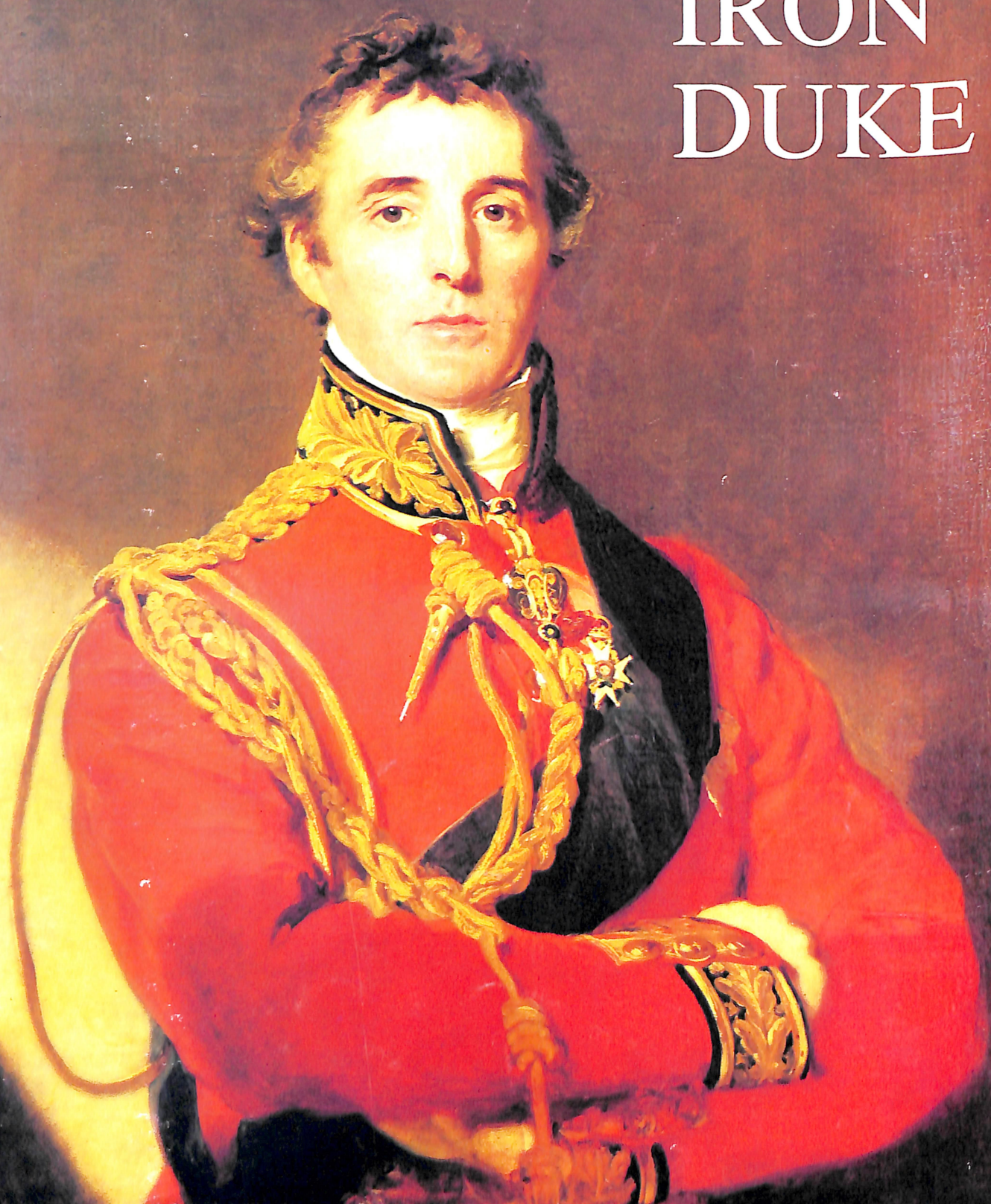


SPRING 2004  
No. 254

# THE IRON DUKE



# THE IRON DUKE

*The Regimental Journal of*

## THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S REGIMENT

(WEST RIDING)

*Dettingen  
Mysore  
Seringsapatam  
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*

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No. 254

### BUSINESS NOTES

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# THE REGIMENT

## *The Colonel-in-Chief*

BRIGADIER HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON, KG, LVO, OBE, MC, BA, DL

## *Colonel of the Regiment*

Major General Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter, KCVO, OBE

### **Regimental Headquarters**

*Wellesley Park,  
Highroad Well,  
Halifax, HX2 0BA.*

Regimental Secretary: Major D. L. J. Harrap, LL.B.

Assistant Regimental Secretary: Major R. Heron

### **1st Battalion**

*Belfast Barracks,  
BFPO 36.*

Commanding Officer: Lieutenant Colonel D. S. Bruce, MBE

Adjutant: Captain M. C. A. Palmer

Regimental Sergeant Major: WO1 S. Caine

### **East and West Riding Regiment**

CO: Lieutenant Colonel M. A. Lodge

DWR TA Companies:

### **Ypres Company (West Yorkshire)**

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 J. Greenlee

Halifax

Huddersfield

Spennithorne

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



*Regiments' Archives Volunteer Team*

From left to right, back row: Cliff Boothman (Medals, 6th Bn & Cemeteries), Cyril Ford (Historical enquiries, Colours, Silver, Medals), Major D. Harrap (Regimental Secretary), Scott Flaving (Co-ordination & Electronic Indexing), Richard Harvey (Photo Scanning & CD Archiving).  
 Front row: Tracy Craggs (Audio Diaries), Bill Norman (Library & Archive Collection 2nd Bn Second World War), Cathy Pugh (Audio Diary Research).  
 Absent on duty: Dave Cochrane (1/4th Bn, 58 A/Tank Regiment, DWR Home Guard); Cyril Curling (2nd Bn First World War); Clem Walmsley (Archive Database Construction).



# Regimental Headquarters

## Regimental Notes

### COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT

We are delighted to record that the tenure of Major General Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter, KCVO, OBE, as Colonel of the Regiment has been extended from June 2004 to June 2006.

### PROMOTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

We send our warm congratulations to the following:

Colonel N. St. J. Hall, MA, AKC, on his selection for promotion to Brigadier in September 2004 as Chief of Staff to UKMILREP at HQ NATO in Brussels.

WO1 (RSM) M. Taylor on his selection for an LE Commission in April 2004 in the appointment of Unit Welfare Officer in the 1st Battalion.

WO1 S. Caine on his selection for the appointment of Regimental Sergeant Major in the 1st Battalion in place of WO1 M. Taylor.

### STOP PRESS - OPERATIONAL AWARDS

We warmly congratulate the following on their Operational Awards in April 2004, as shown below:

OBE: Lieutenant Colonel D. S. Bruce MBE

MBE: Major M. Robinson

Joint Commanders' Commendations:

Op Telic (Iraq): WO2 L. Flitcroft

Private A. Williams

Op Oculus (Kosovo): WO2 P. A. Brewer

Lance Corporal G. J. Hamer

### EDITORIAL

2003 contained months of intensive operations for the 1st Battalion, in two different theatres, which, after well-earned breaks, have been succeeded by months of intensive training. The East and West Riding Regiment too, which deployed over 100 soldiers on operations last year, still has over forty serving in Iraq and expects to deploy a full company group there later this year.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, the small team at RHQ continues to co-ordinate the Regiment's involvement in a very wide range of affairs from battlefield tours, to Regimental Association activities, the Archive and the Museum and, sadly, the funerals of those who, whether serving or retired, die during the year. This is in addition to the more routine series of annual meetings, dinners and church services and continual attention to the welfare of ex-soldiers.

Also, of course, RHQ co-ordinates some of the constant movement of our indefatigable Colonel, who continues to involve himself wholeheartedly in the Regiment's activities, despite having assumed the appointment of Controller of the Army Benevolent Fund. As well as leading us from the front on parades, or battlefield tours, not to mention leading others on treks in far continents, he can be found chatting happily

to anyone wearing a Regimental tie - wherever they are. We have it on good authority that, one day in 2003 he and his wife were to be found on a London bus chatting to a couple coming away from the Royal Hospital's Founders' Day Parade. They were Kath Walker with Ken, who had served with the Colonel's father in Italy in 1944. Sadly, however, we have to report that Ken died in March 2004.

Meanwhile, back at RHQ, a strong team of volunteers has evolved to support the permanent staff and we are delighted to publish, as our frontispiece, a picture of most of them. Not only does their work improve our records, but it also provides interesting first-hand material for the Iron Duke and it will assist the historians of the future to report accurately on the Regiment's activities. We applaud the team's excellent work and thank them for their efforts.

Readers are encouraged to send any interesting material, especially first-hand accounts and photographs, to RHQ, either direct or via your Editor. Apart from current activities, this edition contains first-hand accounts of Dukes in France and Belgium in 1915, Plymouth in 1929, GB in 1940, France and Belgium in 1940 and East Timor in 2003, as well as more from Roberts Around the World in 2004.

J.B.K.G.

### ARCHIVES VOLUNTEER TEAM

Since Bill Norman volunteered to sort out the Regimental photograph collection some twelve years ago, the Archive Volunteers team has grown in size and expertise. The number of projects underway has also grown, with fairly comprehensive lists of Gallantry Medal awards, Rolls of Honour and unit histories being built up. A recent drive to obtain personal memoirs from veterans of various conflicts has had a boost with the addition of Tracy and Cathy, who will be researching, arranging and conducting tape-recorded interviews with as many members of the Regimental Association and Iron Duke readership as possible within the next few months. These interviews will then be indexed and placed in the Regimental Archives for the benefit of future researchers and historians and become a valuable addition to our collection.

Please contact RHQ if you would like to take part in the recordings - or wait for your call up papers!

Should you wish to support this work in other ways, we are always on the look out for photographs and memoirs. In addition, any financial support for the provision of archival quality conservation materials, to house the collection properly, another new project, would be very gratefully received.

Scott Flaving

# 1st Battalion

## Commanding Officer's Introduction

I am writing these notes while deployed in Bergen Hohne for our three-week Gunnery Camp at the start of a busy and demanding training year. Conditions are miserable, continuous snow and rain, good infantry weather and the Christmas cobwebs have been well and truly blown out. One of the highlights of the camp has been the visit of the Colonel of the Regiment, who saw us at first hand getting to grips with Armoured Infantry Gunnery and testing his old skills (he commanded the first Warrior Battalion) in the turret. The training period is full on and the Battalion will remain at full throttle through to the culmination of BATUS at the end of May, when we will ORBAT for training and deployment to Iraq in November. Currently we are configured for war fighting operations, all our vehicles are crewed and our new gunners now trained, the infantry dismounts have also completed a live firing camp. The first few weeks of the year have been focused on individual skills training prior to a series of Company level exercises at Sennelager. This will be followed by simulation training in the tactical trainer at Company and Battle Group level, in addition to a number of CPXs to test the Battle Group staff. The Dukes' Battle Group will consist of two Armoured Infantry Companies (Alma and Burma, Corunna will back fill), two Armoured Squadrons (RDG), a Gunner Battery, Engineer Squadron and various other attached arms totalling over 1400

personnel. It is a big beast and I am looking forward to bringing it all together for our four-week exercise in Canada. The last time the Battalion deployed to BATUS was in 1978, the sole survivor today being the Quarter Master (as he tells us at every opportunity); much has changed over the last 25 years and BATUS is today an extremely high tech and fast moving environment. The package is written for us and starts with two weeks of live firing, from Platoon up to Battle Group level culminating in a five day Battle Group live fire exercise called Tractable. Once the live fire is completed the Battle Group fits Tactical Engagement Simulation computers to the vehicles and weapon systems and exercises against a live (free thinking) enemy, once again building up from Platoon to Battle Group level. The culmination will be a challenging seven-day final exercise called Totalise. I am sure there will be several reports and photographs in future editions of the Iron Duke reporting on this fantastic training opportunity.

Normally little else would be programmed into a training year, the demands being such that there is little scope for additional training. It is also usual that the Battle Group would remain on High Readiness to deploy on War Fighting operations. The demands on us currently are far from normal and within a month of returning from BATUS we will be training for Peace



**The Colonel of the Regiment with the Heavy Mob.**



Support Operations in preparation for Op Telic 5. I am confident that we will be ready and extremely well trained, but the price will be a significant amount of separation over the next 18 months for the families.

Despite the busy schedule, we are giving the Army Cup our best shot and are once again the Germany champions having beaten The Black Watch 37 – 0 in the Final. We have a good side and they are training hard and if we are unsuccessful it will not be due to lack of preparation or effort.

*(Afternote: Alas, the result of the Semi Final was 7 RHA 33 - 1 DWR 17.)*

In conclusion I can tell you that the Battalion is in excellent form, well rested after our operational tours last year and ready to meet the challenges of 2004. We remain over-manned and continue to invest heavily in recruiting to provide a steady flow of young Yorkshire soldiers. Our stock in the Brigade is high, having won every Brigade Competition in 2003 and forcing the Scots Guards to recognise us as the Regiment to beat. It is with some regret that I enter my last six months in command, but this has been a truly special job and leading the Battle Group in BATUS will be a high point to finish on.



**Ah, that's better ... some soldier humour.**

### ALMA COMPANY

It has been a busy autumn for Alma Company. October saw the Company mount three shooting teams for the Brigade Skill at Arms Meeting whilst also filling all sorts of Warrior cadres. We were spread very thinly, but due to some hard work on the ranges for a couple of weeks prior to the competition the teams put in a very strong performance. Captain Phil Smith with Corporal "Sweed" Draycott as his 2ic beat 43 other teams to come in first overall. This came on Phil's last day in the Battalion before being posted to ATR Bassingborne - talk about going out with a bang! Lieutenant Andy Shand with Corporal "Andy" Anderson as 2ic came fourth overall and 2Lt Chris Johnston and Corporal "Riz" Risdale came eighth. All Alma Company teams finished in the Brigade top ten - this made for a cracking start to our autumn half term leave! Mention must go to Private Jones who finished the potential NCO cadre on the Friday and (despite an ankle injury) joined a shooting team on the Monday. Despite his injury he demonstrated that he is definitely made of NCO material - he ran a storming two miles in the march and shoot and then attended the prize giving

shortly afterwards on crutches (for those readers who are wondering, he is now fully fit again)! Speaking of NCOs, the Company had six soldiers passing the PNCO cadre including Private (now Lance Corporal) Green who came top of the cadre, thus earning instant promotion. I must also congratulate Corporal Gav Hill who was promoted to full Corporal in the Autumn - although he has been posted across to the Signals Platoon, I am sure he will always be an Alma man.

We said farewell to CSM Dave Childs at the end of October - he is replaced by WO2 Nat Cole who joins us from ATR Pirbright. CSM Childs was obviously chuffed to be handing over the Company in such good form, but I suspect that he was slightly emotional at the thought of handing over "his" Company to someone else. I would like to pass on my thanks for the sterling service he has provided over the past two years - as a CSM he has been second to none. A word of thanks must also go to his wife, Angie, who has been a central figure in helping Alma Company wives, as well as being key to the Battalion wives activities: all in all a quality double act!



**Commander 4th Armoured Brigade presents Captain Phil Smith with the winners' trophy.  
Corporal Draycott gives him the evil eye!**

Post autumn leave we were straight back into a hectic training programme. The focus for many during this period was the inter-company boxing. Initially Corporal Scott (Kings) started as the Company coach and laid the foundations for a very strong boxing squad with a fairly draconian training regime. The week before the boxing Corporal Scott deployed to the 1 Division ski championships and handed over boxing coach duties to Private Nelson. The squad were strong and put in a number of high quality fights during the prelims leaving all to play for on the night as Corunna Company had eight boxers in the final and Alma seven. Because the points in the inter-company competition were neck and neck it was clear that whoever won the boxing would also win the competition.

The night was a massive success with all the Alma Company boxers displaying the fighting spirit and understated courage that is synonymous with the "fighting tyke". The support that the Company gave our fighters was truly impressive - there was many a sore throat by the end of the night. My thanks and congratulations go to all those who trained with, fought for, or coached the squad for an outstanding performance. Sadly we were pipped at the post and Corunna only just beat us to win the boxing and the inter company competition (we'll get the Sam Basu Shield next year).

Staying with sport, Lieutenant Andy Shand took it upon himself to organize a 1 DWR team to participate in the 1 (UK) Armoured Division Ski championships. I suspect that he didn't realize that skiing with the Army would be such an organizational nightmare! That said, in the face of various frustrations, he managed to organize, man and fund raise and the team deployed in early December for six weeks of skiing. Now that he is actually out on the piste I am sure he feels all the work has been worthwhile! His account of the cut and thrust of ski racing is elsewhere in this issue.

Our return from Christmas leave saw us trying to prepare for our three weeks of field firing at Bergen-Hohne. Alma were also nominated to provide support to the 4th Armoured Brigade study week. The aim of this week was to brief and demonstrate to commanders across the Brigade what all the elements of an Armoured Brigade can do. What this meant for Alma Company was an Armoured Infantry Company display with the OC briefing, the CSM carrying out a Prisoner of War handling display and numerous Alma Company soldiers acting as guides. One of these guides (who shall remain nameless) needs to work on his senior officer recognition skills. As the audience were all sat in the cinema receiving the fire exit brief from the RSM the Brigade Commander strolled into the foyer. Soldier X then sidled up to the Brigadier and said - "if you slip in



at the back now you should get in before it all starts". Brigadier Gibson to soldier X "I hope so, I'm the first speaker"! The study week was an immense success - the square looked like the biggest armoured vehicle park in Germany and I think that those who attended got a real feel for what a powerful organization an Armoured Battle Group is.

We are currently at Bergen-Hohne and have three weeks in which to get the Company through all the dismounted and mounted field firing that we are mandated to complete before we are allowed to cross the line of departure in Canada later this year. This is a tall order and, as with all things in the Army, will require a great deal of flexibility and good humour to carry off. Needless to say we will be heading back to Osnabrück in a couple of weeks having made the plan work and with everyone suitably qualified.

We welcome a number of people to Alma Company. Lieutenant Dave Wilson has recently transferred across

from the Parachute Regiment and is now commanding 3 Platoon. Colour Sergeant "Chopper" O'Neill takes on the role of CQMS after returning from the Waterloo Company Kosovo tour. Private Barma is the only one of seven soldiers to return to Alma Company from Waterloo - the remainder have all transferred across to the Recce Platoon; a testament to both the quality of Alma Company soldiers and the amount of serious soldiering that was carried out in Kosovo.

It looks like 2004 will be as busy and as varied as 2003. We are sat at the top of the first drop on the training year roller coaster - by the next time I write we will have completed our build up training and will have completed thirty days of high intensity warfighting practice on the prairie in Canada and will (in theory) be ready for anything!

Major Paul Fox  
OC Alma Company

## BURMA COMPANY

Looking back over the last twelve months and assessing the Company's achievements is enormously satisfying. There is little doubt that this has been one of the busiest and most exciting years in most of our careers. From covering the firemen's strike in Doncaster, training for Kosovo and then at very short notice deploying to Iraq, this rollercoaster of a year has fully tested the Company. Two things stand out, first the quality of our Non Commissioned Officers and Privates, who have responded magnificently to every challenge in very arduous conditions, with high levels of complexity and uncertainty. The young soldiers of today are as tough as ever and time after time they have

delivered outstanding results, often under-resourced; but their 'can do' approach and Yorkshire spirit has ensured mission success. Second, the effect of our efforts in bringing a new way of life to the 350,000 people of Az Zubayr in Iraq will remain in our minds forever. Despite what one reads in the press, there is no doubt in our minds as to how much the locals appreciated their new opportunity and the progress that continues in Iraq reinforces our sense of worth. It was also immensely satisfying for the whole Company when Sergeant Taylor and Corporal Hutty were each awarded the QCVS for their efforts in Iraq and they thoroughly deserve this public recognition.

Since the last set of notes the Company has been focused on delivering the necessary qualified Warrior drivers, gunners and commanders to ensure that it is fully prepared to start the training year and deploy to BATUS in April. Whilst these cadres have been running, the Company has also competed fiercely in the inter-company competition and the Brigade Skill at Arms Meeting. Unfortunately, we did not win the Champion Company, which came down to the last event - the boxing. Our boxers were extremely well prepared by Corporal Hutty but the decisions on the night did not go our way and that is enough whining from a Company Commander. However, Private Roberts did win the best boxer prize and he was seriously tough on the night - the Company is very proud of his achievement.

Lieutenant Adam Brown, WO2 Maroney and Sergeant Goddard all from Burma Company ran a highly successful Potential Non Commissioned Officers Cadre in September. Six privates from Burma (Privates: Delaiditri, Elliot, Clarkson, Edley, Goladamu and Swindells) passed the Cadre and should be promoted within the next twelve months. This is good news and demonstrates the Company's strength in depth. It has been a frantic year and next year will be equally busy, as the Company deploys to BATUS and is likely to return to Iraq in November.

Major Tom Vallings  
OC Burma Company



Lieutenant Ham Brown leads his Burma Company team home in the two mile speed march: 4 Brigade Skill at Arms Meeting.

## CORUNNA COMPANY

There is little doubt that the Training Year that Corunna Company and the 1 DWR Battle Group face in 2004 is the best-resourced, highest profile, most challenging and demanding all arms training that an infantryman can undertake in the 21st Century Army. It will allow the Company to prepare for High Intensity Warfighting and deliver the Battalion to the highest level of collective performance prior to deployment to the Middle East in late 2004. In short it is the most fantastic opportunity. The Company's preparations to maximise this opportunity began in September 2003 with a raft of individual cadres and courses to remind, revise and teach the Company the art of armoured warfighting, following the "light role" rigours of Op Fresco and Op Telic. Hence Corunna Company personnel attended Warrior driver, gunner and commanders' cadres, 30mm Rarden Cannon Range Conducting Officers' Cadres, Driver Maintenance Instructors' Courses, the Armoured Infantry Platoon Commanders' Course as well as a PNCO Cadre, Regimental Signals Cadres, PTI Courses and, of course, PSBC and SCBC. In addition, personnel deployed to BATUS as Temporary Staff and to the Recruiting Offices as Satisfied Soldiers, whilst nine private soldiers enjoyed adventure training in Bavaria and sailing in the Baltic Seas. The Company continues to provide a large number of officers and soldiers to a variety of Battalion sports teams and notably two members of the Company (Lieutenants Crawford and Smith) played rugby for British Army Germany in the Berlin and subsequently the Singapore Sevens. Lieutenant Smith played for the Army and Combined Services at Rugby Union, Lance Corporal Walker is currently detached to the Army Boxing Squad and Private Gill played football for the Army U21s.

In parallel to this busy period of armoured infantry re-conversion, the Company has also won the Inter Company Shield and thus Corunna Company is the 1 DWR Champion Company. In a hard-fought and competitive competition the Company achieved a remarkable set of results coming first in four of the six events, winning the football, swimming, cross country and boxing competitions, whilst also coming second in the Rugby Union and fourth in the Skill at Arms. There were notable performances by Lieutenant Armitage and Private Staniland in the swimming and Sergeant Connelly and CSM Stannard in the cross country. Whilst special mention should be made of the boxing coaches, Lance Corporal Moore and Private Morton, who enabled the Company team to have eight finalists. Wins were earned in the finals by Privates Sellars, Kilner, Bishop and Nakanacagi, Private Gill won most gallant loser, Privates Brown and Staniland were narrowly beaten on points and unfortunately Private MacAuley had to withdraw due to injury. Congratulations go to all members of the Company for this notable success and to Staff Sergeant Corner (APTC) and his staff for co-ordinating such a well-organised Inter Company Competition.

Other events have included a well-attended Christmas Social at which Private Staniland was awarded the Best Sportsman Award, Private Evans won the Best Shot, Private Gill the Best Boxer, Private



*Brigade Study Day, January '04.*  
**QM (Major Brian Thomas BEM) pretends that OC Corunna (Major Malcolm Norman) is amusing.**

Lelevanu won the most improved soldier and Private Philips won the Shaun Taylor Shield (donated by the 1994 Corunna Company to commemorate Private Shaun Taylor who was shot by a Serb sniper whilst on operations in Gorazde, Bosnia) as the Best Soldier within the Company. In addition, Corunna Company also hosted a Brigade TEWT for fifty young officers, the OC writing the problem, Colour Sergeant Jenkins providing tip top administration and Colour Sergeant Goodall (Officer's Mess Manager) providing an impressive and well received lunch at Schloss Schelenburg - from what the Young Officers said, the high points were the administration and the lunch!

The Company were extremely glad to welcome back the Corunna men detached to Waterloo Company for the deployment to Kosovo (Sergeant Coulson, Lance Corporals Hudson, Lightowlers, Winstanley, Privates Gregg, Ormiston, Franks) who were justifiably proud of the long-term impact their work had on the Balkans and also a number of new recruits from ITC Catterick (Privates Kitchen, Shaw, Walker, Pedelty, Firth, Jessop and Middlemiss). Likewise we have said farewell to Corporal Shuttleworth, who is posted to Pirbright as a Corporal Instructor, and we will say farewell to Sergeant "Recon" and Nikki Ledingham when he is posted to the E&WRR in March 2004. A particularly large thank you goes to Nikki Ledingham for all her work with the Army Families Federation and the Battalion's Families.

As a look forward, the Company will conduct a three-week infantry live firing and armoured gunnery camp at Bergen-Hohne in January, conduct a Company level exercise at the beginning of February at Sennelager followed by a week in the simulated environment of the CATT, prior to reinforcing Alma and Burma Company with two formed Platoons for BATUS in April and May. Corunna Company, the Champion Company, is on good form and looking forward to the challenge and rigours of the Training Year.

Major Malcolm Norman  
 OC Corunna (Champion) Company



## SOMME COMPANY

Somme Company mustered on 5 January for the first time in over twelve months. 2003 was a busy and challenging year for all Somme personnel. Those who deployed to Kosovo completed an extremely intensive and arduous training package, and an equally challenging operational tour. Those who remained with the Battalion had to settle in to a foster company and most deployed to the Gulf. Returning to work in January, the Company had no time to dwell on what had been, with just five days to prepare for deployment to Bergen Hohne to complete an Infantry Field Firing and Gunnery Camp. In the first week back, the Company was also heavily involved in an Armoured Battlegroup demonstration that was organised by the Dukes on behalf of 4 Armoured Brigade. Although 2003 provided a unique and challenging experience for Somme, there was a sense of relief among all ranks to get back to Osnabrück and re-focus on the specialist platoons in preparation for the forthcoming training year.

Whilst Waterloo Company was on Operation Oculus, the Battalion ran Milan and Mortar cadres for a new generation of Somme soldiers. Given the circumstances, the cadres were a huge success and provided a welcome boost to the Somme establishment. Somme also inherited a pool of soldiers who had volunteered to complete the surveillance role and subsequently decided to join either Recce or the Snipers on return to Germany. The overall Somme recruiting drive has paid dividends and the Company is now well manned and balanced with the challenge of BATUS ahead. As a result of the commitment of both Snipers and Recce to Kosovo, it was not possible to complete the respective cadres last year. Therefore these are being conducted around all the other activities in the run up to deployment to Canada. Ultimately Somme will deploy to BATUS fully manned and well prepared.

In the first week back at work after the Christmas break the Battalion hosted an Armoured Battlegroup demonstration. This was a high profile and well

attended event with the intent being to introduce the capability of the battlegroup to the command element across the Brigade. Naturally Somme had a significant part to play. The Company contributed to three stands: the ISTAR (Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance) Group, Flank Protection and Offensive Support. The ISTAR stand included an Artillery Forward Observation Officer, Engineer Recce, Snipers and of course the Recce Platoon. The Milan Platoon teamed up with the Engineer 'Vehicle Launched Scatterable Mine System' (VLSMS) to provide a flank protection stand. Additionally, the Mortar Platoon joined forces with troops from 4 Regiment Royal Artillery to demonstrate the Offensive Support capability and also provided Mortar Fire Controllers at other stands to complete the targeting picture.

The plan for the next few months is to get all the specialist platoons as prepared as possible for BATUS. Mortars and Milan will complete live firing of their respective weapon systems. It will be the first time that the Battalion has had the opportunity to fire both Milan and Mortars in two years and no doubt both events will generate a large amount of interest from across the Battalion, accompanied by the usual jibes from the uninitiated:

'...that's two rounds in the air sir, where do you want them?'

'...we can be on time or on target but you can't have both...'

'...is that a K Kill, an M kill or did you just miss...'

Etc.

After BATUS the company will complete pre-deployment training for Operation Telic with the rest of the Battalion. It is not yet clear what role Somme will be tasked with in Iraq.

Major Phil Wilson  
OC Somme Company

## HOOK COMPANY

It's the day after the inter company boxing finals. Anyone who has been a spectator at this event will understand how unwell I feel today. The boxing tournament was a great success, not only because of the quality of combat in the ring, but also due to the outstanding organisation of the whole event. Our thanks to the Master of Ceremonies, RSM Taylor, and our resident muscle buster, Staff Sergeant Corner. Thanks also to Colour Sergeant Rutter, for coaching the Hook Company squad, and thanks also to each individual boxer. Corunna were the eventual winners, but successful performances by Privates Shinn (yes, son of) and Brammhall ensured that Hook featured on the score card.

In October, Hook Company as well as the three rifle companies were instructed to assemble three teams to take part in the 4th Armoured Brigade Skill at Arms Competition. Whilst I am delighted to report that Dukes teams came first, second, and third, I am immensely

proud to say that Hook teams came second, third, and seventeenth. This achievement is even more remarkable if you consider that a total of 44 teams from across the Brigade took part in the event. Congratulations to all the team members and in particular to the team leaders, Captain Garner, Sergeant Walsh, and Staff Sergeant Rose. The team, led by Sergeant Walsh, is worthy of special mention, for winning the March and Shoot phase and for coming second overall. (In spite of some very dodgy adding up by the organisers.) In summary ..not bad ..for a bunch of fat base rats.

On a much sadder note, we have said farewell to our CQMS of the last two years Colour Sergeant Hallsworth. Our loss is the East and West Riding Regiment's gain; thanks Jonnie for all your hard work and loyal support, it did not go un-noticed. He is succeeded by Colour Sergeant Craig Rutter. Second, this week is the last in the illustrious career of our Company Sergeant Major. Ian Bottomley leaves the

army at the conclusion of 22 years' service. I have known him from the start to the very end. I have served with him on operations and in peace time; I can honestly say that whenever I have been in a dangerous situation, if Ian Bottomley was present, it was a very comforting thought indeed. He has had an extremely challenging tour as CSM. He has always been fair and honest. He has gained the respect of all ranks. He will be very sadly missed. The whole Company wishes him the very best for the future. We will particularly miss seeing his pert bottom in those very tight leather

trousers. (Not for nothing is his nickname Botts!) He is succeeded by WO2 Scott Moroney.

By the time you read these notes, Hook will be firmly focused on our Canada deployment, where for the first time in 26 years a Dukes' Battle Group will be tested on Exercise Medicine Man. I wonder if that taxi driver in Medicine Hat has forgotten what I look like?.....I hope so....The interest on that unpaid fare could finance a small country.

Major Anthony Sutcliffe  
OC Hook Company

## BRIGADE SKILL-AT-ARMS MEETING

The 4th Armoured Brigade Skill at Arms Meet (SAAM), held between 20 -24 October at Sennelager Training Area, was the first real opportunity that the Brigade Commander had of getting the whole Brigade together. The Brigade Commander's directive stated that shooting and fitness were paramount in the effectiveness of the Brigade, and the SAAM gave an ideal chance to test this. This meant that the Dukes had to prove we were the best amongst the competing teams.

A total of forty-four teams entered the competition, with the Dukes and Scots Guards providing the majority, twelve each. However the other units of the Brigade were also well represented, with teams coming from: the Queens Dragoon Guards; the Royal Dragoon Guards; 4 Regiment Royal Artillery; 21 Engineer Regiment; 204 Signal Squadron; 1 Battalion REME; 115 Provost Company; 11 Brigade Support Squadron RLC; and 1 CS Medical Regiment. Each Company in the Dukes had to provide three teams made up of: one Officer or SNCO (who would act as Team Captain), two JNCOs and five Privates, including two Light Support Weapon (LSW) men. The teams were to be tested on a number of things from an Annual Personal Weapons Test (APWT), Skill at Arms (SAA) knowledge for the privates and JNCOs, and the March and Shoot, which provided the most points. The March and Shoot was broken down into completing a two mile loaded march (15 kgs) in under twenty minutes, as a team, with an enforced rest of five minutes followed by a Fire Team Assessment (FTA), as each section went along the range trying to knock down the targets. There was also an additional competition in the form of a Young Officers' Shoot, which was another APWT.

The Dukes had good preparation for the competition in the form of two weeks' intensive range instruction at both Vorden Ranges, outside Osnabrück, and the Sennelager Ranges, directly prior to the SAAM. It was during this period that the teams were able to improve their fitness and hone their shooting techniques, with expert coaching from within the companies.

All the teams congregated on Sunday 19 October at Sennelager in readiness for the start of the competition. The first two days were taken up with zeroing the weapons, and elementary application of fire, and at this stage it appeared that the dedicated preparation was beginning to pay off, with most of the Dukes' competitors achieving good grouping. The Brigade also

laid on a series of instructional lessons on different aspects of shooting, such as range measurement, application of fire, and Fire Control Orders. The teams also had a sniper presentation, by Sergeant Ledingham (1 DWR), and instruction on a General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG). Speaking to some of the team members it was evident the younger soldiers were gaining much from the lessons.

The third and fourth days were taken up with the first of the scoring tests, the APWT, the Theory Test, and the Young Officers' Shoot. As the APWT was an individual event, a lot of pressure was placed on the young privates who made up the majority of the teams, as the SNCOs and JNCOs could be trusted to post a good score, or at least most of them! Mention needs to go to Team 1, Alma Company, led by Second Lieutenant Chris Johnston, whose combined APWT score was the second highest in the competition. Also Team 2, Hook Company, led by Sergeant Walsh, who achieved third highest, including Lance Corporal Harrison and Lance Corporal Fulton who both hit 67/70. A special mention for Team 3, Hook Company, made up of an LAD contingent led by Staff Sergeant Rose, who achieved the highest APWT scores with Iron Sights. The Theory Test proved testing for many a Duke, however, Lance Corporal Adam Burrill PWO (Team 2, Corunna Company) recorded the second highest score in the Brigade. The Young Officers' Shoot proved that some Officers can shoot straight, with Lieutenant Adam Brown coming second with 66/70, and Lieutenant Ed Smith coming third with 64/70.

The final day was taken up with the March and Shoot, and as the scoring system worked out, all was to compete for. The Dukes showed great grit and determination to come in with some fast times. Team 1, Hook Company led by Captain Andy Garner, completed the March in 16:20 minutes, the fastest time recorded that day, with the OC Hook Company heard exclaiming that if anyone else beat their time he would "show his arse on the roof of the Sergeants Mess for all to see". Again, mention needs to go to Team 2, Hook Company, for achieving the best score in the subsequent Fire Team Assessment, out-shooting all the other teams by some margin, with Team 3, Alma Company led by Captain Phil Smith coming second.

The overall results proved quite telling, with the Dukes contributing no less than six of the top ten positions, including all the places on the podium.

Congratulations go to Team 3, Alma Company led by Captain Phil Smith, who came first; Team 2, Hook Company led by Sergeant Tony Walsh who came second; and Team 1, Hook Company led by Captain Andy Garner who came third. In the end we did very well to provide twelve such strong teams, in light of the Armoured Infantry commitments within the Battalion.

Credit goes to all those who competed. The Dukes showed themselves to be the best regiment presently operating under the shadow of the 4 Brigade Black Rat!

Lieutenant Chris Armitage  
Corunna Company

### THE POTENTIAL NCOs' CADRE : AUTUMN 2003

When I first found out that I was on the potential NCOs' cadre I was serving with Alma Company in Iraq. So it was with thanks to my Platoon Commander that my leave was going to consist of fitness and revision, as opposed to the usual relaxation and much deserved lazing about after our operational duties in the Gulf.

I did not know all that much about the PNCOs' cadre. I had heard all the horror stories about how hard it was and the staff parades that got dished out. I was soon to discover for myself.

The cadre was run by Lieutenant Brown and WO2 Moroney. It was not long before the dreaded word 'staff parade' was heard. Nobody was exempt; the entire cadre were on parade outside the Guardroom with bulled boots and highly pressed No. 2s. By this stage I knew it was going to be a long six weeks.

As the cadre progressed, we were challenged both mentally and physically with fitness, written tests and lesson work. All of these tested us greatly, especially the Sergeant Major's little beaster that he liked to call Robust Warrior. This came to us three times throughout the course and involved leopard crawling through streams, running up and down hills with jerry cans, stretchers and logs, much to the Sergeant Major's delight as he watched over us all with a video camera. This was the most difficult experience I have ever encountered in my Army career. I know all of the lads would agree that it thoroughly tested our robustness.

Everyone on the cadre worked hard and really pulled together to help each other, as we discovered our strengths. However, life was never going to be easy with the training team breathing down our necks. We worked in the field for much of the cadre, learning everything from the quick attack to ambush. We patrolled everywhere and were constantly being assessed on our skills and drills.

One of the hardest times on the cadre was being on staff parade on a Friday night in our No. 2s, as all of our mates strolled out of the camp gates for a night on the town, laughing at our misfortune. However, looking back now, it doesn't seem so bad and we have passed. So I look forward to the next cadre when I can sit back and watch.

The most physically and mentally demanding times were the mind games which brought out the "top two inch", a phrase used regularly by the training staff. For instance, when you had been running in full kit we would return to camp and find ourselves doing laps round the sports pitch to see who could hack it. It was credit that so many of the cadre managed to pass the tests we were given.

All in all I found the PNCO's cadre a gruelling experience, but one which I will never forget. To not only pass the course, but come first, made me feel proud and I thank God that I don't have to do another one!

Lance Corporal Green  
Alma Company

### 'A NIGHT TO REMEMBER' : INTER-COMPANY BOXING 2003

The inter-company boxing was a long-awaited event, having been postponed, along with a great deal of other plans, by the Battalion's deployment on Op Telic. In fact I will always remember that on Tuesday 11 March my plan to buy some boxing boots that day quickly changed to packing for the possibility of a very different contest.

The boxing night, reconvened, was to be the finale of the Inter-Company Competition that would crown the victors 'Champion Company 2003'. With double points being awarded for this event there was no doubt as to its importance. The companies quickly assembled their squads and ushered their chosen men into the darkest recesses for training, away from prying eyes.

Burma Company had use of the attic above the company lines, which was turned into a very respectable boxing gym. Punch bags hung from the rafters, skipping ropes and medicine balls were acquired and a square of green gym mats made our training ring. As I was a complete boxing novice, Corporal Hutty, the

Burma coach, became my new mentor and I did my best to be a very attentive student of the pugilistic art; not least in anticipation of getting it wrong and as a Super Heavyweight, being on the end of some of the biggest punches in the Battalion.

Thoughts naturally turned to my opponents and, with the teams yet to be disclosed, some of the larger frames seen walking about camp were eyed suspiciously. Was my opponent to be Corporal Foster from the QM Tech's who famously lifted Captain (now Major) Scott Richardson off his feet with a single punch? Rumours abounded that Lieutenant Ed Smith, Corunna's all-round 'sports billy', would enter the fray; but these failed to materialise (was it the head guard that might ruin the hair or the expectation of cries of "Not the face, not the face"?).

Boxing training, famed for its toughness, also became very enjoyable, due in no small part to Corporal Hutty's expert coaching and the hard work and camaraderie of the other 'Burma Babes'. Private Birkin became my

training partner and took me through progressively more difficult manoeuvres. During each session we would pair off and practise perhaps only a single technique for up to an hour, whilst individuals were called in turn onto the mats for a session with the coach. This meant some very long minutes of hard work putting the combinations together against his open hands on his commands, all to the sound of dance music from the stereo system.

After two days of daytime boxing preliminaries the night of the final saw the gymnasium transformed into an impressive arena. Flashing lights, dry ice and pumping music brought the fighters from the changing rooms and a very smart boxing ring was flanked on three sides by a sea of red mess kit. On the far side the heart of the companies were packed together. The contrasting colour of their Number 2 dress disappearing back into the shadows; each section of this throng erupted in turn for the entrance of one of their own. A picture of the fighters, along with their name and company was projected on a large section of the gym wall 'Sky Sports' style. The Colours display and a single drummer leading each boxer to his corner made for a very proper Regimental occasion.

Waiting for their fight, boxers could watch this spectacle from the darkened balcony of the upstairs area. I took the chance to soak up the atmosphere and just had time to watch the fine display by the Corps of Drums at 'half-time' before descending to the quiet anticipation of the changing room.

My memory of the fight is caught in hazy snapshots; the walk out to my corner, all on the toes as is the form, looking forward, aware of the applause from the officers and the chants of 'Toor-Bi! Toor-Bi!' (Toby) from the

Company. The announcements, then a little practised bob to the judges before the Referee, in brilliant pressed whites, took hold of our gloves for a final word in the centre of the ring. Back to our corners, gloves up, before the loud double clang of the bell brought us out into the harsh light of the ring and before the baying of the crowd.

My opponent was Private Nakanacagi, a large fridge of a Fijian soldier with a quiet temperament but renowned power. I seized a few opportunities early on before his 'big right' was deployed in the second and third rounds. On a number of occasions it scythed through my guard like a very large, hot knife through butter. It connected quite audibly, so I am told, and drew a collective intake of breath from the crowd that might have moved loose pieces of paper on the Judge's table. For me, it had the curious effect of turning out the lights and teleporting me to another part of the ring, although thankfully still on my feet. We each gave it our very best and in the third round were both completely exhausted, with gloves and feet strangely heavy.

I was pleased to have 'gone the distance' and held my own, but the superior 'haymaker' punch won the day in what was a well-fought victory by a very deserving opponent. I am glad we are in the same Rugby squad! The generous hospitality of the Sergeants' Mess that evening temporarily eased a sore head that lasted well beyond any hangover! Corunna Company won overall, with a very notable Best Boxer award presented to Private Roberts of Burma Company by the Brigade Commander. He was fulsome in his praise of the success of what was an outstanding Regimental evening.

Lieutenant Toby "Hammer Fist" Smart  
Officer's Mess Boxing Rep

### *Photograph Caption Competition*



What is anyone in this picture saying, or thinking? The best suggestions will be published in the next edition.



## OFFICERS' MESS

Having just read WO2 Wilson's introduction to the Sergeants' Mess notes I am determined not to start this set of Mess notes with the phrase "since the last edition"! Once again it has been a busy period for the Mess and, as ever, Christmas has only added to the maelstrom of social activities out here in Germany.

The road trip to transport the Colours to the Officers' Regimental dinner in York has now passed into Mess folklore. In honour of their conduct throughout the journey OC Burma Company has been awarded the title "Tern Hill Tom" and OC Corunna "Market Drayton Mally".

During the autumn the Battalion has been out and about proving itself to be the Battalion to beat in 4th Armoured Brigade. This, coupled with the training of new support platoon commanders back in England and a resurgence of serious rugby training, has meant that social events have been a bit thin on the ground in the Mess.

We held a cracking 'late summer' party in a marquee outside the Mess in October which proved to be a great success. I took time to ensure that the seating plan would make for a civilized night and, as a result, the table containing the Adjutant (Palmer Jnr), Operations Officer (Garner), Intelligence Officer (Payne) and their guests was placed between the two subby tables in order to instill some panache and decorum in the junior end of the Mess. Sadly no plan survives contact with the enemy and it ended up being the subbies who had to provide the steadying influence for the Adjutant and gang!

You will find an account of the Pace-sticking competition in the Sergeants' Mess notes. Whilst it was very kind of WO2 Wilson to invite us to participate, there are some things that officers really should know nothing about - this is one of them! Thanks to Captains Ed Colver and Kevin Price who each 'drove' an Officers' Mess team in this curious (some might say spurious) activity.

The build up to Christmas proved to be taxing, with lots of official Brigade functions that members of the Mess were required to attend, including music shows and carol services. Thankfully we also had a number of Battalion events which proved to be outstanding. The Battalion inter company boxing night was truly fantastic, with some top quality boxing and quite amazing support from the soldiers for their chosen Gladiators. Every man that fought demonstrated a very high degree of fitness and a huge amount of courage. Lieutenant Toby Smart held up the Mess end and put in a very creditable performance against an enormous Fijian opponent. As Toby leapt over the top rope into the

ring all inter company banter ceased and at least 500 Dukes soldiers started baying for Officers' blood. Toby (thankfully) is made of sterner stuff and, despite receiving some pretty big hits, went the full distance, but sadly lost on points.

Obviously the highlight of the year for the Mess was the Ruperts and Andy Capp. For the second year running the Officers won the football (which is hardly surprising as the Sergeants' Mess had spent weeks telling us that it was their weakest team for years). What very quickly became apparent was that they had adopted a new plan of campaign and once inside our Mess they proceeded to drink us dry, but thankfully the beer held out until we had had supper and put on the skits. As ever the skits were 'insightful' and accurate but managed to stay just the right side of legal! With timing that could have been planned (perhaps it was) RSM Taylor invited the Officers back to his Mess just as Colour Sergeant Goodall told me that we had run out of beer. Needless to say singing and intellectual discourse continued into the wee hours back at the Sergeants' Mess. Due to circumstances beyond our control we were forced to hold Ladies Night the night after Ruperts, which meant that the Gentlemen weren't on their usual sparkling form. It took a while to 'get outside' the first few drinks but once most had topped up the night took off. After the success of Ruperts though it was only the LE Officers who had the experience and stamina to continue the party through to the very early hours.

We welcome Dave Wilson to the Mess after his transfer from the Parachute Regiment in November - at last Kevin Price has a fellow Zimbabwean to discuss Mugabes' foreign policy with! We send our congratulations to Garrath Price and Clare who tied the knot in September and also to Barrington Payne and Morag who made their vows just before Christmas. It has been a heavy year for weddings in the Mess, but it seems that there are no more marriages on the horizon for the time being (although the Adjutant is showing signs of weakening, despite claiming to be playing hard to get).

At the time of writing we have just deployed to Bergen-Hohne for three weeks of field firing (why does it always take place in the winter?) but when we get back to Osnabrück we will be holding a Dukes' Battle Group dinner night to welcome the cavalry, gunners and sappers and also to teach them how to sing "The Dukes are coming up the hill"! Reports on how the Mess rugby went next time.

Major Paul Fox  
PMC

## WARRANT OFFICERS' AND SERGEANTS' MESS

Check through your previous editions of the Iron Duke and count the number of articles that start with 'since the last edition', you will find a few - most of them are Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess notes. I thought I might highlight this as it has become something of a tradition handed from PMC to PMC.

The other reason is of course that by the time you read these notes I will have handed over PMC, and will have unwittingly pressurized my successor into finding some other way to lead you into an account of the last three months of Mess life ... so without further ado and since the last edition!

Mess life, and life in general in the Battalion remains as busy as ever. October finally gave us the chance to formally welcome WO1 RSM Taylor and say farewell to Captain Ness, this was done in the form of a Dinner Night. This was the first such function in almost a year and was an excellent night. Attended by around a hundred, the Mess was both full and vibrant with a real atmosphere. Presentations were made to Captain Ness, Sergeant Mattie and Sergeant Norman Mason. The latter being the recipient of the Duke on Horseback after completing 22 years' service with the Regiment, the Mess will be a quieter place without him and we wish him well in his new found career as a police officer. We also pass on our apologies to the unsuspecting public for unleashing this quick-firing reticent cynic onto what will surely be many confused and gob-smacked customers. The long arm of the law just got shorter!

After a spell of leave in October, the Mess sponsored the first (in living memory) Pace-sticking Competition. Two teams from each of the three Messes took up the gauntlet to compete for the golden stick. You may be thinking we must have been lost for something to do during this period! In fact it was a busy time and took a real effort to stage. Most teams roared in the starting box and competition was fierce ... with the exception of the Officers' Mess, who with typical drill shyness whimpered more like newborn kittens. This scathing analogy is probably a little unfair, as Lieutenant Smith made one turn of the stick last more than thirty paces! If the competition was judged on economy then not only would he have won but might also be invited to do the write the next defence budget! Considering the pace of life the standard was impressive. The deserved winners came from the Corporals' Mess; having given up some of their leave in order to compete, the result was justified. Having pipped the Sergeants' Mess with an impressive run the winners each received a crystal regimental tankard. The best sticker prize went to Corporal Bell from the Intelligence Cell. A warm thank you must go to all competitors for their efforts.

November also saw the long-awaited return of our members from Kosovo, some of whom had been SNCOs for six months but had never stepped foot in the Mess. Six months is a long time away and it was followed by six weeks' deserved post operational tour leave. The tour was an apparent success, with much being said of the Dukes professionalism. Perhaps worst

off than most were Sergeant Hawksworth and his fleet of 157 vehicles to be run by him alone. Also the G4 effort was held in no less difficult circumstances by WO2 (RQMS) Andy Brewer.

At the end of Bonfire month we held the Christmas function in the gymnasium. It was a roaring success, mainly down to the PEC and his team, but ably helped by good entertainment and even better food. Some members saw things through to daylight, it's easy to lose track of time inside a dressed marquee inside a gymnasium ... apparently.

News that the RSM is to commission in spring came in early December. Whilst he has a few months of his tenure left he will not mind the Mess passing on its heartfelt congratulations to him and his wife Lynn. His new appointment as the Unit Welfare Officer will start sometime in early May. Whilst being PMC I have nearly seen three RSMs, it must have been something I said, or more likely I have been on reshow.

We closed the year in the usual manner with Rupert and Andy Capp. It became immediately apparent that the Officers' Mess had been biding its time to exact its revenge since the pace-sticking competition. Revenge is a recipe best served cold and cold it was as we played the annual football match (freezing to be precise). The Officers ran out winners after a shortened but close game. It would seem that a whole childhood spent kicking a ball against a chip shop wall counts for nothing these days!

The skits have turned into Oscar-winning productions these past few years and always remain the most popular subject of conversation well into Spring. This year was no exception, with outstanding performances coming from both Messes. The day never fails to be exhilarating and provides a real goal to the senior end of the Corporals' Mess.

The training starts for this year in earnest with the field firing camp (this week) in Bergen-Hohne, where the Mess Manager will set up a temporary Mess to try make a focal point for our members for the three weeks ahead. After this we travel to training areas Germany wide before deploying to BATUS in Canada, all in all a busy year ahead which should put plenty of text after the next ... "since the last edition".

WO2 N. Wilson  
PMC

## DUKES' RUGBY

As expected, this season has been difficult, with key players still in Kosovo and the requirement to balance rugby with the multitude of courses, cadres and Battalion commitments. Furthermore, the Army Rugby League and Army Sevens have all encroached into the Union season. However, we planned that our season would start in earnest in December with all the squad together for the first time. Two factors outside of our control have disrupted our preparations for the Army Cup. First, teams pulling out of fixtures at the last minute and delaying the progress of the cup in Germany. Second, the weather, where the frost has forced us to delay the Germany Quarter Final until

January. On a more positive note, the squad have managed two full-time weeks of dedicated training and, given these frustrations, Captain Findlay Bibby and Lieutenant Ed Smith have managed to shape the thirty players extremely well.

There is little doubt that this years' squad is the most talented group of players that the Dukes have had since it last won the Army Cup in 1981. There are four current or ex-Army players (Major Haymen, Captain Bibby, Lieutenants Smith and Johnston), Private Guana is in the Army Sevens team and three soldiers have won Army Rugby League Caps (Privates Karavaki, Selabago and Tuibuca). Whilst these players have all

proven pedigrees, it is the strength in depth that marks this squad apart. Even the Army players are fighting for a place in the side and the combinations available, particularly in the midfield and back row, are vast. It is tremendously exciting to have such talent yet, in the words of Orson Wells, "there is no greater burden than a great potential". It is now up to Captain Bibby and myself to deliver this potential and get our hands on the elusive cup. The Commanding Officer has given us the necessary time to play decent fixtures in UK, but as ever it is the financing and deconffliction with our BATUS training that creates the friction and challenge.

Last year our aim was to win the Germany Cup, which we did, but three days later came unstuck by one point against the RGBW in the UK Semi Finals. This year our biggest hurdle will be 7 RHA in the UK Semi

Finals on 11 February. The squad will be in England from 1 February preparing for its cup run with fixtures against London Clubs and RMA Sandhurst.

The players have already shown they are fully committed to this cup run in terms of their fitness and attitude in training. However, the team lacks decent fixtures with the inherent match fitness and knowledge that only comes from playing competitive rugby week in week out. Hopefully, these weaknesses will be addressed with the planned fixtures and then all we have to add is the aggressive state of mind that a winning team needs to deliver. Can we win the Army Cup this year? Definitely, if the players really want it.

Major Tom Vallings  
OC Rugby

### BATTALION FOOTBALL

The Battalion has continued to build upon its great start to the season. The players produced a great performance in the Army Cup 1st round against 1 BlackWatch. In a fiercely competitive game a late goal from Private Shinn (an inspired substitution from the manager!) levelled the score at 1-1 to force extra time. The fitness level of the Dukes then came to the fore and we ran out 4-2 winners with room to spare following another two goals from Private Shinn and one from Private Gill. This was a very good performance from the lads, who never threw the towel in and saw off a very experienced and strong Black Watch team. The scorers aside, performances of note were put in by Private Reynolds and Lance Corporal Fulton.

Following a period of block leave the next milestone for the squad was the 4 Armoured Brigade Competition which was held over a three day period on 8 - 10 December '03. Despite a lack of preparation, confidence was high and it was clear fitness levels had been maintained, which was just as well with five games to play. The Dukes came top of their group of four to progress to the semi-finals following 5-0 victories against 1 Battalion REME and 1 CSMR (Close Support Medical Regiment) and a 1-1 draw against 21 Engineer Regiment. In the semis we were drawn against 1 Scots Guards and after scoring early they equalized with a late goal; it remained 1-1 after extra time but we went through 4-3 on penalties. In the final we met 21 Engineer Regiment which was an exact replica of our semi-final. Once again a late equalizer was conceded with no further score in extra time. However the Engineers did not display the same composure as the Dukes and we secured the trophy 4-2 on penalties. This tournament was a great prize for the Battalion to win as we were not favourites to do so and was a testament to the eighteen players who were used and showed the strength in depth amongst the squad. Although the Club Captain, Lance Corporal Humphreys, was not available Lance Corporal Collington skippered the side well in his absence and Private Catchpole stood in at centre back with ease. The return to the squad of Lance Corporal Smith (course) and Private Cutts (injury) were a real bonus, as was the consistent form of Private Bishop (despite missing a penalty!), Private Reynolds, Lance Corporal Fulton and Private Shinn.

Two days after the Brigade competition we had to play the 2nd round of the Army Cup against 21 Engineer Regiment (as if we hadn't played them enough already!). The game had to be played on an astro turf pitch due to the bad weather and, worse still, it was 21 Engineer Regiment's pitch which they had been training on regularly. As expected, the teams pretty much cancelled each other out, having played each other twice during that week and so once again the game went into extra time. The Dukes dominated extra time owing to their superior fitness (Quote 21 Engineer Regiment Football Officer: "I knew we'd bloody had it when it went to extra time!") and a goal from Corporal Jones won the match for us (not for the first time this season). Undoubtedly man of the match was Lance Corporal Smith who won everything in midfield against two high quality opponents. Also worthy of a mention were the performances of Corporal Sykes who proved to be an able and certainly younger replacement at full back for the ageing but still quite sprightly Corporal Atherton (!) and our two strikers Privates Shinn and Cutts who gave no space or time to the 21 Engineer Regiment back four.

The 3rd round of the Army Cup was played straight after Christmas leave against 1 Regt Army Air Corps. I won't dwell on this fixture as it was our 'blip' of the season losing 2-1 due to a poor collective performance. We will now concentrate on the Infantry Cup for which we have a bye to the quarter-finals - enough said.

Before I close, a few mentions: thanks to the Battalion 2IC and the Army Sports Board for the provision of tracksuits, a new strip and training equipment - we look smart and can train well, even if we are no longer in the Army Cup! Talking of training, Sergeant Morgan has continued to provide good training (assisted by Corporals Hind and Hurd) and tactical advice, despite supporting Barnsley! Congratulations go to Lance Corporal Collington who has now gone on to establish himself as the Infantry goalkeeper and to Private Gill who is now part of the Army under 21 squad. It is hoped we may be able to get another couple of players selected for trials for infantry football before the end of the season.

Captain Danny Renihan AGC  
OC Football

*The Colonel of the Regiment Presents ...*

**Major Tom Vallings receives his Joint Commanders' Commendation for his work in Az Zubayr.**



**Colour Sergeant Mick Stones receives his Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.**





**Sergeant 'Simmo' Simpson receives a commendation for being one of the top two driving examiners in 1(UK) Armoured Division.**



**Sergeant 'Shep' Shepherd receives his Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.**

## THE ARMoured CLOSE RECONNAISSANCE PLATOON COMMANDERS' COURSE

As BATUS looms, the 1st Battalion's Recce Platoon is engaged in a virtual 're-conversion' to the armoured close recce role. We have not touched our Scimitar CVR(T)s since 2002 and have welcomed many new faces into the Platoon during the intervening twelve months. As the incoming Recce Platoon Commander one of my first and most pressing tasks is to revise and, in some cases, teach the fundamental principles and mechanics of our role as the 'eyes and ears' of the Dukes' Armoured Battle Group. And thus, in characteristically verbose and convoluted fashion, I come to the subject of the Armoured Close Recce Platoon Commanders' Course that I attended during the latter six months of last year.

The course is modular and split between three specialist 'centres of excellence'. The first of these is at the Royal Armoured Corps Centre at Bovington on the south coast where generations of soldiers have learnt to drive, command and maintain the armoured vehicles of choice for the British Army of the day since its establishment in 1916. Long hours in the vehicle sheds, mind-numbing lectures on the mechanical idiosyncrasies of Scimitar and the over-powering odour of barrier cream (the scourge of dermatitis!) were adequately compensated by hair-raising cross country drives and delightfully muddy recovery exercises. We left not only knowing the difference between a 'rear idler' and a 'final drive sprocket' (I have always felt rather an affinity with the former) but also with an appreciation of the limitations of the vehicle (many) and the time required to maintain them.

To Lulworth next and the AFV Gunnery School. This is as much fun as it sounds; long, lazy summer days

filled with gunnery lessons, cries of 'Still!' as students committed some heinous safety error and throwing a large amount of 30mm shells and 7.62mm rounds down the range. Lulworth in June is fantastic, I heartily recommend it, and the talk on the Mess veranda as the sun set and the ice clinked in the gin and tonics was more often about croquet scoring systems than the Rarden cannon.

Things couldn't last ... and they didn't. After a hectic two months as a Battalion spy at BATUS, it was off to Warminster for the final and most meaty phase of the course. It is an old saying that you can talk about tactics until the cows come home and, by gum, we did. For 'talk' read 'listen' as lessons continued long into the autumnal evenings, punctuated only by the arrival of range stew (in camp!) and the gleeful shouts of the Mortar Course carousing in the Mess. Assimilation of the lessons was first confirmed and then tested during a number of demanding exercises on Salisbury Plain. Our mixed bag of Cavalry and Armoured Infantry trainees conducted daring advances to contact, and frankly bewildering withdrawals in contact across this ancient landscape until the pesky enemy called for quarter. The Tactics phase was incredibly well run and left us in no doubt as to the pressures that we would soon be operating under, but also armed us with a variety of solutions to these problems.

And so to Battalion, Bergen Hohne, Sennelager and, finally, BATUS. Watch this space.

Captain Dan Pawson  
OC Recce Platoon

## MILAN PLATOON COMMANDERS' COURSE

Having completed my time as both a Platoon Commander and Company 2ic on operations, I was excited to have been given the chance to command a support weapons platoon for the duration of the training year. The Milan Platoon was my command and hence this meant having to return to the place that all young officers love to be, Warminster Land Warfare Centre, in order to complete eight weeks of intensive training in the art of Anti-Tanking.

As with any course it was with a degree of anticipation that I arrived at Warminster on a cold September evening. Having just returned from my honeymoon the previous day and bid my new wife farewell for the first two months of our married life, the thought of a fitness test and numerous start standard tests the following morning did not allow a good night's sleep! The first day however passed without incident, or failure, and immediately I started to get a feel of what the next eight weeks had to offer. In outline, the Course consisted of many TEWTs out on Salisbury Plain, a comprehensive range package, theory and practical use and employment of the Milan weapon system and finally AFV recognition. This entailed lying in a corridor seven metres away from AFV micro models with a pair of binoculars, trying to ascertain what on earth the little green blob in front of you is meant to be.

Having had no previous Anti-Tank experience, as with most on the Course, the first couple of weeks were a steep learning curve, not only having to learn the intricacies of the weapon's component parts, but also learning the tactics up to and above the standard of the Section and Detachment (Det) Commanders, all with many years' experience and with whom we worked closely on exercises and TEWTs. This involved many a late night poring over a map, desperately trying to find some defilade in which to position Dets so that, once out on the ground, the Section Commanders aren't spending unnecessary amounts of time repositioning their given killing areas. Also to save the embarrassment, or even pain, if we sent them to site spurious positions! Much emphasis was placed on this for the first half of the course, but by the end of this phase all involved were not only confident but also competent in the initial planning phase of Anti-Armour planning.

Week 5 was the week that we had all had our eyes on since the start, it was the week we got to fire the Milan missile for the first time. Much preparation was obviously involved in order to prepare us for the day, including having to achieve a skilled pass in both the No1 and No 2 firing position weapon handling tests. Having achieved this it would have been nice to be able

to make our way to the range and fire the missile (each worth £18,000) on an enjoyable afternoon. Of course not! We deployed at around 0600 hours in Bedfords to a holding area approximately 10km short of the range. We had already been divided into groups and each was released at thirty minute intervals. The initial route to the first RV was 9km, no mean feat with all the Milan, MIRA and missiles being carried and especially for some who were used to the luxuries of being armoured! Once at RV1 we heard the cry of 'gas, gas, gas', NBC suits were donned and this was how we were to remain for the remainder of the day. What followed was a testing battle exercise, followed by mounting a Warrior and eventually reaching the firing point amid the confusion of smoke, small arms fire and battle simulation explosions. At last we were about to fire the missile and I was determined not to miss my target. A mover at 800 metres was our target, according to the initial brief, unfortunately that was broken, but the mover at 1800 metres was fine, great! Missing was not an option both for moral standing and financially: five crates for a miss, two for an M (mobility) kill. Thankfully I managed to get a K (total) kill, much to the disappointment of many of my compatriots and I left the range tired but satisfied. In effect I had just launched a brand new BMW down the range and watched it explode; thank you the taxpayer!

Unfortunately the rest of the course did not prove to be so exciting; the final three weeks were spent solely on exercise on the Plain. Having previously only participated in rifle company exercises, I was surprised by the differences between that and a Milan exercise. The first difference was that I never fired my rifle and second I never saw the enemy (one connects to the other really). For three weeks I must have just always been in the wrong place at the wrong time; great, many may think, but not on exercise. Finally though I was given my command appointment, surely now I would be able to get a better picture of what was involved. I was to be Platoon Commander for the final advance to contact on Exercise Phantom Bugle across Salisbury Plain. Within ten minutes of being in appointment I had no soldiers to command, the CO I was working under had farmed my

sections out to all the companies and I was left, after a certain amount of complaining, to follow up with Tac and await further orders. They never came, I spent eighteen hours following Tac, badgering them to give me my men back, but to no avail.

No summary of the Milan Platoon Commanders' Course could be complete without a slightly more detailed insight into the world of AFV recognition. I had been told much about this ancient art and had heard that it was not easy to master. I was to find this out first hand when I managed to score a massive 26% on my AFV entrance test; a bit of work to be done! There was unfortunately no easy way to learn the sometimes extremely subtle differences between 68 variants of AFVs, it was simply a matter of spending hours upon hours lying in the corridors learning each vehicle's characteristics, ranging from the number of road wheels to size and shape of the turret. The aim was to pass AFV recognition Level 3, this required being able to correctly identify 23 out of 25 vehicles laid out in front of you. For the real spotters Level 4 could be achieved gaining you the honour (?) of having your name put on a plaque hanging in the Anti-tank Division for all to see; it was a bridge too far for me, I was more than happy passing Level 3.

At eight weeks long the Milan Platoon Commanders' course was certainly a rapid learning experience, when asked at the validation process on the final day what should be included or excluded, all the usual cries of more 'phys' and weekend work could be heard. The course for me had been long enough and hard enough, and at the same time a valuable insight, not only into the world of Anti-Tanking, but also working within higher formation. Having spent all my career so far in the relative tranquillity of a rifle company, I look forward to getting out and seeing how Battalion HQ runs in the field and contributing myself to the overall plan. Only time will tell how much the course really taught me and how much I actually have left to learn.

Captain Ed Colver  
OC Milan Platoon

### SINGAPORE SEVENS 2003

Captain Ed Colver, Lieutenants Mark Crawford and Ed Smith and Private Toni Karavaki, were selected to represent the British Army (Germany) Sevens Team (BA (G)) at the 56th Singapore Cricket Club International Rugby Sevens Tournament at the end of October 2003. After successfully retaining the Munich Sevens Trophy in Germany, aspirations to do well were high. The team trained for two days at JHQ Rheindahlen before departing from Dusseldorf airport for a 20-hour journey via Dubai, and Colombo.

We finally arrived in Singapore jet lagged and tired, but with plenty of time to recover and prepare for the tournament. After a good sleep the squad made the trip to the Singapore Police Academy's training grounds. It was here we would train for four days before the tournament. We immediately realized how hard a sevens tournament in these conditions would be with

the heat and humidity. However, by the end of our training we were as prepared as we could be without actually playing any matches.

Early Saturday morning the pool stages of the well-sponsored tournament started in the relatively cool conditions against a traditionally strong Australian side, called Palmyra. As expected, it was a challenging start, but with a relatively scratch side, we managed to gel together right from the start, playing some fluent open rugby. We ended up running out convincing 38-12 winners. Kurumi from Japan were too weak for the strong running players within the BA(G) team and we ran out 52-0 winners. This set up a group 'winner takes all' tie against Oriental Rongotai ('Orries'). The side from New Zealand were contenders for the whole tournament and we were expected to be well beaten. It was therefore a shock to the crowd when BA (G) took



**Lieutenant Mark Crawford tackling.**

the early lead. However the 'Orries', boasting an All Black amongst their ranks, fought back strongly. Eventually their pace, power and flair was too strong for us and they won the game 17-5 to top the group. However we had qualified for day two of the main competition and an early night was the order of the day.

After an encouraging first day we were drawn to play last years' runners up, Durban Harlequins from South Africa. Once again we were expected to be well beaten but after our display against the 'Orries' the crowd believed we might be able to cause an upset and got right behind us. It was now a case of win or be knocked out into the Plate competition. Like our game against Oriental Rongotai we took the early lead, shocking the Durban-based team. By half time they had levelled the score at 7 a-piece and left all to play for in the second half. After some nail-biting rugby the South African side struck first with a converted try. BA (G) realized the significance of the next score and were able to rally to cross the Harlequins' line. With the missed conversion we were two points behind and only a few minutes to play. With growing pressure Durban seized on our all out attacking rugby, to score a break-away try from their own twenty two and secure a 21-12 victory. This sent us into the Plate competition and left Durban Harlequins to go on and win the tournament.

A tight game against the Thai Barbarians demonstrated that the Plate competition was no forgone conclusion. However we were never behind and secured a 19-12 victory. The semi-final of the Plate drew us against

Team Atlantis from the USA. They had faced some tough opposition, including the full Army side, and at times looked very impressive. As expected it was a particularly physical game. A tense affair at times but BA (G) won 28-14 setting up a Plate final against Impala from Kenya. After two days of tough competition, legs were weary, particularly for the likes of Ed Smith who had played every game. The final proved one hurdle too many. The Impala team had come specifically to win the Plate competition and the combination of their power and pace was too much for the BA (G) side that, for the first time in the tournament, started to fall off tackles. By half time the game was all but over, but with some fresh legs the BA (G) side fought back in the second half scoring two tries to the Kenyans' one. However, the game was lost and Impala were deserved winners 34-12.

Private Guana was also in Singapore representing the full Army Sevens side that lost a tough game against Durban Harlequins in the Semi-Finals 19-14.

Sunday evening was an opportunity for the players to let their hair down, have a drink and enjoy themselves. After a great night out at the tournament closing party, we had a couple of days left free to shop and take in the sights of Singapore, including billiards at Raffles with obligatory Singapore Slings and visiting the man-made beaches of Sentosa Island. Visit <http://www.scc.org.sg> for more information.

Lieutenant Mark Crawford  
Corunna Company



## COASTAL SKIPPERS' COURSE

Following the very successful 4 Brigade Sail Training Week, I had promised myself that I would find time to 'get away' and have a go at gaining my Coastal Skipper certification. Predictably, the easiest time to do it would be during my leave and so I booked myself on the first course in November.

The course involved four days of tuition followed by a one-day examination on board a Victoria 34 yacht, based at Gosport on the Solent. Aboard, there was one other candidate, a second crew member (galley slave), along for the experience and the instructor. We were a bit short handed but it meant lots of opportunity for me to improve my skills.

During the four days we visited Cowes, Lymington, Yarmouth, Poole, and went up Southampton Water and the River Hamble. The conditions were, at times, quite lively. My first passage as skipper was a night sail, steadily beating across from The Needles to Poole in a Force 6. The sailing was exhilarating but trying to identify red, green or white flashing navigation buoys so close to 5th November, often proved to be the trickiest part!

The syllabus involves being able to plan passages, sail into harbours, anchor under sail, be safe in fog and knowing the rules of the road. This was all covered throughout the training, albeit sometimes theoretically. My fellow candidate was an Army Racing Team member and so I was able to learn a lot about competitive sailing as well.

On Friday, the examiner stepped aboard. All he wanted to see was that we could sail the boat safely and efficiently. Once we had done this, we'd get the ticket. Thankfully, we both achieved this and the last passage I had to plan was getting from the Isle of Wight to Gosport before closing time in the pubs.

The Coastal Skipper course allows greater scope than the Day Skipper qualification in terms of the distance offshore and night sailing. I hope to be able to use the qualification to take soldiers away to the Army Sail training Centre at Kiel, to sail the Baltic Sea and develop their interest in sailing. Like my own experience though, I suspect the difficult part will be finding the time!

Lieutenant Paul Tetlow  
Burma Company

## LORD OF THE FIRERINGS : TWIN TOWERS (IFFC/GUNNERY CAMP)

It's cold, wet, windy and just about to snow! It must be time to deploy on the annual Dukes epic excursion at Bergen-Hohne (BH), near the village of Belsen, northern Germany. Also known as the AFV Gunnery/Infantry Field Firing Camp (IFFC). With all the ingredients at hand, and on the anniversary of the Holocaust, we set off to do what had never been done before, AFV Gunnery Camp concurrent with the IFFC. Many of you will by now be thinking that we complete field firing and gunnery camp every year and there is nothing unique in that. What is unique is that the Twin Towers (IFFC/Gunnery Camp) is now being produced on a virgin location known as Bergen-Hohne (from the Latin: Breconecos Beconsecous) and is to be done at a range complex designed for Main Battle Tanks!

On the first Recce, we were met by the local Range Liaison Officer, who laughed when we told him of our plan. "These are tank ranges mate. If you do achieve your field firing camp then let me know" as he walked out still chuckling to himself.

Remembering the motto "Fortune Favours the Brave" (or mad) we proceeded to look at the ranges. Only to be greeted by the local range wardens, who, though very friendly, helpful and courteous, alas did not speak a word of English. In vain a mass of Range Conducting Officers (RCOs) tried to ask questions about the ranges in their fluent German dialect: "Zwie pommefrits mit mayonnaise bitter?" Obviously these wardens must have originated from the southern regions of Germany, as they did not seem to understand our fluent German tongue. One glance at the layout and indeed the chewed up barren landscape did confirm that these were tank ranges. If more confirmation were needed, it came from the puzzled look on the wardens face as we gestured Marcel Marceau style our intentions. It would seem

that our Saxon brethren have more flair for safety than we island dwellers; this was evident as we read from their reciprocations that we must fit tracks and road wheels to our rifles or we would be in contravention of Range Standing Orders!

So, post Christmas Leave, the Battalion trundled up to BH. Just as we loaded the train the Intelligence Officer decided to inform everyone that he did not have a Driver or Commander for his vehicle, so could not put it on the train (bless him).

On our normal daily rounds of the range, we stopped off at 7B and approached the tower, only to hear two young officers giggling to themselves. On entering the tower all became apparent! "Sergeant Major listen to this". The happy couple then pressed the intercom button and giggled to the German range warden: "Group sex bitter", then preceded to fall about laughing. They then told me that "group" meant a mass of targets, "sex" - target pit six and "bitter" - please. We left with the sound of them still tittering!

Meanwhile back at the ranch (Oerbke Camp) the safety supervisors and RCOs, who came primarily from HQ Company, were getting put through their paces on the main square, practising for the live field firing ranges. Picture the scene: Young fit soldiers running up and down and the elder and more senior members of the Regiment puffing and panting, shouting, "slow down young man" and "shouldn't the front rank kneel and the centre stand?"

The dismounted troops (affectionately known as bayonets, storm troopers or puddle jumpers) progressed from individual fire and movement (F&M), pairs F&M, fire-team F&M, section F&M and culminating in platoon level attacks with fire support coming from the CQMS's bratty stand. Concurrent to all this was the

grenade range, where Sergeant Tim Morgan nearly chipped a nail and ruffled his hair (luckily there was a medic and pedicure to hand). 94mm Anti-Armour Outdoor Trainer range that Lieutenant Brave Sir Ham Brown ran (literally) and the 51mm mortar range.

As the dismounts leapt about in the snow, the AFV crews did their very best to increase the national debt by firing as much 30mm Rarden Canon and 7.62mm chain gun ammunition as humanly possible. This was only hampered by the occasional blizzard and Burma Company, who fired off most of the 7.62 before anyone else could get their hands on it.

After all the Battalion's newly trained gunners had completed their Initial Gunners' Tests, the Companies quickly progressed through static shoots, fire and movement exercises with single and multiple vehicles, finally achieving some excellent results on the Annual Crew Test. To the amazement of the Armoured Infantry Training Advisory Team (AITAT) even the BGHQ, Somme Company, REME, and CSMs were dragged from the depths of the burger tent to fire the various variant shoots with the pintle mount GPMG. This was achieved initially after a fault was found on the FV 432 that the hatch wasn't quite big enough for the larger members of the Mortar Platoon.

At the end of the package we checked that no one had any extra holes and wearily moved back to the safety of Osnabrück with a pat on the back for all concerned.

## 1 DWR SKIING : DUKES FACE A MOUNTAIN OF A CHALLENGE

Not since 1984 has the Duke of Wellington's Regiment entered the Alpine arena, but, having recently endured the sweltering heat of the Iraqi desert and helped by a favourable forecast of events, it was decided that this was the year to take to the mountains once again. The objective was to raise awareness and interest within the Battalion, replace our outdated planks with new state-of-the-art equipment and announce ourselves by competing at both the Infantry and, if successful, the Divisional Championships early in the New Year.

Infantry alpine skiing has long been thought the sole domain of Guardsmen, but happily, despite all the operational commitments that tie down so much of the Army today, the Infantry Ski Championships 2003/04 saw record attendance. To their credit eighteen regiments and training establishments provided twenty-five teams. The beautiful town of Val D'Isere in the French Alps was to host the Championships once again, placing the vast l'Espace Killy mountain area at our disposal.

The challenge that faced a relatively inexperienced Dukes' ski team was enormous. Four out of the six-man team would, within a month, be competing against some of the best downhill racers in the Army on the infamous Olympic "Piste Orange" course ... no mean feat for lads whose starting point is the snowplough turn!

The team left Belfast Barracks on 30 December 2003 and, despite a brief visit to the city of Torino, courtesy of some fine map reading by the skipper, the journey passed without incident! Training was to begin at 0800

In the making of this production no human or animals were hurt. Special thanks go to the following:

21 Engineer Regiment (BATSIMS team) - who tried their hardest to blow the lads up and proved that it is possible to handle explosives, without having links to al-Qaeda.

115 Provo Company, RMP (exercising troops) - who now know that fire and manoeuvre is not an action carried out when a fire alarm goes off in the block.

The Scots Guards (Permanent Range Team) - who planned and conducted a safe and testing platoon attack range and having a lot in common with the local range wardens, i.e. the dislike of the 'mash men'.

1 CMSR (Med teams) - thankfully being redundant throughout the live firing packages.

AITAT - their worthy advice and, more importantly, showing the RCOs how to work a German intercom system.

Mr Andy Petrylak (civilian liaison to range control) - proving that there is life after the Army.

WO2 Hollinshead  
Battle Group Gunnery Warrant Officer  
WO2 Hind  
Operations Warrant Officer

on Monday 1 December, but 70mph winds and blizzard conditions ensured that the mountain became a no-go zone for the first 48 hours. Frustrating for all the teams who were by now chomping at the bit to get going, but for us team captains it did allow an invaluable period during which the inevitable administration nightmare could be dealt with. In addition, it also permitted a suitably detailed recce of the legendary "Val de Sloane Square's" nightspots to be conducted ... with very satisfactory results!

Week one saw groups of ability decided and half-day training conducted to start to build up those racing muscles. The standard of instruction was excellent with the top groups being taught by former French Olympic ski team members. Communication proved slightly more problematic with, in the end, a 'melange' of French, English, German and sign language settled for! The lack of snow that dogged much of the Alps was at this point having little effect on us, as Val D'Isere is one of the highest 'stations de ski' with its base at 1850m, allowing skiers to reach some 3600m on the glacier 'la Grande Motte'. Its only downside is that at that height when the prevailing North wind blows temperatures regularly get down to below -20°C.....still it keeps away the tourists!

Friendships between teams were soon established with the aid, in particular, of a fancy dress parade through the bars of this notorious party town. The Paras predictably turned out in a variety of drag, which made virtually every woman in the district feel instantly better about herself, while Saddam Hussain made an appearance in several different guises! The Dukes,

utterly unprepared for such an eventuality, cobbled together some of the worst attempts at Superheros' costumes ever witnessed. The skipper, determined to make up for his map reading blunder, tried to turn a set of thermals, orange card and borrowed curtain material into a Superman outfit ... alas he was robbed of the 'Best Fancy Dress' prize!

Week two brought with it a far more demanding training schedule, as race tuition was now to begin in earnest. Mornings were spent getting to grips with the extremely technical slalom discipline, while the afternoons were dominated by the search for ever-greater downhill speed. Trying to put the two together was the tricky part and for most of the week many of us resembled snowmen! Those moments of 'off piste venture' aside, the team made massive progress. In particular the improvement of Private Darren Grange, a first time skier, was remarkable. Already twice moved up groups in ability, he was pushing his more experienced team members for a place in the final four. Private 'Cheeseburger' Walker was also doing well, using his natural assets to great effect in setting some very competitive downhill times.

As we moved into the third and final week of training the bar was once again raised. Concentrating on the more technical race disciplines, we found ourselves racing on ever-steeper slopes, pushing ourselves to the limit to improve our times. Unfortunately we lost Sergeant Mark Colquitt on just such a run, as he suffered a bad fall and ruptured ligaments in his left shoulder. Thankfully he didn't suffer a break and intensive physiotherapy over the Christmas break left him with an outside chance of making the Championships in January. To potentially lose our most experienced skier at the end of the training stage was a bitter pill to swallow, but it reinforced our determination to do well at the Infantry races and earn our place at the Divisionals.

On Christmas Eve the team flew back to various parts of the UK and Germany to join their families for a few days. With the serious racing now just around the corner, the orders were to put the feet up and relax ... something that comes naturally to most of the team!

The New Year brought with it a large dump of snow and all was set fair for the forthcoming competition. The final four had established itself and the team was to be boosted by the return of an 80% fit Sergeant Colquitt. 'Team Tomato', as we were affectionately known, assembled at 0830 on 3 January 2004 at the top of the Olympic run to inspect the Giant Slalom course set as our seeding race. Good individual performances to get favourable seeding positions for the overall competition

were paramount, as by the time fifty or so of the 111 competitors have raced down the slope it can resemble more of an obstacle course than a racing track! Happily we enjoyed a morale-boosting day with both Private Walker and Lieutenant Shand finishing in the top thirty, while Private Grange finished a very creditable 51st.

The good work done by the team during the seeding races paid off the next day as we undertook the first major event, the Slalom. Undoubtedly the most technically demanding, the stakes were upped as the rules dictate that a failure to complete the first run would lead to automatic disqualification from the second. For a team to score points, three of the four men must complete both runs. The team exceeded expectations with Lt Shand finishing 25th while Private Walker and Sergeant Colquitt followed close behind in the mid thirties. The team had notched up some useful points which ensured we had



**1 DWR Ski Team: Private Walker, Sergeant Colquitt, Lieutenant Shand and Private Grange.**

made a solid start to the competition.

The second race day was earmarked for Giant Slalom. Both technically demanding and fast, the course favoured the more experienced skiers and it unfortunately caught out our team avalanche starter, Private Walker, who in his usual bullish manner was butchering the piste until a moment of unexpected 'air time' ended his race! Fortunately all was not lost as the three remaining team members did well with Lieutenant Shand recording his highest ever finish coming in 22nd while Sergeant Colquitt and Private Grange finished 51st and 52nd respectively. Private Grange was fast proving to be something of a natural on skis and surpassed all expectations with this result. We had gained more valuable points, but needed to continue in this vein if we were to justify a place at the forthcoming Divisional Championships.

The downhill is without doubt the spectators' favourite and requires a bit of skill and an awful lot of bottle on behalf of the competitors. We were to be racing the Ladies Olympic Downhill course and were afforded a special training day on that piste to prepare. Unfortunately two competitors suffered broken legs during separate falls, which lowered morale a bit, but just highlights the courage that all show when taking part in such races.

The Infantry Downhill itself got under way the next morning and team Dukes were soon under pressure, as the skipper didn't trouble the time keepers, producing a spectacular wipe-out more likely to earn points at a gymnastics event! However the remaining three team members held their nerve to complete the course and thus safeguard team points. Private Walker did especially well coming in 37th overall.

The final event of this, the 19th year of the Infantry Alpine Training Camp, was to be the Super-G. A bridge between the Giant Slalom and the Downhill, it is perhaps the most physically demanding of all the races. Having had a relatively poor last event we had lost ground against our nearest rivals, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and Royal Welsh Fusiliers, and were lying in 13th place out of 25. Failure to score well in this last event would see us slip further down the table and undermine the efforts of the first two days. This year's Super-G took place on the same piste as the downhill, which ensured a fast and exciting climax to the Championships. Both Lieutenant Shand and Private Walker, now within just a couple of seeding places of each other, were under pressure to set competitive times, to allow the inexperienced Private Grange just a little more leeway. They did so with just seven hundredths of a second separating them as they finished 35th and 36th respectively. Yet it was Private Grange who once again secured the team points with another gutsy performance as he finished 50th overall.

As the final placings were confirmed, the Dukes had finished a very creditable 13th, beating some notable skiing Regiments including the Scots and Grenadier Guards' A-Teams, as well as the Devon and Dorset Regiment along the way. We had fought hard and earned our place at the forthcoming IUK Armoured Divisional Championships to be held the following week at the Les Contamines resort. The team could feel very satisfied at achieving the goal we had set ourselves. In particular, congratulations go to Sergeant Colquitt who despite his bad shoulder, pipped his fellow old men to win the Infantry Veterans Prize! In addition all four members of the ski team received their Advanced Ski Proficiency Qualifications from the Infantry Alpine Association.

A suitably liquid awards presentation and dinner was a fitting end to a superbly run and very enjoyable Infantry Alpine Ski Camp. The move to Les Contamines was a relatively short one but unfortunately the good weather did not hold. The Divisional Championships were to kick-off in truly atrocious conditions as heavy rain turned the opening Giant Slalom seeding course into a farcical affair. For the later seeds it became more a matter of survival than a genuine attempt to race. This was a great pity for the field of 122 competitors who made up the 26 teams. Despite this Private Walker did extremely well to finish 44th while Lieutenant Shand and Private Grange finished 61st and 68th respectively.

After a further day of bad weather, which forced the total abandonment of all racing, things did eventually start to brighten up. The team disciplines then got under way with the actual Giant Slalom. Unfortunately Private Walker could not build on his success during the seeding, as an early fall effectively ruled him out of contention. Thankfully the rest of the team enjoyed greater fortune to post a respectable opening team score. Lieutenant Shand finishing 44th with Private Grange 59th and Sergeant Colquitt 82nd left the team positioned 16th overall.

The team Slalom was a particularly challenging affair played out over two days in near blizzard conditions. Staged over three runs, competitors were forced to trust

both their luck and judgement on a course more fit for the luge! However the Dukes were steady if unspectacular, finishing 14th as a team, with Lieutenant Shand 47th, Private Grange a very impressive 51st, Private Walker 53rd and Sergeant Colquitt 57th.

With just a couple of days before the end of the IUK Armoured Divisional Meeting, the final seedings were worked out to decide who from across the Divisional and HQ LAND-sponsored competitions would make the final cut for the Army Championships. A strong field ensured that the IUK Armoured Division was well represented being allocated 58 places. For the Dukes this ensured that both Lieutenant Shand and Private Walker would just qualify, while unfortunately Private Grange and Sergeant Colquitt would dip out. However both can feel very proud of what they have achieved in their first season of competitive racing. Determined to go out on a high, the team attacked the final Super-G event with gusto as both Privates Walker and Grange led the way with fine times, to leave us once again finishing in 13th position overall.

By finishing mid-table in the Divisional Championships we had exceeded expectations, with the added honour of having two team members make it all the way to the Army Championships. The team had succeeded in achieving what it set out to do, putting Dukes' skiing back on the map and having a thoroughly good time doing it! For Lieutenant Shand and Private Walker a journey to Serre Chevalier, a resort in the southern French Alps, awaited together with the chance to race against the best the Army had to offer.

As one would expect for an Army final, the standard of competition was extremely high. As a debutant at the Army finals it is very difficult to climb the ladder in terms of seeding position, as the Committee take racers' past years' results into consideration. This policy ensured that both Lieutenant Shand and Private Walker would start right at the back of the field. A realistic aim



**Private Walker tackles a tricky Army Giant Slalom course.**



we both held for our first season was to break into the top 100 Alpine skiers in the Army.

We were thankful for excellent conditions, as a reasonable start was made in the opening Giant Slalom with Lieutenant Shand and Private Walker finishing 85th and 95th respectively out of 113. Undoubtedly the most physical race we had experienced, it emphasised the huge jump in standard that exists between the Divisional and Army level. The Slalom event was very tightly-fought with, remarkably, just fifteen seconds separating all competitors. Again it proved a real battle at the back end of the field, but with finishes of 76th and 83rd Lieutenant Shand and Private Walker were at least on course to start creeping up the rankings.

The next two days were earmarked for mandatory downhill training prior to the event itself which would take place on the quite terrifyingly quick Luc Alphard black run.

We were blessed with perfect conditions for the much-vaunted Norwich Union Army Downhill competition and the racing certainly lived up to expectation. The course speed record, set in last years' World Cup Championship downhill event held at the resort, was an incredible 138km/h ... nearly 90mph for those who still deal in old money! The winner of the Army downhill this year clocked a healthy 118km/h while both Lieutenant Shand and Private Walker broke the hundred barrier. Lieutenant Shand recorded his best score to date finishing 63rd with Private Walker coming home in 86th position.

The final event of the 2004 Army Alpine Season was the BAE Systems Super-G. For the Dukes a good finish was needed to ensure that both would break into the top one hundred Army male skiers. Thankfully both

Lieutenant Shand and Private Walker registered competitive times and finished in 70th and 76th position respectively.

As the final seeding places were confirmed, Lieutenant Shand had moved from his opening position at 109 to 87, while Private Walker had similarly improved from 110 to 101. Both are to be awarded Infantry Colours for their performance at the Army Competition, which has put the icing on the cake of what has been a truly fantastic experience. Very few Alpine enthusiasts will ever get the opportunity to race due to the enormous logistical burden it places upon the organisers. We are certainly grateful to the Committees at Infantry, Divisional and Army level for all the work they put in to provide us with such a high level of race piste and necessary surrounding infrastructure. The team is also very grateful to the Battalion and Regimental HQ who provided a substantial budget which ensured we could cover our costs. In addition I would like to thank our generous outside sponsors, Cars Direct, Osnabrück Tax Free Sales and MG Rover who all played their part.

The future is always a difficult thing to plan for in our business and due to an operational tour next year it is likely that skiing will have to be put on hold. However the experience of this season has taught us much and established the Dukes within the Army Alpine network. Success breeds success and, if the likes of Privates Walker and Grange can be brought on to form the core of the team, then there is no reason why we cannot be challenging for top Infantry team honours in years to come.

Lieutenant Andy Shand  
OC 2 Platoon, OIC Skiing

# The East and West Riding Regiment

## Commanding Officer's Introduction

Ring out the old year and ring in the new - but not before celebrating our successes. Last year the East and West Riding Regiment deployed over one hundred soldiers in support of the Regular Army. Some accounts of their experiences follow.

The Regiment prepared for and was exercised in the new role within homeland defence as the Civil Contingency Reaction Force for the Yorkshire area. We continued to recruit successfully within the Dukes' footprint area and train in war fighting to meet our primary role.

And what a year 2004 promises to be! Forty one soldiers continue to serve with 1 Light Infantry in Iraq under Captain Andy Cooper PWO(V) and Lieutenant Simon Newiss DWR(V). In September the Regiment will mobilise a company group of approximately one hundred and forty officers and soldiers for duty on Operation Telic 5 for a six month tour.

The tour will be a considerable commitment for the Regiment, its soldiers, their families and employers. It is also one of great historical note and very positive for the future of the Territorial Army. It is a challenge to which I am sure the Dukes' Territorials will rise, as indeed they have done over the last twelve months. The Regiment will be the lead unit for the Brigade FTX on Annual Camp and will provide training support for affiliated Cadet organisations and will undertake a major recruiting, retention, representation and media surge in Yorkshire.

Finally, our football team under the command of RSM Craddock has reached the semi-final of the Army Minor Unit Cup. Not quite the Rugby Cup, but I hope to report success in the next issue of this magazine!



**Six Territorial Soldiers from Keighley Platoon of the East and West Riding Regiment who are currently undergoing acclimatisation and training at Az Zubayr Port in Southern Iraq in preparation for their tour of operational duty working alongside 40 Regiment Royal Artillery. They are (left to right) Private Mark Short, Lieutenant Jason Hunt, Private Matthew Hastings, Lance Corporals Paul Bradwell, Kev Cook and Phil Lythe. The six are pictured here beside one of the Land Rovers they will use to go out on patrols across Southern Iraq. Photo by Chris Fletcher**

### **EAST AND WEST RIDING REGIMENT ON OPERATION TELIC 2 19 June - 5 November 2003**

Forty-four members of the East and West Riding Regiment were quite surprised to receive a brown envelope on their doorsteps on Saturday 26 May 2003. It informed them of the possibility of a tour of Iraq with 40th Regiment Royal Artillery (40 Regiment) for the next few months and this "possibility" quickly turned into a definite mobilisation for the members of the platoon the following Tuesday drill night.

It was initially envisaged we would supply a full infantry platoon of some 28 + 1, with the rest making up a "second XV" in case of need and that we would work as a complete unit with 40 Regiment, however, as the often repeated TA maxim: "No plan survives contact with the Regular Army" held true, we turned up at our respective Drill Halls on 19 June 2003 and moved to Wakefield, with the confirmed news that we would be split up to work with individual batteries of 40 Regiment.

After a departing speech by our Commanding Officer and the RSM we departed on the first leg of our journey to the Reserve Training and Mobilisation Centre at Chilwell (RTMC), outside Nottingham, slightly apprehensive and some of us quite the worse for wear from our respective farewells the night before.

After previous experience of the mobilisation process in 1996 for Operation Resolute in Bosnia, I was not looking forward to the pre-deployment administration and training packages, as it had been very disorganised previously. However, I was very impressed with RTMC and its organisation which went very smoothly and professionally.

However, we left Chilwell after "speed admin" with 29 all ranks, after losing five through the medical examinations and for compassionate reasons, with more kit than I have ever seen issued in my eleven years in the TA. The standard of equipment was excellent and it made us feel a lot better after the recent comments in the media around the issue of desert equipment.

We arrived at RLC Grantham on 20 June after twenty-seven hours in Chilwell to undertake our pre-deployment training under the auspices of 16 Regiment RA for a further period of five days. The training was quite basic, covering the main areas of weapon handling and zeroing, first aid, mine awareness and NBC. This provided us with a "refresher", however, for some of the other non-infantry of the 150 in our group it was quite new! After meeting old friends from 52 Lowland Regiment in the Officers' Mess and conforming to stereotypical Officer behaviour (Pimms, late nights,

missing breakfast etc) we were met by Captain Rob Thompson of 40 Regiment. Rob was acting as our point of contact and arranged for our transport to Alanbrooke Barracks, Topcliffe, home of 40 Regiment.

We arrived late on the evening of 26 June and were accommodated above the Garrison Nursery (quite apt) and proceeded to make the area our own.

By 27 June we were still unsure of our date of departure, so a period of training was organised by E and WRR under WO2s Roberts and Scott and CSgt Hughes, Fontenay and Ypres Permanent Staff Instructors for the next two days. This was curtailed quite quickly, however, as on that same afternoon we were informed that we were to pack and be ready to leave Topcliffe by 2200hrs that night.

After a blur of admin and frantic repacking we set off to South Cerney and RAF Brize Norton, only to find that three of our party would not be flying out with us due to passport problems. They were left to be picked up by 40 Regt Regiment's rear party and would join us after what turned out to be ten days.

The flight was long and uneventful and after a short stopover at Hanover, we arrived at Basra International late on Saturday evening where we were met by a party of 40 Regiment and transported to Az Zubayr Port. It was strange to be loading with live rounds after so long; the last time being in Sarajevo 1996, which seemed like a lifetime ago. After a bumpy but uneventful hour we arrived and were bedded down in the old warehouses that had recently been vacated by IDWR.

The next ten days were taken up by an excellent acclimatisation package, which not only introduced us to the heat but also to the specific tasks we would be carrying out whilst we were with 40 Regiment. We zeroed our personal weapons (the excellent A2 version of the Rifle 5.56) at Umm Qasr port and were introduced to the Minimi, which some of the Platoon were familiar with after Exercise Prickly Pear 2000 and also the AK series and other Iraqi weapons. We received our theatre specific briefs, lessons in Arabic (our favourite words being "Moomkin" and "Jamal" –

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The ten days' package soon came to an end and the three sections went their separate ways. 1 Section under Corporal "Doris" Dawson consisting of Ypres Company and attached Fontenay were attached to 6/36 Battery in Az Zubayr. 2 Section under Corporal Steve Longfield consisting of Imphal and Fontenay to 38 Battery to Abu Al Khasib and Al Faw and 3 Section, a mixed section of Ypres, Fontenay and Minden under Corporal "Skip" Whitehead to 136 Battery at Az Zubayr Port. This left myself, Colour Sergeant Jason Credland and Sergeant Dave Carswell without specific roles, but after an interview with CO 40 Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Nugee, we were quickly found roles. Colour Sergeant Credland was attached to the B Squadron the Light Dragoons working in a G2/G5 role (I at last understand what the Gs now mean) in Intelligence and Civil affairs, Sergeant Carswell with 38 Battery at the outpost in Al Faw in a G4 role and myself as 2IC of the Police Evaluation and Training Team (PETT) working from Az Zubayr port.

As the sections were split up, I did have a remit from the Commanding Officer 40 Regiment to visit them as often as I thought necessary, which turned out to be once every 7-10 days, the longest time between visits was our "Foreign Legion" outpost at Al Faw, which I do admit took a long time to get to and may have been the poor relation in terms of visits but, strangely, they did not seem to complain!

My own role during July to November was one of working on the ground with a mixed team from 40 Regiment, 1LI, Light Dragoons and 1 RMP, at times up to ten strong visiting the eleven Iraqi police stations within our area of responsibility, evaluating their effectiveness alongside my RMP colleagues against a series of factors decided by the chaps at Basra Palace and then assisting in their training on basic security and police issues. We undertook this training initially at a central location in Camp Chindit in Az Zubayr and from mid July at each of the police stations in our AOR.

The job itself was excellent and as a TA subaltern I was very pleased to be working with the Regular Army and I learnt many things from my time in the job, from Captain Dennis Law, Battery Captain of 136 Battery and my immediate boss, 2 Lieutenant Darryl Stearman my oppo and IC of the embedded RMP detachment with 40 Regiment, WO2 "Brummie" Furlong and the rest of the PETT team in no order whatsoever: Sergeants "Jacko" Jackson, Tom Jones and Nick Carter and Pipe Major Innes Anderson. Great people to work with who made my time in Iraq so much better than it could have been and whom I will not forget.

The welfare packages available to each section varied considerably, from internet access and a fully stocked gym in Az Zubayr, to mud pies and dubious publications in Al Faw, although I can only praise the way we were looked after during our time with 40 Regiment, who treated us with no difference whatsoever from anyone else in the Regiment.



**Corporal Dawson.**



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**19 June - 5 November 2003**

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Corporal Dawson.



We arrived back in the UK via 747 charter on 4 November 2003 at Teeside International Airport with all members of the platoon fit and healthy, apart from two soldiers who left during the tour for compassionate reasons and were missed by all in their sections.

After a mix up with transport (assumption being the mother of all problems) we eventually returned to Chilwell at 2300hrs 5 November and started the demobilisation procedures. This continued until noon

the following day when we were met by a coach that returned us to Wakefield slightly more tanned and fitter then when we left there in June. A welcome by Lieutenant Colonel Mark Lodge, CO E and WRR, was followed by transport to our Drill Halls and then off home on the afternoon of 5 November, twenty weeks after we had left.

Lieutenant Jason Hunt



Left to right: LCpl Lythe, LCpl Short, Cpl Dawson, Pte Hastings, LCpl Bradwell, Pte Ellis, Pte Birks.

### FONTENAY (DWR) COMPANY

Weekend soldiers (I don't think so)! Since our last submission the Company has had a further twelve soldiers deployed to the Gulf on Op Telic 3. Lieutenant Newiss, Corporals Baldwin, Butterworth, Dolan, Wass, Privates Bailey, Crookes, Ellin, Lund, Robson, Williams and Winter are all doing the business for the Light Infantry, and have been doing so since October. At present Fontenay Company has the largest contingent of soldiers deployed in the Gulf from the Regiment. December saw the return of Corporal Whitehead, Privates Birks, Blagojevic, Brook, Brunton and LeGross from the Gulf.

Despite the loss of Lieutenant Newiss and some quality Junior Non Commissioned Officers, the Company still managed to carry out some effective training during this period. In October the Company deployed to Whinny Hill in Catterick to practise their fighting skills in an urban environment. This training gave some of the younger soldiers the first chance to show off their aggression and enthusiasm. In November the Company was called out along with the remainder of the Regiment for the Brigade Civil Contingency Reaction Force (CCRF) FTX. This exercise gave the soldiers the opportunity to carry out tasks that they normally wouldn't do, such as Quick Reaction Force

(QRF) tasks and cordon duties. It also offered the opportunity to see how the emergency services operated in such circumstances.

The Company is still in a good position to win the Champion Company competition this year, despite having a pretty disappointing Christmas weekend on the sports field. Having said this, the rugby team put up a valiant performance and were only narrowly beaten by Ypres Company (and some dodgy decisions by the referee) in the final. The regimental football team is also going great at the moment, winning the 15 (NE) Brigade Cup, and at the time of writing are preparing to face 7/10 Field Laundry Unit in the first round of the TA Cup on 8 Feb '04. No doubt they will turn out in a very clean football strip (until we kick them all over the pitch). This success is largely down to the following Fontenay lads, Warrant Officers Roberts (x2) and Padley, Sergeant Burton (x1), Privates Brook, Mellor (x4) and Tibble (x6) who have contributed 13 of the 15 goals scored so far.

The Company is now preparing for the forthcoming Inter-Platoon competition and Exercise Martial Merlin, both of which take place in March. However, before these events there is still the very enjoyable Field Firing weekend up at Warcop at the end of February.



**Corporal Whitehead, Privates Brook and Brunton. The Barnsley element on their return from the Gulf.**



**Corporal Wass leading Private Brunton into battle during the OBUA weekend at Whinny Hill.**

Colour Sergeant Geoff Harding has finally decided to hang up his boots after 41 years of service, and the Company would like to wish him all the best for the future. I would like to welcome his replacement Colour Sergeant Dave Richards to the Company, who joins after serving 22 years with the Kings Regiment. He is currently working hard in raising his standards to that of a "Duke". Also congratulations go out to Lance

Corporals Brown, Hyde and Surgey on their recent promotions. The Company is looking in great shape for the future, with a large amount of soldiers attending and passing career courses at all levels. Finally I would like to welcome Captain Mike Watson to the Company as Second-in-Command.

WO2 Baz Roberts  
SPSI Fontenay Company

## **THE TERRITORIALS OF YESTERYEAR STANLEY LANGLEY'S WAR**

*We continue Stanley Langley's tale following his capture at St Valery-en-Caux from pp130-131 of edition 253 - Ed.*

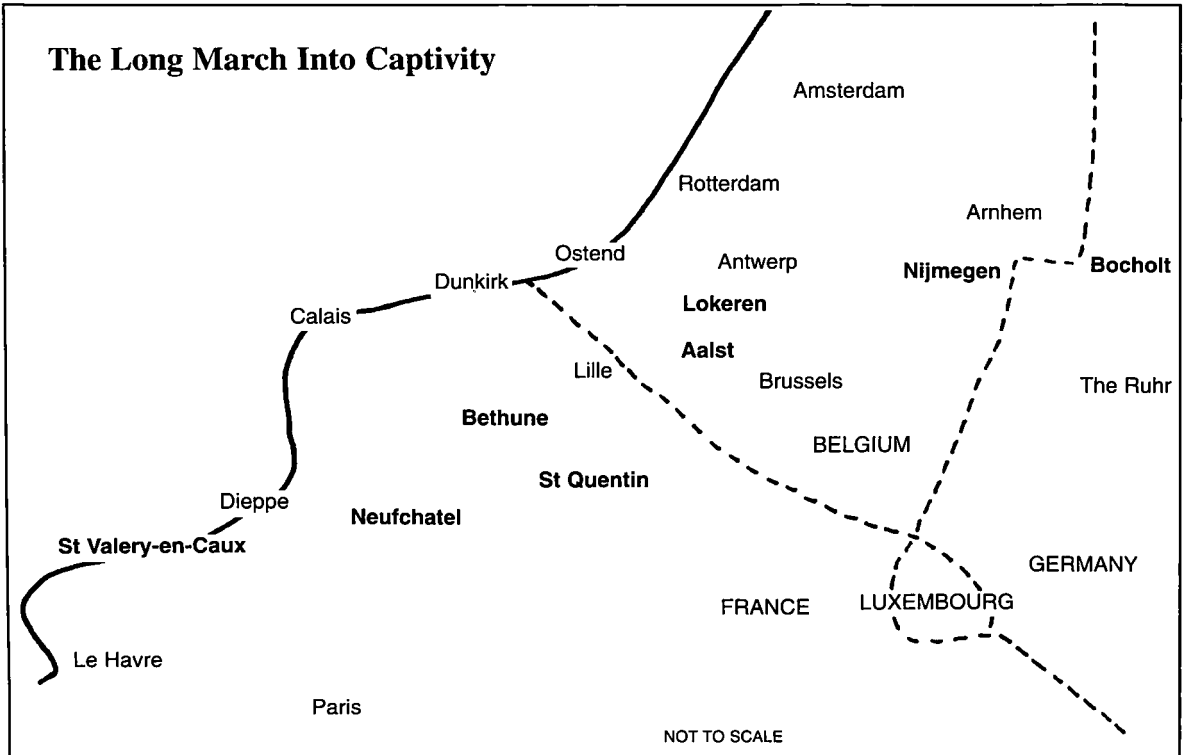
### **Into Captivity**

We got off the boat and went up the beach. There was a horse trough into which I dived for a moment. The Germans marched us up steps at the cliff face. They were fearsome, and to hear their language for the first time was frightening. Get out of line and they butted you with their rifles. A long march followed, maybe thirty-five miles, to, I think it was, Neufchatel. The first German word I heard and learned was Kriegsgefangenlager - prisoner-of-war camp. Next day, off again, marching to another field, machine-guns round us. There seemed like thousands of us, mainly of the 51st Highland Division. On the third day they gave us food: a tin of meat-and-veg rations - one tin between twenty-eight men, about a spoonful each. We thought, they're not going to shoot us or they wouldn't waste food on us. Later, they gave us some Dutch round cheeses, a little square piece each. We seemed to be zig-zagging across France and Belgium. There was no transport at all; we walked. I remember a stop in a football field in Bethune, on about 21 June. I remember St Quentin very well because my future father-in-law

had been there in the First World War. We stayed the night in a ruined building. Then on we marched, through Aalst and Lokeren. (*See map overleaf - Ed.*)

This was the worrying thing: that this was happening to me, and my parents and Marjorie didn't know about it. A lot of the blokes had got back, most of them, to England and they didn't know what had happened to us. They couldn't say, Stanley is alright; nobody knew, and this worried me a lot. Especially as during the first war my mother's brother, whom she was very fond of, went missing under similar circumstances. They never heard anything more from him. So I thought my mother must be going through agonies. Somewhere in Belgium I saw two nuns and I managed to pass them my address scribbled on a scrap of cardboard I had picked up. Months afterwards my parents got a letter from them saying they had seen me.

We reached Nijmegen and the Rhine, in Holland. There were coal barges there and we went in the hold of one - latrines on the side of the boat - and rested for a couple of days. The long march continued through Emmerich and on to Bocholt in Germany. That was



where I first saw on a camp the words 'Arbeit Macht Frei' - 'work makes one free'. At last we piled onto a train, in cattle trucks, and I was feeling ill. It was dysentery. A big problem was loo paper: we didn't have any. I was passing blood so I used dock leaves, anything, to keep myself clean. The train was heading east, destination Poland.

#### The Polish Camps: Schubin and Warthelager

I arrived at Stalag 21B, Schubin, early in July, with very mixed feelings because I was so ill. The camp didn't make much of an impression because of this; except for Polish prisoners: their dirge-like music depressed me. We were in solid huts with straw on the floor; toilets amounted to just a big hole dug in the garden with a plank stretched across. By this time I could hardly move. Yet I got to the doctor who couldn't do anything; people there were dying of dysentery. I thought, if I stay in that camp there was nothing for me. I found you were not allowed out of the camp on working parties if you were not fit, so I smuggled myself out with a group going to another camp.

Stalag 21D, Warthelager, was a former Polish cavalry camp near Posen (Poznan). We went on the train and walked a mile up a steep hill to the camp. Or rather, Angus McDonald, who became a good friend, carried me. I was put in the sick-bay and was seen by a German doctor who didn't want to do anything for me, he said, because the British naval blockade was harming German women and children. Why should he give me food or treatment? On another day, he said, "You are dying and you will go to the cemetery to your comrades". Eventually he told me I was to go into

hospital. I thought, thank God. "It will be no picnic". I told him it was no picnic here either. I asked for a Bible there and read the 23rd Psalm fervently.

At the end of July, which seemed rather ironic as it was about the time of the "Wakes" week at home in Mossley, I was in the hospital at Posen. What a way to spend a holiday! It was a Polish hospital commandeered by the Germans. They carried me to a bath of a few inches of tepid water and the attendants carried off my lice-ridden clothing at arm's length. They bathed me and carried me to a bed - the most wonderful sight I had seen. From this point the treatment by the Germans completely 'changed. Before it had been brutal, uncaring; now I was being looked after as well as I could have been anywhere.

It was there that I met Heinrich Tobes, a German soldier who had been a trainee priest before the war. He looked after me and came into the ward day and night. He assisted with my incontinence; he was absolutely remarkable. Heinrich even brought civilian women to see me who were there to visit their men folk. He was concerned that my parents had heard nothing from me, because having been sick I had not yet registered as a POW. I had no number, without which I couldn't send any letters. He tried to elicit sympathy for me.

I was in hospital for three months. Heinrich said to me, "You are going to be alright!" I always thought I would be alright, never thought of anything else. It was there that I had my first proper meal for months: he brought me bacon and potatoes - the bacon uncooked. he assured me they always ate it like that. I enjoyed it, of course.

When I was recovering, they put me in a room of my own, without a lavatory, and Heinrich had to lock me in at night. I told him I might need to go to the toilet during the night, so there was a problem. I made a suggestion, and Heinrich said, "A good idea!" So he left the key with me. I went down the corridor when needed, then locked myself in again. Even if I had been fit enough, I wouldn't have betrayed his trust by running away.

I remember looking out of the window and seeing a little child picking up a chair in the garden. I thought I wasn't fit enough even to do that. But I was getting better. When I left in October, still weak, Heinrich was very apologetic.

*(Editor's note: Mr Brian Norris, who has provided and edited for us this tale of Stanley Langley's War, went to considerable lengths to discover what eventually became of the compassionate Heinrich Tobes, with whom Stanley maintained contact for a while after the War, but then lost touch. It turns out that he became a Roman Catholic priest and then a missionary in Argentina, who used to cycle round his parish on a lady's bicycle. Since Stanley's death in October last year, Mr Norris has discovered that, in 1959, Father Tobes, having graduated to a moped, was out late one evening in his Argentinian parish when he was hit by a vehicle without lights and killed on the spot. A sad ending, of which Stanley was, of course, unaware.)*

I went back to the Warthelager camp like a ghost returning. I was not fit enough for work, couldn't straighten up. There was an iron rail they used to tether horses to. I bent to go under it, fell, and couldn't get up again. We had wooden stools to sit on and that was an ordeal. I weighed six stone, precisely eighty-four pounds. A German sergeant saw me and said through an interpreter, "This man should never be in a condition like this. Take him to the cookhouse and give him any food he wants". There wasn't much food in there, but they fed me.

Nearby, in the flat, wooded countryside, was a large German camp used for tank training. Every night we could hear tanks rumbling through, heading east. We sensed that before long they would go through Poland and attack Russia. When the news came, in June 1941, we said, that's it, they have bitten off more than they can chew. We put this thought to one of the older German guards. He said, "Yes, I know. But Germany will rise again if it takes a hundred years". He was dejected because he was old enough to know. The Russians would retreat and retreat, and then pour forward. It was only Hitler's silly ideas that made them do it. The day of reckoning would come. Later, we heard about Stalingrad. In our camp we had a secret radio. News would be written down each evening, and then passed to every hut.

Discipline was mainly self-discipline. There was a horse trough there and, occasionally, a prisoner might be thrown into it if he wasn't keeping himself clean. A POW sergeant-major was responsible for camp discipline; in the barrack room, Sergeants, who didn't need to work, were in control. Stealing was dealt with harshly. So discipline was more or less regulated from within. There were about five or six hundred of us.

Angus McDonald started writing a book and called it "My Struggle" - a take-off of Hitler's "Mein Kampf". Then a guard found it, one who could speak English, "You are making fun of the Fuehrer", he said. So Angus got seven days confinement in the local nick. The funny thing was, when they put him away he got better food than in the camp. Meanwhile, we were plagued with lice and the Germans wouldn't help us. So some of the men took lice off their clothes, put them in matchboxes and managed to transfer them to the guards' greatcoats. Then they did something about it.

By the end of 1940 the first Red Cross parcels were coming through. The first one was shared between four prisoners; the second was shared by three, the next by two. As a result of this, a man wrote home complaining that he had received only one-ninth of a parcel! He had added up 4 + 3 + 2, and then put a one over it. We couldn't reason with him, it became quite an argument. Curiously, the man had a few supporters for his arithmetic. Some people would argue about the silliest things.

In the following spring I had largely recovered, except for a hernia that they later treated well. The Germans wanted a joiner to go on a working party, so I volunteered. We took a train to Wronki, a village that had a former monastery. About twenty-five of us were in the monks' living quarters and we were turning it into a hospital. Conditions were better; more food, but not a lot. Out in the garden tomatoes were growing, so we had as many as we wanted.

I developed a septic finger and was sent to a military clinic. I went in with a guard and found it filled with German soldiers waiting to see their doctor. I took out of my pocket a tin of cigarettes from the Red Cross, fifty Gold Flake. Now Germans loved that brand before the war. All eyes popped out of their heads. One of them came across and politely asked if I would exchange one for a German cigarette. I felt it best to agree. So another stepped forward and soon they were queuing up. Well, the guard intervened and said, in effect, "Steady on, this man is a prisoner of war. You shouldn't be getting things from him!"

The doctor gouged out my painful finger with a pair of scissors and started going on about Churchill. I told him to never mind about him, what about this fellow of theirs? He's the one who started it all. Then he gave me a tiny piece of soap and told me to wash the finger with it. When I did this, back in camp, I had never seen anything like it. It bleached the finger white, took the poison out and cured it.

A word about escapes: the reality was that we were in a camp over a hundred miles from the nearest port, Danzig. You couldn't stack enough food up. You were working during the day and you were exhausted. It wasn't very practicable to think about it. We did have people who tried it, but they never got anywhere. Also, in Poland, whilst the majority of people were friendly, there were some, the Volkdeutsch, who were worse than the Germans themselves. It's all right talking about Colditz and other officers' camps. They had better food, and all the time in the world to plan escapes, make uniforms and forge documents. They didn't have to work as we did, kicked out of our beds at six-thirty with

"Raus!" Our rations were a bowl of soup and 250 grammes of dark rye bread a day. We weren't in a fit state to do anything. All we could think about was where we could get more food. The only hope was to go out on a working party and you might be given something extra. I would say the Lord's Prayer; it had a petition that was meant.

In Wronki there was a civilian jail where people were rounded up for little or no offence. The prisoners came to our monastery one day because we had a cesspit that had to be cleaned out. At first our guards told us to do it

and gave us little pans for the job. We objected, so that was why the others were brought in. In their striped uniforms, a yellow star if Jewish, I had never seen people in a more abject state. One day I had a bar of chocolate from a parcel and a Polish prisoner came up to me, his hands filthy from the cesspit reaching out. I dropped two pieces into them. Chocolate and filth went into his mouth in a flash. They scavenged through a tip of rotten tomatoes. We had it bad enough, but they were a lot worse off.

... to be continued

## BUSACO - 27 SEPTEMBER 1810

*We are grateful to Richard Diacon for sending us the following:*

The text inscribed in both Portuguese and English on a Memorial in the monastery at Busaco reads: "The glorious General Arthur Wellesley, Viscount Wellington and Baron Douro and, after, Count of Vimeiro, Marquis of Torres Vedras and of Douro, Duke of Ciudad Rodrigo of Victoria and of Wellington and Prince of Waterloo, spent the night following the Victory of Bussaco over the invading army of Massena on 27 September 1810 in this Convent."

The Battle of Busaco has not, perhaps, received the attention it deserves: it was important for three reasons in particular - (1) it was Wellington's first encounter with the French as sole Commander in the Peninsula; (2) it demonstrated most of the strategic and tactical dispositions which became a hall-mark of the Duke's battles; and (3) it was the first occasion during the Napoleonic War in which a French Army had been

soundly defeated. It was also the occasion on which the newly-trained Portuguese Army stood its ground and caused severe casualties, and dismay, to the French.

The battle was fought to secure possession by the French Army, under Massena, of a steep ridge, about a mile long, which barred their westward advance into Portugal and which had been selected by the Duke as the ground on which to fight. As he did in subsequent encounters, he concealed many of the defenders, and the reserves, behind the sky-line, building a rough track along which he could move troops unseen by his opponent. The area nowadays is heavily wooded, but, in 1810, the slopes up which the French were forced to attack were almost bare of trees.

In consequence, Massena suffered unsustainable losses and was forced to withdraw. But a few days later, he was able to outflank the Duke's position: that was the beginning of the long retreat (*withdrawal? Ed.*) to the Lines of Torres Vedras.

## THE DIARY OF 1846 PRIVATE WILLIAM BRADBURY

1/7th Battalion The Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regiment

### MY TRAVELS IN FRANCE AND BELGIUM

*This diary was transcribed from the original kept by Private James Bradbury by Bob Garside and amended into its current form by Scott Flaving. Clarifications, mainly place names, are in italics.*

1915

**April** Sailed from Folkstone about midnight on 15th April 1915. Landed at Boulogne early in the morning and marched up to St Martin's Camp. Left there at dinnertime and marched to Hesdigneul, entrained for Merville and stayed in an old iron foundry for the night. In the morning marched on about 1 mile to Neuf Berquin and stayed there for ten days, except four hours in the trenches for instruction with the 13th Londons. On 23rd April marched up to reserve billets near monastery between Fleurbaix and Bois Grenier, stayed there till 30th. Went in front line on 30th till May 3rd.

**May** Fleurbaix May 3rd to 6th. We were reserve company in monastery for the Aubers Ridge attack from 6th till 11th. On rest near Fleurbaix 11th till 15th. Front-line again 15th till 19th. On rest again from 19th till 23rd. Went in support to 148 Brigade whilst they took advanced trench from enemy. There from 23rd to 26th.

**June** On rest from 1st till 5th. Trenches again from 5th till 8th. Went down to 1/1st West Riding Field Ambulance Hospital with swollen right knee and stayed till 14th. Joined Battalion while on rest on 14th. We moved up into front-line on 16th and stayed till 22nd. We worked with 5th Battalion all this time. On 26th we left Fleurbaix and marched to Doulieu [*Le Doulieu*] and stayed there in bivvies (tents) till 29th. We then marched to a farm about 1 mile south of Meteren. Left this place about 5pm on 30th and marched to a wood at St Jean [*St Jan Ter Biezen*] near Proven. We were now in Belgium.

**July** Stayed in wood till 7th and marched up to a small wood near Currough Camp and stayed there the night. On 8th we went up into the trenches near St Julian, about 2 miles on the left of Ypres. During this time we had our first taste of gas. C Coy lost rather heavily through it. Practically all gas shells. We should have been relieved on 13th but, owing to the enemy making



- July** an attack on our left against the 148th Brig, round the International Sap the whole time. Went back to the same trenches Skipton Road sector from 18th to 23rd. Came down to the east side of the Yser canal about 1 mile behind the front-line till 28th, Skipton Road sector, 28th - 2nd Aug.
- Aug** On rest from 2nd to 7th. Went up Skipton Road in support dug outs, ration carrying. Bombardment from 2nd Battle of Hooge on night of 9th. Had to go up to and relieve C Coy early morning of 10th as they had suffered heavy losses. We had to be relieved ourselves in the afternoon as most of the men were suffering from some kind of poisoning. We lost our Platoon officer on the morning of the 10th. Killed by shrapnel/bullet. Lt Gibson (one of the best). Then came down to the west side of the canal from 10th to 16th. Front line from 16th to 22nd. Then came down to the east side of canal. Was on bridge guard (6 B) till we went back to a point between Elverdinghe and Poperinghe [*Elverdinge and Poperinghe*] on 28th for a rest.
- Sept** We then went up to Elverdinghe Wood on 8th as Brigade reserve till 14th. We moved up from there to support lines off Halifax Road (trench) on 17th. I was sent to hospital with a septic wound on left shin. The 1/3rd West Riding Field Ambulance near Poperinghe. I rejoined the Battalion on the Halifax Road sector on 23rd (reserves). We went up to front-line on 23rd till 27th.
- Oct** Down to the canal bank till the 1st when we went back to wood near Poperinghe. On rest till 13th. Front-line from 13th till 19th, down to canal bank from 19th to 25th. From 25th to 4th Nov on west bank of canal.
- Nov** Went back to rest camp at St Sixxie [*St Sixtus Abbey ?*] on 4th till 11th. From 11th to 27th (I was wounded by sniper across the back on 23rd) we had two days on the canal bank, two in the front-line, two in support, two in front-line, two on canal bank, two on front-line, two in support and two in front-line. We then went back to St Sixxie and were there from 27th till 4th Dec.
- Dec** My chum was wounded on 4th and died a week later at the base. Bert Fawcett. From 4th to 21st we worked same as from 11th to 27th Nov except that, owing to being short of men, we did three days in front-line and one in support. Gas attack on 15 mile front on 19th. They gassed for two hours but gained nothing with it. Landed at No 4 camp near old Brigade Headquarters early morning of 21st and stayed till Boxing Day when we marched up to Elverdinghe Wood. **Had a fairly good Christmas under the circumstances.** Whilst in Elverdinghe from 26th to 30th the enemy dropped 4 x 17inch shells, one of which put out 76 men, mostly of the 3rd Monmouthshires.
- 1916**
- Jan** Went to Currough Camp for the night and on 31st Dec marched to Houtkerque where we stayed till 11th Jan. **Had my 21st birthday there.** Stayed at Wormhout from 11th till 4th Feb.
- Feb** We marched to a small station (Esquelbecq station) and entrained there for Amiens, landed about noon on 5th and marched to Ailly-sur-Somme. Got on buses and rode to Mullins Midame [*Molliens de Vidame*]. Stayed till 12th when we marched back to Ailly-sur-Somme. On 13th we marched to Rubempre and on 14th went on to Buzzancourt [*Bouzincourt*]. All these three days it rained hard, hardly clearing at all. There till 23rd, when I went on leave, arriving home at tea time on 24th.
- Mar** Left home again on 2nd. Had a day in London and rejoined the Battalion at Buzzancourt just as they came out of the line on the 4th. I joined the Signal Section when I got back. Was there [*Bouzincourt*] till 6th, went down to Senlis till 8th. Went up to Buzzancourt working on new road, Northumberland Avenue, till 13th when we moved to Verrenns [*Varennes*] and stayed till 28th when we marched to Senlis and on 29th went on to La Vicogne and had a good time till 22nd April.
- May** We then left for Puchvillers [*Puchevillers*] and worked with our companies on new railway till 1st May, when we went back to La Vicogne and were there till 31st. We left and marched up to Tutoncourt [*Tutencourt*].
- June** On 1st went on to Martinsart. On 3rd we went to our companies, B Coy were at Mesnil and were working round Hamel till 20th. Section returned to Martinsart and we left with rest of Battalion at midnight on 22nd for Vignacourt Wood, near Contay. Marched up to Senlis on 27th and back again on 28th. We went up to Senlis on 30th and stayed from 4.30pm till 11.30pm when we went up to Avauley Wood in reserve for 1st July.
- July** Went to South Bluff noon of 1st and on night of 2nd went up into front-line in front of Thiepval for two days. Lost about 250 men. Back onto North Bluff on 4th, Avauley Wood [*Aveluy*] on 8th early in the morning and went back again same night. Went into front-line on 9th, went into support with B Coy till 11th when we went into front-line till 15th. Back onto North Bluff till 19th, front-line again till 23rd. North Bluff till 28th. In front-line 28th to 3rd Aug.
- Aug** North Bluff till 9th. Front-line till 15th. Camp out onto railway side till 19th when we went back to Forceville. The first time we had been more than half a mile behind the front-line for 50 days. Went on to Arqueves on 20th. We stayed there till 28th when we went up to Hedauville and on 29th up to Avauley Wood where we stayed until midnight on 2nd Sept.
- Sept** Went in support to the 4th and 5th in the Steps of Elgin Avenue for the attack on St Perrie Division [*St Pierre Divion*] and Schwaben Redoubt. We left about 7pm after a rather rough time and went to Hedauville and stayed there till 16th when we went up into the Wonderwerk in front of the Leipzig Redoubt (Salient). Our Battalion went over the top on 17th. Gained their objective and went 300 yards past, dug in under heavy fire and through heavy rain and held it until relieved 30

- Sept** hours after. Came out to Crucifix Corner on 19th and stayed till 23rd. We went up into the front line on 23rd Wood Post way and **had one of the worst times I ever had**; was on lines and there was no wires up to the front-line. First laid D5 Mattalic [*Metalic*] three quarters of way and wire ran out. Came back and laid D1 earth return round Hindenburg trench and Princess St which were both level. This held till about midnight and the day after finished D5 up Pip St extension. Came out on 25th and went down to Hedauville. Went back to Halloy on 26th, there till 29th when we marched to Souastre and on 30th to Bienvillers.
- Oct** Went from there to Humberchamps [*Humbercamps*] on 3rd and stayed till 9th. Went up to Fonkvillers [*Foncqvillers*] trenches and were in till 17th. Crallboys Lane Sector. We came out to Humberchamps and on the 20th moved to St Armand, moved again on 24th to Souastre and on 30th went up to Fonky Trenches again, Lincoln Lane Sector.
- Nov** In reserve in the village from 6th to 12th and then went in line again till 17th when I went to the Divn Signal School at Henu with F. Manton. Was sent to hospital, suspected Diphtheria case, on 25th and went to the 12th Stationary Hospital at St Pol and went down the line on 29th to the 16th General Hospital, Le Treport, arrived on 1st Dec.
- Dec** Stayed there till 14th when I went to Le Havre on the hospital train 'Princess Christian' and went on board the 'Warhilda' on 15th, arriving at Southampton on 16th Dec, 1916.

Just 1 year and 8 months of active service abroad.

**1918**

**Jan** Joined 1/4th D of W at Westhoek Ridge. Served with them from Jan 1918 till demobbed in Jan 1919, with Signals Section.

The details of William's chum who was wounded on 4th Dec 1915 and later died are as follows:

1871 Private James Albert Fawcett, 1/7th Battalion The Duke of Wellington's Regiment. Born Marsden, Son of Mr & Mrs William Fawcett of Netherleigh, Marsden. Attended Marsden Congregational Sunday School. Employed as a dyer's labourer by Mr John Edward Crowther at Bank Bottom Mills. Was a keen cricketer and won a medal in Marsden Cricket Club's championships in 1913. Enlisted at the outbreak of the war. Died of wounds to the head on 21st Nov 1915, aged 22 years. Buried at Etaples Military Cemetery - plot 3, row G, grave 7a. On the Roll of Honour in Huddersfield Drill Hall and Marsden War Memorial.

The Lieutenant Gibson mentioned lies in Colne Valley Cemetery, near Boesinghe, Belgium.

*1846 Private James Bradbury was born on 7th January 1895. He served throughout the war in the 7th Battalion The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, 49th (West Riding) Division. After the war he moved to Canada, where his half-brother had settled, to find work. He was followed by a young lady and they married there, having three children before returning to England. The family settled in Marsden, near Huddersfield, and James became the secretary of the Marsden British Legion Club for a number of years. He died on 11th October 1971, shortly after their Golden Wedding. His widow died soon afterwards on 6th December 1971.*

## A BOY'S LIFE IN THE ARMY - 1929

*F. Gill, whose story began on pp134 of Edition 253, continues his tale:*

Having become a soldier, I had forgotten that my parents knew nothing about it. But I knew that they would not worry, as I had set out to sign on. Now I found out that boys were not allowed out every day; only from 5 to 8pm on Wednesdays and from 2 to 9pm on Saturdays; so it was on Saturday that I went home (still in my school clothes) and told them that they were looking at a future empire-builder. (Looking at today's maps ... where did I go wrong?!)

While waiting to be kitted out, I was taken to the Orderly Room to be interviewed by the CO, Lieutenant Colonel Wellesley, the Adjutant, Captain R. H. D. Bolton, and the RSM, WO1 "Cabby" Smith DCM. Then I met Drum Major Stannard, who asked me if I knew anything about music. I replied only that the spaces in music were E, G, B, D, F. I was then given a B Flat flute (or Fife, as it was known in the Corps of Drums).

Next I visited the QM's stores and was given a kitbag in which I packed a succession of articles and, finally, the well-known "Holdall", that contained a knife, fork, spoon, razor, comb, lather brush, button stick, tooth-

brush and what was called a "Housewife" (a cloth wallet containing needles, thread and wool).

Nobody had mentioned rates of pay to me, but I discovered from other boys that we received one shilling (5p) a day and on Fridays we would draw five shillings (25p), the remaining two shillings stayed in our credits, from which would be deducted a few pence, according to how much "damage" had been done during the month. We were also credited with a small kit allowance, as any time we required new kit it would be paid for from our credit balance.

I now come to my efforts to be a soldier. I did not find it took much effort, as the first few weeks I tried to make a musical noise with my flute. I was also issued with a bugle and this instrument caused me some embarrassment. I just could not make any headway and, as will be seen later, it was some years before I was able to go on guard duty as the Guard Bugler. Of course it was some time before I was proficient enough on the flute to join the rest of the Drummers in practice sessions. Boys' routine was usually to practise on their own, sometimes having an NCO as a tutor. Boys in the

Band practised with Band NCOs, but most of the day Boys were under the training of Corporal Goodwin. He took the Drill instruction and organised any sport. Incidentally, he was the Regiment's rugby full-back and most weekends he was away playing for Devonport Services rugby team.

Two or three times a week we attended the gym under qualified PT instructors. On Saturday mornings the Company Commander would inspect barrack rooms; everything was spick and span.

Throughout the Army, everyone attended Sunday morning church service (excepting employed persons, such as cooks etc). This practice was compulsory throughout the Services and was adhered to up to the outbreak of WW2. The Parade was a fantastic sight; almost full Battalion strength, led by the Band and Drums, whose instruments were highly polished and whose blanched white equipment stood out. Rousing marches were played, sometimes accompanied by the buglers. When church parade was over, the Band would play a programme on the square, to which the civil population were admitted.

There was another regiment, the Worcestershire Regiment, in the area, but they were stationed at Crown Hill, just outside the Plymouth boundary.

Military training consisted of occasional route marches of about seven miles, led by the Band and Drums (Boys also took part in this). Early in June the Regiment marched to Tregantle Fort, near Whitsand Bay in Cornwall. The annual small arms training and qualification on rifle and Lewis gun were held. Cross-

country running was also held. This lasted three weeks. A few weeks later, brigade training was held at Willsworthy Camp on the edge of Dartmoor. This was about fifteen miles from the barracks and took about six hours' marching. Boys took part in the march, but not the manoeuvres. Being in a tented camp for a few weeks was quite enjoyable, but not very exciting.

I have not mentioned many names, except the list of Boys. This is because, apart from Bandsmen and Drummers, we did not have much contact with the rest of the Regiment. However, I will name a few individuals that some of the older readers will recognise and, as my story continues, I will introduce more as I meet them.

In the Corps of Drums were Corporal Jackie Horne, who was born in the Regiment when he father was with the 1st Battalion in India pre-WWI; Corporal Menzies, Bass Drummer Boon, Drummer E. Bentley, a Battalion rugby stalwart, noted for his speed on the wing. The Bandmaster was WO1 Ovington (*see letter on page ... Ed.*) and until he left us in 1933-34 I did not have any conversation with him. The Band Sergeant was Peter Thorpe, whose successor was Sergeant Collick. CSM was WO2 Horace Coates and CQMS was Colour Sergeant "Fanny" Cullen. An "Old Sweat" was Spud Waller, whose sole job was to run the Boys' dining room. In charge of the unit's baths was Arthur Henn and running the billiards room was "Billy Whip"; not many knew his correct name was Ayling, who used to be a noted bowler in the cricket team.

... to be continued

## MEMORIES

by Arthur Johnson

*Our Barclay's Regimental History tells us that, after the Dunkirk evacuation and the fall of France in June 1940, it was apparent that the United Kingdom was in danger of early invasion. To meet the immediate threat, additional units were raised - mostly infantry - and it was as one of these that our 8th Battalion came into being. The nucleus of the Battalion was formed at Weston Park, Otley, on 4 July 1940. At the end of October the 8th Dukes moved to Newquay, in Cornwall, for training in the role of beach and airfield defence. By the spring of 1941 the threat of invasion had diminished, but it had become necessary to create more armoured units and 8 DWR was selected for conversion into 145 Regiment, RAC (DWR).*

*We are delighted to have the permission of Arthur Johnson to publish his Memories - his first-hand version of the above-quoted piece of our Regiment's history. Ed*

### July 1940, Leeds - Otley

There were about sixteen of us on the station platform that Wednesday morning. A few of us were school mates and most knew each other, so it was quite a happy crowd. About twelve of us were bound for Otley (via Leeds) to join the Duke of Wellington's Regiment, the new 8th Battalion.

We knew it was a tented camp; three of us had a look at it the week before. I was pleased to be going there mainly because Halifax had a grim reputation.

After Leeds we soon found ourselves at Otley station, all there with a small empty suitcase (for clothes after being issued with uniforms). The train had hardly stopped when, from nowhere, came army trained voices, calling for men with surnames beginning with A, B and C. Two RASC lorries then went away with about forty new soldiers. The remaining hundred or so expected the lorries to return - but no. We were put into threes, ready to march through Otley to Weston Park, about two miles away.

So, away we sauntered with suitcases swinging and dogs barking. It's a good job we were not known; talk about 'Dad's Army'. Many heels were trod on and the friendly banter soon went, replaced by Army language. The NCOs in charge thought it was a joke - I suppose we were.

By then it was past dinner time which consisted of tea, bread, Spam and a slab of fruit cake. We were all then processed, that is 'sworn in', given a number and some Army togs. So I became Private A.J.4624141 D of W, and was put into 3 Platoon HQ Company. We lived in bell tents, six men to each one, and found that the suitcases took up a lot of room as we were given more gear, rifles etc.

After two weeks all the men had arrived (A, B, C and D Companies - totalling around 900 men), in the bottom part of Weston Park. The 'West Yorks' were on the top half. The 'Dukes' soon had a bugler, Ebor Rice, who had played in the Black Dyke Band. 'Wakey Wakey' and the other calls were soon familiar to us.

Each Saturday and Sunday we were allowed home in turn, if not on other duties, which were many. We had to pass for inspection past the guard tent and many were sent back for no reason at all. One or two older NCOs knew they would not stay with us and so they enforced the rules more.

One stormy night whilst on main gate guard, I had to 'Call out the Guard'. My mate had been blown over whilst inside the very heavy sentry box. Trapped inside, he had been shouting for some time whilst I had been checking the cook house and other tents. It took six of us to lift the box and free him. We told him not to rock himself in the future, but all he could think of was getting his rifle clean for his dismounting inspection.

There are many hard roads and hills around Otley and Fewston. I know them fairly well - on two wheels, cycling. My feet did not take so kindly to army boots and I was soon doing the old soldier tips, like soaping my socks and giving my feet more care. I found I could do the training easily - this went on for seven weeks. With shoots at Hawksworth and night marches, the Otley residents were certainly well entertained. Troops were always in town - about 4,000 men, all told, I think. The pubs, so numerous, were very busy. I remember a call out to Arthington Viaduct and the Guards at Yeadon very well.

Rumours began going around. Where would we be moving to? Cornwall, Scotland and the East Yorkshire coast were all mentioned. It turned out to be Cornwall. Most of us were ready for a move but the married ones were not. I had been moved to B Company by this time and on the day we changed over CSM Holmes told us that he had never seen a scruffier lot and if Hitler knew, he would come and lasso us. Needless to say he did not stay with the Battalion and I never heard of him afterwards. So the day came when we were at Otley station again, by now with quite different people than were present beforehand.

### **Cornwall**

The corridor train was standing waiting for us and the views of Devon and the south coast made it certain that we were bound for Cornwall. The loading up of the train took all day and at about 4.00pm we moved out and travelled all night. After many stops we arrived at Wadebridge, about 6.00pm, I think. We had all eaten our food and I don't think that I have ever enjoyed corned beef sandwiches as much. QMS Beech and his advance party did well for B Company. Then the work of unloading began. The carriages had to be cleaned out ready for the train to return. After two hours or so it was our turn to board the green Cornwall buses that took us to 'Carnanton House' (well, to the farm buildings to be correct). The Dukes followed, along with another Duke company, the 'Cornwall's', who must have been as near to home as we had been in Yorkshire.

Well, at least we had a roof over our heads at last. We slept in the loft over the animal stalls, which were empty, of course. All the water had to be brought in dustbins about 150 yards from down in the orchards, a trough fed by a spring. The russet apples did not last there very long, in spite of orders.

Carnanton is quite near to Mawgan and St Eval, both operational air force airfields. We had to 'Stand-to' at dawn and dusk, sitting in two buses ready to go anywhere. There was a platoon of about thirty men to guard 'Denzell Downs' about six miles away. This was a 24 hour one, overlooking a dummy airfield. Here we cooked our own food and had the help of a greyhound, which brought in a rabbit or two for our stew. He had been there weeks, we were told.

From there we saw, or rather heard, a few air fights. One of our spitfires buried itself in the bog at Mawgan, near St Eval. Twelve platoon's next move was to Padstow. The next four weeks were to be most enjoyable. We stayed in the British Legion hut, it had electric light and heating and was right in the town centre. The Fisherman's Mission' club room and a bit of freedom were both very welcome. I was not a dancer but a few of the lads did not miss the twice weekly dances in the hall. The duties there were not so bad. A guard on the end of the quay and fire piquet and, of course, 'Stand-to' at dawn and dusk. The October weather was more like spring. I shall always remember the café owner and baker who brought a can of tea every morning to the guards on dockyard duty. The Platoon Officer, Lieutenant Wilkes, never surprised us as he was always in view as soon as he left the buildings on the far side. The ferry and the two fishing boats across the river made life seem more like a holiday.

Time came for a move, up to the Nissen huts at St Mirren. Training and route marches became more numerous now. There were camp guards plus guards around the naval base. The weather had now changed and the concrete pill boxes were each connected by telephone and Lieutenant Egan, an old officer, made sure that you were awake. He would go to the nearest one to camp and just say that 'he was on his way'. But many times he would not come round at all.

Our first Christmas was spent here and we all had a good time. At Otley I had turned down the chance of a stripe but when I was asked again I decided to have one. I became Lance Corporal, unpaid, on trial. With an expected pay increase of 9d per day later. This would be welcome as I was single.

After a few duties at the Pentire Hotel, Newquay, which was the HQ and in charge of rations etc, I was moved to D Details at Constantine Bay. This detachment consisted of the 'bad lads', the 'swingers' and the 'absent without leave-ers'. But as it turned out they were doing more than other companies were. Guards were five nights out of seven, plus wiring and other duties. So it was no surprise when Captain James caught three guards not doing 'dawn stand-to' all on one morning!

The golf hut was company office and it was cap off. I got a severe reprimand, I don't know what I would have got if the Captain had known that two of my guards had been asleep in a caravan all night with their

clothes off as well. Two nights after this I had to take the bullets from one of the 'bad boys' after he had fired away at seagulls. He said that they had annoyed him. No wonder they called it D Details.

I was pleased to be moved back with 12 Platoon, but even there it was not easy. I don't think I was cut out to give orders. We were now in the village of St Column Major, in buildings which were fine. One of the guards was on a farm near the coast of St Mawgan. The building here was really the control centre for air and naval operations. After a week we changed over with another platoon and I was in for it again. I was in charge of twelve, marching back to St Column one day, when we encountered an Air Force chap. As he had his cap in his hand and appeared not to be bothered, we continued straight past. He called me over and asked why I had not saluted him, I told him that I did not know the Air Force ranks and apologised. A few days later, on the notice board outside the company office was a list of all forces ranks and their numbers. I was sorry I did not salute him, it would have been so easy to give him 'eyes right', and he may have been one of 'the few'.

The next move for B Company was delayed because of a few call outs to Bodmin Moor's parachutists and gorse fires. We finally moved across to Mevagissey on the other coast.

It was mid summer now and it was more like a holiday with long walks and sea bathing twice a week. The manse at the top end of the village held all the company. One platoon was away for a week at Hennick near to Caerheys Castle. Here we had our first casualties, two men were lost when a Jerry raider shot up a hut near the beach. The Dukes soon made friends and one or two of them made it a rule to get their feet under the table as soon as possible, talk about cheek!

The duties here became harder, tubular scaffolding on the sand across the bays, guard on the quay and winding the boom across the dock entrance - morning and night. Barbed wire along the tops of the bays, one of which was used for the army film 'Next of Kin' (it was supposed to be a landing in France).

All the route marches now included more gear and bren, tripod and ammo. I remember one exercise which

tested everyone. It consisted of a forced march across to St Column twenty miles away with mock Air Force attacks and then a dawn attack on a hill - with blank ammo and umpires etc. There was just time to make a real meal in an old house when word came we were needed back in Mevagissey. If the Officers and Sergeants had had to carry their share they would not have been able to lead us. Twelve Platoon got good marks, although we did have plenty of blisters on our feet. Lance Corporal Bob Caradice, the medical man, spent a full morning working with a needle and wool. We were all excused duties until night guard.

About this time we went twice to the firing range at Hayle and I came to the conclusion that I was a poor shot with a rifle, but not bad with a Bren gun. I decided to hand the stripe I had back and revert to a private. I was still unpaid and I thought I was not good enough. Sergeant Major Goodwin was not for letting me do this and offered to see that I was paid but I stuck out. Then the rumour began going around that there were too many infantry units and the Dukes, the 8th, were to be disbanded. Then our prayers were answered. Notices went up that we could become drivers, gunners or wireless operators in the RAC and the tanks would most likely be the new 'Churchills' and soon off we went to Tidworth, on Salisbury Plain, home of the Cavalry of yesterday.

### **The Royal Armoured Corps**

The 'Dragoons' we thought, but our cap badge turned out to be the mailed fist, under the crown of the Royal Armoured Corps, and later the red patch behind was given by the Canadian Army Corps.

So, the D of W's stay in Cornwall came to an end. We left with happy memories after ten months' stay, fighting the gorse fires on Dodman Point, unloading anthracite blocks from the railway at Truro (all wearing gas masks), not forgetting the cider, 'scrumpy'. No more was heard of the voices singing 'The Dukes are marching up the hill' or their version of 'Roll me over'.

*... to be continued*

## **THE 2nd BATTALION - WAITING FOR DEMOB**

by **George Wragg**

Following the Campaign of 1944, the 2nd Battalion Dukes were in rather poor shape physically, with all kinds of problems. My own was a gastric stomach from not having fresh food for such long periods. Vehicles had managed to come to the extreme of where vehicles could reach at Ukru, where the campaign for the Dukes had ended; and were we glad! But we were not really in a condition to fully appreciate it.

After Ukru I believe we were in a holding camp near to Imphal. The food at that stage was nourishing, but not a lot of variety; mainly meat and various vegetables, but after being able to eat only a smallish portion, one had to make essential visits, where the food would discharge at both ends of the body at the same time. Not very nice,

but it was true at that time. After a while we were able to take food and keep it down.

By this time I was gaining a little weight, but was plagued by incessant malaria and made full use of the issued Mepacrin drug in an effort to fight it. I was in hospital a number of times, for a number of days; alternating with doing Orderly Sergeant, but walking around on warm, sunny days wearing a greatcoat, because of the continual shivers of the malaria fever. Such are the problems with malaria, which has at times decimated armies in tropical regions.

By now, many old hands had returned to the UK and a fresh influx of forces had helped to reinforce the 2nd Battalion. It was finally our turn for Deolali, the transit



camp near Bombay. This was the camp where some old soldiers became highly strung, almost to breaking-point, it had one hell of a reputation. Breakdowns were known as the "Doolali Tap". The next stop was Bombay (of course that has changed its name), the Char Wallahs and Bombay Oysters (raw eggs with salt and vinegar). There she was, waiting for us, The Queen of Bermuda, waiting for us to board. The Monarch of Bermuda also sailed with us back to the UK.

We took a rather different route from the journey out, when we went round the Cape of Good Hope, a rough area where the Indian and Atlantic Oceans meet off South Africa. We returned via the Suez Canal. That in itself was an experience; a waterway of 100 miles linking the Red Sea with the Mediterranean. Travelling through the canal was indeed unusual, our large ship moving with land close on both sides. When we approached the area to dock, I believe the local workforce had some industrial action, so 'The Queen' had to winch herself into the dockside - a fine piece of seamanship.

By now it was nearly the end of April. Much was still happening in Europe, but the war was almost over. On the journey to Gibraltar we were accompanied by thousands of birds, migrating north for the summer. There was a strong wind and the rigging etc was full of them. They would perch on your feet while on deck. It

was about this time that we received news that Franklin D. Roosevelt had died. The President of the USA, who had been such a staunch ally with Prime Minister Churchill and instrumental in many deals that helped us to win the war over Germany.

We took on supplies and water at Gibraltar and were near enough to view the four-legged inhabitants - the famous apes. Whilst there, a very large convoy could be seen entering the Med. Of course some U Boats were still active and a danger to shipping. The final leg to Liverpool was rather rough weather and some of the crew had serious headaches. I was not a crew member, but I did not escape headache. We disembarked at Liverpool and were sent to units to receive pay etc before some long-awaited leave.

I travelled overnight from near Newcastle and arrived home in Nottingham at 6.00am on 8 May 1945, which of course was VE Day. I could not have timed it better. I was still somewhat under the weather with malaria, but my leave did me good and I finally shook it off.

Note: The Queen and The Monarch of Bermuda were two pre-war luxury liners that had plied between the UK, New York and the Caribbean. I believe one of them once held the Blue Riband for the fastest crossing of the Atlantic.

... to be continued

## BACK FROM THE COLONIES

by Captain Liam McCormick

A tropical posting to a backwater Australian frontier town is not an experience many British Army Officers are familiar with. The exchange post tied to the 5th/7th Battalion the Royal Australian Infantry Regiment (5/7 RAR) is traditionally filled by a Guardsman from one of the five regiments, usually whichever is currently in Munster, Germany. The reciprocal Australian Officer is permanently based in Munster and returns to Australia with a perception of the British Army that is quite different from one that would form after two years with the Dukes. Somehow I found myself heading off to Australia in May 2001 like many Englishmen before me, unlike them I had no ball and chain to weigh me down, although she would follow in the August when we got married.

Robertson Barracks, Palmerston, 20km outside Darwin, is the home of the Australian Mechanised 1st Brigade. 5/7 RAR forms the infantry component of the Brigade and carries out its role in a fleet of ageing M113 armoured fighting vehicles. The vehicles are old, many served in the Vietnam War, but they are surprisingly reliable, and are due for a comprehensive upgrade in the near future. An experienced commander could coax 100km/hr out of a good driver in a Warrior, but a more sedate speed of 50km/hr was the maximum achievable in the M113. There is little point comparing the two vehicles, as one is 1960s' technology and the other 1980s' and the difference shows. The Australian Defence Force is equipped with state-of-the-art communications equipment, which allows secure

conversations down to section level, and an e-mail style Command and Control system. The experience using this technology provided a glimpse into our future, when digitisation finally arrives in the form of Bowman.

The exchange culminated with a six month tour in East Timor, one of the highlights of the posting. Operation Citadel is Australia's contribution to the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISSET), the Australian Combined Battalion Group (AUSBATT) is now in its VIII rotation since 1999. The 5th/7th Battalion provided the Battalion HQ, two Rifle Companies, one Log Company and one Support Company for AUSBATTVII rotation from October '02 through to May '03. A third Rifle Company is provided by Fiji, and a fourth company was formed from the reserves, the first operational deployment of Australian reserves since the Second World War. The addition of a reserve company propelled a routine deployment into the national media, and drew attention of both senior political and military observers. A cloud of uncertainty hung over the deployment as final orbats awaited political clearance, which in turn depended on UN approval due to the start of a military draw-down process. As a result, the final force structure did not appear until two weeks prior to deployment, causing a great deal of uncertainty and consternation to those who were eventually left behind. The Battalion was, needless to say, eager to get into country and start determining its own destiny.

In 1999 East Timor voted for independence, which triggered the withdrawal of the Indonesian Army, and allowed the province to slowly decide its own future. The country officially came into existence on 20 May 2002, when the UN handed over administration to the President and former freedom fighter Xanana Gusmau. The transition to independence has not been easy with 80% unemployment, food shortages and fear of returning militia. The UN attempted to tackle these and other obstacles by creating a secure environment to live, while also training an indigenous army and police force. These government bodies have taken responsibility for law and order, along with liability for border security and customs. Militia groups based in West Timor are still a constant external threat and attempt to infiltrate across the border, intent on destabilising local government. The UN is slowly withdrawing from the country as the new security forces grow in competence



**Captain Liam McCormick winning hearts and minds in East Timor.**

and authority. The AUSBATT mission is now to maintain a safe and secure environment dealing with external security threats, in ever-expanding operating areas with fewer troops available on the ground. The operational experience gained in a unique environment is one which I shall always remember, the Australian method of operation is not far from our own and the 'diggers' (soldiers) are of great character and ability very similar to our own.

Australia is a huge piece of dirt that contains many different climates and ecosystems. Despite the busy work schedule, Christina and I managed to get away and experience a majority of what the country has to offer. A highlight of the two years would undoubtedly be following the British Lions from Brisbane to Melbourne and finally onto Sydney, where I linked up with fellow Duke, Captain 'Pilfering' Palfrey. Having witnessed the disappointing final game, we decided to sample some of the local beer in an attempt to improve morale. Another sporting highlight would have to be in Sydney again, in February 2003 at the fifth and final Ashes test match, when we finally beat their incredible cricket team. In a country where sporting achievement is the national obsession it was great to finally throw a little abuse in the other direction, although they do not generally take it well.

Living and working in the tropics has been a fantastic experience, and transformed my outlook on life. The wonderful opportunities provided for exploration and adventure are endless. Darwin is ideally placed to explore the dusty outback or the tropical crocodile-infested swamps of Kakadu National Park. The tropical frontier town atmosphere of Darwin poses its own difficulties for those used to a more frantic pace of life, and it takes time to adapt to life in the slow lane. The motto of the average Darwinite would appear to be simple: it can always wait until tomorrow, and if not, then there's always the next day. Clearly this attitude did not sit easily with a Duke of Wellington's officer, but I obviously did my best to adjust. One cannot get frustrated by the lazy nature of tropical life, the only real solution is to head for the pub, sink a cold beer and hope tomorrow will be ok, and, somehow, generally it is.

## ROBERTS AROUND THE WORLD

### Leg 2 - Gibraltar to Antigua, October - December 2003

In the last issue I reported that we had reached Gibraltar where the Blue Water Rally started officially. We had six weeks in total on the Rock based at Marina Bay which many of you will remember from the 83/84 tour (Bianca's!), but didn't exist when I was there with my father in the 50s.

It was fascinating to visit Gib again and Carolyn and I spent sometime "down memory lane"! South Barracks has gone; Lathbury is derelict (except for the Officers' Mess which has been converted into a smart flat complex) and completely run down; the hospital is being developed, again for flats; much of the dockyard is now an industrial estate. There is a small Joint Service

HQ and one of the of Gibraltar Regiment's Companies is the only regular army presence. The Convent ceremony takes place very occasionally on high days and holidays. As an aside, the present Governor, Sir Francis Richards, was an exact contemporary of mine at Mons OCS and joined the Green Jackets, taking over from us in Cyprus (Kophinou and Ayious Theodorous) in 1967 under General Frank Kitson. As a result we dined at the Convent twice, much to the amazement of our fellow yachties.

Rally Control duly arrived in Gib and we had a number of briefings and even a CP Ex where we practised the Control Net procedures - actually very



**The Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess.**



**Corunna Company Office.**

worthwhile. We also had two sailing trips to Africa and one to Malaga. What with last minute preparations and victualling for the next six weeks, it was a busy time. Spirits are still incredibly cheap - Famous Grouse £4.25 for a litre - so the holds of one or two yachts were clanking merrily as we set off for Tenerife. In fact the weather was pretty appalling and within three days we were facing a Force 9 Atlantic gale! A stiff reminder that it was not all going to be "plain sailing"! Anyway boat and crew did well and we duly arrived in Tenerife for a very pleasant ten days. The Rally had arranged membership at the Real Club Nautico - very up-market with two pools, tennis courts, plenty of bars, etc.

And then the great day came to set course for Antigua - Thursday 13 November - twenty boats did a sail past

of the Club and then headed West. The timing is designed to catch the Trade Winds and it proved to be so for the first five days with beautiful fast downwind sailing, but then we disappeared into a large wind hole with acres and acres of flat blue sea, a disappointing amount of motoring and, after you had caught your first few fish (Dorado, Wahoo and Tuna), it became pretty dull. The fun was to be had on the Rally net, where after the formalities of position and situation had been reported, there were chat frequencies which you could join or just eargwig. With two ex-Cavalry on another boat (Murray Kayll 16/5L and Peter Forbes 4/7DG) there was a certain amount of teeth arm rivalry. Our communications allowed us to ring our daughters, send e-mails to friends and even monitor the rugby world cup as it was being played.

With only two on board Nademia we had long nights "staggering on"- we operated two on, two off. Water was at a premium so we washed up in salt water and used the frequent squalls to catch rainwater (pretty half-heartedly it has to be said, but practising for the Pacific) and had al fresco showers.

After twenty-three days we reached Jolly Harbour, an idyllic self contained spot on the West Coast of Antigua, where we relaxed, partied, cleaned the boat (and ourselves) and partied some more. On 16 December we moved round to Nelson's Dockyard in English Harbour, a historic (as the name implies) and picturesque spot, where many of the BWR crews will spend Christmas. Our girls are with us till Boxing Day when they return to the UK and we set off down the Leeward Islands to be in Panama by 10 February.

Reflections on the Atlantic - to be honest it turned into a bit of an endurance test, with little hard sailing. But, hopefully the rewards are the sense of achievement and also because it leads to exciting new pastures - the Caribbean, Panama, the Galapagos and the Pacific Islands. More of that next time!

A.D.R.

## SNIPPETS FROM THE ARCHIVES

### The Tactical Recognition Flash (TRF) (or DZ PATCH)

In March, 1994, Alma Company was deployed as the lead element of the 1st Battalion to Bosnia as part of the UN force. Wearing UN blue berets, with UN cap badge, and brassards with the UN logo alongside the Union Jack, there was no way of easily recognising Dukes on the ground.

During discussions between the QM, Major B. W. Sykes, and OC Alma Company, Major N. G. Borwell, in the Company Office in Vitez, it was decided to produce some Regimental recognition feature, in line with other units in theatre. After some design work, adjudicated by the OC, the basic stable belt pattern was adopted for wearing alongside the Union Jack emblem. This design was accepted by the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel D. M. Santa-Olalla, and stocks were demanded through the QM. The QM arranged for a local tailor to produce 300 armbands - which were ready within four hours! (This can be seen on the rear cover of The Regiment Magazine.) These were smuggled into Gorazde to the Battalion. Although only slightly larger than the Para and Guards' TRFs, the bold colours of the Dukes patch stood out well, making recognition much easier.

Although initially restricted to soldiers actually serving in the 1st Battalion, in 1996 the 3rd Battalion requested, and was given, permission to wear the TRF as part of the 'One Army' concept and the use became more widespread.

In March 2003, DPS (A) requested all units to submit a proposal for the adoption of a particular design, to include the historical rationale, a design specification, no greater than 5cm x 3cm, and consideration of whether attached Corps personnel should wear the unit TRF, or their own Corps badge.

In September, 2000, the move from Hounslow to Osnabrück to join 4th Armoured Brigade, where the Brigade 'Desert Rat' symbol was to be worn, was a perfect excuse for reducing the patch to a more tactical size and fresh stocks were rushed to the front line troops.

The TRF is now worn with pride wherever Dukes' soldiers are serving, having been authorised by the Army Dress Committee on 10 April, 2003.

Scott Flaving

#### Sources:

*Colonel Borwell, Major Sykes, Captain Hosty.*

*PS12(A) letter dated 17 November 2000.*

*Army Dress Committee letter dated 10 April 2003.*

## THE GHOSTS OF BRANCEPETH CASTLE

### A true story by Lance Sergeant John Cuffley

I had arrived at Brancepeth Castle which is situated near the village of Brancepeth, County of Durham, in the autumn of 1943, to join my unit, a section of the 2nd Battalion of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment, the bulk of which was already in India involved in extensive jungle warfare training. We were to join them in due course as a scouting reconnaissance group attached to combat columns, which were made up of the 2nd Battalion and other regiments which formed the 2nd Independent Infantry Brigade, having completed our basic training at Balloch Castle on Loch Lomond, Dunbartonshire, Scotland.

Balloch served as a general service corps training unit where new recruits received training in all aspects of warfare and were selected according to their suitability for various units within the British Army: Artillery, Armoured Corps, Signals and Infantry. It would seem that I, for one, was too tall, being over six foot, for tanks and artillery, and too slow for signals. This was not altogether true in regard to the latter. I was, in fact, quick enough to realise that within Signals it was far too easy to keep track of one. And although I understood the importance of keeping in touch, and a very good thing as far as others were concerned and certainly good enough for me to keep in touch with others, providing others, and in particular Higher Ups, would not keep in touch with me.

Now I found myself at Brancepeth Castle and in the Infantry. A foot slogger or, nearer the truth, a foot runner, as my unit was attached to the Durham Light

Infantry, Brancepeth being the Light Infantry main base. As Light Infantry marched at a running pace, one hundred and sixty steps a minute compared to the Dukes' marching pace of eighty steps a minute. The Dukes were obliged, at times, being a smaller unit, to march with the Durhams and, as such, keep up. It was not until my promotion to Lance Sergeant being, as I understand it, the youngest and quickest promoted soldier in the British Army, being just seventeen and having served barely three months, that I worked out a system whereby when the Durhams and the Dukes were required to march together then the answer lay in separating them<sup>1</sup> - the Dukes marching off on their slow pace and then, when far enough away, start the Durhams off at their fast pace and then bring the Durhams to a halt on reaching the Dukes and then, with the Dukes continuing their march and once at a safe distance, start the Durhams off once more. All very effective and very amusing, but there is no finer calling than to be in a good regiment, and there are no finer infantry regiments than the Dukes and the Durhams.

The Durhams recruit lads mainly from the County of Durham, and as such they came from a certain class - mining communities. A close-knit, hard-working, proud, quite silent type; unlike the Dukes, who drew their recruits from all over the UK - cosmopolitan and, on the whole, with less strong county roots, like the West Riding of Yorkshire, Halifax, the Dukes' home, and so had less county pride. Nevertheless, in some way they had pride in the Regiment and the Regiment's close

<sup>1</sup> Words of command are different for those given to Light Infantry Regiments and those given to Heavy Infantry Regiments.

association with the Great Duke of Wellington. My affiliation with the Durhams was to last for the next two years, until our parting on the north-west frontier of India at Peshawar not very far from the Khyber Pass.

I did my very first guard duty at Brancepeth, patrolling within the castle grounds and within its walls, alone, through the corridors, its 250 rooms, battlements and towers. All the other lads found it too creepy and sinister (sheer imagination) but, as I pointed out, there was nothing to fear from ghosts or, more likely, practical jokers.

It was on such an occasion, on going through the castle along a corridor, that I was attracted by the rays of the setting sun throwing its strong light, even for late autumn, through the arched windows against the stone interior, the heat from the sun's rays drawing vapour from the wall. As I walked along I could feel the heat from the sun on my hands and face and, at each window, I stopped just for a few seconds to take in the warmth. As I reached the end of the long passage, still fascinated by the sun's rays and the heat drawing vapour off the wall, I turned to look back. Suddenly a black

smear, like soot, appeared from out of the wall and hovered within the vapour, and then slowly, very slowly, there appeared a form. First in black, and then turning a deep purple. A slightly-built figure. A young man carrying a sword just, it would seem, as a decoration, secured at his side by a belt. His dress: stockinged legs, buckled shoes, breeches puffed-up around the thighs, finely laced shirt covered by a highly decorative waistcoat, again with puffed-up shoulder pieces, wearing on his head a velvet cap pulled down to one side and sporting a most colourful large feather. And then, as if in a flash, he was gone, along with the setting sun.

Of course, there is a theory that an image can appear under certain light and temperature conditions if thrown against natural stone, chemically controlled - such as a castle wall, and then under the very same conditions can re-appear time and time again, like a photograph.

If this theory is correct, then some day in the future will a good-looking, six foot tall, young soldier in 1943 battle dress appear if the conditions are the same? Will his image, like that of the Tudor gentleman, be printed into the stonework of the castle by the setting sun?

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From: 31 Judith Avenue  
Knodishall  
Saxmundham  
Suffolk IP17 1UY  
12 January 2004

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

In the Winter 2003 edition of the Iron Duke I was particularly interested to read of the Italian Battlefields Tour last September. My father, the late Major P. P. (Brainy) Benson MC was killed at Anzio and is buried in the Beachhead Cemetery. I was particularly interested to read of the recorded message from T. F. (Fred) Huskisson, a long time friend of my father's, and the contributions from General Donald Isles and Bob Hanson.

My sister and I were part of an RBL Pilgrimage to Italy in 1994 and one of the many people on that tour was Bob Hanson, with whom I had many interesting conversations and admired the fact that he goes to Anzio most years. Also three of that Pilgrimage party were ex-Dukes - all sadly now deceased: Sergeant Ron Clarke MM, the Reverend Tom Richardson and Corporal Herbert Beckett. Between them they filled in many details we did not know. When we visited the area where they all came ashore at Anzio, I asked Herbert if it rang any bells - but apparently it was pitch dark and he managed to trip over and bash his nose! Later in that year my husband and I attended the annual Regimental Service, then at York Minster, and also attended lunch at York Race Course, where I met General Donald Isles.

My father went to the Regiment in about October or November 1939, following an OCTU on Salisbury Plain which he and most of the other members of the Honourable Artillery Company attended. They were

then parcelled out to various regiments as Second Lieutenants and he and others, including Jim Sills, went to the Dukes. The Colonel of the Regiment is, of course, the son of Lieutenant Colonel Brian Webb-Carter who commanded the 1st Battalion in North Africa and Italy and I still have the letter which Colonel Brian Webb-Carter wrote to my mother following the death of my father.

Yours faithfully,  
Mary J. Wright (Mrs)

From: 247 Denison Road  
Victoria, BC  
V8S 4K2  
Canada  
23 January 2004

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

I read in the 252 Edition of "The Iron Duke" that the New Barracks, Gosport, was being demolished.

This reminded me of the time I lived in the married quarters of the New Barracks. My father, E. Ovington, was Bandmaster of the 1st Battalion Dukes and in 1923-4 we lived on the ground floor of a long, rectangular-shaped stone building. RSM Smith and family occupied the floor above. A long straight hall ran the length of the apartment, with rooms opening off on either side, main entrance door at the end.

One day I was playing a very vigorous ball game in the hall with my brother and sister. All the doors were closed. At the moment I was facing the entrance door and they had their backs to it. Suddenly I stopped very still and stared, the figure of a monk, in cowl and long robe, came through the door, turned right and entered



the first room on that side. My sister and brother called "Get on with the game", I said "Oh, it's alright, it has gone now", and the game continued.

I wonder if anyone else experienced anything like this? (*See page 44 opposite! ... Ed.*)

Yours sincerely,  
Honor Jones

From: 3 Aultmore Court  
Kingswood Road  
Tunbridge Wells  
Kent TN2 4UF  
27 February 2004

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

I was interested to read David Miller's letter of 22 September concerning the non-mention of the Dukes' time in Palestine 1945-46.

I have been to the web site and I see there is now mention of the Dukes' time in Palestine, Syria, Beirut, Egypt, Damascus and Khartoum.

I was with C Company, which left Taranto for Haifa in February 1945. At this time vocational training was introduced preparing for civilian life and demob. I was transferred to the Education section and members of the section were promoted to the rank of acting Sergeant.

I became the organist at the Garrison church in Haifa and Padre Coey, the Battalion Chaplain, and I took contingents of soldiers to Jerusalem to visit the seven stages of the Cross.

I still have a map of Jerusalem which was handed out to visiting forces showing out of bound areas and accommodation available depending upon rank!

On one visit we witnessed the bombing of the King David Hotel and I have a photograph I took of the hotel after the bombing.

I was confirmed into the Church of England in St George's Cathedral at that time by the Bishop of Croydon.

I believe Padre Coey remained in the Army and became Assistant Chaplain General, although I was not in touch after Khartoum.

Yours sincerely,  
Barry Musgrove

*On 26 December Len Rusby wrote to us as follows:*

From: 99 Crestline Court  
Northampton  
NN3 8XZ

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

Looking through my collection of militaria the other day, I found an old notebook that I purchased at the Battle School in Japan. In it I came across "The Ten Commandments" - I've racked my memory to remember which old soldier I got them from, but to no avail. I think I could have first heard them at a Company Smoker in Korea or Gib and the names that come to mind as the likely suspects are Dolly Dawson, Cab

Callaby, Blondie Williams or Pop Dodds; one of the old "India Service" lads I'm sure.

Maybe one of my peers, or slightly older generation, will remember whose party piece it was.

Yours faithfully,  
Len Rusby

*But, on 29 December he wrote again:*

I received my Winter Iron Duke this morning and we have another amazing coincidence! I see someone has preceded my Soldier's "Ten Commandments" (see pages 151 and 160). They were certainly not written by a National Serviceman. As I have written, I first heard it at a Company Smoker either in Korea or Gib, by an old India Hand.

Your other writer must have heard it in Cyprus at a similar venue and someone may have requested a copy of it; that's how it fell into his hands. Though slightly embellished (from my version) by 1956/57, when he heard it, I wrote it down as it was given, verbatim, to me. Pity I can't remember who it was!

Yours sincerely,  
Len Rusby

From: 55 Palmbeach Avenue  
Hythe  
Kent  
CT21 6NW  
1 January 2004

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

I am due to retire after more than forty years' service with the British Army, first as a Junior Leader at the AAJLR, Tonfanau, Wales, then for nine years in the 2nd battalion Royal Anglian Regiment and finally thirty years as a MOD Civil Servant (Civilian Instructor) and as a very young 60 year old I am not yet ready to "march slowly into the sunset".

Through my hobby of visiting War Graves in Belgium and France I have noticed that there are very few flowers placed at the headstones in the Commonwealth War Graves.

I am starting a business which will operate a flower delivery service to France, Holland and Belgium. The service will include delivery of flowers to the graveside and recording the moment by photograph, which will be sent to the customer. I believe it will be a worthwhile service to relatives who have lost loved ones in the two Great Wars. May I respectfully ask that you consider disseminating this information in the Iron Duke.

Should there be sufficient interest, I will begin to take orders for these services from Monday 2 February 2004. I can be contacted as shown below:

Tel/Fax: 01303 268009 (home)  
0131 310 2857 (business)  
Mobile: 07773 178745  
E-mail: checkit55@aol.com

Yours sincerely,  
Mr T. P. Doyle

From: 39 Kingfisher Avenue  
Audenshaw  
Manchester  
M34 5QH  
12 February 2004

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

With reference to the Winter Edition of the Iron Duke, I was very pleased indeed to find my late father Joseph Quest's face, amongst the ranks in the photograph on page 154 (his is the sixth face from the left), which was taken in Gibraltar. Unfortunately, I do not have many photographs of my father in the army, so this was a very pleasant surprise.

My dad, grandfather Joseph Quest Snr and an uncle all served in 1/7th DWR, during the Second World War, sadly my uncle was killed on 19 June 1944, and is buried in the war cemetery at Hottot-Les-Bagues, France.

My father was in the Dukes for approximately 28 years, he also served in Korea and spent three years seconded to the Gurkhas in Malaya, during the uprising, finally finishing his service in 1960.

I have been a member of the Mossley Branch of the DWR for the last 25 years, and for the last 20 years I have been with ex-Dukes to the 11 November memorial services held in the village of Hem in France.

Yours sincerely,  
C. J. H. Quest (Mr)

From: 9 The Braid  
Chesham  
Buckinghamshire  
HP5 3LU  
10 January 2004

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

With regard to photograph on page 158 of the Winter 2003 issue, I regret that I am unfortunately unable to name any of the senior ranks but the photograph does present many problems, some of which I give below:-

If the date and place given are really firm, then the senior ranks could only have been on convalescence or otherwise detached from the 1st Battalion since on the date 1 May 1944 the Battalion was in B Echelon of the Anzio Beachhead (see page 96 of Barclay's History 1919-1952). If however the year given is wrong and should be 1945, then it is possible that the place was Tel Aviv, since at that time the Battalion was at Camp 515 near Majdal in Southern Palestine not too far from Tel Aviv for a night out. However, why are none of the senior ranks shown wearing shoulder flashes and Div/Bde signs on their shirts and not a lanyard in sight?

The beer (?) bottles on the table have no 'Star' labels and why are their khaki forage caps also on the table, when at that time the headdress was the unforgettable 'Cap G.S.'? Perhaps these are from attached arms?

It could be that this photograph was actually taken in Italy whilst on leave or convalescence in Amalfi or

Salerno, which might also explain the lack of insignia on newly issued kit prior to returning to the Battalion at Anzio; the bottles could in fact be for wine.

There is a piano behind the two girls and they obviously played together, whilst in the background there appears to be a full length curtain which might indicate a stage, so the place could also be the canteen/NAAFI of the Sarafand Military Hospital, near Tel Aviv.

The mystery deepens.

Yours sincerely,  
Geoffrey Bullock

*Editor's note: D.E.I. agrees that the photograph must have been taken in 1945 or '46. He thinks the man on the right is CSM Green.*

From: Bryn Pabo  
Carreglefn  
Amlwch  
Gwynned LL68 0PL  
31 December 2003

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

The obituary on Peter West and his subsequent declining to receive Regimental matters puts me in mind of the year 1963, when I went for an interview with Cliff Morgan, then Head of Sports at the BBC. It was for a job on the weekly sports programme and all the guests were assembled before transmission. Peter West was there and, when he saw my Regimental tie, said "Snap!" We had quite a chat before I was called for interview. He showed great interest in the Battalion, but he had gone when I had finished. He wore his Regimental tie with some pride.

Yours faithfully,  
Bryant Fell

From: 51A Flemming Avenue  
Leigh-on-Sea  
Essex  
SS9 3AN  
24 November 2003

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

Just a few lines to report how my talk went on Remembrance Day to West Leigh School on why we wear a poppy on this day.

When telling them about the thousands and thousands of poppies that grew on the battlefield called Flanders in the First World War, one little girl asked me did I think they had been sent for a purpose. I said I thought they were, so that we could all wear them on Remembrance Day in thanks for all who gave their lives in two world wars for peace and freedom. Another said; "I think they were sent by God".

The children wanted to know all about the different coloured ribbons on my medals. Blue for the Navy, red for the Army and light blue for the Air Force. Defence

Medal: green for the green fields of England, black for the blackout during the war and orange for the Blitz on London.

They wanted to know which was my favourite medal. I said it had to be the Distinguished Conduct Medal presented to me at Buckingham Palace by the late King George VI in July 1946. One boy spoke up and said: "But we only have a Queen".

My grand-daughter asked me to be sure to write down all about my medals and I have some so.

Yours sincerely,  
Douglas Emery

From: Maen Hir  
Pencarnisiog  
Ty Croes  
Anglesey, UK  
LL63 5UG  
7 January 2004

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

I refer to the obituary to the late WOII (ORQMS) Bill Akrigg which was published in the Winter 2003 edition of the Iron Duke. It states there that Mr Akrigg "held the Africa GSM with Kenya clasp. The only Duke to do so".

I regret to say that this statement is not correct, as I personally know of two other Dukes who were awarded this medal with the Kenya clasp. One being the late Major Graham Tedd and the other Major Charles Curry OBE.

Major Tedd was serving on the staff of Headquarters East Africa Command, Nairobi, at the time that the clasp Kenya to the Africa GSM was being awarded.

Major Curry, at that time, was a National Service Second Lieutenant who had been commissioned into the Dukes and was seconded to the King's African Rifles. He participated in operations against the Mau Mau with his battalion, 2/6 KAR, during 1953-54.

Yours faithfully,  
David Miller

From: Birch Cottage  
Redpath  
Berwickshire

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

The recent death of Tom Gunn brings to mind an event that today is commonplace, but in 1953 was rarely seen, casualty evacuation by helicopter.

Tom was badly hit on the Hook at the start of the Chinese bombardment which luckily began before dark. He was brought down and taken, I think, to the RAP, where a very early model of the BELL 47, operated by the Americans, came and lifted him to the Norwegian MASH. He was on the operating table within an hour of being hit and this undoubtedly saved his life.

It was certainly the first time I, and several others, had ever seen a real helicopter in flight. In those early model 47s the casualty on his stretcher was strapped to the skids outside the helicopter and whisked away suffering from the downwash en route. One wonders what the patient's thoughts were during the flight - am I on my way to meet St Peter at the Pearly Gates!

Yours sincerely,  
Bill Oliver

From: 155 Long Lane  
Attenborough, Beeston  
Nottingham, NG9 6BZ  
14 November 2003

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

It is a considerable time since I last contributed to the Regiment's magazine.

Early in the Tercentenary Year I suffered some discomfort and was rushed into the local hospital on 4 July. Of course that was the very day that Brigadier Tony Firth died. I was not able to attend his funeral, but, with the help of Bill Norman and Brigadier Firth's widow, Alex, as well as her daughter, Robyn, I was furnished with copies of the funeral service and the Address and was able to follow events; they were all kind to me. I was limited to reading of the Tercentenary celebrations in the Iron Duke.

I'm afraid this year has been little better; not for myself, but for my wife, who had been under the weather for some time. Margaret eventually died on 28 October and was cremated this Wednesday, 12 November. It is my own birthday tomorrow, 15 November, when I will be 82. So it has not been a very good period.

I had always wished to say some words about Brigadier Tony Firth, who was my Column Commander in 1944; and we had also been in the campaign of 1942. I will always believe that he was one of the brilliant leaders of men in World War 2. His life was a credit to the Regiment, as an officer, a gentleman and a parent. After meeting him and his wife in Burnham Market in 2000, I will always remember that very pleasant visit and the conversation we had.

The Dukes travel around the globe in attempts to keep the peace; long may they be able to do so.

Yours sincerely,  
George H. Wragg  
(ex-Corporal DWR)

# 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 19 September (AGM).

*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.

\* \* \* \* \*

## REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION EVENTS - 2004

The following dates are now confirmed:

Saturday 24 April - Regimental Service, Halifax Parish Church.

Saturday 2 October - Regimental Association Reunion Dinner and AGM, Hilton Hotel, Bradford.

## SKIPTON BRANCH

Ernest Ramsbotham of Skipton Branch reminds us that the Dukes are well ingrained in the history of Skipton. Together with members of the families of those commemorated, three members of the branch attended the unveiling of a refurbished old Memorial at Skipton



L to R: Mr E. Ramsbotham, Mr B. Blood, Mr M. Doyle, all of Skipton Branch, providing a wreath on behalf of the Association at Skipton Cricket Club. The Memorial is on the wall behind them.

Cricket Club to members of the Club who lost their lives in the First World War. Of the nineteen names on the Memorial, the following twelve were Dukes:

Claude Denman Bennett, Captain, taught at Water Street School and Parish Church School and was Headmaster at Langcliffe School. Died of wounds, 18 July 1917.

Harley Bentham, Lieutenant. Died of wounds, 16 September 1918.

Cyril Calvert, Private. Killed in action, 24 November 1915.

Gordon Carruthers, 2/Lieutenant, taught at Glusburn School. Died of wounds, 29 November 1918.

Sydney Carter, Private. Died of wounds, 17 November 1916.

Fred Cartman, Private (and Yorkshire Cricketer). Died of wounds, 5 June 1915.

Tom Drummond, Lance Corporal. Died of wounds, 19 May 1918.

Percy Elliott, Private. Killed in action, 14 October 1917.

Wilfred Hall, Private. Died of wounds, 22 April 1917.

William Ireland, Sergeant. Killed in action, 12 August 1917.

Edward Supple, Lieutenant. Teacher at Ermysted's and London Irish rugby player. Died of wounds, 15 August 1915.

John Willan, Lance Corporal. Died from gas poisoning, 19 December 1915.

#### 'HEROES' RETURN' SCHEME

The 'Heroes' Return' is a scheme which has been established with the support of lottery funding to help fund travel costs for veterans (including former prisoners of war) and their present day carers to visit the countries where they served in the Second World War. This is in recognition that 2004 and 2005 will be special years for many Second World War veterans, when the country will be commemorating the 60th anniversary of the momentous events that led to the end of the Second World War. Though it is anticipated the focus will be on events which took place in 1944 and 1945, if veterans want to return to overseas areas where they served during other years of the Second World War, these can be funded too. A fixed sum will be available for each veteran and their spouse and/or carer. There will be different levels of funding for different destinations. Funding is available for visits which take place at any time in 2004 or 2005 and is limited to one per veteran. Veterans can visit either with a veterans' organisation or individually.

To apply for funding or to find out more about the scheme telephone 0800 1692277.

The closing date for applications to be considered is 31 March 2005.

#### KEEPING IN TOUCH...

We cannot help rejoicing that, not only does the Iron Duke reach our readers who write to us from as far afield as Australia (last edition) and Canada (this

edition), but Colonel Alistair Roberts' copy of the last edition reached him in the Panama Canal! Luckily, its 64 pages constituted a bumper edition, so he'll have plenty to read when he's on watch out in the Pacific.

#### Italy - 1944

The report in our last edition of the September 2003 Battlefield Tour included mention of the awards for gallantry and/or leadership made to Lieutenant Colonel B. W. Webb-Carter DSO, Major T. F. Huskisson MC, Captain A. Burns DSO and Private R. Burton VC. Mrs Mary Wright has now written to us about her father, Major P. P. Benson MC (*see page 44*, which reminds us of his similar award; although, sadly, he was killed in action.

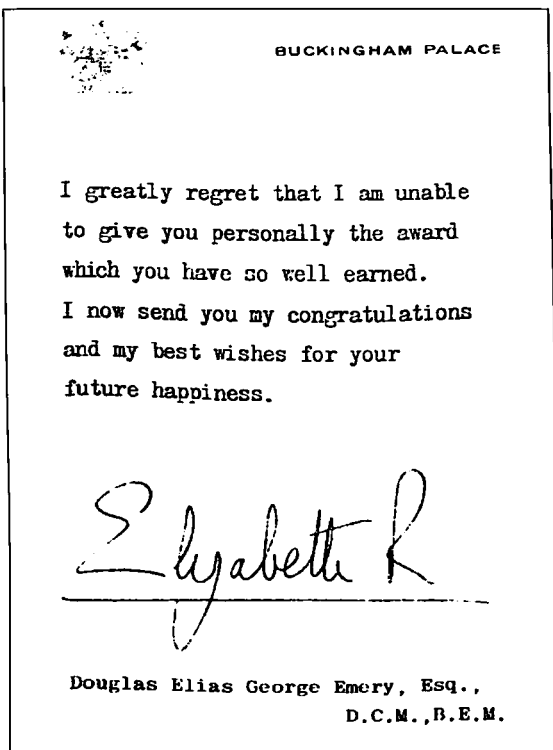
Another gallant ex-member of the 1st Battalion is Douglas Emery DCM, BEM, now 85, who lives in Essex and has been an active member of the London Branch of our Regimental Association for a number of years. He has sent us this photograph of himself and Richard Burton taken in 1945.



Private R. Burton VC and Sergeant D. Emery DCM

We should record that Sergeant Douglas Emery, who was commanding the Platoon as his Platoon Commander had been wounded, was himself awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for his courage and leadership in the capture of Monte Cece. He writes: "When we were resting in Palestine, Dick Burton, my Platoon Runner and good friend, were told to report to Battalion HQ. The Commanding Officer informed us that Dick Burton had been awarded the Victoria Cross and I the Distinguished Conduct Medal. As it was in the London Gazette as an Immediate Award, we were given the appropriate ribbon to wear. I felt very proud to be able to write home to my wife that we would be going to an Investiture at Buckingham Palace to receive the medal from King George VI."

In 1983 Douglas received from the Lord Lieutenant of Essex the British Empire Medal for his service in Customs and Excise. Reproduced below is a copy of the letter he received from Her Majesty the Queen. He is also proud to wear the 1939-45 Star, the Italy Star, the Victory Medal and the Defence Medal.



### Late Conversion

It's never too late to convert an unbeliever. Many readers will recall Major Simon Berry's long-standing aversion to sweaty sports and he himself will recall long hours filling in as Orderly Officer, while others sweated mightily to win sporting trophies around the world. Well, the word is that Grandfather Berry is now a touch-line expert, who can tell a ruck from a maul and an offside from a nearside, for he has a young grandson who is playing Colts rugby at County level. We suggest that RHQ must devise a scheme to engage this young man's attention and tempt him towards a year or two of military service with the Dukes. All being well, he'll boost our efforts to win the Cup, failing that, he can fill in as Orderly Officer while others continue to strive ...

### NIVA Service of Remembrance

Readers may like to be aware that the Northern Ireland Veterans' Association (NIVA) will be organising a Service of Remembrance on 23 September 2004 at the Ulster Grove, National Arboretum, Lichfield, Staffordshire, for those members of the armed forces and civil authorities who gave their lives in the fight against terrorism. The organisers would find it helpful if those who plan to attend could let them know in advance, so that appropriate plans may be made for the

number attending. As RHQ will not be co-ordinating attendance, those wishing to attend should inform: Chairman NIVA, c/o The Legacy Project, The Tim Parry and Jonathan Ball Trust, Peace Drive, Warrington, WA5 1HQ.

### Our Man in the North East

We note with interest that Our Man in the North East, Councillor Bill Craddock, Chairman of the Washington Millennium Centre Trustees, has recently visited the Cabinet War Rooms in Whitehall with other dignitaries, including the Duke of Edinburgh, as a guest of the National Playing Fields Association, which, with the Millennium Commission, helped to fund the creation of Millennium Centres UK-wide. The London Branch of the Regimental Association can confirm that the Cabinet War Rooms are well worth a visit - even without dignitaries being present!

### The Royal Hospital, Chelsea

Readers will recall the article about the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, on pp161-162 of our last edition. Those with a particular interest in the Royal Hospital may like to be aware of a new publication which is being released at a special pre-publication price to members of regiments in the British armed forces.

The book, which is being published as part of the Royal Hospital Appeal, includes a Foreword by HRH the Prince of Wales and will be officially launched in March 2004.

It is called 'Royal Hospital Chelsea - The Place and the People'. The closing date for the pre-publication price of £30.00 (including p&p) was 27 February 2003, but you could try for it by exercising your charm on: Louise Wilson, Third Millennium Publishing, Farringdon House, 105-107 Farringdon Street, London EC1R 3BU. Tel: 020 7837 4004.

E-mail: [info@tmilt.com](mailto:info@tmilt.com) Web: [www.tmilt.com](http://www.tmilt.com)

### Leaving the Service

Those who are completing their service may like to be reminded that the Regular Forces Employment Association (RFEA) Limited exists to help you resettle and find work, any time up to the national retirement age and as often as necessary, provided you have served a minimum of three years in the ranks, or were medically discharged, regardless of time served. This service is also extended to:

Those commissioned from the ranks

Widows/widowers of eligible spouses who died in service

Spouses of those eligible, but who are unable to work on medical grounds

Early leavers, who will be offered a service limited to 'signposting'

The service is available from 29 branches throughout the country. The Yorkshire Branch is run by David Hilton in Leeds on 0113 246 9065.

Alternatively use web site: [www.rfea.org.uk](http://www.rfea.org.uk)

Head Office at 49 Pall Mall, London, SW1Y 5YG.

Tel: 020 7321 2011

Fax: 08700 940795



### The Army Arts Society

#### The Chemring Painting Competition 2004

The first prize in the Chemring Painting Competition in November 2004 will be £300 with runner-up prizes of £150 and £50.

The competition is open only to serving members of the British Army, male or female, irrespective of rank. It will be held in Salisbury as part of the Army Arts Society Exhibition. Entrants may submit up to four items; work may be sent in by Royal Mail. You may choose your own subject, but the organisers would prefer you not to submit abstracts. There is no entrance fee.

For more information and entry forms, send your name and postal address to:

The Secretary, Army Arts Society, Long Cottage, Longstreet, Enford, Pewsey, SN9 6DD.

E-mail: [armyartssociety@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:armyartssociety@tiscali.co.uk) (note the double 's' in this address)

From mid April you can visit: [www.army.mod.uk](http://www.army.mod.uk) and click on Army Arts Society.

#### Memory Lane

The only responses we received regarding the identity of people in the photograph on page 158 of our last edition are recorded on page 46. So here is another challenge. This one dates from Bulford Camp in 1985. Names please to Mr Cyril Ford at RHQ, Wellesley Park, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX2 0BA.

#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS/\*NEW SUBSCRIBERS

Mr F. Armitage, 5 Overdale Court, Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 1AE.

Mr T. T. Carter, 'Fenay Lea', 50 Thorpe Lane, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD5 8EL.

Mr W. L. Colman, 10 Budworth Close, Billingham, Cleveland, TS23 3TB.

Mr R. F. Diacon, 4 Newport, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 8RH.

Mr P. I. Rawcliffe, PO Box 33119, 5311 Paralimni, Cyprus.

Mr A. D. Siddall, Penrice House, Porthpean, St Austell, Cornwall, PL26 6AZ.

Mr P. Tillotson, 17 Wilsthorpe Road, Chaddesden, Derby, DE21 4QR.

Mr N. J. Wainwright, 27 Manchester Road, Chapel-en-le-Frith, High Peak, Derbyshire, SK23 9SR.

\* Mr M. Ambler, 65 Meadow Drive, Wheatley, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX3 5GX.

\* Mr C. Boothman, 24 Regent Road, Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 1AU.

\* Mr T. G. Evans, 41 Heol Gwynno, Llantrisant, Mid Glamorgan, South Wales, CF72 8DD.

\* Mr D. J. J. Kirk, Macnamara's House, St Edward's School, Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 7NN.

\* Mr C. R. Whitehead, Coppice Farm Park, Lanes End, St Leonards, Tring, Hertfordshire, HP23 6LG.



On leaving the Army in 1957, following the award of the Meritorious Service Medal, Donald taught music at Sedbergh School and formed a band for the CCF. In 1973 he and his wife Irene, whom he married in London in 1940, moved to Kendall from where Donald taught music at a girls' school in Windermere and at Lancaster University. He also led the Kendall Town Band. Donald and Irene later moved to Sussex where he worked full time for the Local Education Authority teaching music and various instruments up to the age of 70.

Despite his achievements and many musical talents Donald Seed was a quiet, unassuming and modest person, but whose skills and ability made a considerable contribution to the capabilities and performance of the Regimental Band and to regimental music during the post-war period. He was without doubt one of the most highly qualified and musically skilled Bandmasters of his time and some of his musical arrangements continue in use with the current bands of the King's Division.

Donald's wife Irene died in 1994. He is survived by his daughter Yvonne, born in Halifax in 1947 and his son Christopher, born in Minden in 1952.

Lieutenant Colonel W. Robins

### **WO2 (TQMS) D. E. Dickens, BEM**

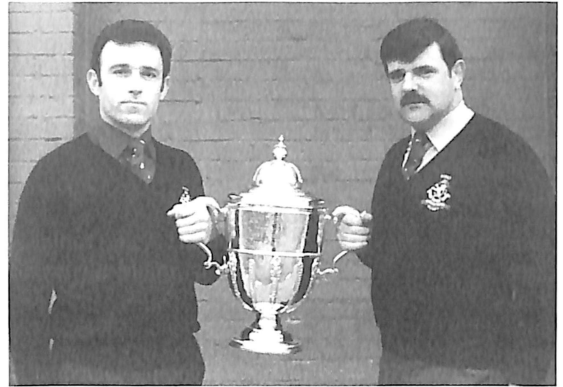
David Dickens died on 28 November 2003, suddenly, at the age of 60.

Born in 1943, he was brought up as a child in the 1st Battalion by his stepfather, WO2 Bill Costello. Bill served through World War II and into the late 1950s.

Having changed his name from Costello to his mother's maiden name 'Dickens', David joined the Irish Guards as a Junior Soldier in September 1958, however, in July 1959 he re-enlisted into the Yorkshire Brigade as a Junior Drummer and cap badged into the Dukes. He joined the 1st Battalion in 1961 at Colchester.

Whilst serving in Catterick David met his wife-to-be Freda and they were married in Huddersfield in 1963. Shortly afterwards Freda gave birth to their loving son David. David and Freda shared forty happy years together before his untimely death. David was also the proud grandfather of Lucy Victoria and Alexander Edward.

David served his country for 25 years from 1958 to 1983. His service included overseas tours such as Germany, Denmark, Cyprus, Hong Kong, Northern Ireland (four tours) and Canada. Some readers will remember David as a young Provost Lance Corporal in Osnabrück in 1965. However, for most of his service David was a member of the Mortar Platoon in Somme Company, but in the latter part of his career worked for the Quartermaster as the Battalion Accommodation Colour Sergeant, completing his career as the Technical Quartermaster Sergeant (TQMS) in Catterick 1982/83. It was for his outstanding contributions to operations in Northern Ireland (Londonderry 1977) that David was awarded the British Empire Medal. His other awards were the LS&GC, GSM with Clasp Northern Ireland and the UN Medal for Cyprus.



**David Dickens (right) with his hand on The Cup on one of the six occasions he was entitled to hold it. Peter Robinson assists him.**

David was an outstanding sportsman, his pursuits included Battalion-level basketball, skiing, cricket, golf and rugby. Without a doubt he will be remembered for his contribution to rugby. David was a member of arguably the most successful Dukes XV of all time. He played in six Army Cup Finals: 1965, 66, 67, 68, 72 and 75, being successful in all. His aggressive style of play and the ability to intimidate the opposition was a major factor in the success of the team of that time.

After leaving the Dukes, David and Freda settled in Shepley near Huddersfield. David initially worked as a postman, followed by a spell with the Council Highways Department in a stores capacity. He became heavily involved with Shepley Cricket Club accepting the position as Secretary. In 1991 David and Freda decided to move and live in their favourite holiday destination, Applecross, on the north west coast of Scotland. Though meant to be their retirement home, it wasn't long before David was enjoying working as a fishing boat deck hand and Freda successfully managed their home as a B&B.

2002 saw their final move, which was a wrenching move from Applecross back to Huddersfield to spend more time with family. Typically, David became an active member of Longley Park Golf Club and continued to steward at the British Open Golf Championships. He also worked at a local hospice.

The funeral service was held at Parkwood Crematorium, Elland, Halifax, on Monday 8 December 2003, followed by a reception at Longley Park Golf Club. A large contingent of serving and retired Dukes attended and paid tribute to David at the request of Freda with a chorus of 'The Dukes'.

His larger-than-life personality, wit and mischievousness will be missed by all who knew him.

Peter Robinson

### **Captain D. M. Gordon**

The Reverend Douglas McKenzie Gordon died on 12 August 2003 aged 87. Born in Macduff, he attended Aberdeen University and then Divinity College in Edinburgh, taking his first charge in Hamilton in 1939.

After serving as Padre to aircraft units in the Southampton area, he was posted abroad to our 2nd Battalion and thence to 76 Column, Chindits, Burma. Many years later he gave a talk to the Rotary Club in Montrose entitled "The Bravest Man I Ever Met". From his notes for the talk it is possible to reconstruct what was a minor action in the major feat that was the Chindits campaign. That he was able to give such a detailed account of an incident involving Captain A. S. Binnie, who, in spite of pain caused as a result of Japanese mortar shells wounding him in the eye, succeeded in reuniting his party with the main Column, for which he was awarded the MC, suggests that the Padre must have been very close to the action and says as much about his character as about the others in the party.

Returning from Burma, the Columns were reunited at Dehra Dun, as the 2nd Battalion DWR, where repatriations took place, leave was taken and reinforcements brought the Battalion up to strength. During this period the Padre played a discreet but important part in seeing that the many changes in personnel and circumstances were effective. Moving to Meerut, the Battalion was in cantonment barracks and with a full church the Padre continued to build the beliefs for which he had served until his own repatriation ended his ministry in the Services. Ever a good judge of character, he sought to bring out the best in those entrusted to his care, always seeking to build, never to belittle. Caring and compassionate, but never sentimental, he was a source of strength to all.

He subsequently served for more than fifty years as Congregationalist Minister in Montrose, working in many different ways for the welfare of all the townspeople, as well as his parishoners. He kept in contact with the Regiment and was proud to apply for and receive the Chindit badge, which he displayed at the end of his Rotary Club talk.

J.G.S.

### **Captain Reggie Grieve**

Reggie Grieve was born on 3 March 1920. He was educated at Ampleforth College and was about to go to Oxford University when the 2nd World War broke out. He joined the Royal Sussex Regiment in March 1940 and served with them as a Private soldier until May 1940 before going to Officer training at 166 OCTU in Colchester. He was commissioned into the Dukes and joined the 8th Battalion from October 1940-42.

In 1943 the 8th Battalion converted into 145 Regiment of the Royal Armoured Corps.

In 1944 the 145 Regiment was disbanded and became 48th Royal Tank Regiment where he was Acting Major for a short while because his Major was killed.

In May 1943 he was Mentioned in Dispatches when his tank was hit by a German Bazooka near the town of Montericcardo. Lance Corporal Spratt was killed and he and Tpr Johnson were wounded. When he was captured he gave his rank, name and number and shook his German Officer's hand and decided to congratulate him on the manoeuvre saying "well bazookered". Apparently the young German Officer was so surprised and impressed by this that he later offered Reggie some wine.

Being only lightly wounded, Reggie probably should have been taken away as a prisoner, but instead he was released and rescued six hours later. He suspected that it was only because the young German was so impressed by his enemy's reaction that he was allowed to go.

Later in 1944 the 48th Tank Regiment disbanded and he joined 6th Royal Tank Regiment (W/S Captain).

He was discharged from the Army in September 1947 and joined Whites, a fruit importing company. In the 1950s he was part of the British Purchasing Commission and lived in Valencia purchasing citrus for the British Government. In 1967 he joined Lisons Ltd Fruit Importers as a director and worked there until his retirement in 1990. He became one of the main Spanish strawberry importers.

He was a keen rugby player and represented the 8th Battalion, and the 21st Tank Brigade. He played centre and full back and he had a wicked dummy.

He had to give up playing after he ruptured his urethra in a car accident where the driver missed a turn and crashed his jeep to avoid a bridge in Austria.

The incredible thing about the Grieve family was that all seven brothers and sisters and their mother and father were directly involved in the war. Three brothers Reggie, Charlie and Edward all served as soldiers (Charles of course in the Duke of Wellington's Regiment as well). Brother Jack and sisters Helen and Vicky were prisoners of war under the Japanese in Santo Tomas Camp in Manila. Mother Adela, father John and sister Milly were taken prisoner by the Germans in Guernsey and taken to internment camp in Germany. All nine members of the family survived the War.

Reggie married Esperanza in 1960 and had five children and ten grandchildren.

John Grieve (son)

### **Mr Kevin P. Leech**

Mr Kevin P. Leech died suddenly at his home on 23 February, aged 55. His funeral was held at the Skipton crematorium on 3 March.

Kevin was an ex-member of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment West Riding Battalion, he also served in The Yorkshire Volunteers and The Queen's Lancashire Regiment. All were represented at his funeral in a guard of honour, with the banners of the DWR (Keighley Branch) and RBL (Barnoldswick Branch).

As well as being a member of The Duke of Wellington's Regimental Association, Kevin was also a member of the Polar Bear Association (49th Infantry Division) and the RBL.

He made a large plaque with the regimental badges on for the Keighley Branch of the Regimental Association, and it has pride of place at our meetings. He also rescued a stone lintel from the Barnoldswick Drill Hall (where the 6th Barnoldswick Company of the Regiment used to have their training from 1925), prior to its demolition and organised its placing in the Garden of Remembrance in Barnoldswick, both lasting memorials to Kevin's hard work and determination.

He also gave great support to the RBL for the shop and poppy appeal.

Kevin was a great one for getting things organised, anything involving the Dukes or the RBL he would do, asking for nothing in return.

He will be greatly missed by his wife, Jean, children John, Michael and Barbara and family, and just as much by his comrades.

C. W. Akrigg  
Keighley Branch Secretary

#### **Mr T. Gunn**

Tom Gunn died at Rothbury on 3 February 2004, aged 70.

Tom joined the 1st Battalion from the East Yorkshire Regiment just prior to Korea and served in 1 Platoon of A Company until he was badly wounded during the night of the Hook Battle. He had been the Radio Operator for the daylight raid carried out on a Chinese position from Naechong in January 1953. Colonel Rodney Harms, who commanded the operation, recalls that communications with the forward Battalion Command Post were excellent throughout.

Because of his wounds, Tom remained in hospital in Japan until the spring of 1954 and was therefore nearly a year late in being released from his national service. He subsequently worked in local government until taking early retirement.

His funeral service was held at North Shields on 11 February 2004 and was very well attended by members of the Regiment, the British Korean Veterans Association, the Royal British Legion and their Standard Bearers. Two Pipers played Flowers of the Forest at the conclusion of the service.

#### **Mrs Norah Barnes**

Nora Barnes, widow of Lieutenant Colonel Colin Barnes, the last Commanding Officer of the West Riding Battalion (TA), died in Huddersfield Royal Infirmary on Thursday 11 December 2003 after a long illness. Her funeral took place at the Huddersfield Crematorium on 18 December 2003. Major David Miller represented the Regiment.

*RHQ has also been informed of the following recent deaths:*

**Mr Winston Riley**, who was a member of 11 Platoon, D Company in the 1st Battalion in Korea, died on 12 October 2003.

**Captain Dennis Gibbard** died of leukaemia on 18 October, aged 77.

**Ex-Sergeant Victor Stead**, formerly of the 6th Battalion, died on 12 December 2003.

**Mr A. V. Mottram**, formerly of the 1/7th Battalion, died on 31 December 2003.

*Obituaries of the following will be published in our next edition:*

**Mr D. Borwell**, who served in D Company in Korea, died in December 2003.

**Major T. F. Huskisson**, MBE, MC. Fred Huskisson died on 25 April 2004.

**Mr Ken Walker**, who served in the 1st Battalion at Anzio and thereafter until the end of the war, died in March 2004.

# 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.