleyard, 7 Pl	Malcolm McGregor
Peter Bangs, 7 Pl	Sigs Det
Geoffrey Baxter, 8 Pl	Frank Monaghan, 9 Pl
Edward Brown, 7 Pl	Edward Montague, 7 Pl
Bill Buckley, MT	Euan Morgan, 9 Pl
Robert Dawson, 7 Pl	Wilf Pickles, 7 Pl
Brian Eastwood	John Rutherford, 7 Pl
Philip Gazzard	Johnny Sargeant, 7 Pl
Charles Huxtable, 9 Pl	Dennis Saunders, 7 Pl
Sid Kirk, 8 Pl	Dave Williams

1st Battalion - D Company

Scott Bainbridge,	Kenneth Keld, 10 Pl
Sigs Det	Dennis King, 11 Pl
Derek Booth, HQ	Joe Moses, 11 Pl
Walter Bye, 11 Pl	Jim Newton, HQ
Bill Clark, 10 Pl	George Pickersgill, 10 Pl
Trevor Dunne, 10 Pl	Tom Robinson, 11 Pl
David Ellison, 10 Pl	Robert Sage, 11 Pl
Frank Haigh, 12 Pl	Ronald Shaw, 10 Pl
Brian Hargrave, 11 Pl	Joe Straw, 10 Pl
Derek Holroyd, 10 Pl	Malcolm Swallow, 10 Pl
Keith Jagger, 11 Pl	Colin Tate, 11 Pl

1st Battalion - S Company

Bert Ackroyd, Mor Pl	Keith Lodge, MMG Pl
Bill Blakey, Mor Pl	James Longstaff, MT
Jack Collins, MMG Pl	Alan McDermott,
Brian Dobson,	MMG Pl
Asslt Pnr	Bill Norman, Mor Pl
John Dorward, MMG Pl	John North, Asslt Pnr
Ronald Gledhill, MMG Pl	Leonard Rusby,
Robert Hawke, MMG Pl	MMG Pl
Donald Hodgson, Mor Pl	Neville Smith, MMG Pl
Barry Jackson (2nd Bn),	David Town, MMG Pl
Asslt Pnr	Cyril Withers, MMG Pl

1st Battalion - HQ Company

Pete Barnett, Sigs Pl	Tom Nowell, Sniper Sect
Trevor Bates	John Reddington, Sigs Pl
Cliff Brook (REME att)	Walter Robins, Sigs Pl
Tony Conley, BOR	John Shaw, MT Pl
George Croft, MT Pl	Dennis Smith,
John Goodman, Provost	Seoul Gd Coy
Rodney Harms	John Thompson, MT Pl
Reuben Holroyd, Sigs Pl	Thomas Walker,
Gordon Horsfall, MT Pl	Seoul Gd Coy
Hugh Le Messurier,	Ken Willoughby, JRBD
Adjutant	Leslie Winspear,
Derek Mason, Sigs Pl	Sniper Sect
Robert Meadows, BOR	Brian Young, Drums

1st Battalion - 29 Brigade HQ

Dennis Talbot

ANNUAL DRAW

This year's Draw was again an outstanding success. Income from the Draw was in excess of £2,800, which, as readers will be aware, after deductions of costs and prize money, goes towards making the Dinner affordable for all members of the Regiment. The Draw was held at RHQ on Friday 6 June and the prizewinners were:

Prize	Ticket No.	Winner
£250	2446	Major C. P. Good
Weekend at Hilton Hotel	7398	Dr R. A. Duncan
£100	2224	Mr M. Swallow
£100	4365	Col R. R. St J. Barkshire
£75	9974	Mr L. Birks
£75	1306	2Lt S. Jones
£50	6953	2Lt D. P. Holloway
£50	2246	Mr R. Taylor (Scarborough)
£50	7292	Dr J. M. Reddington
£25	9098	Major J. R. A. Ward
£25	8390	Sgt C. N. Simpson
£25	7056	Mr R. A. S. White
£25	3008	Mr G. D. Croft

REGIMENTAL SERVICE

This year's Service is to be held in York Minster, at 12.30pm on Saturday 20 September. The Service will be conducted by the Regimental Chaplain, Canon Roy Matthews, and the Address will be given by the Assistant Chaplain General, Headquarters 2nd Division, the Reverend R. Hall MBE. The King's Division Normandy Band will accompany the Service.

Following the Service, a buffet lunch will be provided, at a cost of £9.50 per person, including drinks, in St Peter's School, York. Readers please note that, because of the RHQ subsidy towards this lunch, we will not be holding the usual pre-Service coffee reception.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/*NEW SUBSCRIBERS

Mr T. J. Coburn, 1 Hartley Fold Cottages, Hartley Fold, Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria, CA17 4JH.

Mr D. H. Cole, Courtyard House, Westow, York, YO60 7NE.

Major J. D. P. Cowell, 24 The Mount, Gowerton, Swansea, SA4 3AH.

Mr P. L. Evans, GM, MBE, Turnpike House, Barton Road, Hereford, HR4 0AY.

Mrs Joan Fish ISM, 14 Kelvin Avenue, Halifax, West Yorks, HX2 7LU.

Mr C. Jones, Pentre Brodyr, Rhyd y Gwin, Craig Cefn Parc, Swansea, SA6 5TF.

Mr I. G. Kelly TD, Birch Hill, The Cross, Ellesmere, Shropshire, SY12 0LP.

Mr D. I. Richardson MBE, 2B Station Road, Helmdon, Brackley, Northants, NN13 5QT.

Lieutenant Colonel W. Robins OBE, 3 Smithfield Avenue, Hipperholme, Halifax, West Yorks, HX3 8HZ.

Mr J. Scroby, 54 Prospect Avenue, Pye Nest Road, Sowerby Bridge, West Yorks, HX2 7HP.

Mr W. G. Unwin, 'Baudill', 12 Meadowside, Linton on Ouse, York, YO30 2TG.

* Mr P. R. Cole, 32 Boothroyd Drive, Crosland Moor, Huddersfield, West Yorks, HD4 5QH.

* Mr T. Mallinson, 8 Homelands Grove, Ramsden Heath, Essex, CM11 1NJ.

* Mr T. B. Musgrove, 3 Aultmore Court, Kingswood Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 4UF.

* Mr A. Powell, Stella Maris, The Bucklands, Wells-Next-The-Sea, Norwich, Norfolk, NR23 1EY.

KEEPING IN TOUCH...**e-mail**

Ex-WO2 Ian Metcalfe, who regularly keeps in touch with Ted Pennington and Les Roberts, tells us that his new e-mail address is: metcalfe@iprimus.com.au

Korean Reunion

We are indebted to Andrew McMillan for the excellent photograph which we have selected as our Frontispiece. Copies may be ordered from him at: 8 Fern Street, Keighley, West Yorkshire, BD21 3AZ. or: amcm1@btinternet.com

All remittances payable to Andrew McMillan. The photograph is available in the following sizes:

8" x 6"	(in folder)	£8.50
10" x 8"	(in folder)	£10.50
12" x 10"		£15.00
14" x 11"		£17.50
16" x 12"		£19.50
20" x 16"		£25.00

Second World War Experience Centre

Regrettably, we published the wrong address in our last edition for the Second World War Experience Centre. The correct address is: 5 Feast Field, Horsforth, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS18 4TJ. Tel: 0113 258 4993. We have not yet decided whom to blame for this error, so, in the interim, the Editor carries the can. Our apologies go to all concerned.

Another Link with Oz

We have been pleased to hear by telephone from Geoffrey Annal, of 23 Streeton Circuit, Mill Park, Melbourne, Victoria 3082, Australia, who tells us that his father, the late Archibald Annal, served with the Regiment from 1925 to 1933, before transferring to the Reserve. He returned to the Colours in 1939. We and Geoff Annal would be glad to hear if anyone has any more information about his father's service.

Havercake Ale ... in good company!

As many readers will know, to honour our Tercentenary last year the Regiment had a cask beer, Havercake Ale, specially brewed for us by Timothy Taylor of Keighley. Head Brewer, Peter Eells, described the brew as: "A robust Yorkshire ale, brewed to match the qualities of the famous West Riding Regiment - it has strength, balance, clarity, and a good head". It was served throughout Yorkshire last summer, particularly in pubs along the route of the Havercake March.

Timothy Taylor has only ever produced one other special brew, Royal Ale, which was produced to celebrate the visit to the Brewery by the Prince of Wales, so we are in exalted company.

The West Yorkshire Brewery, which has enjoyed a long and close association with the Regiment, is well known for brewing the award-winning Landlord beer. This classic pale ale hit the headlines recently, when Madonna announced on national television: "Timothy Taylor - it's the best real ale". Apparently she visits the Dog & Duck in Soho with her husband, Guy Ritchie, and orders a pint and a half of Landlord. She has clearly discovered what we have known for years - many fine things come out of Yorkshire! (*I wonder what her husband drinks? Ed*)

Regimental Museum

Readers may well be interested in the following special event which is being planned by the Regimental Museum for **Saturday 8 November**:

What did you do in the War?

A day of shared memories of World War 2, as Bankfield Museum re-lives the 1940s with a mixture of reminiscence, re-enactment and material from the Museum collections. The event will run from 11.00am to 4.00pm. Admission is FREE.

Medal for the Canal Zone

We understand that, after much lobbying and a very long delay, it has been agreed that the General Service Medal (Army & RAF) 1918-62 and the Royal Naval equivalent, shall be awarded with the clasp "Canal Zone". The qualifying service is ninety days on unit strength in Egypt between 16 October 1951 and 19 October 1954. Medal, or clasp, may be claimed from: The Officer in Charge, Army Medal Office, Government Office Buildings, Worcester Road, Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire, WR9 8AU. Clearly, valid evidence of relevant service will be required.

The Gallantry Medallists' League

The Gallantry Medallists' League is second only to the VC and GC Association and embraces all holders of second level gallantry awards, both military and civilian. There is also a class of membership, friends of the League, open to holders of Level III gallantry awards. Level II awards are: Distinguished Conduct Medal, George Medal, Distinguished Service Order (for gallantry), Conspicuous Gallantry Cross. Level III awards are: Distinguished Service Cross and Medal, Military Cross & Medal, Queen's Gallantry Medal, CBE, OBE, MBE, and BEM (when awarded for gallantry). For brevity, we have omitted some RN and RAF equivalent medals. For more details and an application form, apply to: Mr D. Harper GM, Honorary Secretary, The Gallantry Medallists' League, 3 Orchard Close, Barnstaple, Devon, EX31 2DF.

Legacies

From time to time Regimental funds receive a very welcome legacy through a bequest from someone's will. There are tax advantages to be obtained from making a legacy in a will and RHQ is always ready to explain how this may be arranged with advice from the Regimental Solicitor, which can be made available through 01422 361671. The Army Benevolent Fund also welcomes legacies and it can be contacted through 020 7591 2054.

MAKING YOUR WILL? PLEASE DON'T FORGET THE REGIMENT

The Friends of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment Fund was started in 1998. The fund has been and is an invaluable resource in helping to sustain and build the Regiment we are all so proud of and to foster the regimental spirit it relies upon. There is much more we could and should be doing in the future and so ensure the Regiment retains its character and place in the Army as a living testimony to all those who have served in our ranks. If you are able to help the fund through a bequest, or in any other way, please do. The Friends of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment Fund is a registered charity and any bequests made to it are not subject to inheritance tax. If you would like any legal help or guidance from the Regimental Solicitor in making a bequest please call RHQ on 01422 361671.

BECAUSE I'M A MAN ...

Because I'm a man, when I lock my keys in the car I will fiddle with a wire clothes hanger and ignore your suggestions that we call a road service until long after hypothermia has set in ...

Because I'm a man, when the car isn't running very well I will pop the hood and stare at the engine as if I know what I am looking at. If another man shows up, I will say: "I used to be able to fix these things, but now, with all these computers and things, I wouldn't know where to start". We will then drink beer.

Because I'm a man, when I catch cold I need someone to bring me soup and take care of me. You never get as sick as I do, so for you there is no problem.

Because I'm a man, I can be relied upon to purchase basic groceries at the store, like milk, or bread. I cannot be expected to find exotic items like "cumin", or "tofu".

Because I'm a man, when one of our appliances stops working, I will insist on taking it apart, despite evidence that this will cost me twice as much once the repair person gets here and has to put it together again.

Because I'm a man, I must hold the remote control in my hand while I watch TV. If the thing gets mislaid, I may miss a whole show looking for it. (Though once I was able to survive by holding a calculator.)

Because I'm a man, I don't think we're all that lost, and, no, I don't think we should stop and ask someone. Why would you listen to a complete stranger? I mean, how the heck could he know where we're going?

Because I'm a man, there is no need to ask me what I'm thinking about. The answer is always sex or football, so I have to make up something else when you ask. So don't ask.

Because I'm a man, I do not want to visit your mother, or have your mother visit us, or talk to her when she comes, or think about her any more than I have to. Whatever you got her for Mothers' Day is okay. I don't need to see it. And don't forget to pick up something for my mother too.

Because I'm a man, you don't have to ask me if I enjoyed the movie. The chances are that if you were crying at the end, I didn't.

Because I'm a man, I think what you're wearing is fine. I thought what you were wearing five minutes ago was fine too. Either pair of shoes is fine. With or without the belt is fine. Your hair is fine. Can we just go now?

ANON

Obituaries

*We deeply regret to record the following deaths,
and on behalf of the Regiment offer our sincere sympathy to those bereaved*

Brigadier P. P. de la H. Moran

Patrick Philip de la Hogue Moran, known as Pip, died in March 2003 in his 88th year. Pip was one of three brothers and three sisters whose father was an officer in the 11th Rajputs serving in India at the time. In the fashion of those days Pip was sent home to school in England, to Stonehurst. It was at school that Pip's ability as an all round sportsman first became apparent. After school he attended the Royal Military College, Sandhurst and was commissioned into the Dukes in

August 1936 with whom his brother, Bob, was already serving. Pip joined the 2nd Battalion in Nowshera and served with them there and in Multan up to the start of the war. He moved with the Battalion to Delhi and became Adjutant to Colonel Hugh Fraser in 1941. He continued to serve with the Battalion in Burma and Assam and also with HQ 17th Indian Division and with "V" Force in the Chin Hills, until returning to the United Kingdom to attend the Staff College in 1944. He was awarded a Mention in Despatches for his service in

the Far East. He returned to the 2nd Battalion in 1945 as Second in Command before a spell as DAAG at General Headquarters India in 1946. From 1947 to 1949 he served in the War Office in London before joining the 1st Battalion as a Company Commander at Strensall.

It was while he was in London that he met and married his wife Viviane. While working at the War Office Pip was living with his mother and sisters in Farnborough. It was by chance that Viviane's parents, who had known the Morans in Quetta in the late 1920s and were visiting friends in Fleet, called unexpectedly on the Morans. From then on Pip and Viviane met frequently in London, where she was working for the BBC, and at their respective homes in Farnborough and Boreham Wood. They became engaged in May 1948 and were married at the Chapel of the Assumption on 28 August that year. They spent their honeymoon at Le Pont Sanson at Feugerres in France, Viviane's family home.

After his time in Strensall, Pip returned to the War Office for another tour, before being posted to the 7th Battalion as Training Major / 2IC in 1954. In 1956/7 he served as 2IC of the 1st Battalion The York and Lancaster Regiment in Dover, before taking over from his brother in Command of the 1st Battalion of the Dukes in Northern Ireland and Brentwood. After two very successful years in command, he was posted to the staff of the Headquarters in Aden before promotion to Brigadier and Command of 146 Infantry Brigade in York. He attended the course at the NATO Staff College in 1965/66 before retiring in March 1968.

Pip Moran was a complex character. He was a fun-loving young man, having a reputation as an excellent dancer, a sportsman of some distinction, representing the 1st Battalion at rugby, as a thrusting centre three-quarter, cricket and athletics and a man of God with a deep seated sense of duty and honour. He commanded the Battalion with a surprisingly light touch and he had a great sense of loyalty to all those who worked for him. He and Viviane were always very welcoming and generous hosts. Yet he sometimes found it difficult to forgive what he saw as the mistakes of some of those nearest to him.

He was determined to ensure that all those under his command had every opportunity to develop their potential. It was he who encouraged the development of what became known as "Adventure Training" in the Battalion in Northern Ireland. He always encouraged those who wanted to expand their horizons and to try something new. As his Adjutant I found him easy to work for and thoroughly enjoyed doing so.

His family has expressed their gratitude for all the kindness and the letters they received from members of the Regiment after Pip's death.

A Requiem Mass in thanksgiving for his life was held in Guildford on 27 March, which was attended by the Colonel of the Regiment, Generals Huxtable and Isles, Brigadiers Bray and Greenway, Major David Harrap and Jim Shenton, who were all pleased to see Mrs Roy Exham there, as well as Mrs Valerie Helliwell, whose article on Sittang we published in Autumn 2002, with her husband.

C.R.H.

Major D. S. Gilbert-Smith, MC

David Gilbert-Smith died on 24 March 2003, aged 71. A Service of Thanksgiving for his life was held in Tewkesbury Abbey on 31 March and we are grateful to Colonel Wilf Charlesworth for his permission to publish part of the Eulogy he delivered at the Service.

"David Gilbert-Smith had an extraordinary career; commissioned into the Duke of Wellington's Regiment in 1951; operational tours in Korea and Cyprus; two tours in 22 SAS and involved in operations and exercises all over the world; a tour with the Foreign Office; Training and Development Manager for Bulmers; founder and Chief Executive of The Leadership Trust; international rugby player, awarded the Military Cross at the age of 21.

That's the official persona; but what was David really like? What does a man do after playing rugby for his country and winning a Military Cross before his 22nd birthday?

I worked with him, for him and, on his last real operational tour, he worked for me. He was probably the most magnetic, charismatic field commander I have ever met. Although he was often terrified like the rest of us, he never showed it. So much so that most people thought he was recklessly brave. He was also enormous fun.

As you can imagine, I have received numerous telephone calls, letters and e-mails about David, which I want to share with you. But, first, two anecdotes from me:

David was the Dukes' Senior Subaltern when I was first commissioned. After I had been in the Battalion for about a month, he casually asked me to canoe the Irish Channel with him. I had never been in a canoe, so I asked him: "Why me?" To which he replied: "It's dangerous, it's never been done before and we have been forbidden to do it. None of the other subalterns will come with me." To cut a long story short, we did it in a home-made canoe, and the others did come with us. Whereas they properly and sensibly wore life jackets, David sat on his and I, because there was no room at the front of the canoe, discarded mine. He was the sort of man who made you feel invincible.

Seven years later David joined my Troop on operations in the mountains of Arabia. Although he was un-acclimatised, a lot older and by this time not as fit as us, he always insisted on doing more than his fair share. Many of us have been in this situation. You are just about to go out on a long-range patrol carrying very heavy bergens; no-one wants to carry an ounce more than he has to; there is extra patrol kit to be carried; everyone prays that he won't be asked to carry it, and it's David, with his challenging half-smile, who says "And I suppose, William, you would like me to carry the spare radio batteries?" And, of course, after the long night marches, when we were all shattered and there were light-order reconnaissances to be done, it was invariably David I took with me to watch my back. I could have chosen anyone in my troop - all tough, experienced soldiers, some of whom later became legends; but it was always David I chose."

Now extracts from some of the letters and e-mails:

From the official Citation for his Military Cross: "Second Lieutenant Gilbert-Smith has taken part in a number of very daring patrol actions. On two occasions with only one man as escort he ventured actually into the enemy positions, and once came under small arms fire at point blank range. During the battle of the Hook he led his platoon across 400 yards of open ground in order to counter-attack a position which had been overrun by the Chinese. His route was under heavy shell and mortar fire. Having succeeded in clearing the enemy from one sector, he re-organised his platoon and proceeded to deal with all the other pockets of resistance."

From his Batman/Wireless Operator: "I will always remember him, firstly as my officer, and then as my friend."

From fellow Dukes' officers: A platoon commander who always went the extra yard; an unconventional company commander and a passionate all-round sportsman; as the battalion wicket-keeper, he infuriated our own fast bowlers by standing up to the wicket; in international rugby player who led the Dukes to two Army Cup Finals and, on one memorable day took part in the victory over Ulster.

Only last night one of the Rugby League Boys telephoned and said "He was a man within a man."

From his SAS Troop Sergeant: "He was an outstanding, dedicated officer." For those of you not familiar with the Regiment, this is an exceptional tribute, as the SAS specialise in character assassination.

From David himself: "When I left the Army, I went round the Embassies of the world that had wars going on, hawking my calling card: 'Have gun, will travel'. I eventually ended up in the Israeli Embassy. The Military Attaché listened carefully to my sell and then said: 'Major Gilbert-Smith, I can see you have a lot to give, why don't you offer it to your own country, in particular to British industry?'"

From the Chief Executive of the Leadership Trust: "David's ideas on leadership development were germinated during his time in the Army and then tailored for the civilian business world, first at Bulmers and then at the Trust. When he started in the mid-seventies, his techniques were truly revolutionary, focussing as much on inward bound as outward bound. In his words: 'Organisations are only as effective as the people in them. People are only as effective as their leaders enable them to be.'"

From one of the Trustees: "I admired and respected David to a degree I gave to no other man."

David is survived by his third wife, Janet, a son from his first marriage and an adopted son, a stepson and stepdaughter from his third. Colonel Michael Campbell-Lamerton headed over a dozen Dukes' officers, some with their wives, at the very well-attended Service of Thanksgiving.

Major C. G. Fitzgerald

Chris Fitzgerald died on 6 July 2003, aged 60. We are grateful to Brigadier Johnny Walker, who spoke at the Requiem Mass held on 16 July in thanksgiving for Chris's life, for his permission to publish part of his Eulogy:

"Everyone will have their own memories of Fitz, whether in the Regiment at various places around the world, or overseas with other organisations, or, more recently, locally from his second career with the Defence Vetting Agency nearby in Bath.

Chris was born in Bulawayo in 1942. His father was head of NU in Southern Rhodesia and had fought in World War 2 in North Africa and Burma; he was a member of the Burma Star Association. A lifelong friend from junior school remembers fishing, canoeing, exploring, camping, swimming, shooting snakes and birds, as well as, from time to time, being caught with Chris having an illicit smoke. Chris went on to senior school at St George's, a Roman Catholic school in Salisbury, now Harare, which some of us were to find out was a nursery for Sandhurst. He excelled at school, playing first fifteen rugby, becoming a Cadet Officer in the Cadet Corps and a School Prefect, and capping it all by doing very well academically.

Chris duly arrived at Sandhurst in 1961. Not the least of his early difficulties, which he shared with a number of our Colonial friends, was putting collar studs into a shirt and tying a tie with a detached collar. But he was able to play an active part in rugby, cricket, swimming and water polo.

He joined the Regiment in 1964 in Catterick, before we moved to Osnabrück, where many of us spent our formative years in the Regiment and games and sports played a major part in our lives. Can you imagine rugby training every afternoon of the week nowadays? Soldiering aside, it soon became clear that Chris was not your conventional British Army officer. He had an unusual interest in international politics, about which he held strong views; he could be very outspoken. His interests extended way beyond training at Sennelager, the oval ball and entertaining ladies from the Teachers' Mess, to the FT, international money markets and the daily movement of his shares.

It was clear from the outset that he enjoyed the company of his non-commissioned officers and soldiers. One of his great friends was Staff Sergeant John O'Donnell, his first Platoon Sergeant; who has written: "The man was funny, entertaining and had all the qualities soldiers respect in their officers. I remember those twinkling eyes and still count him as a good friend, as only military personnel can understand."

Fitz enjoyed his soldiering, especially outdoors, and he took easily to cross-country skiing and Biathlon, that is shooting whilst on skis, and he helped to develop the Regiment's competitive involvement in these sports. In this period he became linked with Alan Westcob, who joined us from Kenya, who became a firm friend, despite so often being the unwitting butt of Chris's wicked sense of humour and his gift for mimicry. Barry Kavanagh, our Commanding Officer, used to call them his "two Colonial Gentlemen".

Chris also served in Hong Kong, Belgium, Northern Ireland, Rheindahlen and Berlin. He was one of several Dukes' officers who had the privilege of serving as ADC to General Bobby Bray, who at the time was Deputy Supreme Commander Allied Forces at SHAPE, and Lady Norah has written: "Chris's time with Bobby was a happy event for us, as I hope it was for him. His combination of charm, unfailing good humour, enthusiasm and efficiency was just what was needed and we greatly enjoyed having such a nice man as, in effect, one of the family. He was diplomatic and popular with the representatives of the many nations we worked with in NATO. In a place where many were rather senior, it was good to have Chris as a young, fit, typical Dukes' officer to remind everyone that all was well in the front line."

Chris leaves his widow, Susie, and daughters Kate and Amy. After a family funeral, Brigadier Dick Mundell headed more than a dozen Dukes and the wives of some at the well-attended Requiem Mass at which Donald Palmer also spoke.

WO1 (RSM) R. Todd

D. E. I. writes: "Until I read RSM Reg Todd's obituary in the spring issue I am afraid that I was unaware that he had left us. Accordingly, I feel that I must add a few words to what was recorded in his obituary. I first met him in Halifax in the 1950s and then later he was my CQMS when I had 'D' Company in Kenya in 1960. When I was commanding in Osnabrück and Cyprus he was CSM to Charles Huxtable in Corunna and I saw much of him at the trouble spot that was Kophinou, where he and Charles remained for the whole of our six months' tour in UNFICYP. He was a very tough, hard man and a sound disciplinarian but always fair. He set the very highest of standards whether in his CQMS store, on the parade ground or on operations. In UNFICYP he was more than a match for any Greek or Turk and stood absolutely no nonsense from either community. For sure, the Turkish fighter Mehmet will never forget him! In 1967 I was sorry to see him leave the Battalion and go on promotion as RSM to 1 York and Lancaster Regiment. We never met again but I remember him now as a very good friend and splendid regimental soldier in the best Dukes' tradition."

Sergeant Bill Middleton

Bill Middleton was born and bred in Mossley and joined the 7th Battalion (TA) in Mossley as a young 18 year old shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War and just in time to be called up with the rest of the Battalion when this was embodied on 1 September 1939. He first went with them to Catterick and then on to Malton where he did his initial military training with the Battalion while billeted in farm buildings and barns.

In the spring of 1940 the Battalion was despatched to Iceland where it spent two years, first putting in the hard labour to help in constructing an airfield at Reykjavik, then training for 'winter and mountain warfare'. He returned with the Battalion to the UK in 1942, which then began training for the invasion of North West Europe. During this time Bill was a PT instructor, teaching and training soldiers to ride bicycles which was to be their first mode of transport as follow on troops behind the D Day landings, though in the event many of the bikes never arrived on the beaches. Bill served with the Battalion throughout the campaign, through Normandy, Holland and into Germany. On his return to civilian life, after the war, he started his own welding business which, in due course, his son followed him into and which he continued working in for the rest of his days. Bill remained throughout his life a keen member of the Regimental Association and was treasurer of the Mossley Branch for fifteen years. He was also one of the founder members of the association group who travelled each year to join the Remembrance Day ceremonies in Mossley's twin town in France, Hem, which the 1st Battalion passed through at the beginning of the Second World War on its way to Dunkirk, and where the Battalion is still remembered and honoured.

Major C. R. Taylor TD

Charles Robert (Robbie) Taylor died in Haslemere, Surrey on 5 March 2003, at the age of 94.

Bobbie Taylor was commissioned into the 7th Battalion in 1927. In 1939, as a Captain, he was posted to HQ 147 Brigade as a Staff Officer serving in Yorkshire and Iceland. Between 1942 and '45 he served as a Staff Officer in Alexandria, Tunisia and Italy, where he was twice Mentioned in Despatches.

RHQ has also been notified of the following deaths:

Captain W. G. (Bill) Bannochi

Died in September 2001.

Captain Michael Jubb TD

Served in the 5th Battalion between 1937 and 1941. Died in Dumfries and Galloway General Hospital on 20 May 2003, at the age of 83.

Mr Charles Wilkinson (ex Sergeant)

Died in Leeds on 5 April 2003, at the age of 87.

Mr E. Stead

Eddy Stead died in Bradford on 6 April 2003 at the age of 65. He served in the 1st Battalion from 1955-58, including the Battalion's operational tour in Cyprus (1956-57).