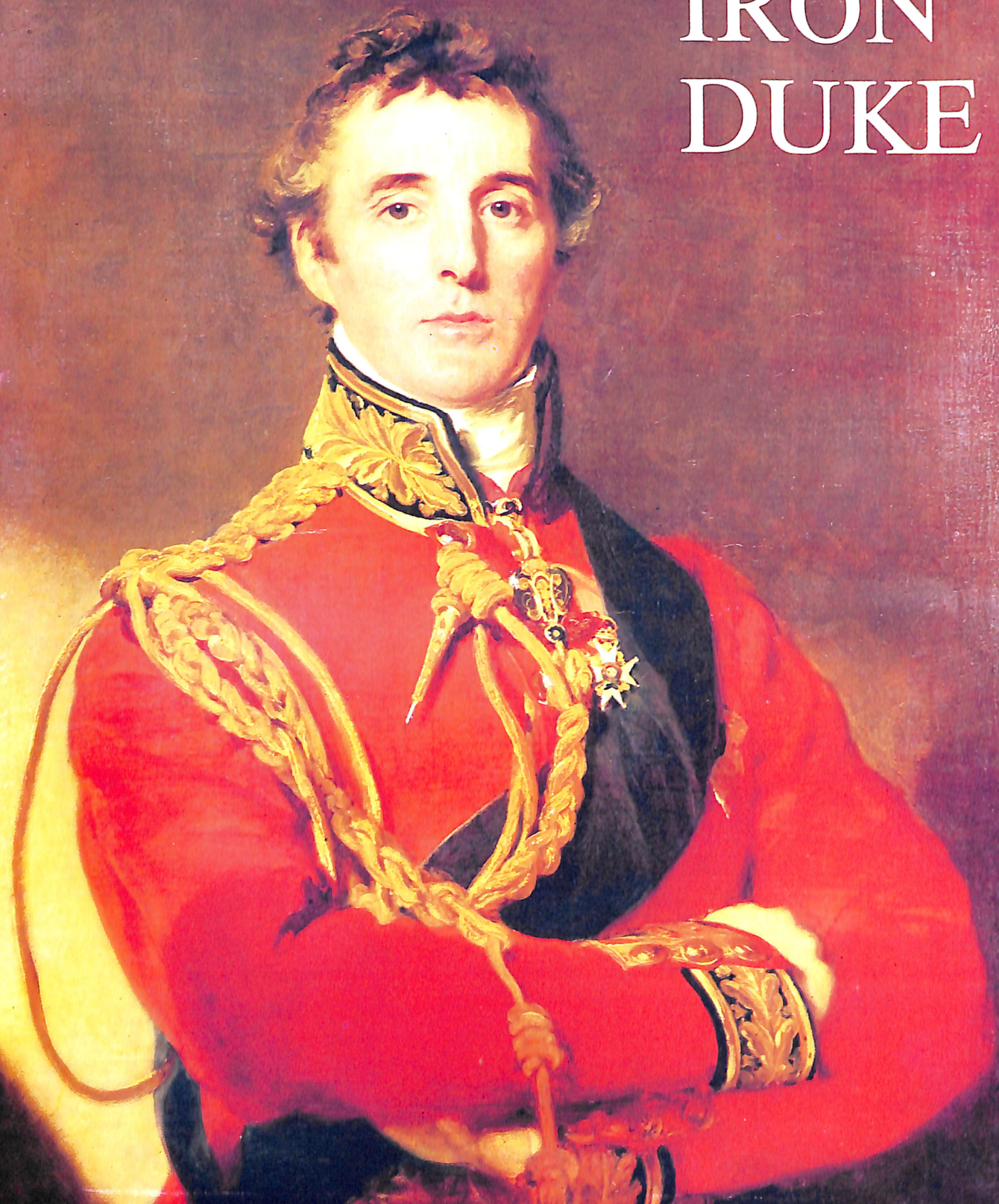


SPRING 2006
No. 260

THE IRON DUKE



THE IRON DUKE

The Regimental Journal of

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S REGIMENT

(WEST RIDING)

Dettingen
Mysore
Serlingapatam
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
Iraq 2003

Vol. LXXXI

Spring 2006

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BUSINESS NOTES

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Editor:

Brigadier J. B. K. Greenway, CBE, JP, Starbarrow,
35 Church Avenue, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 7AT.
Telephone: 01252 514786 E-mail: jbkandjpg@aol.com

Business Manager:

Major R. Heron, Wellesley Park, Halifax,
West Yorkshire, HX2 0BA. Telephone: 01422 361671

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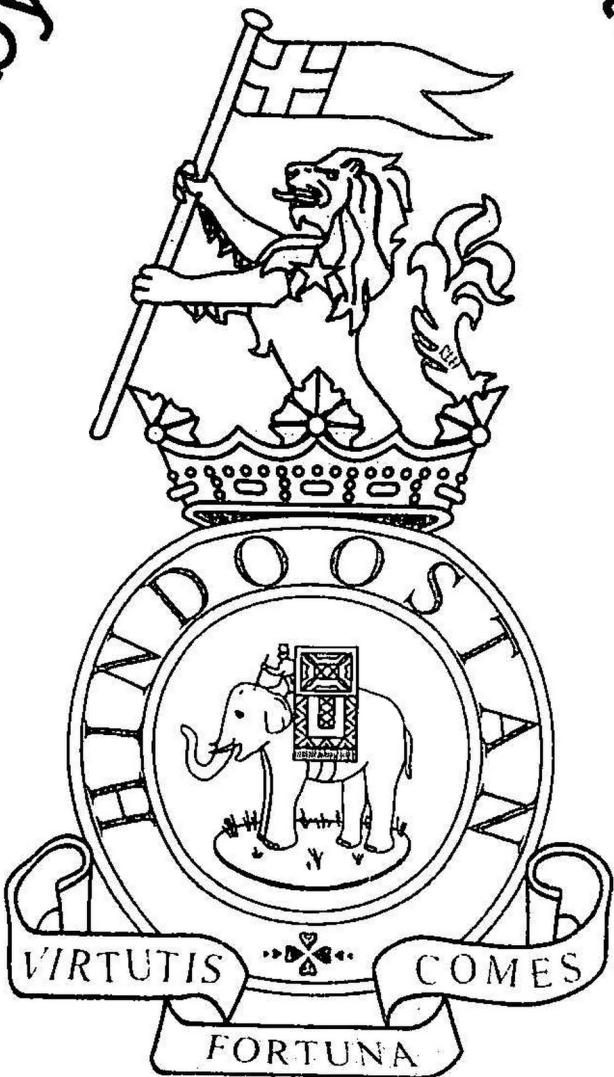
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THE REGIMENT

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

*Battlesbury Barracks,
Warminster, BA12 9DT.*

Commanding Officer: Lieutenant Colonel P. M. Lewis, OBE

Adjutant: Captain P. Lee

Regimental Sergeant Major: WO1 N. S. Wilson

East and West Riding Regiment

CO: Lieutenant Colonel P. A. Simpson, TD

DWR TA Companies:

Ypres Company (West Yorkshire)

Deputy Honorary Colonel: Charles Dent Esq, DL

Officer Commanding: Major S. A. Routh

Fontenay Company (South Yorkshire)

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

Officer Commanding: Major M. R. Watson

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 A. Jordan, RN



The Guard awaits the Ceremony in Erquinghem Lys.

Regimental Headquarters

Regimental Notes

HONOURS AND AWARDS

We are delighted to record that, in June 2005, Her Majesty the Queen graciously approved the award of a Theatre Honour - "IRAQ 2003" to, amongst other recipients, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding), which may be emblazoned on its Colours, if the Regiment so chooses.

AWARD TO THE 1st BATTALION OF A FAHNENBAND

We draw to the attention of our readers the award, which is reported in the 1st Battalion notes, of a Bundeswehr Fahnenband. This is not a common award by the German Army to an allied regiment. On the contrary, it will have been deservedly earned by the Regiment's conduct and performance in Germany, added to the Dukes' record in BAOR down the years. We send the Commanding Officer our congratulations.

THE IRON DUKE

Since the Iron Duke will be changing with the times over the next few years, we felt it would be appropriate to re-publish parts of the Editorial to the very first issue, No 1, of May 1925:

"In introducing the first number of The IRON DUKE, it is opportune to say a few words about previous Regimental Journals.

The first of which we have any trace is a magazine of the 1st Battalion called "The Havercake Lad". It was issued quarterly, beginning early in 1897, and ran into eleven numbers, the last issue (that of September 15th, 1899) being published at Dover shortly before the departure of the Battalion for South Africa. The editor, Lieutenant F. J. Siordet, was unhappily killed at the Battle of Paardeberg a few months later.

"The Havercake Lad" was started again at York in April 1905, under the editorship of Lieutenant (now Major) D. Firth, and was continued in Darjeeling and Sitapur until the end of 1907, when it lapsed.

In April, 1921, with the idea of keeping old members of the Regiment in touch with news of all its battalions, a pamphlet, edited by Brigadier General P. A. Turner, and called "Regimental Notes" was published.

Towards the end of 1924 it was decided to replace "Regimental Notes" with a regimental magazine. A Committee, under the chairmanship of the Colonel of the Regiment, with members representing the two Line Battalions, the Depot and the Territorial Battalions, decided upon the form and issue. The result of their deliberations is THE IRON DUKE.

It will be seen that this is the first really regimental magazine that we have had, in that it contains news of all existing battalions and of certain of the Service Battalions formed during the war.

We print as frontispiece to our first number a portrait of the Duke of Wellington from the painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence PRA - and at this point we might remind our readers of the Regiment's association with

the Duke of Wellington, "The Iron Duke", he was familiarly nicknamed, joined the 76th Regiment as an ensign in 1788. In 1794 he was appointed to command the 33rd Regiment, and it is interesting to note that at that time he spelt his name Wesley. At a later date he spelt his name "Wellesley", the form in which it is now familiar. In 1806 he was appointed full Colonel of the 33rd, an honour which he held until 1813."

COLONEL-IN-CHIEF

Now, in 2006, as we adjust to the changes being imposed upon the infantry, we should reflect with pleasure, not only that, until now, have we continued to be called The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, but also that our Regiment's links with the Great Duke's family were strengthened in 1974 when our then Colonel, General Sir Robert Bray, GBE, KCB, DSO, published the following message in Iron Duke, Issue No 164:

"Just before this number of our magazine went to press, it was able to record an important event in our regimental life. HM The Queen's approval of the appointment of Brigadier, His Grace The Duke of Wellington, MVO, OBE, MC, as our Colonel-in-Chief is a very great honour. It is very rare that anyone, other than a member of the Royal family, has been so appointed to a British regiment. In fact the last occasion was 61 years ago and now we are the only regiment to have such a Colonel-in-Chief. Throughout all our long history no-one has held this post, though, of course, the "Iron Duke" not only commanded the 33rd, but was later Colonel of the Regiment.

The Eighth Duke of Wellington served 29 years in the Army. He will, I know, not only take a great interest in the Regiment, but will also direct and control our affairs. We welcome him as the senior officer of the Regiment and also as a member of it. On behalf of all of us, I wish him a very happy time as Colonel-in-Chief of the Regiment which is proud to bear the crest and name of his family." Robert Bray, Colonel, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment.

Although we recently celebrated his ninetieth birthday, we nonetheless hope very much that His Grace The Duke of Wellington will become part of the hierarchy of The Yorkshire Regiment. Meanwhile, we would like to place on record our thanks to him for his close interest in and attention to the affairs of the Regiment, often accompanied by The Duchess, during his tenure of over thirty years as our Colonel-in-Chief. It has been an association that the Regiment has valued greatly.

The Duke's most recent visit to the 1st Battalion, which took place in December 2005, is reported in the 1st Battalion notes..

COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT

As the changes resulting from the current restructuring of the infantry rush upon us, it is appropriate to reflect on the pressure that these events placed, not only upon all those still serving, both in

active and "retired" capacities, but also upon those serving in a voluntary capacity, such as the Regimental Council and Boards of Trustees. They, in turn, need to acknowledge that the burden fell primarily upon the Colonel of our Regiment, who, despite his many other responsibilities, has spent many hours in piloting us through the minefield of change, none of which has been wanted, nor to our liking, to find a workable solution that leaves us with much of our Regimental pride intact and with some optimism for the future.

We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Major General Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter, who handled everything with great good sense and with as gentle a touch as the bitter circumstances of enforced change allowed.

In 2002, well before the Army Board's bombshell, the Colonel had steered the Regiment through all the many and varied aspects of our Tercentenary, including the Havercake March through our recruiting areas, Freedom Parades in several towns and cities and, the highlight, the Presentation, in Osnabrück, of new Regulation and Honorary Colours, for which the 1st Battalion deserved and received high praise.

He has dealt alike with all of us, serving and retired, officers and soldiers, and our families, with friendliness and great good humour and his Battlefield Tours have been both informative and great fun. He and Lady Webb-Carter, who has provided strong support, deserve warm thanks from all of us. We can safely say that, had the late Brigadier Brian Webb-Carter, DSO, OBE, been with us today, he would have been, as a Duke, well pleased and, as a father, rightly proud.

We shall miss our Colonel's close attention to detail and his light touch after June 2006, when he will cease to be Colonel of the Regiment, but we are truly delighted that he has generously agreed to remain President of the Regimental Association until 2008.

THE YORKSHIRE REGIMENT

On 2 March 2006 it was announced that Her Majesty The Queen had appointed the Duke of York as the Colonel-in-Chief of The Yorkshire Regiment with effect from 6 June 2006. We welcome the appointment, but it does not alter our hope, expressed above, that The Duke of Wellington may remain part of the new Regiment's hierarchy, perhaps as Deputy Colonel-in-Chief.

On the Day of Formation of the new Regiment, 6 June 2006, the battalions will change capbadges at their respective locations. The main date for marking the formation will be on 16 July 2006, in York. It is hoped that the Duke of York will attend and other details of the event will be announced in due course. We wish Lieutenant Colonel Mark Lodge well in his role as Formation Project Officer and subsequently, on promotion, as Deputy Commander, 15 (North East) Brigade.

THE EAST AND WEST RIDING REGIMENT

We bid a warm welcome to Lieutenant Colonel Paul Simpson TD, as he takes over command of The East and West Riding Regiment. Lieutenant Colonel Simpson was born in York in 1962 and educated at Archbishop Holgate's Grammar School. He joined the Territorial Army in 1980 with the 2nd Battalion Yorkshire Volunteers, following his father's advice that the TA

was the place to learn to drive! As one of the NATO-role Territorial Battalions he exercised in Germany, Gibraltar and America. In 1987 he applied for a commission into the Yorkshire Volunteers and won the Silver Cane for Best Cadet at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.

After various regimental appointments he assumed command of a rifle company and in his tenure rebadged to 3 PWO as part of SDR. He also led the Company through the transition to become one of the eight TA Fire Support Companies in the UK. In 1988 he was appointed 2IC of the 15 (North East) Brigade Training Team, running the leadership wing, before returning to The East and West Riding Regiment as 2IC in 2000. For the last three years he has been part of the 15 (North East) Brigade G3 staff responsible for training.

He enjoys a variety of interests and sports, including squash and golf. He is married to Deborah and they have a daughter and a son: Sophie 13 and Joseph 7.

THE KEYS TO ERQUINGHAM-LYS

Issue No 238 of The Iron Duke, of Winter 1998, described the heroism of Private Arthur Poulter VC, a stretcher-bearer in our 1st/4th Battalion, in the area of the French town Erquingham-Lys near Lille. The town had built the Memorial to Arthur Poulter which is shown on page 24 and Issue 138 also described its Dedication and the formal and informal ceremonies which took place on 9 April 1998.

During 2005 the Mayor and Council of Erquingham-Lys invited the Regiment to return in order to receive the Keys to the Town. Thus it was that, on 12 November 2005, the 1st Battalion's Colours and Drums, with a Guard drawn from the 1st Battalion, in Osnabrück, and from Ypres Company of the East and West Riding Regiment, under the command of Major Mark Robinson MBE, exercised their right to march through the town, in time-honoured British fashion, with Colours flying and bayonets fixed.

The March was preceded by a formal exchange of presentations, first, by the Mayor to the Colonel of the Regiment of the Key to the Town and, in return, the Centenary Statuette of the 1702 and 2002 soldiers of the 33rd of Foot. In his speech the Colonel pointed out that it was probably a unique gesture for a French town to place such an honour upon a British Regiment and drew to everyone's attention the Battle Honour "Lys" emblazoned upon the Queen's Colour.

Readers will know that, before enlistment, Arthur Poulter probably obtained some of his strength from his work lifting loads in Timothy Taylor's Brewery in Leeds, so it was appropriate that, as in 1998, Colonel Charles Dent, Managing Director of Timothy Taylor in Keighley and Deputy Honorary Colonel of Ypres Company, should attend the ceremony with his wife and other members of his staff. Again, as in 1998, they very kindly brought with them a generous supply of Havercake Ale and other brews, which were much enjoyed by soldiers and Frenchmen alike.

The Regiment was delighted that the Poulter family, which was represented in 1998 and which, in 1999, very generously presented Arthur's VC to the Regiment for display in the Regimental Museum, was able to be represented in Erquingham-Lys once again. This time

Larrain Barker (with her husband Jim) and Jennifer Smith, Arthur's granddaughters, and Katie Harrison, their niece and his great-granddaughter, attended. Afterwards, Jim Barker reflected some of the atmosphere of the gathering in his polite message of thanks to the Colonel:

"The arrangements made for us on behalf of the Regiment and the very generous contributions of Timothy Taylor's were greatly appreciated. The VIP treatment for the Regiment and Arthur's "girls" was superb and the presentations were inspiring. Larrain, Jennifer and Katie really loved the attention they were given. What we will also remember is the gracious, friendly, family atmosphere that the group created for us throughout the event. Would you please pass on our sincere thanks."

The events of this historic day, from the Regular and Territorial viewpoints, are described later in this edition by Alma and Ypres Companies respectively. Photographs are at pp 22 and 23.

60th ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE UNITED NATIONS

On 24 October 2005, the Regiment was invited to send representatives to St Paul's Cathedral in the city of London to a Service to mark the 60th Anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. Our group comprised the Colonel of the Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Tim Nicholson and Assistant Regimental Secretary, Major Bob Heron, both UNFICYP in 1975; Secretary of the London Branch, Keith Jagger; Korean veteran Tom Nowell MM from Sheffield, and, from 1 DWR, another Sheffield man, Colour Sergeant Wayne Mills CGC, who was the first recipient of that high award for gallantry on operations under a UN mandate in Bosnia

Her Majesty the Queen and HRH the Duke of Edinburgh attended, as did Tony Blair, and both those gentlemen read a lesson in a Service that trod quite a difficult path between a sincere desire to salute an organisation which was founded with such high hopes on the rubble of the Second World War (as Lord Ashdown put it in his address), and perhaps understandable concern that some word or phrase of hymn or prayer might upset someone somewhere. A new

second verse of the National Anthem for example, perhaps written especially for this service, directed God's attention "Nor on this land alone" concluding "that we in unity, should form one family, the wide world o'er". A bit Sunday School for some of us perhaps.

Having initially been directed to seats at the back of the North transept, remote from the centre of things, our party was suddenly whisked forward to places under the dome, from where all the proceedings were clearly visible. The interior of St Paul's has recently been totally refurbished and was looking magnificent.

Christopher Wren's great church is at its best when packed with the great and good of the land: Masters of City Livery Companies, bowed by their extravagant badges of office; high clerics in rainbow robes led by vergers in black gowns clutching silver wands; a slightly surreal parcel of ambassadors in national dress, led by an elderly man in a green frogged coat and a fore-and-aft hat topped with a ruff of short black feathers, thought to be the Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps; Cathedral ushers in their morning coats, silver medallions on red ribbons. And, at the heart of it all, the Sovereign in a cheerful blue coat and hat, eternally serene.

The purpose of the service lay in words said by the Dean: "As we gather to give thanks for the birth of the United Nations sixty years ago, born from the travail and horror of war, let us recommit ourselves and our future to its founding vision, in seeking to prevent and resolve conflict, and in bringing justice, peace and reconciliation to all the peoples of the earth".

Many thousands of British soldiers, sailors and airmen have served under the blue flag around the globe and some have given their lives in the cause of that founding vision. It was right and proper that men of our Regiment, with experience of UN operations in Korea, Cyprus and Bosnia, should have been there in St Paul's along with everyone else, to acknowledge that, despite its faults and failures, the United Nations has been, is and will be needed in this troubled world and, until someone can think of a better way to achieve its aims, we should continue to give it all the support we can.

T. J. Nicholson



Left to right: Keith Jagger, Colour Sergeant Wayne Mills CGC, The Colonel, Tom Nowell MM, Lieutenant Colonel Nicholson and Major Heron at St Paul's Cathedral.

1st Battalion

Commanding Officer's Introduction

The move back to Warminster from Germany went well, despite a very heavy snowfall right in the middle of the process. As you will read elsewhere in this edition, we were well served by Graham Nellist, who, as an ex-Duke now working for the German removal company, was responsible for our unit move, pulled out all the stops to make it work. He could not have been more helpful and as an ex-families' Colour Sergeant, he knew exactly how to handle things in a sensitive and efficient manner. Credit also goes to Major Andy Pigg and his team for coordinating the effort within the Battalion. Despite a busy programme right up to the very end, the handover of Belfast Barracks to 1 QLR went as well as we could have expected, as did the takeover of Battlesbury Barracks from 1 BW here in Warminster. Both Quartermasters and their teams deserve particular credit for this. In theory, at least, we will not have to go through the pain of another unit move, but we will have to wait and see how things pan out!

Prior to our departure from Germany, I had deliberately painted a rather gloomy picture to the Battalion of what the accommodation and infrastructure of Battlesbury Barracks would be like. Therefore on arrival there were no major surprises and, though the barracks is not of a particularly high standard, there are worse elsewhere. Clearly there is an awful lot that can and should be done to rectify years of neglect, but this is not going to happen overnight. Indeed, much of the accommodation, the dining room and the Junior Ranks' Club is due to be flattened in a couple of years' time as part of a major rebuild programme, so I am confident that things will improve. As an interim, we are now implementing measures to try and improve the quality of life for the boys, but as ever public money is short and the system is not prepared to invest heavily at this time. Despite all this we have been quick to make Battlesbury Barracks our home, and anyone visiting might think that we have been here for years.

During a hectic run up to Christmas, we were delighted to be able to host a joint visit to the Battalion by both the Colonel-in-Chief and the Colonel of the

Regiment. It was an emotional but memorable day for us all and one that I suspect, given the time available, we will not be able to repeat in our current guise. The Colonel-in-Chief appeared to have thoroughly enjoyed the visit and clearly felt very much at home and with friends. On more than one occasion, he took the opportunity to express his desire for this battalion, as we become the 3rd Battalion Yorkshire Regiment (Duke of Wellington's) to continue to refer to itself as the Dukes. I am sure we will.

Our minds are now very much focussed on preparations for the future, both as far as the Yorkshire Regiment is concerned and ensuring that we are fit for role as the Land Warfare Centre Battlegroup (LWC BG). There is much to be done and the Battalion Second in Command, Major Peter Monteith, has been working tirelessly to pull it all together and he deserves particular credit for this. The role presents us all with a fresh series of challenges, which we relish. Our mission as the LWC BG can best be described simply in four verbs:

- We oppose units and formations in training.
- We train individuals on courses.
- We demonstrate capabilities and tactics.
- We test new equipment and technology.

In addition to this we must attend to our own training, administration, logistics, recruiting and retention - and of course we must also be prepared for the unexpected. What makes us different from previous Battalions in this role is that we know we are to remain as an Armoured Infantry Battalion beyond this two year tour. It is therefore essential that we ensure that we continue to build on our expertise in this field and take advantage of the superb training opportunities that the current role offers. This will stand us in good stead for our eventual return to a deployable brigade.

I do hope by now that most will be aware of the Regimental Weekend to be held here in Battlesbury Barracks, 6/7 May 2006. It is intended to be very much a celebration of this fine Regiment, but also part of the launch into the future.

THE VISIT OF THE COLONEL-IN-CHIEF

Within just a week of the 1st Battalion raising the flag in its new home at Battlesbury Barracks in Warminster, we had the honour to be visited by both the Colonel of the Regiment, Major General Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter KCVO, OBE and the Colonel-in-Chief, Brigadier His Grace The Duke of Wellington KG, LVO, OBE, MC, DL. This was set to be a momentous occasion and most probably the last time that we would be visited by The Duke as the Colonel-in-Chief. Bearing this in mind, the Commanding Officer was determined to make this a visit that he would remember.

The Colonel of the Regiment arrived with his wife, Lady Webb-Carter, on the evening of 13 December

2005. This afforded an excellent opportunity for dinner in the Officers' Mess with the Field Officers and their wives. It also allowed the Colonel to see the Regimental silver on show in its new home.

After a hearty breakfast in the Officers' Mess the following morning, the Colonel of the Regiment was taken on a whistle stop tour of the camp, accompanied by the Commanding Officer and the Regimental Sergeant Major. During this tour, he was shown a typical accommodation block, the Junior Ranks' complex and the cookhouse, all of which are significantly less salubrious than their Osnabrück counterparts. However, the soldiers had made a sterling effort over the previous

week in bringing the camp up to the standards expected of the Dukes. This walk around gave the Colonel an excellent opportunity to chat with these soldiers and discuss their views about being back in the United Kingdom, most of whom were very positive. Following this, the Colonel was shown the vehicle garages and some of the vehicles that had returned from the Bowman conversion, before being taken up to Harman Lines to visit A Squadron 1st Royal Tank Regiment, part of the 1 DWR Battlegroup.

At eleven o'clock the Colonel-in-Chief arrived at the main gate with Her Grace the Duchess of Wellington. The Unit Welfare Officer, Captain Shaun Caine and the Commanding Officer's wife, Sally Lewis, hosted the Duchess and Lady Webb-Carter on a visit to the married quarters estate and welfare facilities. Meanwhile, the Commanding Officer spent the remainder of the morning giving a presentation on the Battalion's new role as the Land Warfare Centre Battlegroup and the future, including the changes that will take place with the formation of the Yorkshire Regiment. After the presentation, everyone retired to the Officers' Mess for lunch with the officers of the Battlegroup, which was preceded by a photograph of the Officers of the First Battalion with the Colonel-in-Chief and Colonel of the Regiment.

After lunch, the Colonel-in-Chief took the salute at a short parade led by the Officer Commanding Corunna Company, Major Rob O'Connor. This allowed an excellent opportunity for The Duke to present long-awaited Iraq medals to a number of the soldiers. In his short speech, he thanked the Battalion for such an enjoyable visit and congratulated those soldiers on parade. He also expressed his regret that this would probably be the last time that he visited in his capacity as the Colonel-in-Chief but hoped that all members of the Regiment would continue to consider and refer to themselves as Dukes. Following these poignant words, the Duke was shown around a display of armoured vehicles representing all the different elements of the Battlegroup.

The final visit made by the Colonel-in-Chief was to the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess for refreshments. Here the Duke presented Long Service and Good Conduct Medals to Sgts Walkinshaw and Harris from the Sniper Platoon and Corporal Magregor from the Signals Platoon, before saying his final farewells for the day. It had been the climax to an extremely busy week for the 1st Battalion.

It had been important to us to make the visit one that the Duke and the Duchess would remember and it had been equally important we showed that regardless of forthcoming changes to the Regiment, we would always remain Dukes at heart.

We were pleased to see the Duke's kind letter of thanks, reproduced below, which the Commanding Officer received after his visit.

Major Steve Lees
Officer Commanding Burma Company

**From His Grace the Duke of Wellington
KG, LVO, OBE, MC, DL**

Park Corner House
Heckfield
Hampshire
RG27 0LJ

12th December 2005

Dear Phil,

I very much appreciated my day with the Battalion and I would like to thank you and all members including those attached, who contributed to making my day such an enjoyable one. Everyone seemed in very good form and carrying out their duties in such a professional and cheerful way. I would of course expect no less. My only sadness is that it might be the last time I shall visit you under your present title although, as I said in my little speech, I hope all members of the Regiment will continue to call themselves Dukes both unofficially and officially if possible.

I hope the contents of my letter can be distributed as widely as possible within the Battalion.

Yours ever,
The Duke of Wellington
Colonel-in-Chief



The Duke with members of the Recce Platoon.

PRESENTATION OF THE FAHNENBAND TO THE 1st BATTALION

The Fahnenband dates back to 1965 when the Bundespräsident of the Federal Republic of Germany presented battalions of the Bundeswehr (German Army) with "Truppenfahnen." These were made in the German national colours of black, red and gold with the "Bundesadler" (German Eagle). The same design is used by all units of the Bundeswehr, with individual units identified by way of a Fahnenband which is attached at the apex of every Truppenfahnen pole.

The Bundespräsident agreed to a proposal from the Federal Minister of Defence to present worthy allied units or battalions who leave the Federal Republic of Germany after a minimum of five years' service with a Fahnenband in recognition of that service. This is a great honour for the receiving unit as the Fahnenband is treated with a similar degree of reverence to Regimental Colours.

On 24 November 2005 Major General Claus, General Officer Commanding 7 (German) Panzer Division presented the 1st Battalion with the Fahnenband, in recognition of the Regiment's distinguished service in Germany. In his address, which was meticulously researched and delivered in faultless English, General Claus spoke of the long association between his own Division and the 1 (United Kingdom) Armoured Division. He also spoke of his pleasure in being able to present the Fahnenband to the Dukes,

"This is in recognition of your outstanding service in Germany. You are a credit to your Division."

He also made reference to the Regiment's previous service in Germany, from the time of the War of Austrian succession through to post-World War Two postings.

For the presentation of the Fahnenband the Colour Party was made up of Captain Johnson, Lieutenant Redshaw, Lieutenant Carman and Second Lieutenant Obese-Jecty, escorted by Warrant Officer Class 2 Carter, Sergeant Harris and Sergeant Clarke. The Guard was furnished with soldiers from all five Companies and commanded by Major O'Connor. The band was from the Queen's Royal Lancers. The preparation for the parade was under the watchful eye of the Regimental Sergeant Major, ably assisted by Warrant Officer Class 2 Carter and Sergeant Harris, the latter displaying an enthusiasm for drill one would not expect from a sniper. Rehearsals for the parade had to fit in around Bowman training and a Corunna Company exercise at Achmer but, despite the limited preparation

time, everyone was ready on the day. There was a great sense of pride, tinged with sadness, as it was the last time the Duke of Wellington's Regiment would ever parade in Germany.

The significance of the day was not lost on the local community and a number of dignitaries arrived to watch the parade, as did the local school children who had been given a reprieve from lessons for the morning. Also present were Major General Cooper DSO MBE, General Officer Commander 1 (United Kingdom) Armoured Division and Brigadier CM Deverill MBE, Commander 4 Armoured Brigade. After inspecting the Guard, Major General Claus attached the Fahnenband to the Queen's Colour, carried by Second Lieutenant Obese-Jecty. The Queen's Colour was then trooped. On completion of the troop Major General Claus addressed the Battalion. The guard then marched past the dais in quick time and all retired for lunch. In the Officers' Mess General Claus was presented with a cake and magnum of champagne to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Bundeswehr.

General Claus departed after lunch and the second half of the day was given over to Major General Cooper DSO MBE, General Officer Commander 1 (United Kingdom) Armoured Division. This was the General's annual visit to the Battalion and also his opportunity to bid the Battalion farewell prior to the move to Warminster. The General viewed a complete cross section of the Battalion including Hook Company's accommodation, Corunna's Warrior fleet and Somme Company's specialist Platoons. General Cooper was genuinely interested in the opinions of the soldiers and officers with whom he spoke. All of the companies had expended a great deal of effort in preparation for the visit and this was rewarded with the General's high degree of satisfaction with the standard of the Battalion.

Major RC O'Connor
OC Corunna



The Commanding Officer with General Claus.



General Claus inspects the parade.



General Cooper with members of Somme Company.

ALMA COMPANY AT ERQUINGHEM-LYS

Before leaving Germany, Alma Company was tasked with conducting a Freedom Parade in Erquinghem-Lys. Erquinghem-Lys was one of the most fierce encounters of 1918. General Ludendorff had launched an offensive on the Neuve Chapelle front with the aim of securing the Channel ports. The Portuguese, who held the majority of the front, were overcome rapidly by the Germans as they pushed up to and in some cases beyond the River Lys. On 10 April the British launched a counter-attack on the village of Erquinghem-Lys. Among the troops engaged were officers and soldiers of the 1/4th Battalion the Duke of Wellington's Regiment (147 Brigade).

We were faced with fierce opposition; one company was virtually destroyed; overall, the Battalion lost 15 Officers and 391 other ranks. It was during this battle that Private Arthur Poulter's immense bravery earned him a Victoria Cross. Private Poulter was a stretcher-bearer who, on ten separate occasions, carried badly injured men on his back to a place of safety. Even after an order to withdraw over the river, he went back once more in full view of the enemy to rescue another injured soldier. He gave medical aid and bandaged up over forty men throughout the day and the example he set to all ranks cannot be described in any other way than as purely magnificent. He was subsequently badly injured during another campaign, however, survived the war to live in peace.

Alma Company, alongside members of Ypres Company, East and West Riding Regiment, was tasked to conduct a Freedom Parade in remembrance of those who fought in the town. The task of producing the drill format and educating the Company fell squarely on the shoulders of Company Sergeant Major Carter. After several dress rehearsals the confidence began to flow throughout Alma, although we were still some way short of the Public Duties swagger. Nevertheless, with great fortitude Company Sergeant Major Carter pressed on and even those with two left feet were soon looking the part.

After setting off at an unholy hour on the Saturday morning, we began the interminably slow drive to Erquinghem-Lys, arriving mid-morning.

Everyone relaxed for a while before a walk through the town for orientation and final rehearsals. We then began to get ready and the nerves were clearly apparent in a number, particularly your author who kept frantically testing the air for wind as the Honorary Colour has a tendency to act like a spinnaker sail. It was also apparent that certain soldiers wanted to stay inside

not due to fear of failure or the increasingly inclement conditions, but more to do with the barrels of Timothy Taylors that were being studiously plumbed in. Eventually we were ready for the off. Some rifle drill warmed the hands and helped to settle nerves, before Major Robinson gave the formal words of command and the Colours were marched onto parade. Any final concerns soon dissipated as the Drums, led by Drum Major Sykes, began to thump their martial beat and we set off with a swagger toward the Town Hall.

Looking around it was apparent that the soldiers were immensely proud to be on Parade in a French town. We



Captain Johnson keeps the beer flowing.

stopped at the Town Hall and were greeted by the town Mayor as well as Major General Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter and a number of other Duke luminaries. We listened intently to the impassioned speech delivered by the town Mayor and an equally rousing retort from the Colonel of the Regiment. We were then presented with a singular honour; the Keys and Freedom of Erquinghem-Lys. Major Robinson then, in French, asked for permission to fix bayonets and let the Colours fly. Incredibly, he was understood and the town Mayor duly gave permission. The parade then marched through the Lys streets before finishing at the Arthur Poulter VC memorial on the edge of town. The assembled throng were then treated to an eye opening account by Brigadier Mundell of events on 10 April 1918,

before a sombre and poignant playing of the Last Post. It was particularly moving to see the relatives of Arthur Poulter VC lay a wreath in memory and helped to remind the soldiers of the sacrifice our predecessors made.

With the formal element of the parade complete, Alma and Ypres soldiers were treated to a Yorkshire isotonic drink courtesy of Mr Timothy Taylor. From this point forward Major Robinson and Company Sergeant Major Carter kept their fingers well and truly crossed whilst the soldiers demonstrated that ale was the drink of champions. The barrels of Best, Landlord and Haver-cake had an ethereal quality and appeared to be bottomless as the beer kept flowing, literally freely, throughout the evening! In a rare moment between pints we were treated to a fantastic evening meal by the incredibly hospitable locals before the lads disappeared across France in search of fondant fancies.

The evening passed without international incident and a somewhat more relaxed OC and Company Sergeant Major surveyed the carnage the following morning. Despite the best efforts of some to travel

the length and breadth of France in search of a good night club, all the soldiers returned in time for the bus home. Both territorial and regular Dukes now faced a momentous journey, nursing some appalling headaches.

The weekend was an unqualified success, due in part to the efforts of the soldiers in preparing for the parade. Nevertheless, without the great efforts of the local

populace, particularly Jacques who helped organise the event, Major Bob Heron and the Timothy Taylor's nourishment team, the weekend would not have come together. Their work reaped rewards and the honour bestowed upon the Regiment proved that the work was all worthwhile. It is fair to say that, so far as dickings go, this was one of the very best, as everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

CORUNNA DAY

On 16 January we celebrate the Battle of Corunna. This year the event was marked with a shooting competition and a dinner night. Serving members of the Company were joined by twenty six guests, most of whom had served in Corunna as a Sergeant or above in years gone by.

Second Lieutenant Rob Douglas, fresh from the rigours of Sandhurst, organised a shooting competition which included a challenging 600 metres best effort up a particularly steep hill, followed by a series of shoots from a variety of positions. Five teams of red-faced, sweat-drenched soldiers arrived at the firing point, all trying desperately to catch their breath before getting onto the firing point. The competition was split into three categories; Best Shot, Best Team (shooting) and Best Overall Team (a combination of quickest up the hill and the highest scores).

The vast majority shot well, notably Privates Eaton and Lawson although they were both eventually surpassed by Private Teleyko of 7 Platoon, who had, earlier in the week, recorded the highest score on the Annual Personal Weapon Test, dropping only one shot. Teleyko, who has just joined us from Infantry Training Centre Catterick, applied himself extremely well and was thoroughly deserving of his prize.

The Best Team events were a closely-run contest. On shooting alone, the top two teams managed to finish even on points. The only reasonable way to separate

them (not through 'milling' as suggested by Sergeant Clarke) was to see who had recorded the most hits on the targets. As soon as this was done, Private Teleyko's team was hailed the victors, albeit by the narrowest of margins.

The last category of the event, the Best Overall Team, saw the top three teams measure up nearly even on the shooting scores. However, the physical part of the contest had yet to be taken into consideration. Once it had, a clear winner emerged. The team headed up by Private Staniland of 8 Platoon was some 21 seconds faster than their nearest contenders. They were declared the Best Overall Team and were overjoyed at their triumph - especially Private Firth, not a small man, who did exceptionally well to keep up with the other racing snakes!

Corunna Day itself, the following Monday, culminated with a Company dinner night. A number of former Corunna men still serving in the Battalion were invited to join the Company for the evening. Colour Sergeant Yeadon and his helpers spent many hours arranging the function, abetted by Corporal Sutcliffe, and the end result was well worth the effort. The tables were laid out with various pieces of Regimental candelabrum and we had the honour of having the Colours too. At the centre of the head table was the Commanding Officer, hosted by Corporal Farrington, and various other personalities were hosted by members of the Company.



Corunna Company Day - the table layout for Dinner.

A series of mouth-watering courses was followed by Second Lieutenant Paddy Dennien's presentation on The Battle of Corunna. The actual battle, fought against the French, was a delaying battle conducted at the end of a fighting withdrawal. It was predominantly an infantry battle, fought in the walls and streets of Elvina and Piedralonga in north western Spain. The British forces suffered heavy losses, but held on until nightfall before managing to board ships which would take them home.

It was both a thought-provoking and informative synopsis - and the use of a ceremonial sword as a pointer certainly captured the mood. Everyone left the dining hall far more aware of what had actually happened at the battle from which their Company was named, and refocused one and all about what we were remembering.

From here we took our guests back to the Corporals' Mess for further liquid refreshment. There was an excellent atmosphere, and hearing so many former members of Corunna reminisce about their various experiences, whether funny or sad, proved fascinating and allowed us an insight into how the Company was, ten, and in some cases twenty, years ago.

Remembering the Battle of Corunna, and the men of the 76th who made the ultimate sacrifice, is something the Company will seek to (diary permitting) keep as an annual event. It was a special evening, and with the nearing of our Regimental name change, it is all the more important that events such as this long continue in the 3rd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment (Duke of Wellington's).

2nd Lieutenant Doug Hayton-Williams
OC 8 Platoon

C.I.S. PLATOON



Captain Dick and Majors Richardson and O'Connor enjoying training.

This last period has seen the Battalion brace itself for the massive changes that the Bowman system will bring. The conversion period started for us in August 2005 when we had four select instructors, namely Sergeant Devanny and Corporals Baker, Blair and Sargent (Bowmanators), trained up to deliver the Westland's computer emulation training; the first part of our training being taught on a computer screen. This was challenging in itself! At the first lesson we received an A5 folder to put course notes in and seventeen pages of TLAs and abbreviations. That alone could break a grown man!

Thankfully we were not going into this process completely blind, as Colour Sergeant Spink recently returned to us from the Bowman trials team, so he was able to point us in the right direction.

Since we have been in Warminster the training has focussed (with the help of the Bowman Training Advisory Group or BOWTAG) on getting hands on the radios and becoming familiar with the computer software. As the vehicles have been arriving back from Ashchurch after General Dynamics have swapped the green boxes over for new green boxes and hard-wired new radios and computers into vehicles - it all looks

very new and impressive. The best bit of kit (according to WO2 Hind) is the new heater in the 432 - how times have changed!

The new kit will be able to deliver massive improvements to the legacy Combat Net Radio enabling faster, more secure battle procedure. There will inevitably be fundamental changes that will evolve in time. We will have secure voice down to section level and (when it is all working) situational awareness - similar to blue force tracker. This will have the capability of displaying individual call signs on a computer map that automatically updates at regular intervals, reducing the need of 'send locstat, over'.

Despite some of the negative press received recently in the papers, it is a step forward and offers secure voice at tactical level - something we never had before. It is, however, a juvenile system with a great deal of upgrading and development to come before 'steady state' is reached. During this time we are going to be making it work on Salisbury Plain, probably suffering Bowman turrets (KEK, CIFD, CIP, BNAU, BEOM, ABC, VP, VMG, HM, HMOL, HCDR, HMOP, VA, VM ... etc).

Captain P. G. Smith, RSO

ANTI-TANK PLATOON

After an intense Milan Cadre period in Germany, the Platoon was now getting ready for the move to Warminster and looking forward to getting their hands on the new weapon system "Javelin". Before that though there was a matter of a well-earned Christmas leave. The guys then came back to a very busy period. BOWTAG was upon us and also the Javelin conversion. AI Cadres were now running and also Driving Cadres for CAT B and C.

Corporal Imber, little Smudge Smith, is now being taught on the BOWTAG training ready to come back and train the rest of the Platoon.

Lance Corporal (Kinky) Tuikoro disappeared on his Javelin Detachment Commanders' Course, leaving Lance Corporal the Juggler Lane to instruct on the Cadre as well as looking after the stores, vehicles and a few other things. Colour Sergeant Smith was pulling

his hair out yet again, with his blood pressure flying through the roof, trying to plan the Cadre and administer the rest of the Platoon. "Oh what would it be like to have a Platoon Commander!"

The conversion is now well under way and the guys are having a great time over at the Anti-Tank Division trying to complete their Javelin gunner's test, in which they have to complete forty computer-generated firings at various targets to qualify them as operators.

After the conversion is complete then we look forward to the busy times ahead converting to Bowman and getting out on the Plain using the JAVWES.

Welcome to the next incoming 2IC, Colour Sergeant Dave Schofield, who has just arrived to relieve the pressure off Colour Sergeant Smith.

Colour Sergeant Smith

DRUMMING UP SUPPORT FOR THE DUKES

In April 2000 the Corps of Drums of the 1st Battalion the Duke of Wellington's Regiment consisted of over twenty trained drummers. Having completed two years of public duties, every member of the Drums Platoon was more than competent at playing their respective musical instruments. Led by Drum Major Ian Johnson with Corporal Prendergast as the lead tipper, the Platoon fulfilled both the roles of the Corps of Drums and the Sustained Fire (Medium Machine Gun) Platoon.

The move to Osnabrück in Germany brought about changes in our orbat as an armoured infantry battalion. There was no longer a requirement for a machine gun platoon. However, lessons learnt from previous battalions suggested that the use of a sniper platoon had proved to be invaluable, despite the lack of such on a battalion's establishment. Consequently, Sniper Platoon was generated within Somme Company and the Drums Platoon became one of the three armoured infantry platoons, namely 4 Platoon, within Burma Company. In addition to their new role as Warrior AFV crew, some drummers were also trained up as assault pioneers. The erosion of the Corps of Drums set in over the course of time as the more experienced members of the Platoon left the Army or moved on to postings elsewhere. The drummers who remained spent little time on their musical responsibilities and ever-increasing amounts of time on their primary duties as Infantrymen. This gradual demise was further increased due to the level of operational commitments including tours to Kosovo (twice), Iraq (twice) and Operation Fresco during the firemen's strike. This resulted in the five-and-a-half month drums course in Catterick becoming the least of our priorities.

By the time the Battalion returned from Operation Telic V in April 2005, we could only field a front rank of five side drummers. Our trained manpower was at critical levels. With the prospect of becoming the Yorkshire Regiment looming on the horizon, it became increasingly likely and all too easy that we would lose the Corps of Drums. The 1st Battalion, the Green Howards were suffering from similar difficulties and

the 1st Battalion, the Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire were not in a significantly better state. It was make or break time.

The then Officer Commanding of Burma Company, Major Wilson set the Platoon Commander, Lieutenant Carmen, the difficult task of coming up with a workable plan which would begin the re-formation of the Corps of Drums within the Battalion. We contacted the Army School of Ceremonial in Catterick and managed to negotiate ten vacancies for the Dukes on the next course. This was quite an achievement bearing in mind that it was more than three times the allocation a single battalion could normally expect. The Commanding Officer agreed the proposals with strong support from the Regimental Sergeant Major and the newly appointed Burma Company Commander, Major Lees. In doing so, they accepted the risk created by sending over a section's worth of soldiers on a long course over what would prove to be an extremely busy period in the Battalion's life.

The Drums course is very demanding. Each drummer learns to play a primary instrument, either a side drum or a flute, and the bugle as a secondary instrument. Students take their graded exams as the course progresses and at the end of the course they all take part in a Pass Off Parade. Inevitably, not all of those sent managed to complete the course and four soldiers left at various stages along the way. However, one or two of these still managed to achieve their musical qualifications (our primary aim), and gain valuable experience prior to their premature departure. We are currently looking to send another eight on the next course, again taking a risk in the shortfalls that this will create in the Land Warfare Centre Battlegroup orbat.

The Drums Platoon will soon be losing the current lead tipper, Lance Corporal Gillot who has served nine years with the Platoon. However, with a newly appointed Drum Major and the experience of people like Corporal Oxley, Lance Corporal McFarland and Private Charlesworth, it is hoped that our newest drummers can be nurtured into part of what could very well be a capable Corps of Drums.

The Platoon is very much looking forward to displaying its new musical prowess as the Battalion gets ready for the inter company boxing (which Burma Company will win) and the Regimental weekend in May this year. We are also very much looking forward to the opportunities that will arise with the formation of the Yorkshire Regiment later this year and have already begun to form close ties with the other two Drums Platoons having each provided support to the capbadge launch in December last year.

Twelve years ago we saw the sad loss of our Regimental bands. Our forefathers then vowed that we could never let this happen to our Corps of Drums. It is our responsibility to ensure that this does not happen.

Virtutis Fortuna Comes

Corporal (Drum Major) Sykes



Corporal Gillot sounding the Last Post.

UNIT WELFARE OFFICE FAMILIES' UPDATE

The pre-arms plot preparation, which included the wives' Recce of Warminster, briefings and anticipation of welfare problems, has really paid off. I would personally like to thank all the Welfare staff both in Germany and Warminster for all the hard work they put into the move. Our wives and families have had to cope with a disruptive few months and the Families' Office staff thanks them for their support and patience during the move to Warminster. We are now putting together a summer programme of events and are open to any ideas for thing to do and places to visit.

Many are asking "what is it like to be a Pad in Warminster?" Who better to answer that question than a Dukes' wife:

A Pad's life in Warminster

When I was asked to write this article, it got me thinking - what is a 'pad'? Alright, everyone knows it's the spouse of someone in the Forces, but just where did this term come from? What did it mean? And after four hours of Internet searching I still couldn't tell you for sure, so maybe we should invent our own terminology, our own meaning - what it means to us in Warminster.

Such a small word can mean so much; a 'Pad' can be defined as 'temporary living quarters', which in so many Arms Plots previous to this one was quite on the mark, it was temporary, we only had to 'put up with it for a while' and now we have moved permanently. Some spouses may see this as a bad thing, but this has opened up so many opportunities for us and our children ... a chance to settle down.

But what if 'Pad' actually stood for something? Panic Anxiety Disorder, Poignancy And Disappointment, Possibility And Desire, Pregnancy And Divorce, Pride And Dignity, all of which if you truly think about it we have felt during this move, okay, maybe not Pregnancy And Divorce.

Well, for many people reading this, the relocation to Warminster will have been their umpteenth move, again trying to get everything sorted, packing boxes, filling holes in the walls with anything that vaguely resembles magnolia paint, and of course trying to make sure that the children are entertained. I can only sit back and watch with awe as I observe families with young babies, toddlers and even teenagers that are blossoming into the next 'Vicky Pollard', smiling as they move into their new Pad.

But for some, like me, this will have been their first move with the Regiment, and their first time living in a Pads' Estate in the UK. Fair enough - I, possibly like many spouses, after spending much time deliberating whether or not any of the furniture in the truck would fit up the tiny stairwell to a second floor flat, probably took a deep breath and then ... cried! After all the emotion had passed I thought about what life would be like in the UK compared with life in Germany - the price of beer, wine, food, cigarettes and even the size of the quarters - all the negative things, and then I thought of the positive aspects.

Okay, so the quarters here aren't as big as in Germany, my cats keep looking at me as though they are waiting to be let in on the joke, and the living room is really a tardis, it's just learning how to get in there!

Alas, the quarters will never be a five-bedroom mansion, and I have discovered that I can stand on the centre tile of my kitchen and be able to cook, wash up and stack the fridge without moving an inch, but we can make what we have into a home rather than a Pad.

After getting through all the teething troubles that everyone has had, I now hear the common cries of "I like it here", "the kids love it here", "I'm glad we came here". As job prospects come up, training courses are identified, clubs and societies that give the kids a glint in their eyes are found, we are all given the chance to make new friends and cement relationships with old ones, as we are so close. There are new places to

discover and explore and, to be brutally honest, after giving it a fair chance, I am one of those saying "I'm glad we came here".

I cannot speak for every spouse who has moved, so maybe it should be 'My Pad's life in Warminster' rather than "A Pad's life in Warminster", but I can tell you this without a shadow of a doubt - I will enjoy making this Pad my home and I am sure that I will not be alone.

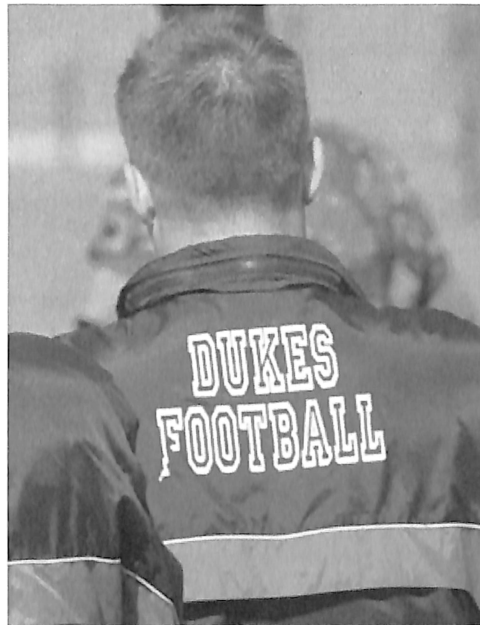
Thanks to all members of the Welfare Office and other unsung heroes who have been listening posts to all our gripes, and we promise that we do owe you a beer ... or few!

Captain S. Caine/Emma Roberts

FOOTBALL

Since I wrote the last notes for the football, way back in September, much has happened; not all of it good. On the surface, the purist would think it a disappointing season, having exited the Army and, more recently, the Infantry Cups, and, considering the first game of the campaign saw us beating 21 Engineers 8-1, then you would be right to expect great things. As ever there is much more below the surface than results would suggest. Having not competed in Army football for some eighteen months, the first eleven were always going to be up against it; I believe the Rugby team would echo that sentiment, as rust sets in to team sports without you realising it's even there. You are only reminded when you come up against a good team that has played together all year and find that you are missing the two percent of final polish that sets you apart from the rest. This said, we have without doubt given our all in competing for both Cups and have defiantly ended a few Regiments' hopes of glory. I will summarise the games played somewhere near the end, firstly it would be wrong of me not to offer my excuses for the foreshortened season, or I may be sacked forthwith. I am assured I have the vote of confidence from the directors. The dreaded vote of confidence is more usually the kiss of death in the Premiership but, considering our director is the PRI fund manager, then I hope I will still have a job at the beginning of next season, and even if I don't then at least I am assured of a season ticket.

The main problem I have already mentioned is a lack of competitive games over a long period, a lack of regular players due to courses etc, but without doubt the main problem I would cite is poor luck, here is an example. We went out of the Infantry Cup two days ago after a thrilling game which saw us taking the game into



Sergeant Hind.

extra time, having trailed one nil for a long time and with only ten men on the field (we'll not go into it), we eventually lost to a soft goal which we should have restored to level parity several times over. Whilst it all sounds like excuse-making, the main problem was the quality of the opposition, they had recently been in the semi-final of the Army Cup and as an Infantry team that is no mean feat. Their manager was honest enough to say that we had given them the hardest test they had faced in some twelve months. But that is the way it goes in Army football, you can draw a great team or a poor one and, whilst you will have to face them all eventually, there is definitely a good argument that you will be better placed to play the elite somewhere nearer the end rather than the beginning.

So far I have concentrated largely on the negative aspects of the season, there are of course many good things I should speak of. Starting from the top, the team has a new head coach in WO2 (RAOWO) Mark Doyle; Mark has taken the reins from Sergeant Tim Morgan and has endeared himself instantly, not a shouter but a thinker, who likes to pass the message to the RSM who in turn becomes the shouter (I have just realised I am being used!). He has put training on a more professional footing, with code of conduct contracts and other unusual facets, the team is now well versed in a more methodical and comprehensive training routine. He has a large task in running training as he and the skippers (Corporal Rob Smith and Corporal Raggy Humphries) have an average of 20-25 players at the twice weekly sessions. Sergeant Gavin Hind is always on hand to help out and dovetails well with the 'RAOWO (I think Starsky and Hutch called it the 'good cop - bad cop' routine) he is quite the most unpopular trainer due to his pain-related training, believe me I have done SAS

selection twice but it's nothing compared to one of his 'warm ups'. There are of course the players, we have welcomed back into the fold Lance Corporal Gill, a regular Infantry player and more recently Craftsman Scott McMillan of the LAD (REME). McMillan is a footballer of note, playing for the REME Corps and raising considerable interest from civilian clubs. But more worthy of a mention are the regular players who turn out for every session such as Lance Corporal Harry Harrison, Privates Suff South and Mott, Lance Corporal Roberts, Privates Lee Shaw and Dwayne Willie, to name but a few. The latter named player is the club's main striker in the absence of Lance Corporal Kev Shinn (Op Telic). All of these lads are great players who have improved under the tutelage of the aforementioned coaching staff.

If we are all honest we would agree that football is not the priority sport in the Regiment, but we *will* compete well next year, it is my hope to lift some silver-

ware (and for the lads to stop calling me Mike Bassett behind my back). The up-coming Regimental weekend will see a past and present (legends v current) feature match. If there is anyone out there who would like to play then you should bring your boots along on 6 May.

Looking forward to next season, we have the opportunity to join the 5 Div league, this will bring regular football and with it more improvement, considering we have a vibrant side now, I wouldn't like to be facing us in the Cup next year.

Overview of the season:

Played	17
Won	10
Drawn	2
Lost	5

Not all that bad, but you can bet your boots it will be more impressive next season!

WO1 RSM Nick Wilson

OFFICERS' MESS

The period from November through to December saw the Mess run an almost unprecedented number of functions, as we bade farewell to Germany and introduced ourselves to Warminster society. The constant round of social events, cocktail parties, dinners and general jollies brought the prospect of gout ever closer. The period began with fraught final fortnight in November and saw the Mess host GOC 1 (UK) Division, 4th Armoured Brigade staff, a number of local German luminaries, and serving Dukes' officers posted externally, whilst preparing for an arms plot move under two feet of snow. Thankfully the snow dissipated as rapidly as the numerous hangovers and the move across to Warminster ensued with minimal fuss.

The Mess's reconfiguration in Warminster occurred in record time in order to hold a number of events to mark our return. Although the move was a Mess responsibility, Captain Chris Armitage and Lieutenants Ben Redshaw, Doug Hayton-Williams, Bob Carmen and Ben Obese-Jecty bore the brunt of the accounting and packing. All were ably assisted by the ubiquitous Colour Sergeant 'Bram' Bramwell. Bram, aka the 'Scarlet Pimpernel', was clearly a man under pressure, as the interminable functions intermingled seamlessly with packing, un-packing and re-packing. The usual stream of incessant banter from Bram slowed to a veritable standstill.

The Warminster leg of the social calendar began with a lunch for local dignitaries and ended with a Ladies' Dinner Night on 17 December. Interspersed between the two functions stood the main event; the visit of the Colonel-in-Chief and Colonel of the Regiment. The Mess was decked out in full finery providing the silver member, Lieutenant Obese-Jecty, with the perfect platform to display his extensive knowledge on the subject. Unfortunately his knowledge tended not to match reality and the Colonel of the Regiment identified a more reliable version of events. A remedial presentation has already been prepared to educate one and all. The Colonel in Chief appeared to enjoy the day

and rounded it off with a rousing and combative speech on our future direction, a speech that was thoroughly well received.

The week concluded with the traditional Rupert and Andy Capp awards followed by a Ladies' Dinner Night. Lieutenant Ben Redshaw received the award for the Rupert after a productive first year in the Battalion. Although the award was a little harsh, he received it in good grace before going into a corner to sob. The Ladies' Dinner night was expected to be a rather stately affair following Ruperts, but with great fortitude and ample supplies of wine the Mess soldiered on and the night proved to be a resounding success, if somewhat painful next day.

The Mess is in a healthy state. Our return to Warminster afforded the opportunity to begin a long overdue programme of refurbishment. The Mousey Thompson tables and a number of pictures were deemed priorities and are currently with apposite specialists. The silver cleaning programme also recommenced. This is running in tandem with a full appraisal of our holdings as part of an insurance re-appraisal. The aim short term is to allow the increasingly expensive costs of insurance to be split between the 1st Battalion and the Regiment. The situation currently has the 1st Battalion footing the bill for insuring all Regimental Silver. We recently added to the silver collection and are now the proud owners of six silver goblets, replicating the original 1st Battalion design. The six goblets have been inscribed with the names of all DWR officers who served in Osnabrück. The goblets were inscribed by Mr Dave Armitage, father of Captain Chris Armitage, and he is to be both thanked and congratulated on a job well done.

As the Land Warfare Centre Battle Group we are no longer alone in the Mess. A number of welcome additions include eight members of the Royal Tank Regiment, two members of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and two members of the Royal Engineers as well as the usual complement of Adjutant

General's Corps personnel. The additions make for a vibrant Mess and have increased the burden on the food and wines appointees considerably. As one would expect, the new additions have been welcomed wholeheartedly and elements of the Royal Tank Regiment's property and silver have been interlaced with the Dukes' to ensure that they feel at home. Further additions to the Mess include the recently commissioned Second Lieutenants Craig Dawson, Rob Douglas, Henry Stow, and Simon Farley who completed the Armoured Infantry Battle Course in March. The size of the Mess has allowed us to display more of our property than was previously possible in Germany. The Property member has had many a happy hour sifting through the numerous items held in store.

A number of serving Dukes' officers posted externally recently voiced concerns over the issue of leaving presentations. This has been brought into focus with our impending change to the 3rd Battalion the Yorkshire Regiment (Duke of Wellington's). The Mess voted unanimously to maintain the Duke of Wellington's Regiment Silver Salver presentation for all those who served with the 1st Battalion. The presentation will continue until all DWR officers leave the Service. Individuals who serve with the Yorkshire Regiment will be able to opt for one or the other. It was also proposed that individuals receive a DWR Band Banner as an alternative gift to the salver. This is currently being investigated through Toye, Kenning and Spencer.

Germany inhibited visits and made life difficult for those wishing to return to the Battalion for functions. The move to Warminster will alleviate the problem and the Mess is looking to hold a series of functions for those who, for whatever reason, were not formally dined out. Exact dates have yet to be finalised but those still awaiting their last Dukes' supper will soon receive invitations.

A number of farewells are due as Mess members move on. Captain Andy Shand completed his short service commission and moved into the cut-throat corporate world. Captain Shand was an amiable character in the Mess and will be remembered for his appalling bravado, constant preening, and an uncanny ability to come out smelling of roses. He is wished all the best for the future. People moving into the wider Army include Lieutenant Bob Carmen who moves to the Infantry Training Centre Catterick and Anne Fieldhouse, the Doc, who moves to Frimley. The Mess would also like to bid adieu to Major Jonny Mayo and Major Jim Purcell both of whom have left the Service. We wish them all the very best for the future.

The Mess continues to flourish and the change of scenery has brought a new zeal to proceedings. We look forward to hosting serving and former officers during the Regimental Weekend in May.

Major Mark Robinson MBE
PMC

MOVING THE BATTALION FOR THE LAST TIME - THE ARMS PLOT

In theory this should be our last ever Arms Plot move. We now reside in Battlesbury Barracks, Warminster and will continue to remain here indefinitely.

The Advance Party under Captain John Frear left first, at the end of November, to begin the takeover of Battlesbury Barracks from the Black Watch, while the Handover Party under Captain Tony Sutcliffe prepared Belfast Barracks for handover to the Queen's Lancashire Regiment.

The handover preparation was complicated as we had to dispose of all of the Armoured Fleet and associated equipments (the incoming Battalion are to be Mechanised) whilst still completing key training, not least the conversion to Bowman. This meant that we hit a ground rush the week before the main bodies moved.

It was also at this time that the single soldiers' unaccompanied baggage and the Regiment Property were moved. Company Sergeant Major Martin Lumber worked well into the night for the ten days, manifesting, weighing and in some cases repacking freight for the move. The sub contractors, mostly Polish drivers, arrived with 40ft articulated containers and eighteen hours later they were being unloaded in Warminster. The only real headache was the scummage machine due to its size and weight. Fifteen Officers spent the best part of an hour scratching their heads before Sergeant Major Lumber took over and solved the problem in a minute. "Empty the water out of the rollers, remove the roof of the truck and use the Light Aid Detachment's

(LAD) crane to lift it on" he said. "We were just coming to the same conclusion Sergeant Major" said the Rugby Officer.



Memories of an Osnabrück winter.

The Unit Welfare Office under Captain Sean Caine and Colour Sergeant 'Knocker' Goodall had a key role in moving 130 families. Most families opted into the Married Quarter cleaning scheme. At a cost of approximately £160, depending on the size of the Quarter, it meant that families didn't have to go through weeks of cleaning before moving out. In addition, all families were moved into hotels, at the Army's expense, in Germany after removals and in the UK before removals delivered. These two improvements to a families' move are most welcome and help to relieve stress during this busy time.

The civilian contractor tasked with moving the families' household possessions fell to SML Logistics, a firm based in Germany. The senior contractor was a Mr Graham Nellist, an ex-Duke who had left the Battalion in 1979 whilst we were in Minden. The whole move was extremely well planned and executed, as you would expect from an ex-Duke.

The majority of single soldiers opted to travel back to the UK by car and enjoyed a short weekend break in

Yorkshire before reporting to work in Warminster. The remainder travelled on one main body flight on 5 December and reported straight for work.

Flag Day was Monday 5 December and the Commanding Officer duly handed over to his incoming counterpart in Germany whilst the Battalion Second in Command took over Battlesbury Barracks from the Black Watch. Both handover and takeover had gone extremely well and all parties involved, not least the two Quartermasters, should be justifiably proud.

The Battalion had moved in a four-week time frame whilst continuing to train for our new role. We had back-loaded an Armoured Infantry Battalion's-worth of equipment, moved 130 families and 500 single and married unaccompanied soldiers and had unpacked and put the camp in order for the Colonel-in-Chief's visit on 13 December.

Thank God it's the last Arms Plot move.

Major Andy Pigg MBE
Unit Emplacement Officer

The East and West Riding Regiment

Commanding Officer's Introduction

January saw the departure of the last CO, Lieutenant Colonel Mark Lodge, to move on to be project officer for the launch of the new Yorkshire Regiment before promotion into the post of Deputy Commander (North) 15 North East Brigade. He has had an extremely focused and eventful tenure, serving the Dukes well. The two Dukes' companies of Ypres at Huddersfield /Keighley and Fontenay at Barnsley /Sheffield have survived the Future Infantry Structures (FIS(V)) transformation intact, to become the well-manned C and D Companies respectively of the 4th Battalion the Yorkshire Regiment at a time when many TA Infantry subunits have simply had to fall by the wayside.

The Regiment continues to provide manpower to the regular Army, with three Dukes' Privates attached to the Parachute Regiment on Operation Telic 7. The latter part of 2005 saw the Regiment successfully mobilise on a Civil Contingencies Reaction Force Exercise to a



Lieutenant Colonel Paul Simpson

number of simulated incidents, from a train crash on the outskirts of Sheffield to an air crash in Nottinghamshire. This year will see Ypres Company deploy to Gibraltar and undergo exercises in the buildings and extensive tunnel network of the Rock, whilst Fontenay deploy to the beaches and ravines of Cyprus supported by a section from the 1st Battalion.

Looking forward, there is an air of excitement with the formation of the Yorkshire Regiment. For some TA soldiers this will be the fourth rebadging process within the last twenty years, however the opportunities of being within a single Yorkshire Regiment make

yet another change very worthwhile. The changing role of the TA has demanded much closer working relationships with the Regular Battalions and we look forward to building on the ones already in place with our Regular Battalions.

YPRES (DWR) COMPANY

PRESENTATION OF THE KEYS OF ERQUINGHEM LYS - A T.A. WEEKEND

By invitation of M. Alain Bezirard (the Mayor of Erquinghem Lys) the Dukes were to be presented with the 'Keys' (Freedom) of the town on Saturday 12 November 2005. Our Company was approached by RHQ DWR to provide a Guard along with the 1st

Battalion and we considered it a great privilege for the Company to be represented.

In the very early hours of 13 October I met Major Bob Heron at Manchester Airport to fly to Brussels for our initial recee. There we met Major Mark Robinson,

who would be the parade commander, and Warrant Officer Class 2 Jimmy Carter - Company Sergeant Major of Alma Company, whose Company would be forming Number 1 Guard. Upon arrival at Erquinghem Lys we met Jack Thorp, the local historian and friend of the Regiment, and Colonel McDowall from the British Embassy, who helped enormously with explaining the French traditions, and also acted as interpreter throughout the parade day. It must also be added that without him the excellent lunch at the town's restaurant where he translated the menu, would not have been as enjoyable as it was. Incidentally, the restaurant is owned by the Mayor, which was an added bonus when discussing the format of the parade. After a worthwhile reece and a late flight back on the same day I was ready to brief the Company and pick up the thirty soldiers who would form the Number 2 Guard.

The majority of soldiers selected came from our Keighley Detachment, which was also the home of Private Arthur Poulter VC who worked for Timothy Taylor's Brewery and whose VC memorial is at Erquinghem Lys, so the details all tied in very nicely. With the remainder of the soldiers from Huddersfield, the guard which also included two girls and Sergeant Baz Sheehan our Permanent Staff Instructor who looks after the Keighley Detachment, we were ready to start training. For those readers who are not familiar with the TA I can assure you that only the very basic foot drill is taught (and rarely practised). So the very mention of Arms Drill which would include fixing of bayonets, present arms and changing arms on the march all to be taught to a high standard in little over three weeks drew a sharp intake of breath from the soldiers and many expletives from one or two of the more senior members of the Company. (It is worth noting that three weeks in

TA life means 3 x 3 hours on Drill Nights.) The time was right to bring out of hiding from the Dukes' Regimental Recruiting Team, Colour Sergeant Jimmy Jenkins who whipped, bullied and cajoled them into shape, even if an extra Drill Night was required. This he did and to his credit they looked worthy to represent the Company by the time Friday 11 arrived. As in good TA SOPs, after a full week's work we set off to travel overnight.

On arrival at Erquinghem Lys, after a quick walk round the route we met the 1st Battalion's group, did a rehearsal in the sports hall, then changed ready for the parade. The parade consisted of a section of the Corps of Drums, the full Colour Party and two Guards of 28. From the moment they stepped off it was evident that the rehearsals had paid off and individual pride was there for all to see, as was commented on by various VIPs and guests. The parade went extremely well and after speeches by the Mayor and Colonel of the Regiment bayonets were fixed and with colours flying the Guards marched past and around the town finishing at the Sports Hall.

The full parade, VIPs, guests and spectators then moved to the Arthur Poulter VC memorial where Brigadier Mundell gave a very stirring account of the actions up to and including the battle of Erquinghem Lys. This was followed by the Last Post and wreaths laid by the Mayor, Poulter family and the Regiment. It is worth noting that a small contingent of soldiers from Ypres (DWR) Company was present at the unveiling of the memorial in November 1998. Two of the soldiers, Corporal Paul Dawson and Lance Corporal James Sykes, were there in 1998 and also on the present parade.



Ypres (DWR) Guard await the Mayor and Colonel of the Regiment outside the Town Hall.



The Colonel of the Regiment receives the Keys.



The Mayor receives the Keys.



Jim and Larrain Barker with Jennifer and Katie.



Colonel Dent (left), Brigadier Barker with Larrain Barker.



enary Statuettes.



The Drummers perform.



Lieutenant Colonel Lewis
and Jennifer.



The Mayor is invited to inspect the Guard.

Once back at the Sports Hall bar facilities were laid on courtesy of Colonel Charles Dent (Deputy Honorary Colonel of Ypres (DWR) Company) in his capacity as MD of Timothy Taylor's Brewery where such fine ales as Landlord, Golden Best and Havercake (making a second brewing after the Tercentenary) were consumed in great quantities, and by some, I am told, until the wee small hours. The locals seemed to enjoy the ales too, and it was quite strange to see them with a 'pint' in their hands. Arthur Poulter VC worked for Timothy Taylor's and if any readers would like a more detailed account of his working life I am sure Colonel Charles would be more than happy to oblige. The townspeople extended their hospitality even further by laying on an evening meal in the local school rooms, and breakfast the following day for all the marching troops who were accommodated in the Sports Hall.

Kit packed and weapons checked we said our goodbyes and made our way back to Huddersfield and Keighley with heads held high. Everyone was a credit to themselves, Company and Regiment. A very enjoyable and worthwhile weekend was had by all, with everyone looking forward to a good night's sleep before returning to civilian work on Monday morning (normal TA SOP).

Major Barry Hey, Permanent Staff Administrative Officer



The Arthur Poulter Memorial
Flanked by Lance Corporal James Sykes (left) and Corporal Paul Dawson (right), both also attended the unveiling in November 1998.

FONTENAY (DWR) COMPANY (SHEFFIELD)

At the time of writing, Fontenay Company is very much focussed on preparation for annual camp in Cyprus which will be taking place in the second two weeks of April. The camp comes only eight months after our last one and this has caused a certain amount of difficulty for some members of the Company who are unable to take time off work, but a good number will be taking part and are looking forward to it. The first week will be primarily platoon level training, which will then be followed by an adventurous training phase. The final week will conclude with a company level exercise in the hills around the Western Sovereign Base area.

Having just completed a phase of Civil Contingency Reaction Force training, the Company is once again focussing on war fighting skills, primarily in preparation for camp and will be spending a number of weekends out on the ground at Otterburn and Leek as part of the build-up process. In addition to this, we are training a number of Company members with a view to them obtaining Unit Expedition Leader (UEL) qualifications and Sergeant Fitchett, having now successfully passed his UEL course, is leading people on additional training weekends so as to enable them to build up the necessary days on the mountains before they attend the course themselves. Sergeant Fitchett is also to be congratulated on his award of a Lord Lieutenant's Certificate, which has just been announced and which will be awarded at the end of February.

Prior to Christmas the Company Christmas party was held at a local hostelry, followed up by a visit to some of the finer establishments in Barnsley town centre. At the same time, the opportunity was taken to finally say a formal farewell to Mr (formerly WOII) Roberts who had been our previous SPSI and who now seems to have settled into civilian life and work. Again we wish him and his family all the best for the future.

Sergeant Ledingham is now coming to the end of his tenure with us and we also wish him all the best for the future and his new posting. He is replaced by Colour Sergeant Blake as the PSI for the Sheffield detachment. The platoon at Sheffield, commanded by Lieutenant Walker, will become a rifle platoon, as opposed to a GPMG SF platoon, following the reorganisation and the formation of the Yorkshire Regiment.

Recruiting under the guidance of Colour Sergeant Burton remains strong, with a healthy flow of recruits through the recruit training process. We still have a number of vacancies though. In particular we have a need for a signals detachment commander. We would once again extend the invitation to anyone serving, or who has formerly served, to come and visit us after training on a Tuesday night to catch up with old friends. Anyone wishing to contact the Company should do so on 01226 200116.

Major M. R. Watson
 OC Fontenay Company

THE TERRITORIALS OF YESTERYEAR

THE WARTIME MEMORIES OF JACK ROBINSON (who, remember, was originally a member of 5DWR)

We continue Jack Robinson's tale, which we left on page 146 of Issue No 259.

I met the Colonel's 2IC who told me the Colonel was away, but he had all my instructions. We were to report to the Training Offices at Merriem, Pembroke, Wales. Due to shortage of petrol there was a restriction on vehicles travelling over sixty miles. The driver of any vehicle that had to travel further must have his works ticket signed, authorising the journey. Since our trip was about 300 miles I asked our Captain to authorise it but he said he couldn't and we would have to wait for Colonel King, but I was told he would be away for a few days. Eventually we had to go by train, which meant leaving most of our tools and equipment with our truck. While travelling down to London, Bob remarked that it would be grand if we could spend the night there because he would have liked Barney and I to meet his family. When we arrived in London a truck was waiting to take us and our equipment to Paddington Station. Once there we put our stuff on to a railway cart and stayed out of sight until the train for Wales had left! We then went to the RTO (an Army officer responsible for the movement of troops through the station) and told him we wanted a train to Pembroke, he told us we had just missed it and that there wasn't another until the following morning. He gave us a pass for the night so we could get a place to sleep, and telephoned Pembroke to say we would not be arriving until the next day. He also reserved us three seats on the train and said he would look after our equipment. We thanked him and caught the bus to Bob's house. His family were surprised to see him because it was only two days since he went back off leave, they made us very welcome and we had a very good night. We arrived at the station in plenty of time, collected our equipment and thanked the RTO, found our reserved seats and settled down for the long journey ahead.

We had not been going long before Bob started playing on his ukulele and got everyone singing. It was late evening when we arrived at Pembroke but there was a truck waiting for us and we were soon settled in at Merriem Camp. The next morning I met the training officer and he told me of the troubles they were having with the flail tanks. The flails were now fitted to Sherman tanks and they did not have auxiliary engines like the Matilda tanks.

We had only been at the camp for a few days when our truck arrived with all our kit, the Colonel had sent it, he knew we would miss our truck - he was that kind of chap. We were able to cure a lot of the faults on the tanks. I had to keep a list of all the modifications we had done and then I had to go to the firm who were fitting the flails to the tanks.

The firm was Currans in Cardiff. I arrived late in the afternoon, so a meeting was arranged for the next day. They fixed me up with a nice hotel but before I went, Mr Curran and I had a talk about the firm. He told me that it had started in a small way making enamel pots and pans and now they were making parts for ships, tanks and shell cases. He took me around the firm to all

the different departments. We went into the old part where they still made enamelware, he gave me a few enamel pots and a set of enamel jugs. He asked me if I had any children, when I replied that I had a daughter of eighteen months he gave me a small enamel chamber pot. I was able to get most of these things home. The next morning I was at a meeting with the managers and foremen who were involved with the flail tanks explaining the modifications we had to do to the tanks. By the time I had finished it was too late to return to the camp, so I had another night in the hotel - it was like a short holiday!

When I got back to the camp the biggest worry was still what to do to keep the tanks in formation when flailing and how to mark the area that had been flailed. We played about with different ideas without success, then we thought of "white lime". We made a drum that would be turned by the tank tracks, drilled a few holes into it and put in some white lime. The contraption worked only for a few yards, we found that the lime packed solid with the vibration, so we gave up. Someone else worked on the idea of dropping steel rods with flags on them into the ground. This left us free to work out how to keep the tanks in formation.

Eventually, we found the answer and it was so simple. We put one tank behind another in its correct flailing position, put two lamps on poles on the offside of the front tank, the lamps had to be in such a position that when the driver of the rear tank looked at them the front lamp was just above the rear lamp, this was the correct flailing position. If he went closer to the front tank, the front lamp appeared to go below the rear lamp and if the tank dropped behind, the front lamp appeared to rise. We first drew it on paper, then we went into a field where I had seen some inch water pipe, so we cut some lengths off that and took some rear lamps off a Bedford truck, welded the pipes onto the tank and wired up the lamps and it worked. I have seen some photos of modern tanks and some of them have this type of fitting on them.

Our work at Pembroke was about finished and we got a message to report back to HQ at the Colonel wanted to see us. He told us there was a Major at Aldershot workshops trying to make a plough to fit onto the front of a Churchill tank and that things were not going too well, so would we go and take over from him. The Major told me that it was impossible to get everything done in the workshop because the men there were civilians and would not take orders from him. He went and we managed to get things moving. (See Churchill's Toyshop MDI)

When I joined my unit on 3 June, all the workshop trucks were lined up on the road side near Chertsey, just outside London, and we slept in the ditches. One day the lad who had been with me as a DR was cleaning his bike, then he said "I am just going to try it down the road, I won't be two minutes". When he had not come back in quarter of an hour I got in a jeep and went

looking for him. I found his bike on the road side and someone said he had been taken to hospital, when I got there it was too late, he was dead. I was very upset because he had been with me for about two years. When I got back and told the Major he said that one of the Warrant Officers had been hurt and was in hospital. I thought 'and all this before we even get abroad'.

We sailed from Tilbury in the evening, two or three days after the Normandy landings, and arrived off the coast early the next morning. The Workshop transport were trucks with one recovery tank, and I was put in charge of the tank. When we got ashore I saw the trucks going up a track to the left and when I tried to follow I was told that tracked vehicles had to go to the right. There was no time to argue as lots of things were happening, so I went right following some fighting tanks. At the first opportunity I left them as I wanted to be with the Workshop. The first chance we got where we could pull up out of everybody's way, we stopped and talked over what we should do. We had no maps and did not know where the Workshop was going, so I told the two lads who were with me to brew up some tea, because it was now about ten o'clock and we seemed to be in a safe place with plenty of infantry around. After I

had my tea I told them to stay with the tank and not to move and I would try and find the Workshop. I soon found a road with lots of traffic on, so I laid on the side of the road trying to see someone from our brigade. It was well into the afternoon before I saw a Major that I knew, I stopped him and asked if he knew where our Workshop was. He said no, but he would find them and sent a DR for us. It was evening before we got to the unit. They were only a few fields away from us, busy setting up the Workshop. The vehicles we repaired and maintained were Sherman Flail tanks. We had to sleep in holes in the ground, the earwigs and ants were a nuisance and also a bit of a bind when it rained. For the first two weeks all our food was from tins, then we got fresh meat. The fields next to us were used to store damaged tanks from which we took off parts to repair other tanks. The trouble was that in the damaged tanks there was a lot of blood and bits of flesh which attracted plenty of flies. The flies got onto our meat and very soon everyone was ill with diarrhoea, some so bad they had to go to hospital. I managed to keep working but was very ill.

... to be continued

MEMOIR OF 1456 PRIVATE N. LEES

1/4th BATTALION THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S (WEST RIDING) REGIMENT

12 September 1912

I joined the Territorial Army on 12 September, 1912, and became No 1456 Private N. Lees, G (Elland) Coy, 4th Battalion The Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regiment.

I joined because all my pals were in, not because I fancied soldiering (the whole idea filled me with dismay). One of my friends got 10/- for recruiting me, which was quite a lot of money in those days.

I shall never forget the first time I turned out in uniform, was my face red, however, I settled down and soon became intensely interested in musketry. I was a good shot, having very good eyesight, and was soon spending all my Sundays at the rifle range at Bradshaw, along with Sergeant Major McCormack and a few more of the instructors.

August 1913, Wales

In August, 1913, I went to camp at Aberystwith, in Wales, for a fortnight. The weather was extremely hot. The camp was at Lovesgrove, or Devil's Bridge, amidst some of the loveliest scenery in Wales. I remember there was a plague of grasshoppers. The tents and everything were full of the horrible things, however, we survived. We did not lose anything by going to camp, the Territorial Association paid our wages.

That first year I made great progress with my shooting and won several money prizes and a silver cup (to be held for a year) which I still have owing to the outbreak of war. I was included for the team for the Saville Cup, which was contended for by all the Companies in the Battalion. Elland Company won it that year and would

have shot for the Bingham Trophy at Bisley had it not been for the outbreak of war

August 1914, Marske

At the beginning of August we went to the annual camp. That year (1914) it was at Marske on Sea, between Saltburn and Redcar, overlooking the Tees Estuary. It was soon evident that there was something unusual afoot by the naval activity in the estuary, destroyers fussing in and out. On 3rd August war had broken out between Britain and Germany, which lasted till 11th November, 1918. That which had been discussed, and which the great majority of people believed would never happen, had happened, and millions would lose their lives.

Grimsby

From Marske I was sent to Grimsby. We were now mobilised and I was in the Special Service Section, which entitled me to a payment of £1 per year, however, I had not joined the Imperial Service Section, in that you could be sent overseas. In Grimsby we were stationed at the Power Station and had to supply guards (sentries) for various points of vantage all around the Power Station. One duty point was the Switch Board in the Generating Room and the warmth and the hum of the turbines and generator was very sleep inducing. We did four hours on and eight hours off.

Some of us were billeted in the joiner's shop and some in tents. The other half of the section guarded the power cable to Waltham Wireless Station and the wireless station itself, which belonged to the Royal Navy and was of great importance in war time. The Power Station

was ringed with flood lights which shone outwards at night, lighting up all round the Power Station and leaving the grounds in the dark. The sentries patrolled inside the dark perimeter. Down the back stretch there was a cemetery and it was most weird at night. The sentries had to go on night and day.

Needless to say it was a good, soft billet. When you had done the four hour guard you had eight hours off to do whatever you liked. You would go out into Grimsby and we quickly made ourselves familiar with the place and the pubs and the populace.

There was one place in the defence of the Power Station that came close to a row of terrace houses and the wall of the Power Station and the back yards of the houses made a long, straight passage which was a bit of a military problem to the Oi/c, Lieutenant Waller (of West Vale, afterwards killed) so all the people in the houses were told not to use the back way and a rifle on a tripod rest was placed at one end. The sentry on duty had orders to pull the trigger if anyone came into the passage during the hours of darkness, without any challenge as such. One night there was a general alarm about 9.00pm. The sentry on the lonely back stretch fired at what he thought was an intruder and wouldn't answer when challenged. It turned out to be a big dog.

September 1914, Immingham

However, all good things come to an end and eventually we were relieved by a company from the Border Regiment. We had to march to Immingham where we joined up with the rest of the Battalion, a good, long march it was and the September day was very hot. At Immingham we had to sleep in the great sheds, concrete floors. It was hard, cold and uncomfortable.

Great Coates

However, we did not stay long and our next camp was at Great Coates. We had to march it, of course, a long way, twenty miles, and hot. We had a plague of daddy-longlegs and leather jackets here. You could see them popping up out of the ground inside the tent. Enough to put you off.

Riby Park

From Great Coates we moved to Riby Park for intensive training. From here we went to Slaithwaite and Marsden to fire our course on the rifle ranges at Deer Hill. Fine time here, got our rations from the Co-op. We could go home every night if we wanted, as we could ride free on the Huddersfield trams. Had plenty of beer here, people very friendly.

Doncaster

From Riby Park we went to Doncaster, alright here, and from here to Halifax to get organised for Coast Defence.

January 1915, Holderness

We left Halifax in early January, 1915, and those who had bicycles were asked to take them. We had no idea where we were going to. However, we entrained at Elland Station in the very early morning, and landed up

in the Holderness/Withernsea area. The section I was in went to Grimston Hall near Garton. It was a long march from where we got off the train and I had my bike to push. Eventually we arrived at Garton in a heavy snow storm. We were billeted in a large, empty house on the farm belonging to some people called Marshall. I was up in the attic. Officers and Staff went to Grimston Hall, about half a mile away, right on the coast. We were not long before we were settled in and had to find a patrol for the coast that night. I had to go on duty at Grimston Hall as a cyclist orderly. We relieved a Battalion of the Norfolk Regiment and they were glad to get away. It was the most God-forsaken place imaginable. Grimston Hall was a weird place, no gas or electricity, oil lamps and candles. It was reputed to be haunted. I was always glad to get away at night and back to the billet.

1915

The coast patrol had its headquarters in an old farm right on the coast. It was a poverty-stricken place, dirty and empty. There seemed to be no furniture, only a table and two beds. We had a room nearest the sea. One night someone accidentally fired his rifle. The bullet went straight up through the ceiling and through the bed where an old woman was sleeping. Luckily it missed her. The farmer came down and played hell. Next day he reported it and the whole platoon got a severe talking to.

One dark, stormy night, when it was raining and blowing, a patrol, which consisted of three men who were supposed to meet the Kings' Own Yorkshire Light Infantry patrol three miles up the coast and were supposed to meet one of our own patrols from Roos further down the coast, didn't go on patrol but spent their time in an out-house at the back of the farm, sheltering from the weather. The next patrol did the same thing. While all this was going on something had happened. A Russian cargo ship had run ashore bang opposite the farm and our bright lads had failed to observe it. When daylight came the coastguards were there. More trouble. Captain Richardson (Officer in Command) nearly went crackers. The sergeant in charge of the patrol didn't half get a wiggling. The ship was loaded with coal and had a crew of about a dozen men and one woman. The ship was aground on the soft sand and would have to wait until the next high tide to be towed off. The crew were taken off by the coastguards and were billeted in a pub at Roos. Eventually the ship was towed off by two tugs that came from Hull, without dumping any of its cargo. It had come from Newcastle and was bound for St Petersburg (now Leningrad).

(Now St Petersburg again - Ed.)

... to be continued

ACCOUNT OF 2/4th BATTALION DWR

by Bramwell Mitchell

Many of the older residents in Halifax and district will remember this year as the 50th Anniversary, when the 2/4th Battalion, West Riding Regiment, went on active service with the 62nd Division.

This account which I have written is some of my own experiences with the Battalion in 1917.

I was in the Battalion Headquarters Company all the time, and all those who were with us at the time will remember me quite well.

We made the crossing to France early in January and disembarked at Le Havre. The journey to the war zone was uneventful, but it was extremely cold weather. At one place, where we were in a camp composed of wooden huts, I remember the water supply was frozen and the only available source of supply was at a draw well in a nearby village. We had only one blanket each so we decided to make a bed on the floor boards large enough to hold ten and it would be warmer, all sleeping in one bed.

Water carts brought water into the camp but when they arrived the water was frozen. Our water bottles were also full of ice. In due course we arrived at a village which was nearer to the front.

While training in England we knew the day would come when we would go across to France. The thought was present in our minds but the reality was something in the future and we would wait until that arrived before giving it any serious thought. That day had now come. In the distance, faintly audible, we could hear the low rumbling of gun fire. At night time we could discern a faint glow on the sky line, and that was the place we were heading for.

I happened to be picked to go on the advance party, or perhaps I volunteered, the latter was more probable. Having no knowledge of trench warfare an advance party had to go up to gain some idea of the sector of front we were going to take over. I was to go to Battalion Headquarters and, on arriving there, I made my way down to the dug-out. I didn't get far, the dug-out was crowded and could hold no more. The steps leading down were nearly all occupied but I found a seat about half way down which someone had vacated. I remained there all the time except when I went out with someone whose job it was to show me round. Whenever a runner went out on some mission I went with him.

On returning from one outing around the trenches, I saw a stretcher had been left near the dug-out. Someone was on the stretcher completely covered with a blanket and I guessed he must be dead. One of the soldiers who was near the stretcher noticed me looking at it and he told me what had happened. The dead man had been on sentry duty in a firing bay during the night. When they went to relieve him they found him dead and frozen stiff. He was upright and leaning forward, resting on the wall of the trench still holding his rifle beside him. I could scarcely believe this was possible, but it had been intensely cold during the night. He had been brought back for burial and just then another soldier came to the

dug-out. They both lifted the stretcher and moved off and I stood watching until they disappeared out of sight.

Later in the day, as we were talking together in the trench, I heard gun fire and everyone made for the dug-out. I followed but not in such a great hurry as I did not know what had caused such a hasty retreat. When I made enquiries, it was Whizz Bangs dropping close which had made the noise and caused a panic. A Whizz Bang was a shell fired from a German field gun. When the gun fired there was a whizzing sound, as the shell left the barrel of the gun, and then a bang as the shell landed and burst. Hence the name Whizz Bang. All this happened very quickly in about one second of time.

In a couple of days our battalion moved in and took over the sector. On the evening of the first day I was sent as guide to a ration party. I knew the spot where the rations were collected. The transport was able to bring the rations by road to this spot. They were brought up packed into sandbags, so each man could carry a sandbag slung over his shoulder. When the rations had been unloaded, the transport left, all except one officer on horseback. He would stay until we had collected the rations and moved off.

I forget this officer's name as he had just been posted to our battalion. He had at one time been a big game hunter. I will, therefore, refer to him by the name of Captain Sykes. At this moment the Germans began to drop shells nearby, evidently aiming to hit the road and catch any transport or troops on the move. Early evening was the usual time for artillery to start, on both sides. No sooner had our artillery started when the Germans retaliated, or it would be vice versa. The moment that the shells started to drop, all the men rushed into a trench which was near the road. Captain Sykes remained sitting on his mount and never moved so I took my cue from him and remained where I was on the road beside the rations.

I could hear the whistle of shells as they plunged out of the sky and the explosions as they burst on landing. Perhaps I should have been alarmed, or even terrified, but it had no such effect. I was doing the same as Captain Sykes and, in effect, taking instructions from him as the most reliable person. Although I didn't see him again I did not forget that incident. The next time I heard about him would be two months later. I should explain that I was no different from the men who had run off into the trench. It was simply that I had chosen different methods, and my way didn't coincide with theirs. We were all in it together, the dangers, the hardships and everything else were shared equally by all.

We stayed in the line four days and during that time I got very little rest. Every time one of our runners went out he would ask if I would go along with him. They knew it was somewhat different when out along with me. I didn't mind going out at all, but always when I had settled down to rest the Corporal would come over, shake me gently and apologise for disturbing me again, and then tell me Bergen was going out and would like me to go along with him. This, of course, only happened on those first days in the trenches. When we got settled down we all took it in turn.

We always went out in pairs, one going out alone could be wounded or killed and he could possibly have been out on some urgent and important mission. When two went together there was always the chance that one of them would get through safely.

When we went out for a rest we were put into an old barn, which gave us a little shelter and there was straw and hay to lie on, although there were gaping holes in the walls and part of the roof was missing. However, it was better than no cover at all. The first thing was to have something to eat, and then settled down for a good rest and actually slept for 24 hours.

For several weeks we remained on this part of the Somme, at Beaumont Hamel. This was one of the places where the Battle of the Somme had been fought in 1916. We had only to look around to realise this, the ground was pitted with craters. Wherever we went it was the same, a place where no wildlife or vegetation existed, just an empty space. At one spot there had been a wood and now all that remained were a few battered and bruised stumps of trees. The village of Beaumont Hamel had completely vanished. I saw only a heap of rubble, which may have been a church. I travelled through many villages and towns that had been flattened out, but we could always walk along a street and see the remains of buildings. The village of Beaumont Hamel had gone, there was a sign bearing its name, that is where it had been.

We were still around these parts when the thaw came. The frost had lasted so long that it had penetrated deep into the soil. When the thaw came the ground was turned into a sticky mess, like gum. In the trenches the sides fell in making the sticky mess deeper still. We tried wearing gum boots, but when we came to a deep patch the boots would become firmly embedded and refuse to come out, so they had to be left. At these particularly deep places it was very slow progress as each leg had to be lifted out with both hands before a step forward could be taken. It was almost impossible to climb out of a trench. Every time an attempt was made the man just slithered back into the trench. Then, on returning to our quarters, all the sticky slime had to be scraped off the clothing before it had set hard.

Early in March the Germans were supposed to be retiring and, on 17 March, we made a move forward and met no-one, so they really had gone. We stopped at a village called Achiet le Petit. We made our quarters in a small house which had not been damaged, in fact, there were many buildings in fairly good condition. The next morning a runner was sent for to go back to

Brigade Headquarters, along with Colonel Nash, and the Corporal asked me to go with the Colonel. It was a few miles further back and would take us some time. On our way we passed some gun emplacements which had been abandoned and we noticed some guns had been damaged and left behind so it was plain to see that the Germans had been shelling. Once the enemy discovered the positions occupied by our artillery they would do their utmost to put it out of action. We had not got clear of this place when we heard a shell coming in our direction and we knew that it would drop close. We could tell the direction a shell was travelling in by the sound. The sound of this one increased to a roar and we dropped face down to the ground, and just in time. The shrapnel flew through the air, but over us, and we were none the worse. Getting to our feet again I noticed the crater the shell had made, with smoke curling round the sides. I looked at the Colonel as he rose up and I saw he had been shaken a bit so, to reassure him, I smiled and, in a casual tone, remarked that it had been a close one. He did not reply and we continued on our journey. The difference in rank between us meant that it was not proper to walk side by side. Today the Colonel took the lead and I followed and, under these conditions, we did not talk or have any conversation. A little further on there was another gun which had been left. We were passing close to this gun and would have gone straight past but there was a horse still harnessed to it so we stopped to have a look. The gun had almost had a direct hit from a shell as it was being taken out, the horse was in the shell hole and both its front legs had been blown off. The horse was still alive and yet it must have been there for a considerable time, it was moving its head from side to side and would have been suffering great pain. The Colonel told me to take my rifle and shoot it. I got my rifle ready but then hesitated, so the Colonel took the rifle himself and shot the horse through the head, it died instantly. We continued our journey without further incident.

When I came to think about it I wondered why no more shells had been fired, only one had come over, I was expecting more to follow. One gun firing only once was almost a waste of ammunition, especially so far behind the line. We just happened to be on the spot at the precise moment when the shell dropped. The odds were very much against such a coincidence, in fact, almost as great as the odds are against being struck by lightning.

... to be continued

A BOY'S LIFE IN THE ARMY

We continue China Gill's story from page 153 of Issue No 259

Our range course was held at Ash Ranges, about a two-mile walk from barracks. It was at the 1933 qualification that I excelled with the rifle. I obtained the highest score in HQ Company and became "Company Shot". Later I was selected to shoot at the Army Bisley Rifle Meeting. I was entered in Class C, for soldiers with under two years' service (my Boys' service did not count).

The first day's shooting was five rounds at 300 yards, mainly to give contestants the opportunity to zero their rifles. The targets were the normal 300 yard targets, but had a two-inch white bull. A hit in the bull counting as 5 points, inner 4, magpie 3, outer 2. I scored twenty-three (3 bulls and 2 inners). With all the regiments of the Home Army taking part, the only score to equal mine was by SQMS Churcher of the Small Arms School.

Our money prize was £1 each; those scoring twenty-two received 10/- (50p) each. As was the custom, I had to give half my winnings to the Regimental Rifle Fund. I did reasonably well in the Roberts and Roupell Cups, but not well enough for further prizes.

I think it was in 1933 that Drum Major Stannard was promoted to CQMS, Corporal Goodwin taking his place. Some time later CQMS Stannard was posted to the 2nd Battalion.

The Aldershot tattoo provided a surprise for the Corps of Drums. Instead of playing with the massed Bands and Drums, the Battalion was selected to enact the Battle of Agincourt and the Drums and Fifes played the March "Agincourt" as the men marched into battle. All participants wore the period costumes illustrated in the photograph below.

During 1933 we had a lot of new personnel; quite a few new officers, including Lieutenants Skelsey, Strangeways and Summers and a number of Second Lieutenants from Sandhurst, most of whom departed when the drafting season commenced in October, en route to the 2nd Battalion. Lieutenant Skelsey immediately took over the Intelligence Section and made his mark straight away, improving our training and knowledge. Lieutenant Strangeways was another enthusiastic officer, always getting the best out of the men. Lieutenant Summers' arrival improved our athletic team. He was a noted sprinter, who covered 100 yards in a fraction over ten seconds, which in those days was phenomenal. Lieutenant Troop was another notable addition about this time and was awarded his England Rugby Cap. Lieutenant C. F. Grieve also appeared; he played rugby for Scotland. Two Corporals also arrived; I do not know whether they came from the Depot, but they were to make their mark in the future. They were Corporals Upjohn and Lonsdale and both had joined specifically to go to Sandhurst.

We were informed of two recruits at the Depot who were allegedly excellent soccer players: a centre forward called Pat Connolly and a full back, Buck Bailey. I believe feelers were put out to have them sent to the 1st Battalion as soon as possible. They eventually arrived at Aldershot and were an asset to the team, but it did not progress far in the Army Cup. However, both were stalwarts and Bailey also became an excellent rugby player.

As the rugby team had won the 1932/33 Army Cup, a Yorkshire tour was arranged and the Band and Drums accompanied it. We all travelled by train to Halifax and were billeted in the Depot in Halifax. Wherever the team played, the Band gave a concert and the Drums beat retreat. The tour took them to Bradford, Huddersfield, Skipton, Keighley (where the Dukes had a TA Drill Hall) and, finally, Halifax. The tour was a great success and it was also my first visit to Yorkshire.

Back to Aldershot. All our Drummers had their 2nd Class Certificate of Education; not many bothered to take their 1st Class Certificate, but someone, probably the Company Commander, asked for nominees to study for it and about a dozen, including me, put their names in. We then discovered we were to study for an hour in the evening, after tea. We were instructed by Sergeant Murphy and Corporal Lonsdale. Then the location was changed and classes were held at Talavera Barracks, about two miles away under the Army Education Corps. This became a bit tedious every morning and everyone decided to study for only two subjects and only sit the exam for those; this was permissible at the time. I passed my Maths and Map Reading and it was to be eight years before I took the exam to pass the remaining subjects.

Another personality to arrive was from the Grenadier Guards, Drill Sergeant Brenchley, a large and jovial character. He took us on RSM's Parades and I was one



Drummers, left to right: Boswell, Smith, Heaney, Killeen and Childs.

of the first Dukes he spoke to on parade. He asked me what was meant by "echelon". My response caused him to laugh and say: "Ho, we will have that put in the Iron Duke". I had said: "Where the travelling kitchens and baggage were found on exercises". He often reminded me of that, as, for nearly three years (1940-42) I was his Ration Sergeant when he was QM of the 1st Battalion.

Since winning the Army Rugby Cup in 1932/33, we had no outstanding success at sport. The rugby team was still good, but, apart from winning Aldershot Command Cups, we could not reach the Army Finals. The soccer team held its own in local leagues, but did not have the luck of 1931/32. The athletic team improved, but still lacked the necessary field events contestants. One outstanding recruit came from the Depot, Private Woods, a soccer full back, who became a stalwart for the next few years.

So we come to 1934, which was to be our final year in Aldershot, our fourth year in that station. Our draft to the 2nd Battalion in India included Drill Staff Sergeant Brenchley, who was to become the 2nd Battalion RSM. CQMS Stannard also departed and at the end of WW2 was to find himself a Major QM at Dehra Dun. A few Bandsmen and Drummers left us to be replaced by new arrivals from India, one of whom was a Drummer Gill, who was no relation to myself.

The programme for 1934 showed no change. First the annual range course, something most of us looked forward to. As there was considerable rivalry amongst the best shots and I was always amongst the leaders. This was followed by Regimental exercises and, due to the expanse of training areas, there always seemed to be areas that were new to us. The Band and Drums were used as enemy to the rifle companies and we wore white arm bands to distinguish us.

The Army Rifle Meeting took place as usual at Bisley in July. The Battalion entered the usual team and the rest of the Battalion also attended, having been nominated to act as markers in the butts. It was an interesting but laborious job, living in a tented camp and with only a

few small villages to visit in the evening. Actually I had relations living in Knaphill, a couple of miles away, so I visited them a few times.

Then it was back to Aldershot to prepare for the usual divisional/army manoeuvres. To be honest, I cannot recall anything specific about these exercises, possibly because it was much the same each year. I do have one memory from the exercise; Lance Corporal Glen of D Company was on sentry with his section; the word was that the "enemy" might be deploying tanks; about an hour before stand-to Glen heard engines approaching; HQs were alerted; the Battalion stood-to; Brigade and Division were alerted and the Division was ready to meet the tank attack. At last someone discovered that the engine noise was the RAF aircraft warming up on Netheravon, or Upavon airfields and our alert sentry earned the nickname "Tank" Glen.

But there was one event that stood out. At the end of the last exercise every unit appeared to be located alongside a stretch of road or track running west to east along Salisbury Plain. About mid-afternoon a mobile column appeared and passed by all units. It started with some scout cars, armoured cars, heavy transport, artillery of all sizes, light tanks, heavy tanks and various other transport, eg Royal Engineers' bridging units. The whole column took a couple of hours to pass. Our thoughts were that it was a demonstration to visiting imperial powers to show that England was still a force to be reckoned with. Also to Adolf Hitler, who had started to wield power. It was definitely a booster to all who saw the demonstration.

Back to Aldershot again to the usual practice sessions for parades and Beating Retreat and the usual evening visit to our favourite pub. After four years in Aldershot, we had been almost trouble-free. Never crossing the Military Police or local authorities. We felt we had been in one town long enough and it was with great relief when it was announced our next move would be to Malta in January 1935.

... to be continued

EARLY DAYS OF THE 9th BATTALION (146 REGIMENT RAC)

by Captain M. A. Girling

We continue the story from page 156 of Issue No 259

Back in the Deccan

There is now a blank in the War Diary until 1 October, 1943, when we are back in the Poona area. Having gone to Ranchi by road we returned by train. I am fairly certain the train I was on was just A Squadron, Alan Bucknall in command. Eventually I became his 2IC for the rest of our time and, in fact, A Squadron became more an independent Squadron. The train was supposed to take two days to get from the Calcutta area to the Bombay area but it got more and more behind hand and fuel kept running out - much of the fuel being wood!

The latter days of 1943 and the early days of 1944 I cannot place in chronological sequence. I know that for a time A Squadron trained in Combined Operations with 72 Infantry Brigade at a Lake Kharahavaslar in the area

of Poona. I also, again playing soccer, badly damaged my right hand which meant I could not go on a battle course. Lieutenant Whitehead went in my place, was wounded on the course and eventually got invalidated out! When we were stationed opposite Government House just outside Poona there was a great occasion when about 300 VADs arrived from the UK and were billeted in Poona. Some of us were invited to a ball at Government House given for these VADs. For ourselves who'd had little of English female company since being in India this was a great occasion. We got to know some of them well, my best friend eventually married one of them and I still see their eldest boy, a godson of mine. There was also a rugger tournament in Bombay and I captained our Regimental team but, as I remember, we did not do very well.

In early 1944, one of my main memories was being sent on detachment to the operational area in Burma. I was originally supposed to be attached to a regiment in the Kohima area but, having got as far as the rail head, Dimapur, we were told that the road had been cut by the Japanese (7 April 1944) and we could go no further. So we 'hitch-hiked' a plane to Army HQ in Comilla and were sent from there to the Arakan. While briefly in Comilla a General came up to us and asked what we were doing - of which we only had a brief idea!, the General being Orde Wingate, who was killed two days later in a plane crash. Perhaps I should add that hitch-hiking in a plane for us meant sitting on the floor of a Dakota, often uncomfortable and, if you happen to get into a cumulo-nimbus thunder cloud, extremely dangerous, the plane being tossed about like a toy, even, it was said, in this monsoon climate, the wings being torn off. They presume something like this happened to General Wingate.

It is pertinent here to say something about tanks and the Arakan. The Arakan itself stretches down the west coast of Burma, as far as operations were concerned to Taungthup. It consists of a narrow coastal plain flanked to the west by ridges of thick jungle hills rising to over 1500 feet. Bryan Perrett, in his book (chapter 4) quotes one soldier's remark about the Arakan: "not fit to fight in!". Further, in chapter 11, Perrett goes on:

"As we have seen, the Arakan is one of the most unpleasant places in the world in which to fight and the conduct of armoured operations is particularly difficult in view of the close and hilly nature of the terrain, which is further broken up by the muddy meanderings of countless coastal chaungs."

In addition, the Japanese tended to dig themselves in on the hillsides covering possible routes and tracks. As it was almost impossible to locate these bunkers or even see them until close to, artillery or air strikes were almost useless. But if a FOO (Forward Observation Officer) was able to locate a bunker and put the tank's 75mm gun onto it (often as near as 400 yards) the AP and HE were lethal, literally firing into the narrow fire ports of the bunker and giving the infantry a chance of capturing it. Perrett goes on:

"In the final Arakan offensive, tanks had been used in very small numbers ... on Ramree Island they had been used in a classic example of indirect approach and their appearance completely disrupted the (Japanese) garrison's withdrawal ..."

Although the terrain was eminently unsuitable for tank warfare, the infantry relied on them. One well positioned enemy bunker could hold up a complete infantry company for as long as 48 hours but, because the Japanese had not expected tanks they had little in the way of anti-tank guns and this meant the tanks could mostly get close to a target without fear of being stopped by enemy gun fire. The infantry had a very difficult time: the steeply sided hills covered with dense jungle made progress very difficult; it was also hot and very humid and often all the infantryman had in the way of liquid for the day was what he could carry. One was never certain where the enemy were by day, and worse still by night. Early on there were engagements and skirmishes at night which turned out to be between two

parties on the same side. As an example, the first night I had in the Arakan, attached to a squadron of 149 RAC (KOYLI), having dug my slit trench and put up my bivvy tent I was awoken by firing. Some tracer bullets were flying everywhere and I got into my slit trench with my revolver cocked (in fact, a useless weapon!) wondering what to do. Eventually, the firing died down and I retired once again to my 'bivvy'. In the morning it was discovered that the tank harbour had been fired on by another harbour not far away, consisting of a British mule transport company! The Japanese also used to come around harbour perimeters at night shouting and encouraging our own troops to show their positions by firing. Eventually the order went out that anyone who fired at night must produce a body - otherwise he would be severely punished. One of the advantages of tanks was that not only did you have a 'mobile home' but, above all else, the ability to carry about ten gallons of drinking water.

The Assault on Ramree Island 'A' Squadron 146 RAC

1944/5. Towards the end of 1944 we were in Burma, not far from Maungdaw, at the mouth of the Naf River. Actual timing I cannot remember exactly but we spent some time training and, eventually, when we were due to take part in the assault on Ramree Island, in waterproofing our tanks. This meant waterproofing up to the turret ring, in the process of which many bolts had to be removed, waterproofing material inserted and the bolts put back. The actual landing beach appeared to be more or less unknown and, just off the beach, we were told there were pill boxes guarding it. We were shown aerial photos of the landing area (including the pill boxes - which turned out to be corrugated iron 'mock-ups'). Our particular squadron group, under Major Bucknall, consisted of fifteen tanks, a company of Indian troops, under Captain Smith, and a detachment of Indian REs, under Lieutenant Cull. I cannot remember the exact number of officers we had but there was the Squadron Commander, Alan Bucknall; myself, 2IC; Tony Richards (second Captain); and Lieutenants Buckland, Buckley, Carey and, I think, one other. There was also our FO Officer, Captain Westman, an extremely important member, and he was, in fact, extremely efficient. We set out in three LCTs, each carrying five Lee tanks and some infantry and sappers. The LCTs, like much of the rest of our equipment was, as far as we could gather, surplus to the European area and not very good. As I remember, of the three LCTs we had only one which was going on all three engines, the one which I commanded, as far as the Army troops were concerned.

20 January 1945. These LCTs had a very small cabin area for the two naval officers but, for the troops, there was nowhere to eat, sleep, wash or use a toilet - the latter merely entailing hanging over the side and hoping one did not fall in! At least the weather was fine and warm. We had quite a large convoy of ships, including a battleship! In addition to an almost complete lack of intelligence material, the troops of the 26th Indian Division, with whom we were to fight, we had never met until we landed.

The passage to Ramree took three days. We landed in a few feet of water and with no particular problems (though one or two LCAs struck mines). Not much happened as far as we were concerned apart from the half squadron Alan Bucknall had capturing an enemy tank, and myself with four tanks getting hopelessly bogged down in a most peculiar piece of land (see pictures between pp 160-1 in Perrett's book).

From then on the campaign progressed slowly but methodically. I saw little of the forward action as, being 2IC, I was responsible for bringing up reinforcements, supplies or anything else needed (the general outline of the campaign is given in Perrett's book, pp 201-208). The terrain was difficult, the whereabouts of the enemy uncertain and the climate extremely enervating. Having cleared Ramree Island we then proceeded by Z Craft to the mainland and so eventually to Taungup where, virtually, the fighting stopped as the Japanese had pulled out. We continued, now with the 82nd W African Division, to do sporadic reces in the area of Taungup to see if there was any possibility of using tanks further. The area was mostly jungle, interspersed with tidal chaungs. I was now in charge of the squadron, as Alan Bucknall had left, and so had our FO Officer who had gone to make arrangements for his forthcoming marriage! I know in the final days when we were still making reces, I sent out a troop commander one day who was shot at. The next day I sent out another troop commander, who was also shot at. So, on the third day, I thought I had better go myself. I took a Corporal with me and we had a detachment of West African troops, about two sections, and an English officer with them. At a certain point one section and the officer left to go down another track and I was left with a few West African troops who did not speak English. At a point in

a dry chaung there was a basha (a native hut) from which I heard sounds. I told a West African Corporal that he and two men should go forward to see if there was anyone about and we would cover them. Either the Corporal did not understand English or merely refused to obey. I could see that a difficult situation was arising and told my Corporal we must go ourselves. So, in typically English fashion, we sauntered past the basha and, I am glad to say, nothing happened. Soon afterwards we returned to our camp area. In any case the ground was quite impossible for tanks.

Soon afterwards, it was decided that the enemy had withdrawn and we started pulling out. The exact sequence of events I cannot remember. I do remember somewhere in a rear area holding a fairly formal squadron parade. I also remember being told that we were to proceed to India, leaving our tanks behind. I am certain that we did not return as a single unit because, when I was finally on the way back, I am fairly sure I was on my own. Hitch-hiking a ride on a Z Craft (to Ramree Island, I think) we had nowhere to sleep, so retired to the canvas roof of a three-ton lorry. Someone had a small infantry W/T set, tuned in to some civilian station and suddenly it announced "The War in Europe is over!" This, I think, would have been 17 May, 1945. We had nothing for a toast till someone found a half bottle of gin. We each had a measure and then went to sleep! After so much war service one trained oneself never to get excited or show emotion. Once we reached Ramree it was quite easy to hitch a plane to India, Calcutta, as far as I was concerned, for Anders Westman's wedding, and then back to Ahmednagar and preparing ourselves for repatriation.

... to be continued

MYSTERY OF THE LOST DUKES

In January of 1947, I, along with lots of other young men aged 18 years, and some just a few years older, were summoned to report to the barracks at Highroad Well, Halifax, with the intention of fulfilling our obligation to the Nation and in my case to perform a task long looked forward to.

Having served as a Dukes' cadet for the previous four and a half years, I personally looked upon National Service as a pleasant climax to my cadet service, which I maintain prepared me well for what was to come; a cadet service, which I had thoroughly enjoyed along with lots of other young men of my school unit.

After Basic Training in Halifax and Corps Training in Catterick (Gaza Lines), of which much of the time was spent digging a path or a road through very deep snow to some isolated farm or flock of sheep. Remember this was the terrible winter of 1947, one of the worst winters in my memory, but not in my opinion quite so severe as the winter of 1933.

However, Basic Training, Corps Training and snow clearing firmly behind us, the time came for us to be posted to our respective units, in my case, and to my pleasure, it was to be the 2nd Battalion The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, presently in India but shortly to return to the UK for amalgamation with the 1st

Battalion. The chosen mode of transport was to be the troopship *Georgic*, reputed to be the largest troopship of its time.

Somewhere in the region of Port Said, there developed problems with the bearings on the propeller shaft, or perhaps even the shaft itself. Whatever the cause of the problem, a repair was urgently required and whilst this was carried out, the order of the day was training, informative films and lectures by the ship's doctor on the dangers awaiting testosterone-laden young men in faraway, hot countries.

It was in Port Said that I first learned to swim and this occurred as follows. The port side of the troopship was furnished with ropes and scrambler nets to assist in our recovery from a rather unhealthy looking water. Of course, the temperature of the water was quite high and looked rather inviting, but at the same time rather unhealthy; even then it was very tempting when compared with the cold of Catterick in a severe winter.

In order not to miss a chance to cool oneself, I quickly changed into my trunks, and seeing an open cargo door on deck 'F' promptly launched myself into the water, it was then that I realised I had committed the biggest mistake of my young life. There were no ropes or nets on the side where I was in the water!

It was at that time I realised I had a decision to make, either I learn to swim to the port side of the ship or stay where I was and give myself up to the watery grave which awaited me. Yes, I did manage eventually to negotiate my way to the port side and the safety of ropes and nets. To this day, I consider those nets to be my first saviour.

Shortly after our departure from Port Said, I was informed that myself and, I believe, a few other Dukes were to proceed to Singapore, and thence to Malaya for the purpose of training the men who were to become, in later years, The Malaya Defence Force; at the time they were based in Kuala Lumpur. I say 'other Dukes', but in fact I personally know of only one other, Private Roche B. 19125910; regrettably, he is buried in the Military Cemetery, Kuala Lumpur, as the result of a road accident.

There followed a brief period in the transit camp situated on Singapore Island, this turned out to be the most terrible place I have ever visited. When one considers the fact that newly arrived troops of every draft arriving from the UK were thrust under canvas with the most basic hygiene facilities, and for their first few days - when they were at their most vulnerable, were not provided with mosquito nets. It would have been little short of a miracle if no one had been hospitalised.

My particular reward was to contact Malaria, which resulted in hospitalisation for a short period in No 1 Military Hospital, Singapore, and even this was not an establishment to recommend to one's friends, especially sick friends.

This was followed by a spell at No 1 Military Hospital, Kuala Lumpur, where my duties were split between being involved in Standing Patrols in the nearby jungle to the north-east of Kuala Lumpur (this was brought about by the increased activity of the newly formed Chinese Communist Party (MCP) who had plans to run Malaya after its liberation from the Japanese forces), and offensive patrols which were in fact a total waste of time and energy, but presented an excellent learning curve for what was to come some weeks later. My other duty was the guarding of a few remaining senior Japanese prisoners of war who were awaiting sentencing by the military courts for war crimes they had committed during the occupation.

One very senior officer who was determined to avoid the death penalty and the shame of trial was discovered in his cell having chewed his tongue to shreds and then attempting to swallow it to bring about asphyxiation. It was also during this period that I was detailed to join the security staff of the hospital with responsibility for discipline.

Some time later, I was told to transfer to No 1 Military Hospital, Cameron Highlands, which on enquiry transpired to be located in the lovely, peaceful, mountainous region some four thousand feet high through very dense jungle, where wealthy planters and such took their families for rest and recreation. During this period the full emergency was declared, 16 June 1948, and the direct result of this was to place a three months' extension of service to all essential National Service personnel.

My original appointment was as Ward Master, which entailed the regulation of discipline within the building and surrounding area (most of which was dense jungle). Quite shortly thereafter, and subsequent to the emergency, the security staff was expanded to include some more Infantrymen from the West Yorkshire Regiment. Our terms of reference were extended to the security of the hospital, the local power station, and also the escorting of patients and staff from the railhead at Tapa Road; this was situated some thirty miles south-west of our hospital.

From the railway station the road rises some eight thousand feet through dense jungle, which presented an ideal situation for ambush of any road traffic. Today, the area is a wonderful tourist spot with its massive waterfalls and quaint Malay villages, all with their own unique traditions. However, in 1948 things were quite a long way from peaceful and although there were incidents involving terrorists, I personally was not involved in any of these apart from a failed attempt to bomb the power station, which of course was the only supply to our hospital. This error was later corrected by the installation of our own power plant.

Inevitably, my time in Malaya was drawing to a close and the date for demobilisation drew nearer and the last few weeks were quite frenzied but nevertheless were completed before hand-over date.

There followed the unusual performance of packing of gear and disposing of tropical clothing no longer to be required, the saying of my farewells to the hospital staff, having the customary drink (or two) with my Commanding Officer, who was Major Hamill, RAMC. There was also a very hectic evening in a local bar with the security staff, then the long, slow, dangerous train journey to Singapore, another short stay in the transit camp at Nee Soon. Regrettably it was no better organised than when I had first visited some time previously.

Burned into my memory is the departure from the dockside of Singapore Harbour aboard the troopship Dunera, and as we cast off, the band of the Seaforth Highlanders were playing 'Will Ye No Come Back Again'. There and then I made myself a promise that one day I would indeed go back again and to that end everything was planned to return along with my wife, to celebrate our Golden Wedding. However, a rather annoying stroke dictated otherwise and precluded that much-awaited and long-anticipated adventure when we planned to re-visit all the places I had served, with the exception of Nee Soon Transit Camp!

On my arrival in the UK I was transported to York, here I was to hand in all my military gear and receive what civilian clothing I was entitled to. The final act was to issue my travel warrant and for that, and after all that, no one ever said goodbye or thank you.

Thus came to an end my extended National Service in Malaya which, according to our Regimental HQ, had never happened. I say never happened because they (RHQ) insist that after the end of hostilities with the Japanese, there were never any Dukes in Malaya during the emergency. Of course I still get to wonder to this day if it was all a dream, or was I there in another time, in another body? I also wonder just who that young lad called Roche was that we buried in the KL grave.

A short while after my demobilisation I rejoined the Cadet Force and served until 1982 which, by my reckoning, gives a total of forty years of almost continuous service to The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, of which I am justly proud. So, for a soldier who never was and a cadet who joined in 1942 and retired in 1982 with the courtesy title of Lieutenant Colonel, I believe my record stands firm.

Note of interest:

On the morning of 16 June 1948, an estate manager, 50 year old Mr A. E. Walker from Edinburgh, after his usual start to the working day, returned to his bungalow on the estate to join his wife for breakfast, as was his usual custom. At approximately 0800hrs, two communist terrorists of the Malaya Communist Party (MCP), pulled up at his home armed with Sten Guns.

They fired through the door and windows of the bungalow killing Mr Walker instantly. His wife had a miraculous escape unhurt.

Within hours of the dastardly deed, the terrorists arrived at the site office of a Mr Alison from Putney, the estate manager of the Phinson Estate located near to Ipoh. After a brief conversation, Mr Alison and his assistant, Leonard Christian from Radlett in Hertfordshire, were bound and gagged with their hands tied behind their backs, they were then murdered in cold blood. Also on that day, a Chinese construction worker from the Subur Estate near Kuala Lumpur was also killed.

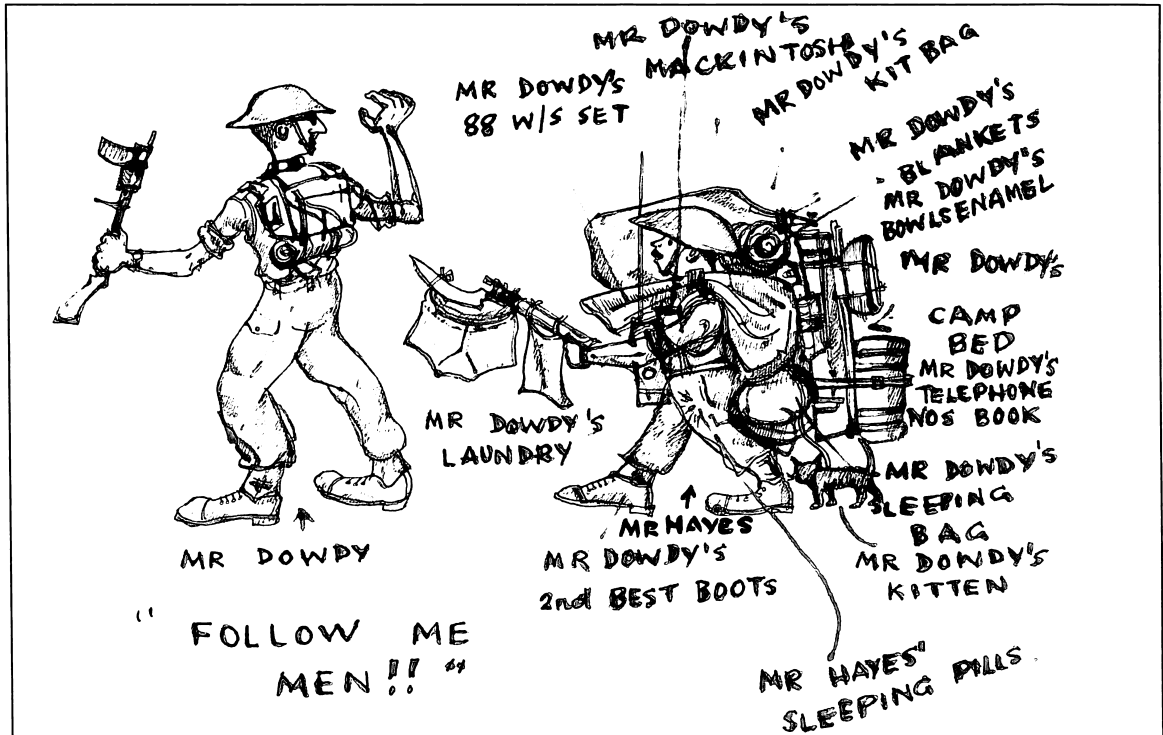
The state of emergency was to last for ten long years, at the height of the emergency 100,000 armed troops were involved along with Malay Police.

MR HAYES' DEPUTY

by Mac Dowdy

James Hayes and Mac Dowdy were possibly the oldest National Service subalterns commissioned into the Dukes and sent out to join 1 DWR in 1953. James was an intake ahead of Mac at Eaton Hall, and was therefore very much more senior to him. They met for the first time when they were attached to the 1st Battalion Wiltshire Regiment out in the New Territories of Hong Kong. James had arrived on a prior troopship to Mac and was a well-established time-serving officer by the time of their meeting. He took the newcomer

under his experienced wing and quickly instructed him in all aspects of the lore of the Wiltshires' Officers' Mess. In no time at all Mac was able to cope with the vagaries of ordering how he would like his eggs for breakfast, and what books to take when up in the OP at Lok Ma Chau. This friendship between two post-graduates of the same British university, was short lived because Mac went off to hospital for two weeks, and on return James had gone with a draft of reinforcements to Korea.



2nd Lieutenant James Hayes Platoon Commander, being assisted by 2nd Lieutenant Mac Dowdy, his Deputy.

James went off to serve with the 1st Battalion at the sharp end against the Chinese, whilst Mac became familiar with a series of hospitals and curious attachments that had him in almost continuous correspondence with the Adjutant, Hugh Le Messurier, asking to be posted up to the Battalion. Eventually he was successful and James and Mac were not only reunited, but in the same platoon of the same company. Once again James was able to demonstrate what an old campaigner he was. With a number hundreds of digits less than Mac's 427770, he was undeniably *the* Platoon Commander. As the *junior*, Mac rather enjoyed the absence of supreme responsibility, and happily accepted James' somewhat irreverent title for him of 'The Defender of Pusan', but Mac also liked acting the hard done-by subject, ever at James' beck and call.

The cartoon shown on the previous page defines an incident on an exercise a couple of months before the Regiment left Korea for Gibraltar. No 1 Platoon of 'A' Company is in the van of an advance. A 'suspect' feature before them holds up the movement, so someone has to run ahead up the hill to signal back if all is well to continue. The Platoon Commander authoritatively turns to his deputy and, one can imagine, rather firmly orders him to 'skip up there and give us the going'. So Mac, for it is he, replies, one can imagine,

rather politely that first he had best shed himself of his accoutrements to obtain the required speed. This he does, and is off like a hare. James, being the most kind, thoughtful and caring chap that anyone would ever wish to meet, heaves Mac's kit onto his back, with, of course, the help of Mac's batman, and so they wait until the signal to advance comes. Then he trudges up the hill with his noble platoon spread out in sections around him. Mac welcomes them at the top and then proceeds to walk on beside his friend James as the advance continues. Much to the platoon's amusement he does not attempt to relieve James of his heavy load. Much to James' credit, he pretends to be suffering with the task thrust upon him by his deputy, for he knows that light relief is always good for morale.

The original drawing of this cartoon was given by Mac to James on his demobilization from National Service in 1954. The two have remained firm friends since their service days, and James is Godfather to Nick Dowdy, Mac's eldest son. Incidentally, if any reader remembers the night patrol when Mac captured his feral kitten, please get in touch with him. In Korea the cat was named Bastard, because of his aggressive behaviour, before Mac trained him to think he was a dog; in Gibraltar he was renamed Basket, because he travelled on the "Asturias" in a Hong Kong basket.

LIFE OUTSIDE THE MILITARY

One danger of growing up in a close-knit military family such as the Dukes is that one tends to forget that there are many and varied careers to be enjoyed in other spheres of activity.

Perhaps an outline here of one distinguished ex-Duke's subsequent career might inspire others to write in and tell us of any more illustrious Dukes. Careers in commerce, academe and Rugby League come to mind.

The Regiment knows him as Robbie Burns and remembers that, as a Captain commanding A Company of our 1st Battalion, he earned the award of the DSO for his courage, bravery and leadership in the capture of Monte Cece in 1944.

Born Arthur Burns in Derbyshire in 1917, he excelled as a young sportsman and joined the County's Police Force. However, after two years on the beat in Derby, the



country was at war and he joined the Dukes. Perhaps understandably, it was during military training in Scotland that he earned the nickname "Robbie".

After the war he returned to the Police in Derbyshire and rose rapidly through the ranks. In a full career he went, in the fifties, for two years on secondment to the then Colonial Office, in Cyprus, where his opposite number on the Security Committee was Brigadier Ramsay Bunbury. On return, he served in succession in Norfolk, as Deputy Chief Constable, in Essex, as Assistant Chief and then Deputy Chief Constable and, finally, in Suffolk, as Chief Constable. His service was recognised by his being made OBE and by the awards of both the Queen's and Colonial Police medals.

We know he is proud of his time in the Dukes and we'd like him to know that we're equally proud of him!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From: 4 Heather Road
Meltham
West Yorkshire
HD9 4EY

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

My short story came to be told because of an error by our own Regimental Headquarters on being questioned as to the reason for my redirection of destination whilst en-route for India and service with our 2nd Battalion.

RHQ maintained that no members of the DWR had served in Malaya since the end of hostilities of World War Two. Of course, this made me more determined than ever to establish the true facts as recorded in my service record documents and that I did serve in Malaya, along with at least one other member of the DWR, whose body is buried in a cemetery in Kuala Lumpur, although there was talk that he might be transferred to Singapore.

Following receipt of my complete records of service spanning some forty years, they do confirm what I have always believed to be fact. To me, it is quite reassuring to receive undisputable confirmation that I did in fact serve in that theatre, and proves beyond doubt the reason for my absence from home during 1947-48, and part of 1949.

I would be truly appreciative if you could possibly find space in your excellent publication to include this short story. I have been a contributor for many years, as in the past I wrote all the notes for the Dukes' Cadets for a long period of time when I was Commander of the Huddersfield Area ACF.

Yours most sincerely,

Lieutenant Colonel (retired) J. Howarth

Editor's note:

Delighted to publish your story - see pp 33.

From: 9 St Mathews Way
Monk Bretton
Barnsley
South Yorkshire
S71 2HD
neil@ncairns.co.uk
Tel: 01226 247459
1 January 2006

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

I joined the Dukes at Halifax in May 1956 and my Platoon Officer was Lieutenant Greenway, now Editor of The Iron Duke. After basic training, being too young to join the Battalion in Cyprus, I was posted to The Northumberland Fusiliers at Palace Barracks, Holywood, Northern Ireland.

Six months later I joined the Battalion, who were on operations in the Troodos Mountains, and was posted to the Signal platoon. The first person I met was Corporal Ernest Senior, who was charging batteries; "Can I give you a hand Corporal?" "Yes, get a spanner out of that box and top up that engine with some oil."

Not knowing anything about engines, I took out the filling plug and got covered in hot oil. Ernest said: "You have learned two lessons today; one, turn an engine off before working on it; two, never volunteer for anything."

The reason for this introduction is a photograph in Issue No 259, page 162, Pontefract - 1952. Front row, 4th from left, although a few years before I met him, is Alfred Ernest Senior who sadly died on 15 May 2002.

Yours sincerely,
Neil Cairns



From: Headquarters
8th Infantry Brigade
BFPO 802

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

Corporal Dinger Bell - hope you are on the mend.

I broke my leg playing rugby in Northern Ireland last April and have had a number of operations to get the knee working again. My last operation was in the Friarage Hospital in January, which is now enjoying a military / NHS partnership which, from a patient's experience, is working extremely well and proving mutually beneficial. However, the reason for this letter is to share with readers my latest experience in the hospital, where I was fortunate enough occupy the neighbouring bed to Corporal Derek (Dinger) Bell, aged 75, National Serviceman, Korean Veteran and most importantly a Duke.

Dinger was totally engaging from the minute I first heard him talking to the nurses. He was asked for his home phone number, which he claimed to have forgotten, and then he was asked if he wanted the light on and he retorted that "he was light enough". Dinger was then asked if he had had a shower and he replied that "he only showered once a week - whether he needed it or not". His humour and stories of his experiences in Korea kept the whole of Ward 3 engrossed over the next 36 hours. His memory of Korea was totally clear and he related in great detail the characters he went on patrol with into no-man's land, in order to give prior warning of Chinese patrols. He also vividly described daily routine in the defensive position on the hillside of the Hook and he also spoke highly of his Company Commander - Brigadier Tony Firth. Dinger stated that he was medically discharged after Korea with shell shock. His delightful wife confirmed that he still suffered from his experiences in Korea, but had only recently started to talk about them. Dinger eventually stopped talking at 2300 hours and allowed the rest of the ward to stop laughing and get some sleep. However, he snored so loudly it was clear we would get more sleep if he continued with his tales of the Hook.

He even remembered the music the Chinese played as propaganda to lure the Brits into surrender. He remarked that "it just made us even more determined". He then asked if hospital radio was still going, as he would like to make a request for the Last Post, in case some of the ward didn't survive the night - such was his cheek and sense of humour.

There was one 84 year old gentleman in the bed opposite who had been a gamekeeper since he was 14 years old. He had never taken a day off, never gone on holiday and never been to an airport let alone been on an aeroplane. Dinger wasn't having any of this and replied that he had never been on a ship until they sent him to Korea, non-stop and it wasn't possible to get off. Dinger also claimed to be a binge drinker. He wife would drop him off each day at the Working Men's Club for an hour whilst she shopped. Dinger proudly announced that he could see off three pints in the hour and would not have had to stay in hospital if his wife hadn't been thirty minutes late to pick him up the day before!

Dinger made my stay in hospital not only enjoyable, but memorable. He earned everyone's respect and admiration - he is a special individual. It is not surprising the Dukes were magnificent in Korea when the likes of Corporal Dinger Bell were there to hold the Hook.

Yours sincerely, Tom Vallings

From: Postwatch Midlands
Suite 1, Ground Floor
Mill Court, Mill Street
Stafford ST16 2AJ

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

I recently took a group of Chief Executives and Managing Directors of businesses in the West Midlands to spend a day and a half with the Royal Navy. By pure coincidence I was allotted to HMS Iron Duke.

My colleagues and I were looked after wonderfully by the Iron Duke's Commanding Officer, Commander Andy Jordan, his officers and ship's company. I was very impressed by the operational efficiency of the ship and the professional way in which they trained and exercised. We were participants in a "Thursday War", when Flag Officer Sea Training and his staff help work up ships to operational efficiency and put the ship and its crew through their paces.

Commander Andy Jordan was keen to cement relationships with the Regiment, encourage exchanges and to meet the Colonel, and I am sure, following my visit and conversation with General Evelyn, that this is now established.

A great day was had on Iron Duke and a more fitting twinning I cannot imagine. Incidentally, it was good to see the brass tampion (a twin of ours) from the battleship "Iron Duke", prominently displayed in the Wardroom.

Yours sincerely, Richard Ward

Editor's note: We are in correspondence, sort of, with HMS Iron Duke; regrettably some has gone astray.

From: 23 Bentfield Cottages
Clayton
Bradford BD14 6DL
West Yorkshire
29 December 2005

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

Here are a couple of names for your Identification 3 on page 105 of Issue No 258. This is 6 Platoon. As you know, Hepworth MM is on the left; PAD Smith is in the turret; at the time he was a Section Commander. Smudge joined the Regiment in Hong Kong from the York and Lancaster Regiment in 1969 (?). Radio Op could be either Private McNight or Pugh. Second from right is Private Ireland and Lance Corporal Spencer is on the right. I think these names are correct, but it's a few years back.

Also enclosed are two photos from Minden for future use. Date and names are on the back.

It would be nice to hear from anybody from the photo and better still if they served with the Regiment in Burma Company, Hong Kong.

Do you have any information on a Henry Leskovich? Henry was in 6 Platoon in Hong Kong and spent time on Stonecutters for going AWOL in New Zealand. He rejoined the Regiment and shortly after that got promoted to Lance Corporal and joined the Regimental Police with George Gill and, I think, Jungle Joe Collins, who was Provo Sergeant.

Also Ray Baker from Huddersfield, Alan Whitaker from Sheffield, Ray Dyson from Halifax, Jacko Jackson former milkman from Sheffield, Steve Urwin from Hull, and Lance Corporal Pete Vietch, a Geordie. All these were in 6 Platoon and stationed in Hong Kong. Peter Gallagher, Drums Platoon, came from Bradford and was also in Hong Kong.

Anyway, I hope you can help and hopefully some of the above may get in touch. Here is my e-mail address: pg.laws@blueyonder.co.uk

Yours sincerely,
Peter Laws



Minden - January 1978

Left to right: Lofty Coatsworth, John Cockshott, Dinky Hall, Andy Hayton and Deano.



Minden - March 1978

**Left to right: back row: Privates Hollies, Hayton 82, Hayton 27, Martin, Holt, Galtrex.
Middle row: Corporal Cockshott, Privates Brown, Hargreaves, Johnson, Dean, Farrar, Rhodes,
Corporal Laws. Front row: Privates Vant, Ireland, Colman, Sergeant Hall, Privates Barker, France, Mileh.**

From: Ampleforth Abbey
January 2006

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

Except, possibly among the Brigade of Guards, it is improbable that another Regiment can claim from among its officers both a Prime Minister and a Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Great Duke was twice the former and Iain Macleod was the second - for just six weeks, until he died, so soon after the 1970 General Election. He had enlisted in the Dukes as a private soldier in 1939 and was wounded with BEF in France. He subsequently joined 2/7 DWR as a second lieutenant and remained with them until they became 115 Regiment RAC. His obituary was published in the Iron Duke, Issue No 153, of August 1970.

Macleod was succeeded at the Exchequer by Anthony, Lord Barber, who had a similar record. He was a committed Yorkshireman all his life, keeping a home at Wentbridge, Pontefract, and becoming a Deputy Lieutenant for West Yorkshire. Born in Hull, he was brought up in Doncaster, becoming its Conservative MP in 1951. He was at Dunkirk in 1940 and became a prisoner of war. Aged 71, he became, and spent the rest of his life as, Chairman of the RAF Benevolent Fund, until he recently developed Parkinson's disease. Aged 83, he died on 16 December. We should salute his connections with us.

Yours sincerely,
John Stacpoole

From: Ampleforth Abbey
February 2006

Editor, The Iron Duke

Dear Sir,

Your readers may have seen notices of the death, on 2 January 2006, of Colonel A. M. Field, MC, aged 95.

On HM Troopship Orwell in the autumn of 1952 to Pusan (Korea) were Colonel Arthur Field, to command his Field Engineer Regiment, and the Advance Party of the Dukes, myself included, as Assault Pioneer Officer. He had an unmilitary gentleness, which I admired and showed an interest in my Catholicism as an Amplefordian. He taught me much as I ran the Sunday Palm Court records evenings.

So, when out of the line on the 38th Parallel, we would "dine" together, my jeep to his sandbag HQ; evenings of record music and religious talk. One of his officers was Captain George Cooper, from Downside, who later became Adjutant General.

We relieved the Black Watch, after their rough time on The Hook. Our Colonel, Ramsay Bunbury, put his heart into a brilliant artillery orchestration and into a complex engineering effort (Colonel Field supervising). Inboard, Captain Cooper's Sappers built concrete lintels onto all our fighting bunkers; beyond the trench line, my Assault Pioneers built a forest of barbed wire, night after night. The Dukes, the Gunners, the Sappers and the "forest" built by my men won the last battle before the Armistice - which still stands un-peaced.

Yours sincerely,
John Stacpoole

Editor's note: John Stacpoole has also written to us regarding the recent news reports of the United States' forces' intention to disband their last Mobile Advanced Surgical Hospital (MASH). However, we have a house rule that no-one may have more than two letters published in any one edition, so readers will have to be satisfied with our assurance that he is against it. This is because he and three others from his Platoon were wounded by mortar fire whilst building the aforesaid forest of barbed wire on The Hook. Evacuated by helicopter, a MASH was partly responsible for John's eventual recovery.

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 30 April, 25 June, 23 September 2006.

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

Sheffield: 8.00pm second Tuesday of each month at WOs' & Sgts' Mess, 38 Signals Regiment, Manor Top, Sheffield.

Secretary: Mr P. Elwell, c/o Caretaker, Endcliffe Hall, Endcliffe Vale Road, Sheffield, S10 3AU.

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.

* * * * *

FOR YOUR DIARY

We confirm the following dates:

5-7 May - Association visit to the 1st Battalion

7 October - Association Dinner in Bradford

THE IRON DUKE

It is likely that we shall be publishing two issues per year from now on, in order to fit with the dates of The Yorkshire Regiment's journal.

KEEPING IN TOUCH ...

Sam Basu. Many Dukes will have been saddened at the news of the untimely death on 6 December of Sam Basu's wife, Liz. Equally sadly, Sam lost his mother two days before Liz, so he had to move from Fiji to Wales and back to deal with both events and was unable to write to many of those who wrote to send him and the family their sympathy and support. We are glad to be able, on his behalf, to publish his acknowledgement to you all:

"I and my family were very grateful indeed for your kind words of sympathy and your caring and loving thoughts towards us over our tragic loss of Liz. The support and comfort given to us by so many in the Regimental family was truly awesome and I am very grateful indeed. Liz's passing was so quick and sudden, the shock and trauma was hard to bear, but you, my friends, were there for me when I needed it most and I can't thank you enough for uplifting my spirit and my hopes."

Sam knows that we would all be delighted to see him when he is next in Britain, but even a man of his energy can't be everywhere at once. So, if anyone manages to capture him, please throw a party and we'll all try to join in.

Spirit in Adversity. We are grateful to Scott Flaving for sending us the following extract from the War Diary of 2/6 DWR of 31 January 1918, at a time when whole Divisions were made up of Yorkshire brigades and whole brigades were composed of Dukes' battalions, the CO notes:

"The breaking up of the Battalion is greatly deplored by all ranks, but the knowledge that it is disbanding for the consolidation and common benefit of the Regiment serving in XIII Corps, mitigates, to some extent, the regret of all concerned. Every Officer, Warrant Officer, NCO and man leaves the Battalion actuated by a desire and strong determination to carry with them into their new units the enthusiasm and loyalty they have ever displayed for their King, Country and Regiment and above all the sterling principles and esprit de corps which have always been so well established in the 2/6th Battalion, Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regiment. GOD SAVE THE KING."

The Iron Duke 1. We are grateful to Major Barry Hey for extracting from a 5th Dukes' scrapbook at Huddersfield TA Centre a report very similar to that outlined in our Editorial at the start of this edition. An additional piece of information that he provided was that Lieutenant Colonel M. V. le P. Trench was to be the

editor of the new magazine in 1925. Forty years later, in about 1965, when he was Chief Instructor of the Army Outward Bound School at Towyn, in North Wales, your current editor met Colonel Trench's widow, a charming and very sprightly little lady, who lived nearby and generously asked him to Sunday lunch. Being very fit from leading Junior Leaders over the Welsh mountains, he accepted on the basis that he would do some manly manual labour after lunch and Mrs Trench agreed that he could mow the orchard for her. After roast beef and apple pie (with cheese), he asked, hoping it would start at the first pull, to be led to the mowing machine. Her response, with a twinkle in her eye and handing him a large scythe, was: "Oh, I always use this". It was a long, hard, afternoon! The lesson of this story is: being fit is one thing, but fit for what?

The Iron Duke 2. We are grateful to Colonel Charles Cumberlege for unearthing a publication of 1916 called *The Battalion Rag*. It should by now have been seen by many readers on the Battalion Website.

Rugby in the Regiment. We are glad to hear that the 1st Battalion has managed to establish a fixture against the RMA Sandhurst and has presented a Duke of Wellington's Challenge Cup as an incentive for competing annually.

Mr Douglas Emery, DCM, BEM. We have been glad to hear from Douglas Emery, who is no longer able to get to the Gallantry Medallists' League, nor to London Branch meetings. However, he does travel locally and we prove it with this photograph of Douglas, on his way back from a Remembrance Day Service, with his two-year-old great-grandson.



Remembrance Day. Speaking of Remembrance Day, we are grateful to our man in the North East, **Bill Craddock** MBE, for sending us the following:

They went to the War, but they didn't return,
The men who never came back.
Yet they're never forgotten, still their countrymen mourn
The men who never came back.
Under bleak autumn skies on a day in November,
A proud, grateful nation turns out to remember.
From great city centre, to small village green,
The same solemn ceremony's everywhere seen.
The space in front of the Cenotaph's filled,
The flags are lowered and every sound stilled.
The crowd stands bareheaded, 'till the silence is rent,
By the loud signal gun and the bugle's lament.
Then prayers and a hymn, the short Service ends,
The assembly disperses, the crowd homeward wends.
We take freedom for granted, we never think twice;
Yet we often forget it was bought at a price,
By those who made the last sacrifice -
The men who will never come back.

Anon. Gateshead

War Memorials Trust. Still thinking of Remembrance Day, readers may like to be aware of the War Memorials Trust, a Registered Charity, that campaigns for the protection of the nation's War Memorial Heritage and encourages listing of War Memorials. Further information may be obtained from: War Memorials Trust, 4 Lower Belgrave Street, London, SW1W 0LA. E-mail: info@warmemorials.org

Regimental CDs - Through Soldiers' Eyes. Readers will wish to be aware of the two Regimental CDs that have been produced which contain the commentaries which can now be heard at different display cabinets in the Regimental Museum at Bankfield in Halifax. The CDs tell first-hand stories, some moving, some funny, some tragic, that provide a lasting memento of some of the operations undertaken by the Dukes within living memory:

CD 1 : WW2 and Korea

- a. 1 DWR - Fred Huskisson in France, N Africa and Anzio.
- b. 2 DWR - Dennis Mitchell in Malta, NW India and Burma.
- c. 1/7 DWR - Walter Downs in Normandy.
- d. 1 DWR - George Pickersgill and Tommy Nowell in Korea and The Hook.

CD 2 : Modern Times

- a. 1 DWR - National Service with Brian Marson (POW Korea); Jack Scroby (Rugby); Brian Houghton (Kenya).
- b. 1 DWR - Northern Ireland with Bob Tighe, Peter Robinson, Les Birks & Dave Hepworth.
- c. 1 DWR - UN Bosnia (Gorazde) with Nick Borwell and Dave Childs.
- d. 1 DWR and Ypres Company - The 21st Century - from Suffield, to South Yorkshire to Iraq; with additional help from a wife, RSM (now Captain) Ness and General Sir Charles Huxtable.

The CDs should be available for purchase during the Regimental weekend 6/7 May, or via RHQ. The costs to purchase are £5.50 for one CD and £10.00 for the pair. Post and packaging costs to be added (if applicable) are:

	(one disc)	(two discs)
UK	£1.00	£1.20
EU	£1.70	£2.20
USA etc	£2.20	£2.90

All cheques payable to DWR Museum Fund.

The Sittang Bridge. RHQ has been approached by Mr Cyril Nicholls, who served as a Lance Corporal with our 2nd Battalion in India and Burma, finishing up in Germany and in France. He has written a book, **Blow The Bridge**, about the events surrounding the blowing of the Sittang Bridge and has very kindly sent a copy to RHQ. The Iron Duke has not yet had sight of the book, which Cyril has annotated: "To the hundreds of my mates who lost their lives in Burma I dedicate this short story, may they rest in peace", but we are happy to let everyone know that **Blow The Bridge**, by C. G. Nicholls, ISBN 1-905203-33-0, @ £6.99 in the UK, published by Pen Press Publishers Ltd, the Old School, 39 Chesham Road, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 1NB (www.penpress.co.uk), is available from all good bookshops. We have been glad to be able to put Cyril in touch with another old Sittang veteran, **George Wragg**.

Explosion in Bombay. In Issue No 259, on page 156, in his account of the early days of the 9th Battalion (146 Regiment RAC), **Captain Girling** makes reference to an explosion in Bombay which destroyed the Battalion's baggage. We are grateful to **Fred Richardson**, of our London Branch, for providing additional details which we have passed to Captain Girling. Seemingly, on 14 April 1944, a freighter, containing ammunition and explosives (1700 tons), supplies (cotton and dried fish), and bullion (gold @ £2,000,000) blew up whilst alongside in Bombay harbour. This led to extensive destruction ashore and widespread fires, which could only be stopped by creation of firebreaks by means of deliberate demolition on a wide scale. History does not reveal what became of the gold.

Golf. An annual golf competition, which has taken place for several years between PWO and Green Howards, is now kindly being opened to all Dukes - past and present - as well. The event will be held on Friday 19 May 2006 at Romanby Golf Course, near Northallerton. The cost is £40 per head, which includes coffee and bacon buttie on arrival, 18 holes of golf, a three-course evening meal and prize-giving. Jacket, collar and tie will be required for the evening meal. Although there will be individual and regimental team prizes, the event mainly provides an opportunity for old friends to meet. To enter, contact Major Steve Kennedy, or Major Nick Allbeury at RHQ PWO; Tel: 01904 662790; E-mail: regsec@pwoyorkshire.army.mod.uk

Other Activities. Whether or not you are a golfer, you may be interested in the variety of activities still being offered by **Alex Liddle** and **Richard Best**, such as surfing, sailing, climbing, scrambling, or, by contrast, polo. More information from: Tel: 01271 890037; or E-mail: info@breathingspace.uk.com

British Army Badges. Readers may like to be aware of a recent publication **British Army Badges**, by Lieutenant Colonel Robin Hodges, which reportedly contains coverage of the Dukes in 17 photographs of our badges and three photographs of our soldiers wearing them. In an extensive and complimentary review of the book, Professor Richard Holmes says: "Military readers will leaf through these pages in search of their own badges. There will be more smiles than frowns, for it is good to see just how many of the symbols that glinted on the caps of yesteryear have, with a variety of transformation, survived to the present."

The book has been self-published and is available only through the author at: **British Army Badges**, Court Hill Farm, Potterne, Devizes, SN10 5PN. Tel: 01380 723371 E-mail: robinhodges@armymail.mod.uk

The Officers' Association. A number of ex-officers will have made use of The Officers' Association when looking for jobs on leaving HM Forces. Ex-officers and the widows and widowers of ex-officers may like to be aware that The Officers' Association also runs a residential home in beautiful surroundings at Bishopsteignton in South Devon. This home is for those who are fit enough to look after themselves, as no medical facilities are provided. However, meals are provided and accommodation is in single rooms with en-suite facilities. Further details and application forms may be obtained from: The Assistant General Secretary, The Officers' Association, 48 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JY. Tel: 020 7389 5203/4; E-mail: om@oaed.org.uk Website: www.officersassociation.org.uk

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Mr B. J. Bowler, Casa Xanadu, PO 93, Monchique 8550, Algarve, Portugal.

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Mr P. P. Heaton, 5 Begonia Close, St Peters, Worcester WR5 3LZ.

Mr G. C. Irving, 4 Annams, Bowes, Barnard Castle, County Durham, DL12 9LP.

Mr I. E. Metcalfe, 11 Kirra Lane, Clarkson, 6030, Western Australia.

Mr W. G. Nellist BEM, Stresemann Strasse 1, 68642 Buerstadt, Germany.

Mr A. J. Shand, Flat B, King's Court Mansions, 713 Fulham Road, London SW6 5PB.

Mr C. B. Sherratt, 2 Rainsborough Way, Clifton, York YO30 6QA.

Mr G. R. Triplow, 46 Plate Road, London SW2 5UR.

Mr P. Walton, 15 Hebble Court, Mixenden, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX2 8PA.

Mr M. J. Wolff, PO Box 500313, Dubai Internet City, Dubai, UAE.

* Mr A. Walker, 23 Doncaster Road, Wath upon Dearne, Rotherham, S63 7DN.

Obituaries

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

Mr J. A. Shenton MA

Jim Shenton, who died on 25 October 2005 aged 71, joined the Dukes as a National Service officer in Cyprus in 1957, during the operations against EOKA. He thus saw active service but, to his eternal chagrin, not for long enough to earn the award of the General Service Medal.

He had played rugby for Brasenose College (BNC) at Oxford and, probably when BNC played 1 DWR in 1955/56, met Mike Campbell-Lamerton, who persuaded him, a Lancashireman born and bred, to join a Yorkshire Regiment. He, and the Regiment, had no regrets about this, as Jim played a valuable and flexible role in the rugby team, moving around in the pack as our international and Rugby League players came and went. He extended his service by a year and, by now based in Northern Ireland, he played under Dennis Shuttleworth in the Army Cup-winning team of 1957/58. With a good voice and excellent memory, he also had a useful repertoire of rugby songs. He was a handy cricketer and a keen sailor too. He completed the mandatory TA element of his National Service with the 5/7th Battalion whilst working in the oil business. He later worked in Iran and in London for Shelmex and BP. His final employment before taking early retirement was with the National Economic Development Council (Neddy).

By now based in London, Jim was not only able to visit Lord's and Twickenham on a regular basis, but he was also able to pursue his love of music and he sang for many years with the Goldsmith's Choral Union, which he also served as Honorary Secretary.

Affable, intelligent and well-read, Jim made a wide circle of strong and lasting friendships; so much so that, although he never married, several sets of parents invited him to act as Godfather to their offspring and he regularly provided meals, accommodation, or a shoulder to lean on for youngsters who were setting out on their lives, as he did for the parents when they needed an overnight base in London. They, in turn, welcomed him for Easter, Christmas and many periods in between.

Jim moved from London to Kettlewell in the Yorkshire Dales in 2003, where the kind people of the village took him to their heart and helped him through his debilitating final illness, which he endured with great patience.

He was, of course, human and, like many of us, he could be stubborn and critical, but, as Colin Welland, who had been a friend since primary school days, said in his touching Address at Jim's Service of Thanksgiving in St Mary's Church, Kettlewell, on 4 November 2005: "Jim was just a very, very popular bloke". This was borne out by the full Church and bulging pub, in which both regular and National Service Dukes, as well as friends from England, Scotland and Northern Ireland and quite possibly from even further afield, were glad to meet Jim's family, headed by his elder brother, Erik.

There was general agreement that Jim would have really enjoyed the party and for that and his enduring friendship we gladly endorse Colin's closing words: "Thank you, Jim".

Thomas Baxter

It was May 1939 when Tom and I decided to take a big step forward in life, we were both at a loose end with our jobs. We had both left school at fourteen and with the sounds of war rattling round Europe decided to join our local TA outfit, namely the 1st/6th Battalion The Duke of Wellington's Regiment. Not only were we being patriotic, but we were going to get two weeks off work with pay, instead of the one week we normally got, and we were going to Malton TA Camp. So we went along to the Drill Hall and took the King's Shilling. Everything was going fine, doing our two nights' training a week and up on the firing ranges on Sundays; that was until Friday 1 September when the TA was mobilised, and we were supposed to start our camp the next day. We reported back and our fortnight camp was probably the longest on record lasting 6 years 8 months, as Tom and I were demobbed in May 1946. It wasn't long before we were to be split up, as we were classed as army immatures, i.e. we were too young to go abroad. Tom was transferred to an Ack-Ack unit in Scotland where he was to meet his wife Peggy, and they were married 62 happy years. Later on, Tom was to serve in France and Germany. After the war Tom and I kept in touch through our DWR Regimental Association and 1st/6th OCA, of which Tom was a leading light. After a short illness Tom passed away on 9 January 2006 and will be sadly missed by all his friends in Yorkshire and Scotland, and all who came in contact with him. Tom is survived by his wife, Peggy, four children, five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. RIP dear friend.

Ted Schofield 4615576

RHQ has also been informed of the following recent deaths:

Mr John (Josh) Shaw, ex 9th Battalion (146 Regiment RAC), died in Huddersfield in October 2005. Josh was a great supporter of the Regiment, who attended the 9th Battalion Reunion every year until his death.

Captain John Forty, ex 7th Battalion, died on 10 December 2005 in Stockport, Cheshire.

Mr Ken Uttley, ex 1st Battalion in the 1960s, died on 7 October 2005 in Bradford.

Mrs Rita Joan Upjohn, widow of the late Major General Gordon Upjohn, died in Hereford on 13 December 2005, aged 92.

Mrs Joan Wood, widow of the late Arthur Wood, ex 7th Battalion and former General Secretary of the Regimental Association, died on 5 December 2005, in Halifax.

Ex Colour Sergeant A. J. Spring, Bob (as he was known) Spring, who served in the 1st Battalion from 1950-67, including Korea, died on 12 March 2006, at the age of nearly 84 years.

Mr Eric Wakefield, ex 1st Battalion, died on 28 February 2006.

Major G. V. Fancourt MC, Gerard Vivian Fancourt, ex 7th Battalion 1944-46, died on 18 March 2006 at the age of 92.

Mr J. R. Brierley, Jack Rodney Brierley, ex 2/7th Battalion 1939-42, died on 19 April 2006 at the age of 87.

Mr Barry Greenwood. Barry, who served in the 1st Battalion from 1959-61, died on 10 April 2006.