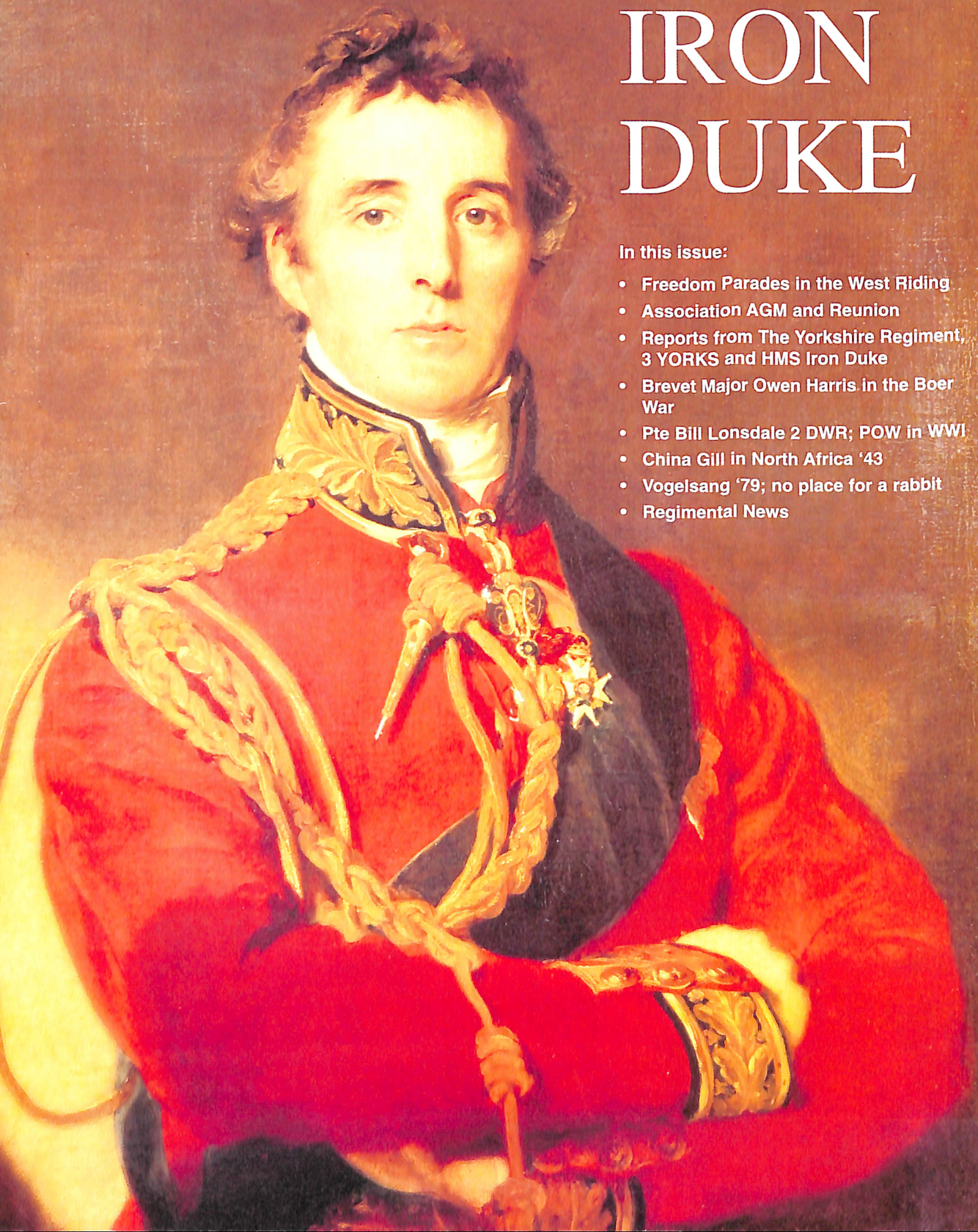


AUTUMN 2008
No. 265

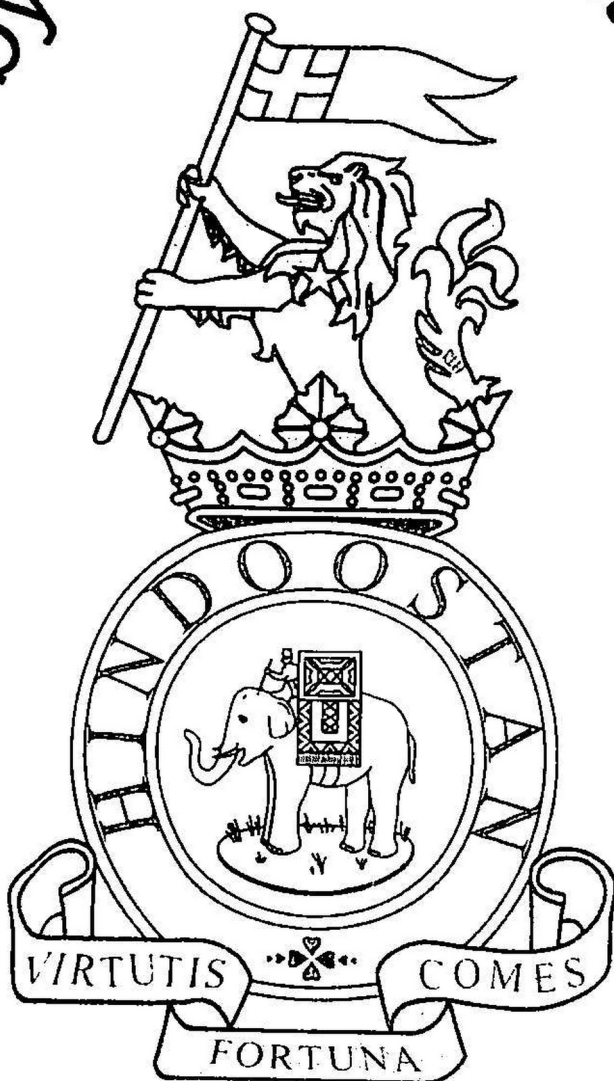
THE IRON DUKE

In this issue:

- Freedom Parades in the West Riding
- Association AGM and Reunion
- Reports from The Yorkshire Regiment, 3 YORKS and HMS Iron Duke
- Brevet Major Owen Harris in the Boer War
- Pte Bill Lonsdale 2 DWR; POW in WWI
- China Gill in North Africa '43
- Vogelsang '79; no place for a rabbit
- Regimental News



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FREEDOM PARADES IN THE WEST RIDING



Above: the Parade marches on in Huddersfield
 Left: the Kirklees Freedom Scroll
 Below: the Colour Party in Barnsley



THE IRON DUKE

*The Regimental Journal of
all who served with*

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S REGIMENT

(WEST RIDING)

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



Hill 60
Somme 1916, '18
Arras 1917, '18
Cambrai 1917, '18
Lys
Piave 1918
Landing at Suvla
Afghanistan 1919
North-West Europe
1940, 1944-45
Dunkirk 1940
St Valery-en-Caux
Fontenay-le-Pesnil
Djebel Bou Aoukaz 1943
Anzio
Monte Ceco
Burna 1942, '43, '44
Sittang 1942
Chindits 1944
The Hook 1953
Korea 1952-53
Iraq 2003

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BUSINESS NOTES

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FREEDOM PARADES IN THE WEST RIDING

The 3rd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment (Duke of Wellington's) carried out six Freedom Parades in the West Riding between 18 and 25 October. Skipton and Bradford on Saturday 18 October, AM and PM respectively; Barnsley on Tuesday 21 October; Sheffield on Wednesday 23 October; and finally Huddersfield and Halifax on Saturday 25 October, again AM and PM respectively. The Battalion was very well received by both citizens and local dignitaries in all six towns and cities.

The primary purpose of the parades was to transfer the privilege of freedom to march through these boroughs with "colours flying, drums beating and bayonets fixed" from the Duke of Wellington's Regiment to the Yorkshire Regiment. Of equal importance was to keep the Regiment, and specifically the 3rd Battalion, in the public eye in the West Riding.

The parades were commanded by the Commanding Officer, Lt Col AM Pullan, with Major M Palmer OC No 1 Guard and Major M Stear OC No 2 Guard. On arrival of the Mayoral Party the parade gave a general salute; the Mayor, accompanied by Col Simon Newton OBE, Deputy Colonel of the Yorkshire Regiment, was invited by the Commanding Officer to inspect the troops; on return to the dais, the Mayor conferred the Freedom of the Borough upon the Yorkshire Regiment and made a short speech, to which Col Newton responded.

The Battalion's Corps of Drums gave a display which fully demonstrated their expertise, and then, led by the band, the Parade marched past, to the enthusiastic applause of the thousands of spectators. This is all illustrated by the photographs which accompany this report.

For those of us standing in the crowd, one of the most pleasing things was the way that the spectators, who turned out in very good numbers indeed, clearly identified the soldiers standing just a few feet away as "their lads". They listened to the speeches, audibly reacted with a mix of pride and concern on hearing that the Battalion is to be sent on an operational tour in 2009, and applauded enthusiastically. To this observer at least the effort made by 3 Yorks to commit to these marches so soon after return from Canada, and to rehearse and practice to ensure that they were delivered well, was fully repaid by the response of those who stood and watched and clapped and called out their respect and support.

Barnsley (top) and Sheffield





Awaiting the arrival of the Mayoral party in Huddersfield



The Colour Party with Maj Stear, OC No 2 Guard, behind



Warrior AFV on parade



Mayor of Calderdale inspects the Parade



Head of the Parade in Halifax



March past - eyes right

EDITORIAL

In this Issue ...

We regret that this issue is later than usual, and we are unable to display many photographs with the 3 Yorks contribution, this is due to circumstances outside our control. However, this edition has some good tales to tell. As ever, news of our regular battalion, and HMS Iron Duke; the harrowing tale of Private Bill Lonsdale, captured while serving with 2 DWR in the BEF in 1914; the story of Brevet Major Owen Harris, whose brass memorial in a Kent village church started a trail of research which led to an account of a fierce engagement between British mounted infantry and de Wets Boer commandos; China Gill with 1 DWR in North Africa in 1943, engaged in some very heavy fighting; the end of Op Banner, after nearly four decades of service in Northern Ireland; Capt Simon Morgan remembers an exercise at Vogelsang; and of course news from around the Regimental Association.

It is the Editor's happy task to collect information from any source he can. Your story will be welcome.

The Dukes Website

I am sure you have noticed how extremely good our website is (www.dwr.org.uk). The Iron Duke, being a twice yearly production, strives to complement the immediacy with which the website can carry news and information. We share a wish to offer interesting and, we hope, relevant information about our Regiment.

If you are not a regular user of the website, you should be. That is the place to go for information on what is happening now or in the near future, as well as its excellent spread of articles and features on Regimental history and other matters. There are issues about what the Association should do, and the site offers facilities for exchanges of ideas and opinions, as well as a great deal of information. We are all grateful to Charles Cumberlege and "Speedy" Nuttall for their skilled contribution as well as their time and trouble.

Public Support for our Armed Forces

I have recently been in the USA, and the different ways we show our support for our servicemen on active service in our two countries is quite extraordinary. In the States there are signs of support for their men and women everywhere; every street it seemed had at least half a dozen houses with patriotic flags and slogans; the local papers were full of stories about returning servicemen, and good wishes being sent by family and friends to those in harm's way at the time. It took Lawrence Dallaglio's jutting jaw to give us a national platform to make a public show on anything even approaching the same scale. Well done him and his mates. And well done the 3 Yorks team whose European rugby tour reported on elsewhere in this issue raised money for Help for Heroes.

Maybe this is just British reserve; or maybe our society is too old and tired and now we are little more than cannon fodder for professional politicians, bureaucrats and health and safety officials. We might also, in passing, note the way that the Gurkhas who retired before 1997 have being treated. Well done

Joanna Lumley and her mates for turning that situation around. Symbolising their huge contribution, it was a Gurkha band that led our Freedom Parade in Barnsley.

Having just witnessed some of the Freedom parades I personally I don't think this apparent indifference to our soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen is what most of the public actually feel at all; unless it is squeezed out of us we are just hopeless at saying what we believe out loud, and telling our politicians what we think of them when they fail (in this as in so much) to reflect the public mood. A recent poll showed that 81% of people do support "our boys". As a nation we seem to participate in the Remembrance Day events in far greater numbers. We just don't show it overtly unless prodded.

We can be different! Readers of the Iron Duke will have no misgivings in offering 110% support for whatever operational tasks are laid before the Dukes - or any other battalion of the Yorkshire and other Regiments for that matter. Fly the flag, literally and metaphorically, whenever and wherever you can. The welfare and well-being of our soldiers mean a great deal to us. The "old and bold" of the Regimental Association are with you all the way 3 Yorks (Dukes); we are just not very good at saying so.

Major General D. E. Isles CB, OBE, DL

We regret to announce that General Donald Isles died on 12 November 2008, at the age of 84. He had been unwell for some time. The funeral service and internment took place at Denton Parish Church on Thursday 20 November 2008.

General Donald was commissioned into the Regiment in 1943 and joined the 1st Battalion in Italy in 1944. He served in Palestine, Egypt, Syria and the Sudan. He commanded the 1st Battalion from 1965-67 in BAOR and serving with the United Nations Forces in Cyprus. He was Colonel of the Regiment from 1975-82.

A full obituary will appear in the next edition of the Iron Duke.





THE YORKSHIRE REGIMENT

Fortune Favours the Brave

1 YORKS (Prince of Wales's Own)

Based in Catterick until October, the battalion has deployed companies for Falkland Islands roulement and Exercise African Thorn in South Africa. Fourteen soldiers served with 2 Yorks in Afghanistan. The battalion recently moved to Munster with 20 Armoured Brigade. Most of the battalion will go to Iraq in late October, with B Coy deploying to Kosovo instead as the Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Task Force (ISR TF).

The Battalion Cross Country team came second in the 2 Division league and the football team narrowly lost in the semi-finals of the Infantry Cup. The rugby team were runners-up in the Army Sevens Plate competition having qualified by winning the 2 Division tournament. We have participated enthusiastically in most sports at division level, including 'Race the Sun', a multi event relay held over twelve hours in the York area.

2 YORKS (Green Howards)

2 Yorks is based in Weeton. The battalion has had an excellent operational tour, being involved in many of the key events in Afghanistan, including the liberation of Musa Qala in December 2007. 2 Yorks soldiers made a big difference during their time in Afghanistan, and can be proud of the work as part of 52 Brigade. The return to Weeton has seen the battalion involved in a number of media events, including fifteen soldiers who visited Ricky Hatton in Manchester, and a further forty soldiers invited by Middlesbrough Football Club to do a lap of the pitch and meet the players prior to kick off against Portsmouth.

In April, soldiers and families of 2 Yorks gathered together at Kirkham Church to remember the five soldiers who had lost their lives whilst working with the Battlegroup in Afghanistan. These were Capt John McDermid (2 Scots), Sgt Lee Johnson (2 Yorks), Lance Corporal Jake Alderton (RE), Cpl Darryl Gardiner (REME), and Cpl Stephen Lawrence (2 Yorks).

The battalion was unable to enter many of the recent military sporting competitions and leagues due to operational commitments. The Battalion will be aiming to develop its rugby union, football, fishing and boxing teams over the next few months, so that they are well prepared for the upcoming competitions beginning later this year. Both the football and rugby teams will be entering the army cup for 2008/09, hoping that with the talent they have at their disposal that they are able to progress to the knock out rounds of the competitions.

3 YORKS (Duke of Wellington's)

Battalion notes follow over the page.

4 YORKS

The battalion is fully occupied with deployments to Afghanistan, celebrations of TA100, and has a recruitment drive with the added requirement to create a Yorkshire Regiment band.

In July this year 4 Yorks had forty-six soldiers mobilised. A company sized group went to Wisconsin to take part in exercises with the US National Guard, and a reciprocal training camp was arranged in Barry Budden, Scotland in September.

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

The Regiment is appealing for funds for a commemorative site at the National Memorial Arboretum (*see letter from Richard Ward in the last edition, page 47 for background*). Some £15,000 is needed, and of course donations are very welcome, and should be sent to: Regimental Headquarters, The Yorkshire Regiment, 3 Tower Street, York, YO1 9SB.

You will no doubt be sent a gift aid form to enhance the value of your donation by 28%. Alternatively you can donate online: www.justgiving.com/yorksmaappeal

Readers will recall that when the Dukes handed over £1m to the Yorkshire Regiment, the responsibility for benevolence grants was also passed over. RHQ reports that over £76,000 was donated as grants by the Regimental Benevolence Case Committee in the last financial year, looking after over two hundred soldiers who needed a helping hand. The Regiment is asking former members of the antecedent battalions if they would consider a contribution to the Regiment's trust to assist with further funding. A small monthly or yearly sum will make a difference. Get in touch with RHQ if you can help, using the address above or email rhqyorks@btconnect.com for a direct debit and gift aid forms.

Finally, the Colonel of the Yorkshire Regiment, Lieutenant General Sir Nicholas Houghton, has written to retired officers inviting them to join a new Yorkshire Regiment Officers' Dinner Club. Our own Dinner Club will no doubt continue, so this will be in addition. Annual subscription £10.00; forms and information from RHQ, as above.

For the latest Yorkshire Regiment information visit:
www2.army.mod.uk/yorkshire_regiment

3rd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment

(The Duke of Wellington's)

Commanding Officer's Report

The focus during this reporting period has been preparation for BATUS and Exercise Medicine Man (MM) 3 for the 3 Yorks Battle Group, and Exercise MM 4 for Corunna Company attached to the KRH. Most soldiers will also complete a second MM but as OPFOR. The first soldiers deployed at the beginning of July, with the bulk returning by early October. The last company gets back in November.

The build-up training for MM3 and 4 was constrained by a lack of resources and a lack of time. With RAAT tasks being an irritating distraction, most could only deploy for CT 1 and 2 training (the basics) with an average of four to six Warriors (each company should have fourteen) and for only one or two weeks in the field. Corunna fared better than Alma and Burma simply dint of having an extra six weeks' preparation time. A week was also spent in the Combined Arm Staff Trainer (CAST), and some two weeks in the vehicle simulators in the Combined Arms Tactical Trainer (CATT). Weeks were also spent in Castlemartin in order to complete the mandated pre-BATUS Warrior live firing. At the culmination of all this, the 3 Yorks Battle Group arrived in BATUS prepared but not as ready as we would have liked. Sage voices from the veterans of BATUS 04 could be heard chiming 'it wasn't like this last time'! Times have, however, changed.

At the time of writing we have completed MM3. A large slice of the Battalion is now OPFOR and prepares to battle the KRH and Corunna Coy during MM4. As to MM3: we worked exceptionally hard, spent time in some 'dark places', but finished the exercise recognised as the best battle group this year and well placed in the top-third of battle groups to pass through BATUS. The Commander awarded the battle group a very robust Collective Training level 4, something the previous unit did not attain. This is a very rewarding achievement considering our state of pre-training. It also indicates that we learnt more about the business of fighting when in the Land Warfare Centre than we previously acknowledged. Most importantly, it says a great deal about the professional character and resolve of the rank and file and officers in the Yorkshire Regiment (and thanks to 2 Yorks for the twenty-two soldiers they sent us). However, a note of caution: I assess that BATUS marks the end of the beginning and is an excellent transition point from which to start pre-deployment training. Much more work is required, but we are now well placed to deliver mission success next year on operations.

Since May, the officers' plot has been in some flux and deliberately so in order to establish a team to train in BATUS which would then deploy on operations. Key changes are as follows:

- Major Nigel Rhodes is now the BG2IC, taking over from Major Paul Fox, and handing over Alma Coy to Major Matt Palmer.

- Major Matt Stear has moved from Somme Coy to Burma, with Major Tom Miller taking over Somme.
- Major Andy Pigg has moved to ITC Catterick, with Major Phil McNeil stepping up as QM.
- Captain Sean Caine is now QM(T), with Captain Richard Hind taking over as RCMO.
- Captain Lee Pearce is now Adjutant, with Captain Phil Smith moved on posting to HQ 12 Mechanical Brigade as a SO3.
- Captain Bob Carman is now RSO.
- Captain Doug Hayton-Williams joins Burma as 2IC.
- Lieut Chris Ibbotson joins us from Lancs and is now Corunna Coy 2IC.
- A healthy crop of new subalterns have arrived, including Goucher, Fitzgerald, Davies, Taylor and Carter.
- We also said goodbye to Major Humphrey Bradley (who has moved to the Mercians), Captain Dan Holloway who has deployed on operations with the Rifles (Lieut Henry Stow taking over as Alma Coy 2IC), and Captains Chris Johnson, Tom Spilman and Mark Crawford who have left the Army to either work in the City or join the construction industry (good timing!).

There has also been some turbulence in the WO2s plot, but again in order to ensure stability out to the next 12-18 months.

- WO2 Clarke is now CSM Burma, with WO2 Yeadon moving on posting.
- WO2 Conley is now CSM Corunna.
- WO2 Goddard is now CSM Somme, with WO2 Hallsworth moving on posting.
- WO2 Hill has stepped into the vacant post of CSM Hook Coy.
- WO2 Rutter is now the MTWO.
- WO2 Stones is now RQMS(T), with WO2 Carter moving over to be RQMS(M).

One person I wish to make special mention of is Capt Paul Tetlow, the Ops Officer. Last year he resigned and he is due out of the Army in December. Despite this he has remained focused and professional, and almost single-handedly covered the G3 element of the Battalion's deployment to BATUS. In BATUS itself his performance was exemplary and not that of a man distracted by an uncertain future and possibly waning motivation. An outstanding officer and good bloke: we wish Teddy all the best and thank him for his pivotal role in delivering mission success in BATUS. We hope that the 'wind fills your sails'.

Penultimately, as ever we have attempted to balance all the hard work of the last few months with some sport and other distractions. The football team played in the Army Cup final, the rugby team reached the Army

semi-finals, and a small crew of budding sailors came second in the Infantry Regatta. At the end of the season, the football team took on the might of Barnsley Football Club coming a gallant second. We also held the inaugural Wellington's Tens Rugby competition, with some sixteen teams competing and all in aid of Help-for-Heroes. The rugby team completed an epic ten games (or was it nine!) of tens rugby in ten days in ten European countries. This tour was also in aid of charity and several thousand pounds was raised. At the time of writing some 120 Yorkshire soldiers are climbing, riding, walking, canoeing and parachuting in the Rockies. More follow them. On return to the UK, and balanced against the pressures of pre-deployment training, we reform the various sports teams and set

about retaining soldiers through sport. One new club to form will be the canoe club, having just received grants to purchase ten boats. Attempts to fund and build a climbing wall are in full swing and all help in this project will be gratefully received!

Finally, we look towards operations next year. Pre-deployment training starts in December, if not before, with the deployment commencing in April or May. We are currently scheduled for six months in Iraq but are agile enough to go where needed. I sense that there might be much change over the coming months and that plans will continue to evolve. I am certain, however, that next year will be a challenging one and we are ready for the challenge.

Lieutenant Colonel A. Pullan

ALMA COMPANY

Officer Commanding	- Major M. C. A. Palmer
Second-in-Command	- Lieutenant H. J. Stow
Company Sergeant Major	- WO2 R. D. Hollis
CGWO	- Colour Sergeant P. A. Bevan
Company Quartermaster Sergeant	- Colour Sergeant B. Sykes
Fleet Manager	- Colour Sergeant J. Luscombe

1 Platoon

2nd Lieutenant A. Fitzgerald
Sergeant D. A. Bagnall

2 Platoon

Lieutenant A. D. Ross
Sergeant I. G. Perkins

3 Platoon

Lieutenant N. R. Spicer
Corporal J. Pearson

Alma's activities over the last quarter have focused on the build-up training for and completion of Exercise Medicine Man 3 in BATUS, Canada. This has been an intense but extremely valuable period of training which leaves the Company on a high and well poised for the challenge of pre-deployment training and next year's operational tour, in whatever form it will take. It is also of note that the Company has said a sad farewell to the outgoing Officer Commanding, Company 2ic and OC 2 Platoon during this period; Major Nigel Rhodes, Captain Dan Holloway and Lt Tony Ross respectively. The Company is especially grateful for their efforts.

The build up training focused around a one week Warrior live firing package in Wales, a week of planning training for the Company Headquarters staff, a week practicing manoeuvring as part of a Combined Arms Battle Group on the impressive computer simulators outside Battlesbury Barracks and a week of dismounted live firing on Salisbury Plain.

May's Warrior Ranges in deepest darkest Pembrokeshire provided the Company with its first opportunity to live fire Warriors in 2008 and an excellent initiation for some very inexperienced gunners. Despite numerous sheep incursions onto the ranges and surfers drifting into the range danger areas, the Company was able to celebrate achieving the required firing standards in a very small and remote Welsh pub. Having then proved it could fire the Warrior weapon systems the Company progressed to manoeuvre training in the huge simulator facility next to camp known as the Combined Arms Tactical Trainer (CATT). This training event also saw the Dukes integrate for the first time with the other attached arms that would make up the Battle Group for the Canada deployment. Despite the warm and

comfortable conditions in the simulators and the fact we seemed to mix well with the strangers everybody got a stark reminder of how difficult armoured manoeuvre warfare can be. The final piece of the pre-BATUS training was to ensure the dismounted personnel who are carted around in the back of the vehicles were able to fight effectively when they are allowed to get out. This training was conducted on our back door and was thankfully bolstered by thirty-five augmentees from 2 Yorks, 4 Yorks and the Royal Military Police. This additional manpower was to enable the Company to have a section of manpower in every vehicle in Canada rather than the handful we could have produced on our own.

On a lighter note it is worth mentioning that not all training was BATUS focused. In May, Alma also managed to get a well-deserved week away, adventure training in Newquay. Whilst the headquarters element had other commitments Lt Nick Spicer was more than happy to step up to the plate and lead the excursion. Surfing, powerkiting, absailing, rock climbing and cliff jumping were on the menu as well as the extra curricular activities that Newquay has to offer. In sum, the Company managed to push the boundaries in all respects but return in one piece with recharged batteries and stories to tell; the LCpl Kisby/Lt Spicer 180ft double abseil being particularly noteworthy.

Following two weeks' leave in July the Company proceeded with a split deployment to Canada, the advance party having the unenviable task of receiving a Warrior fleet in a dire state of repair from the outgoing unit. Especial thanks must go to those on the advance party under the diligent guidance of Staff Sgt James Sheppard, Col Sgts Pete Bevan and Jason 'Osama Bin'



Alma Company on the eve of deployment.

Luscombe whose tireless work on the vehicles was invaluable. Just as they were finishing this mammoth task the main body joined them over five days' worth of flights.

Once the Company was complete in Canada, Battle Group HQ persuaded BATUS staff to break protocol and allow both rifle companies out onto the training area to conduct three-day independent company exercises. This proactive approach was a big success and allowed the Company to gel as a unit, dust the cobwebs off the new OC and revise company level formations prior to the main exercise itself. In addition, the Company was able to get a feel for the testing heat, barren nature of the rolling prairie and the significant reality of the mosquito threat. The latter point resulting in a mass purchase of electronic mossy zappers in the form of mini tennis rackets with electronic strings. As any indigenous insects would explode on contact with the strings the devices naturally lent themselves to man on man electrocution. This kept the Company on its toes for most of the exercise, especially Private Lumb who naively accepted a dare to zap Company Sergeant Major Reg Hollis.

Alma then deployed on the twenty-three day Exercise Medicine Man 3 itself. As many will know, this is broken down into two distinct phases: Live Firing and Tactical Effects Simulator training. During each phase the training gradually escalates from Platoon up to Battle Group level allowing to every member of the Battle Group to experience the Combined Arms battle.

During the live firing phase soldiers not only conducted traditional dismounted and mounted attacks but participated in some excellent trench clearance training, night firing and live firing assault courses. All enjoyed the benefits of this outstanding training opportunity, sweated off pounds as dismounted soldiers or in battened down turrets reaching 45°, and were reminded of the positive impact of tank and artillery fire support and the Engineers' ability to blow stuff up. Feeling the ground shake from the weight of artillery fire and hearing the tanks fire on the approach to an enemy position is particularly reassuring! Throughout this phase the Company continued to gel and reacted in a constructive manner to many of the lessons identified.

It is of note that the responsive nature of the Company was particularly well received by the BATUS training staff and enabled it to get the most out of the training opportunity.

On switching to the Tactical Effects Simulator training the Dukes were back on more familiar ground having used the equipment so frequently in the Land Warfare Battle Group role. Alma personnel also appeared more motivated by the prospect of defeating an opposing force of Welsh Guards, Kings Royal Hussars and Royal Tank Regiment personnel than when assaulting stick in targetry. The result was a significant improvement in their tactical skills and an extremely positive phase of the exercise. The culmination of which was Exercise Totalize, a sapping seven-day event which assesses the level of training achieved by the individual companies and Battle Group. In this regard Alma Company did itself proud successfully tackling Armoured Company Group attacks, Contemporary Operating Environment stabilization operations and 12km dismounted insertions. Alma was rated highly by the assessing staff, proving it had quickly embraced the lessons learnt throughout the exercise and contributed to the robust collective training level achieved by the Battle Group. It was a particularly satisfying end to an intense period of training and leaves the Company poised for pre-deployment training with a solid foundation of Armoured Infantry skills. Perhaps more notably in the current political climate, Alma demonstrated it had the ability to learn quickly and to achieve results from an almost standing start.

Despite this busy period the Company has been able to squeeze in some form of normality. In this regard congratulations go to Cpl Jamie and Cally Pearson for their recent marriage and all wish them the best of luck for the future. They also go to Pte John McLaughlin and Stacy for the birth of their baby girl, Olivia-May. We all wish her the best of health. In terms of newcomers Alma is pleased to welcome its new Company 2ic who joins us from Burma, Lt Henry Stow, Cpl Paul Daniels from his stint training recruits in Catterick, Cpl Ahmar Hassanali from Burma Company and Ptes 'Brawling' Brammer, Michael Bainbridge and Mark Dhali who are fresh out of training.

Finally, as I complete these notes the Company is split to the four winds. Some await a delayed RAF flight back to the UK, some are adventure training in the Rockies and some are preparing to act as opposing

forces for the next Battle Group to roll through BATUS. We will be complete again in November and quickly refocus on preparation for next year's operations.

Major M. C. A. Palmer

BURMA COMPANY

Officer Commanding	- Major M. M. D. Stear
Second-in-Command	- Captain D. Hayton-Williams
Company Sergeant Major	- WO2 M. Clarke
Company Quartermaster Sergeant	- Colour Sergeant G. Peacock

4 Platoon

Lieutenant A. Bond
Corporal C. G. Maclaren

5 Platoon

2nd Lieutenant G. T. L. Goucher
Sergeant M. Roper

6 Platoon

Sergeant G. C. Hill
Sergeant S. P. Harrison

Burma Company is as busy as ever and delighted to be re-rolled into the 12 Mechanized Brigade, which happened in March. The focus is now set firmly on preparation for an operational tour next year.

Since our re-role in March the Battalion has been conducting a compressed training period to work up our competence as a field force unit. Our sights initially were on a BATUS exercise in July 08 and all our pre-training was geared towards being safe and qualified for role, to then use BATUS as our tool for achieving the level of competence. We kicked things off with a two week battle camp at Knook camp shortly after Easter leave. Although only a couple of miles from our home base Knook camp gave us the breathing space, without distraction, to focus on low level skills. It worked and we got thoroughly stuck into a selection of activities starting from light role dismounted skills building up to armoured company attacks as a culmination of the exercise. The two weeks was not without some team cohesion activities and a very amusing and testosterone filled company social was had, which included many cold beers, some inter-platoon games and a world famous CQMS Gaz Peacock barbecue.

It was a great opportunity for Major Matt Stear to take over command of the Company having finished his time with Somme. Captain Christopher Johnston, his predecessor, is now moving out of the Army to take a job in property development on the wave of a recession - so with any luck we shall see him back in the Company before Christmas!

The summer also saw Captain Doug Hayton-Williams join us, having returned from posting at ITC Catterick, as the new Company Second in Command. The other new arrival in Coy HQ was WO2 (CSM) Mick Clarke who has just endured two challenging years as an Instructor at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, where his hobbies have included: walking, socialising and attempting to teach Officer Cadets the dark art of administration. Second Lieut George Goucher has joined as OC 5 Platoon and Sgt Hill took on the job of 6 Platoon's commander.

Other changes include the departures of Lieut Henry Stow, who is now Alma's 2ic, and WO2 Keith Yeadon who has moved to become a CSM at AFC Harrogate. Also, Sgt MacGregor has moved on with a two-year external posting.

For the build-up to BATUS it seemed as if every week had separate goals. May was the period focused on Gunnery, which saw the Company deploy to Castlemartin on a week's range package. June was simulation month involving the Combined Arms Staff Trainer (CAST) and Combined Arms Tactical Trainer (CATT). CATT is a warehouse full of simulated vehicles backed up by 100s of computer screens. The simulator allowed the men to work on formations and weapon skills as well as target recognition and engagement. Finally, July was the month for field firing and leave, working up from Individual Close Quarter Battle skills to section attacks down to (CQB). It was also our first opportunity to welcome the BATUS augmentees into the company from the RMP, RLC, RRF and 2 Yorks. Their support is invaluable in giving us an enhanced combat capability, especially with regards to dismounts; they have all fitted in well, even the coppers! A well-deserved two weeks' leave followed, with several members getting involved in the ten games, ten countries, ten days' rugby tour around Europe and then BATUS had arrived.

After a calm weekend getting fully acquainted with the bright lights of Medicine Hat - O'Reilly's, Ralph's and the Casino, it was all go for the pre-deployment company training. Burma deployed for a three night exercise, ranging from camouflage net training for dismounts to full company attack formations. After a couple of days back in camp, barbecues and beers included, we re-deployed for the ten-day live firing package.

Lieut A. G. Bond, OC 4 Platoon

A Daily Account of Exercise Medicine Man 3.

Startex! It's 30 July 2008 and we are setting off for the pre-deployment move out on to the area. Morale is high and there is a feeling of expectation in the air. As we move we pass vehicles stopped at the side of the road where an unseen fault has now been found! A lot of fast work with spanners and ratchets.

As we continue to move through to our grid for the night leaguer the forty-odd km fell behind us along with civilization. There is not a building to be seen and the roads are literally dirt tracks baked hard in the 35° heat! As we form up for our last good night sleep for a while everyone was keen to get heads down and see what the morrow would bring.

We woke up to D-Day and it was all systems go. Well, testing of the weapon systems anyway! A quick zeroing of all rifles and 30mm as well as a quick attack lane to get rid of a few small cobwebs. We also conducted weapon handling tests on some of the other battle-winning assets such as the 51mm mortar and the Under-slung Grenade Launcher.

D + 1. Today's challenges are in the form of section attacks for dismounts and Annual Crew Tests for the crews. The section attacks are lead by the new section commanders, mainly RMP corporals and a signals TA officer. Able assistance is provided by their vehicle commanders who, even though they spend most of their time in vehicles, are infantry through and through! Next we're fighting a full dismounted platoon attack to clear a series of re-

entrants. The arcs of the range made the attack very enjoyable, as there was the freedom to head just about anywhere! As we finish everyone is huffing and puffing as it had been another scorching day running about in full body armour. But back to the vehicles for a quick de-brief and on to the next leaguer.

D + 2. For the first time, we mixed the dismounts and the vehicles up to make the complete fighting unit. It involved a quick walk through of the range and positively identifying the positions for the first couple of attacks. Then we launch into the attacks themselves. The vehicles would hammer forwards at best possible speed, while remaining balanced, stop twenty meters or so short of the objective and dismount the troops. The troops would spread out and proceed to storm the position. It soon became clear that even though not all of them were infantry they were up to the task! The temperature inside the warrior was incredible while batoned down, 37° outside and engine temperature in excess of 90° made for some very warm, medium-rare dismounts.

D + 3. Based around three stands, firstly there is a FIBUA house which the dismounts attack while the Warriors provide flank defence. The second is a battlefield inoculation stand which involves an assault course with targets. This is great fun and was a new twist on a standard range. The third stand is a grenade range, a long trench with doors off either side that need to be cleared. Only those selected to be grenadiers can throw but the others can help in the clearance. Tonight is our first night attack in the warriors, supported by the mortars who are providing illume and smoke on call.

D + 4. A maintenance day at last! Fresh breakfast followed by some work on the vehicles followed by a lovely shower! A good opportunity to get some rest and prepare for the next three days, morale is still high and the lads, though tired, are enjoying it massively!

D + 5. We start to integrate the tanks into our attacks. With two tanks in front to guide us on to the positions putting down the amount of fire power available to them, the attack is easier but more complicated! The



C/S B13 moving into position.

only mishaps occurred when the tanks were not sure of the enemy locations or destroyed it themselves!

D + 6. The final day before the preparation for Ex Tractable, the company practices movement within the battle group and are now working with everyone. The back of the OCs warrior is getting a bit crowded with three platoon commanders, Engineers, Arty and Anti-tanks not to mention the 2ic and CSM! Tonight we practice holding a defended area, which is assaulted by a variety of figure eleven targets and 2D salamanders (MBT). Again it is great to watch and take part in as the tracer can be clearly seen and look like lasers!

D + 7. Involves a bit of a move up to Trumpton Village to practice the battle group attack that would take place in four days time, live. As we form up in the FUP it was a sight to behold as the entire battle group prepared to assault. Over a hundred armoured vehicles from Warriors to Challengers and Bulldogs to Scimitars. The attack itself let us go through the mechanics of such a gathering but it gave us something to look forward to in a couple of days time!

D + 8. Another Maintenance day! Except this one was called a rehab day, as orders were given and battle prep for the next four days was required. However, this time we are better prepared, we fix up the vehicle the night before and as a result have a full day of rest and fun. Cards, balls, throwing a sack of rags over a washing line and a chance for the lads to relax and enjoy the experience of being in Canada and in the sun! Hopefully the old saying "If it's not raining, it's not training" doesn't apply here!

D + 9 to D + 12. The start of Exercise Tractable which combines everything we've done so far, from advances to contact to the defensive shoots. We have and are issuing full orders with Burma playing a large part in all the battle group missions. The most enjoyable is the deliberate attack on to the village of Trumpton. Burma attacks in second echelon and hammers through its objective, a compound of houses, and then take a second in a similar style. After the attack we fix up the vehicles and prepared for the TESEX phase of the exercise!

D + 13. Morale is sky high as we wake up to fresh breakfast and a sunny morning. The main effort of the day is attaching the TES equipment on to the vehicles. Luckily after a couple years as demo battalion the lads are pros and the whole process took the company no more than a couple of hours. A bit more rest then on to the first of the controlled exercises!

D + 14. The first exercise involves the company standing in two lines shooting at each other making sure that the vests and the weapons were working correctly. We move on to some simple exercises with the OPFOR, A nice advance to contact that involves very few OPFOR casualties and a fair few Burma, but lessons are quickly learned in preparation for the next company exercise.

D + 15. An absolutely great day! We set off on our 10 km advance to contact and we need to cross a bridge. Bridge found, we start to cross. When about three quarters of the Company are across the OPFOR attacked. What ensues is absolute carnage as Mr Bond's Platoon is destroyed and Mr Goucher's out flanked. All there is left is Sgt Hill and the REME to hold the bridge with only one vehicle! After a quick review we set off again to secure another bridge several km to our north. We run into the enemy about five Km from the bridge and vicious fighting begins, the N-law teams are pivotal and one of the platoons lost all vehicles and ended up assaulting the bridge on foot from 5 km away! We then head back to a leaguer, tea and medals followed by orders for the assault on Ironside Ridge.

D + 16. The attack on the ridge is to destroy a command post and anti aircraft weapons. We move down in the middle of the night until we are a couple of km short of the position. Burma is going first, it's going to be a hard assault, the ridge is too steep for tanks and the Warriors would not be able to utilize their speed. H-hr is given and we burst round the corner and into view of the enemy, eight vehicles are down almost immediately with the rest making it to the ridge. Sgt Hill's Platoon storm up one side with Cpl March's vehicle assaulting the other. They start to clear the enemy locations and manage to destroy the anti-aircraft guns before they are stopped. Alma then waltzed through and carried on the attack into the defeated enemy position.

D + 17. Battle Prep is the main aim in preparation for Exercise Totalize which, we are reliably informed, is a

"beast" both mentally and physically! So weapons cleaned and bore sighted, TES equipment checked and lads rested and fed!

D + 18 to D + 23. Exercise Totalize begins! We stare with a delay battle which involved a lot of moving and digging. Luckily there are some proverbial JCBs within the Company and they tend to speed the process up. As we moved south we made contact with the enemy. Mr Bond's Platoon took a lot of the brunt as the enemy came in from the east while he was protecting that flank. He observed the enemy movement allowing the battle group to plan and strike back which crippled the enemy and won us our mission.

Mission 2 involves the assault of a couple of key villages in the area. Both of which are known to have insurgents present. Burma are ordered to assault and secure Horden Village. We then move on to stabilization Ops with the sorts of things we'll be tasked with next year. This was the start of Mission 3, fixing of power plants, ensuring clean water and most of all, protecting the local population from negative influences and terrorist activities.

Mission 4 is a deliberate attack on to a series of hills and buildings known as the Oxo factory. The last of the enemy are dug in there. Attacking at first light the first line of the enemy is found still in their doss bags and provides no problems. Once past them however it was Burma's job to deal with the armoured reserve. This threw itself against us causing us to pull back and cut them off in the rear by a block movement. In a last man standing fight the Battle-Group won. Burma still had three vehicles operational, more than most of the other groupings!

After the final mission and the in field admin we head back in and start to fix the vehicles up so we can hand them over to BATUS. We even managed to get three Platoon nights out converging on one lucky club catering for a company's worth of thirsty soldiers. As I write this the look forward is at some serious adventure training and tourism to see what delights Calgary has to offer before getting stuck into the KRH as we take on the role as their opposing forces, more of our certain successes in the next addition.

2nd Lieutenant G. T. L. Groucher
OC 5 platoon

HOOK COMPANY

Officer Commanding - Major C. Schofield
Company Sergeant Major - WO2 Hill
Company Quartermaster Sergeant - Colour Sergeant Benson

Signals Platoon
Captain R. J. P. Carman
WO2 C. Burns

Quartermasters Dep
Major P. W. McNeil
Captain S. Caine
WO2 R. Carter, WO2 M. Stones

MT Platoon
Captain N. Wilson
WO2 C. Rutter

In March the Battalion re-rolled from the Land Warfare Centre Battle Group to 3 Yorks Battle Group in 12 Mechanised Brigade. Initial hopes in Hook Coy for a slight drop in the hectic pace of life were soon dashed

as the Battalion began planning for the future. The initial focus was on Exercise Medicine Man 3 in BATUS but already thoughts were being cast into next year and the looming operational tour.

In preparation for BATUS the Battalion had to first complete both the Combined Arms Staff Trainer (CAST) and the Combined Arms Tactical Trainer (CATT). Hook Coy played a large part in the organisation and completion of both CAST and CATT and, on reflection, all will agree they have served as excellent preparation for our time in BATUS.

With Medicine Man 3 complete and a robust CT 4 awarded to the Battle Group, half the Company are now awaiting flights home with the remainder poised, ready to take on the KRH Battle Group as enemy on Medicine Man 4.

Signals Platoon

The Communication and Information Systems (Signals) Platoon has experienced several changes in its ORBAT of late with the departure of RSO Captain Lee Pearce to Adjutant and the arrival of Captain Bob Carman, returning from ITC Catterick. Congratulations must go to Sergeants Blair and McGregor on their promotion from Corporal, leaving the Signals Platoon in the fortunate position of having four Sergeants. Lastly, RSWO WO2 Burns retires this year and leaves the Battalion for a civilian life. He has contributed a vast amount to the Platoon over his many years service and will be sorely missed.

Since our arrival in 12 Mechanised Brigade the Signals Platoon has been extremely busy, preparing primarily for BATUS. Our first major event was a platoon training week where we deployed onto the plain in order to revise some basic signals skills. This entailed setting up and using all our available HF and VHF systems combined with some basic soldiering. The two-day final exercise was a great success and reflected the focus and professionalism of the soldiers.

Both CAST and CATT were heavily dependant on the skills of the Signals Platoon. In CAST we took the opportunity to set up our Bowman tent, which is where the Battle-Group Headquarters would work from whilst on the prairie. The staff officers spent the entirety of CAST working from the tent, thus proving it to be a success. CATT gave the opportunity for the whole Battle Group to practise in one enormous simulator. During this week there were several non-Bowman pieces of software that needed to be mastered in order to facilitate the coordinated running of the exercise.

With BATUS on the horizon the hierarchy of the Signals Platoon deployed early on the Activation Party. This was to ensure the proficient initialisation of the radio platforms in the vehicle fleet. After a traumatising fortnight the fleet rolled out onto the prairie with 100% voice communications and 45% data. This was a great achievement considering the restrictions in the communications plan, and the amount of damaged radio equipment we encountered.

Medicine Man 3 was a fantastic experience for the vast majority of the Platoon. The communications network remained secure, robust and flexible allowing the Battle Group to operate with few constraints. Most Detachment Commanders working for the sub-units achieved special praise for their constant enthusiasm in dealing with a fragile radio system. In BGHQ, those tasked to various members of Battle Group staff were an

excellent advertisement to the Platoon, always alert, cooperative and willing to help. As the Colonels signaller, Cpl Cartwright deserves special mention for his constant work under pressure and for the fact he is now entirely bald!



Sergeant McGregor and Corporal Grimmes in W21D - The Rebro Wagon.

After a successful BATUS many of the lads are now on adventure training with the remainder awaiting flights to return home. Those staying will don desert combats and play enemy for the KRH Battle Group on Medicine Man 4. Though enthusiasm remains high, we are all conscious that summer is drawing to an end and the prairie is an inhospitable place in the autumn.

Captain R. J. P. Carman, RSO

Mechanical Transport Platoon

Ever the jugglers MT has been busy supporting another wildly frenetic period, but would we have it any other way, of course we would. There has been some good news of late within the MT mostly in the way of long overdue promotions to Corporal now Sergeant Wrigley and Lance Corporal now full Corporal Jones. Both fully deserve and have settled into their new rank with relative ease. BATUS for the MT is a hectic schedule that is fraught with difficulty and starts some months before the event. We commenced BATUS in January in earnest, qualifying over two hundred soldiers to drive the new SV Manns vehicles. These are a replacement for the old Bedford we know but don't really love. The Manns is an improvement on the old platform but in reality it is not perfect (in my view at least). For instance, the tyres currently on the vehicle are not up to the job and will take it sideways very

quickly in the wet. There is also much talk about the windscreens, which are flat and break very easily under the most innocuous stone strike. But they do have air conditioning and that is a winner with most and certainly an indicator of their long term usage! One item that is a vast improvement is the Bulk re-fuelling vehicle, which is now fairly reliable and carries a significant amount more than its predecessor the UBRE.

Once the conversions were complete we started the Canada matrix test and managed to get around 400 individuals qualified to drive in Canada, not quite as simple as it would appear. Holding my hand up as the MTO it took me three goes, which turned out to be about average. The winner and certainly most persistent in the Battalion had nineteen attempts before passing.

As I sit to write we have just finished Medicine Man 3 and have done extremely well across the board. The A1 Echelon packet that is largely formed from the MT has an important role in re-supplying Combat supplies

to the fighting Echelon. Over the period of the exercise we have dispensed £600,000 worth of fuel into the vehicles in order to keep them going, which makes you ponder on the cost of your car travel. One surprise to me was the gusto in which the MT has tackled the live firing ranges whilst managing to support the sub-units with re-supply. The ranges have not been the best but I believe we managed to get the best from them; each soldier has excelled himself. Whilst on the tactical phase the men were equally impressive and got stuck into the fray whenever they could.

We start something very similar across the road in around a week's time as the opposing forces to the next battle group on Medicine Man 4, and this will see us through to late October when we will come back and start our preparations for the Logistic Support Inspection that is the climax of a very busy year for us.

Captain N. Wilson, MTO

SOMME COMPANY

Officer Commanding	- Major T. J. Miller
Company Sergeant Major	- WO2 Goddard
Company Quartermaster Sergeant	- Colour Sergeant Walkinshaw

Mortar Platoon	Recce Platoon	Anti-Tank Platoon	Light Platoon
WO2 Burton	Captain C. D. Armitage	Captain P. Dennien	Sergeant Moore
Sergeant D. Pepper-Rowlands	Colour Sergeant Garbutt	Colour Sergeant Nettleton	Corporal Oxley

The Company focus since April has been with the preparation for BATUS as well as developing a co-ordinated ISTAR Group. The grouping has been based around the Reconnaissance Platoon and Anti-Tank Platoon forming together with the addition, task dependant, of the newly formed Light Platoon (Snipers) and other Battle Group assets such as Engineer Reconnaissance, Forward Observation Officers and Mortar Fire Controllers to name but a few. Their tasks were to include not just the find, fix and strike of the enemy, but also to maintain the tempo of operations and enable the remainder of the Battle Group to smash the Opposing Force. In partnership to the ISTAR Group the Mortar Platoon prepared themselves for a busy period at BATUS complementing the indirect fire capability of the Artillery.

Having completed both simulated exercises in CATT and command exercises in CAST the Company deployed in good order to BATUS. An ageing fleet requiring much maintenance kept the entirety of the Company busy during the in-theatre build up to deployment. Of particular note are the efforts of SSgt Gaz Dunne REME, Cpl John Solman REME CSgt Lee Garbutt and LCpl Matthew Lawton who worked relentlessly to ensure the vintage recce cars, tired Warriors and deflated Bulldogs were fit. A task that seemed at the start to be near impossible.

Throughout this period the Company spent its 'spare' time developing the ISTAR concept. The addition of subject matter expertise from the Artillery and Engineers involved spending time talking through, teaching and rehearsing how the group would operate.

Deployment saw the sub parts split to conduct special to arm live fire training under the close supervision and direction from the BATUS staff. The Reconnaissance Platoon blistering onto the side of A Squadron KRH as the Anti-Tanks and Mortars conducted weapon specific training. In the case of Recce and Mortars, a 'David and Goliath' atmosphere was achieved with 120mm vs 30mm and 155mm vs 81mm on the same ranges respectively.

The ISTAR Group soon had their first run out under the watchful eye of BGHQ and BATUS. A series of exercises put them through their paces, manoeuvring pan-prairie, using every fold in the ground and piece of available cover to their advantage. It was the first time that Recce were able to focus on the find function safe in the knowledge that the Anti-Tank Platoon and Artillery Observers were covering their move forward, and could deal with any enemy contact situations. The work-rate of the dismounted Javelin Detachments was as high as ever seen ensuring tempo was maintained and that the Recce Cars could manoeuvre with ease.

With a period of maintenance between and phases the Company embarked on the next test of their nerve. The Force-on-Force TES phase with a free-play enemy mustered from the RTR. With procedures in place and skills honed the ISTAR Group set out on numerous advances to contact, a night river crossings and dawn attacks onto a seemingly insurmountable defended hills or defended river crossing sites. The Company was able to demonstrate their primary principle of stealth and probe the enemy positions relishing the effect of surprise and destruction that they could cue from the remainder of the Battle Group.

The Anti-Tank Platoon devastated the enemy armour with co-ordinated shoots, pot-shots and down right Yorkshire grit even though a lack of sleep was a constant reality. The Light Platoon had their first real run out as a formed body and proved to be a force to be reckoned with. Pin-point accuracy at ranges over 700m meant that the enemy commanders were kept at bay as well as sentries disabled prior to any assault. As always the Mortar Platoon provided the Battle Group with accurate and timely indirect fire, either screening the enemy or fixing him in place to allow the Rifle Companies to strike.

The fast pace of training and sleep deprivation were constants throughout the differing phases of the deployment. This meant that Medicine Man 3 seemed to be over in a flash, although looking around at the tired and gaunt faces of the Company proved it had been a testing time. The ISTAR group did a marvellous job and it has provided some of the younger crews a fantastic grounding into their specific roles and responsibilities,

refining and confirming their low-level skills and ability to work in a battle group context. Particular praise should go to the crew of Javelin Detachment call sign 32G, who won the BATUS 'Top Gun' Competition, the first BLUEFOR infantry unit to achieve the title in memory. It would seem that instantly the focus has now rightly shifted to the operational tour next year and BATUS has given the Company the drive and depth in knowledge to succeed.

The end of BATUS has marked a milestone for some members of the Company with the movement of several individuals. To name but a few, WO2 Shawn Burton and Cpl Simon Hunnam leave the Mortar Platoon for adventures in 'Civvi Street' as Capt Mick Cataldo hands over the reins to Lt Tony Ross. Cpl Stephen Lynch is soon to move to ITC Catterick as a Section Commander after three years in the Reconnaissance Platoon and Capt Chris Armitage hands over his command of the Reconnaissance Platoon to Capt Simon Farley on return to the UK.

OFFICERS MESS

As I write this in Canada, following our successful Exercise Medicine Man 3, my look back over the last six months reminds me of our busy schedule to get us in shape for BATUS. Mess life took the hit as events were programmed and then cancelled as training activity took over, so much so that we could not find a suitable day / weekend to have a summer bash. We have therefore reserved all the funds that would have been spent in the summer for a winter event; the ladies dinner night which now promises to be very classy!

There were though three key events. Firstly we hosted the Warrant Officers shortly after leave to thank them for their continued support and valuable effort. As always when these groupings get together the night was fantastic fun reaching into the early hours and requiring the bar a full replenishment in the morning. The next was to dine out a number of Dukes who have moved onto civilian strasse. Our guests included Major Andy Pigg who has moved onto QM in Catterick Garrison, unfortunately unlikely to return to the 3rd Battalion. Also dined out were Captains Mark Crawford, Chris Johnston and Tony Spilman. Finally, we hosted the Battle Group's attached arms officers for a 3 Yorks BG pre-BATUS barbecue, which gave us an excellent opportunity to start cementing the relationships. Thankfully CATT training was completed on the Thursday, leaving a quiet Friday to nurse the hang-overs.

Over the period we have had a number of officers re-join the fold as well as some leavers too; Major Matt Palmer came in to take over command of Alma and Major Tom Miller to command Somme. Both are on the patch, and congratulations to Tom and Hannah upon the birth of their baby boy and to Matt and Beth for their news of expectancy. Obviously there is something in the water as I have great pleasure in announcing the birth of young Daniel Stear and Major Julie Verre-Whiting

has announced that she too is pregnant. James and Josephine Bryden, who still reside on the patch for his job in LAND, and Paul and Nicola Rogers have both had baby girls over the summer. Finally, Angela Nelson takes with her a seven-month-old bump to join Doug on his posting to BATUS. Other movers are Major Nigel Rhodes who has taken over as second in command from Major Paul Fox. Paul has just moved across the road so we will no doubt continue to see him and Alison at future mess events. Captains Bob Carman and Doug Hayton-Williams have returned from their external posting to Catterick. Second Lieutenants Fitzgerald, Goucher and Davies have now completed PCBC and after some quick armoured cadres are now in command of their respective platoons for BATUS. Two more subbies are on the horizon as Second Lieutenants Carter and Taylor go through PCBC. We look forward to them joining us in time for next year's operational tour.

Having seen the first members of the mess deploy to BATUS at the beginning of July we do not reform until early November when Corunna Company return. It is then just a matter of months before the tour but I am sure plenty of time for social gatherings. I hand over PMC to Matt Palmer (today) and he will therefore drive that particular journey. Work in progress includes the commissioning of silver elephant to capture the task org as it stands now and back into LWC BG days. Also a Mess caricature is in the making. Both these projects should complete around Christmas time. Finally, the long awaited TV room re-refresh is underway to provide better comfort and cosmetic appeal to the livers in. So some activity despite our absence and something to look forward to for our return. There, that's my handover to Matt done!

Major M. Stear, PMC

EUROPEAN RUGBY CHALLENGE TOUR

Captain Lee Pearce led a team on an extraordinary rugby tour of eleven games in thirteen days. They won every game.

21 June	at Warminster
22 June	v Toulon RFC at Toulon, France
23 June	v Rugby Club Geneve at Geneva, Switzerland
24 June	v Amatori Milan Rugby Club T Milan, Italy
25 June	v Lynx Rugby Club at Lichenstein
27 June	v Salzburg RFC at Salzburg, Austria
28 June	v Prague RFC at Prague, Czech Republic
29 June	v an Army side at Munster, Germany
30 July	v Brugshe RFC at Brugshe, Belgium
1 July	v DNC Rugby at Amsterdam, Holland
3 July	v an Army side at Osnabruck, Germany

The touring side had recovery days in Salzburg on 26 June, and Amsterdam on 2 July. We can only hope that this sort of recovery was not too tiring.

We hope to receive a full report in time to publish it, but in any case it was an amazing achievement and a wonderful way to introduce the British Army to many people around Europe.

H.M.S. IRON DUKE

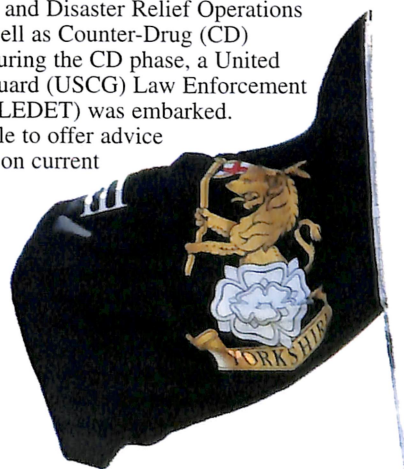
RETURN TO OPERATIONAL WARSHIP AND DEPLOYMENT “FROM BOST TO BUST”

During recent months, HMS Iron Duke has remained focused on achieving the standards required of a deployed operational warship.

The first two months of the year were spent concluding major sea trials to ensure that we were materially ready to commence eight weeks of Basic Operational Sea Training (BOST) at Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) and subsequently be capable of succeeding in any operational environment at short notice.

BOST commenced on 3 March with a Material and Safety Check (MASC). This is a compulsory inspection by the FOST staff of all Royal Navy and non UK warships that are about to embark on training. If passed, this inspection provides a baseline from which the FOST organisation tailors the training package individual units receive. Iron Duke passed MASC and commenced training with FOST the following morning. Our training was delivered in three phases, with each phase having to be passed before proceeding onto the next. Phase One consisted of two weeks' safety training both alongside and at sea. As a Ship's Company we had to prove that we could deal with a wide variety of ship-borne emergencies such as fires and floods, as well as protecting the ship from an asymmetric threat. The four weeks of Phase Two were focused on the core war-fighting skills required of an operational warship in the air, surface and subsurface environments. This period

was an excellent opportunity for us all to learn some valuable lessons and ultimately culminated in a final inspection where our CO commanded a six ship multi-national task group. Phase Three training lasted two weeks and is designed to be theatre specific: in our case to prepare us for our Atlantic Patrol Tasking (North) (APT(N)) deployment. During this period we conducted Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Operations (HDRO) as well as Counter-Drug (CD) operations. During the CD phase, a United States Coastguard (USCG) Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) was embarked. They were able to offer advice and guidance on current in-theatre CD operations as well as integrating their unit into Iron Duke's organisation.



3 Yorks flag presented by Lieutenant-Colonel Pullan in November 07 when he visited HMS Iron Duke.



The end of April saw the successful completion of BOST and an opportunity for Iron Duke to pay a brief visit to our affiliated city, Kingston upon Hull. Whilst there the ship hosted a range of events, including an official reception, a naval careers forum for local advisers and a Ship Open to Visitors. In a six hour period over 1,500 members of the public enjoyed tours of the ship as well as meeting the ship's company. We also participated in a variety of sporting events against local teams, as well as assisting in various community projects. The highlight though was a civic reception for the Ship's Company at the Guild Hall, hosted by the Mayor, Mrs Brenda Petch. After our visit to Kingston upon Hull Iron Duke returned to Portsmouth, with our fathers and sons embarked for a two day passage. We then completed a short Fleet Time Support Period, where maintenance was conducted and the final preparations were made prior to our deployment.

On Tuesday 27 May, Iron Duke departed Portsmouth to commence her APT(N) deployment. For some, this would be their first deployment. For all there were mixed emotions, sadness at leaving loved ones behind and anticipation of what the next seven months would

bring. Family and friends gathered at various vantage points to wish us a safe and successful deployment.

During her deployment Iron Duke will be ready to conduct any HDRO where necessary, as well as participating in Wider Regional Engagement (WRE) and counter-drug patrols with the USCG. It has already proven to be a demanding and fulfilling deployment, with some notable success. We are also required to retain our readiness to deploy outside of the Caribbean Area of Operations (AOO) and therefore maintain our core war fighting skills.

Our first port of call was to the Portuguese capital, Lisbon. The purpose of the visit was to attend a series of briefings and tactical up-dates on the Atlantic AOO from the Maritime Analysis Operations Centre (Narcotics) (MAOC(N)), which is a pan-European counter-narcotics agency with a mission to enhance criminal intelligence gathering and co-ordinate police action on the high seas, with a view to intercepting vessels carrying cocaine and cannabis into Europe. Following these briefings, Iron Duke was better placed to conduct Maritime Security (MS) whilst making the transit to the wider North Atlantic AOO.

There was also an opportunity for both our rugby and football teams to play and win their first games of the deployment, further building the esprit-de-corps within the ship's company.

Following Lisbon, the ship visited Gibraltar for ammunition and fuel prior to the Atlantic crossing. Gibraltar has for many years been an essential stop for Royal Navy ships deploying abroad, and there is a substantial support network in place. On leaving Gibraltar, Iron Duke commenced her MS patrols by conducting twice-daily operational helicopter sorties to enhance our situational awareness and to contribute to global maritime security whilst making our way towards Barbados.

During our trans-Atlantic crossing it was announced that His Royal Highness Prince William would be joining Iron



Duke for five weeks to give him an insight into the role of the Royal Navy and in particular an operational warship at sea. During his time onboard, Sub Lieutenant Wales undertook the duties of a young officer, including learning the skills that are required to be an Officer of the Watch responsible for the navigational safety of the ship. He had a direct role in the planning of disaster relief operations and the day to day running of the ship. The ship's company were, and remain, immensely proud to have been selected to host the prince during his period with the Royal Navy.

Within days of leaving Barbados, and having embarked both S/Lt Wales and the US Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET), Iron Duke received intelligence from the MAOC(N) in Lisbon in association with the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) and Joint Inter-Agency Task Force (South) (JIATF(S)) the US Command authority. This information led to Iron Duke intercepting an ocean-going speedboat north-east of Barbados in a location which suggested that the boat had been en-route to Europe or West Africa. The fifty foot (15m) long power boat - of a type commonly referred to as a "Go Fast" - was located by the ship's Lynx helicopter and was instructed by the aircraft to stop. With such a small vessel so far out to sea, and fitting the profile of a Go Fast, suspicions were immediately aroused and LEDET members subsequently boarded the vessel. Forty-five bales of cocaine, weighing a total of 900kg, with an estimated street value of £40 million were discovered, seized and transferred to HMS Iron Duke. The boat's crew of five men were also detained and along with the cocaine were later handed over to authorities ashore.

It wasn't long before Iron Duke was again involved in a similar situation. The ship had been on a routine MS patrol 110 miles north of the Venezuela-Colombia coast when she became aware that a Go Fast was loitering in the area. The ship's Lynx was preparing to get airborne on a training flight and was diverted to investigate. Despite the Go Fast's crew attempting to avoid detection by spreading a tarpaulin sheet to camouflage the 30ft vessel, it was located by the Lynx. The Go Fast then attempted to flee and was pursued by the Lynx which passed radio and visual warnings to halt. Despite being repeatedly warned to stop, the Go Fast continued to flee and eventually a Royal Marine marksman onboard the Lynx aircraft fired warning shots after the 40 mph vessel. Still refusing to stop, the marksman then



employed non-lethal disabling fire, aiming five rounds at the vessel's engine block and successfully stopping the boat. When Iron Duke arrived on the scene, the three crew members were taken on board and the Go Fast sunk on the authority of the US Coast Guard team on board.

Iron Duke has also been involved in a multi-national, multi-agency operation against a vessel smuggling fuel to Dominica which could be used by cocaine smugglers, in addition to providing assistance to a fishing vessel in distress and in danger of sinking.

We also conducted a disaster relief exercise with the local authorities of the British Dependent Territory, Montserrat. The exercise assumed that a category five hurricane had hit Montserrat causing the collapse of the volcanic dome which sits atop the island's active Soufriere Hills volcano. Whilst the exercise was primarily to test local forces and civil services, it was also an excellent opportunity to show the broad range of skills a Royal Navy warship has available to deal with such a situation. The Royal Navy maintains a presence in the region during the hurricane season (June-November) supported by a year-round Royal Fleet Auxiliary presence outside this time to render assistance if called upon.

Early August saw the completion of S/Lt Wales five weeks onboard Iron Duke, a period in which we exposed him to as many different elements of naval life as possible. Upon our arrival in Barbados at the start of a two-week Self Maintenance Period (SMP), which also coincided with S/Lt Wales RN last night with Iron Duke, a Mess Dinner was held onboard to mark the start of a successful deployment and to bid various mess members farewell.

The SMP was an opportunity to conduct propulsion and system maintenance, which can only be carried out whilst the ship is alongside, and to progress with upper-deck husbandry in the more inaccessible areas. Several of the ship's company took the opportunity to fly members of their families out and to take a week of their annual leave, ever mindful that the ship was at short notice to sail to conduct humanitarian and disaster relief operations if required. Additionally, an adventurous training package including mountain biking, wind-surfing and diving was organised and managed by staff from the Fleet Adventurous Training unit based in Portsmouth.

Iron Duke has now returned to sea to continue her tasking in the Caribbean AOO. With several months left of this deployment we remain focused and eager to have more success in our counter-drug role whilst remaining ready to conduct humanitarian and disaster relief operations, as well as wider regional engagement. Although our thoughts have started to turn to the UK and the welcome return home to loved ones, we are also making preparations for our post-deployment maintenance period which will last into the New Year. We will then be returning to sea to conduct various exercises and trials before Iron Duke is back with the FOST organisation in June to conduct a BOST package in preparation for the ship's next operational deployment in mid 2009.

'FORTUNE IS THE COMPANION OF VALOUR'

OPERATION BANNER - 38 YEARS OF DEPLOYMENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

A Service of Commemoration

On Wednesday 10 September 2008, a service was held at St Paul's Cathedral in the City of London to mark the ending of Operation Banner, the longest continuous single operation deployment the British Army has ever had, to pay tribute to the courage and sacrifice of more than 300,000 personnel who served in the province in that time, and to commemorate those who lost their lives during the campaign.

The cathedral can hold around 3,000 people, and it was packed. Amongst the great and the good were the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall, Lady Thatcher and Countess Mountbatten of Burma; and Messrs Brown, Cameron and Blair were also present. The "top brass" of all three services attended in large numbers, for the most part in ceremonial dress, bringing some colour amid the soberly dressed thousands who served in the province. It seems unlikely that so many medals have been displayed by their recipients in a place of worship in the UK in the last decade or two.

The standards of the Northern Ireland Veterans Association, the Royal Naval Association, the Royal British Legion and the War Widows Association were presented at the dome altar: sensibly, the whole service was conducted under the dome, rather than largely out of sight at the east end of the cathedral, beyond the choir stalls.

After an opening hymn, the Dean gave the Bidding, including the words:

"We come to this Cathedral Church today to remember before God all those who took part in Operation Banner over the course of 38 years. We come together to pray for those who suffered injury, who continue to live with the physical and emotional scars of conflict. We come together to recall with gratitude

and affection those who died, whom many here will remember each day and for whom they continue to grieve. We come together in the hope that the legacy of peace may be deep rooted, and that it may grow and flourish in Northern Ireland."

Afterwards the veterans dispersed to one of three lunch locations; at Guildhall (where Major Bob Heron was introduced to Lady Thatcher), Skinners' Hall in Dowgate Hill, and in the Crypt, where they were addressed and thanked by one of the Chief of the Defence Staff (Guildhall) the Chief of the Air Staff (Skinners') and the Commander in Chief UK Land Forces (St Paul's Crypt). Several hundred of the veterans took part in a march from St Paul's to Guildhall. The streets were lined with onlookers, who applauded as they passed.

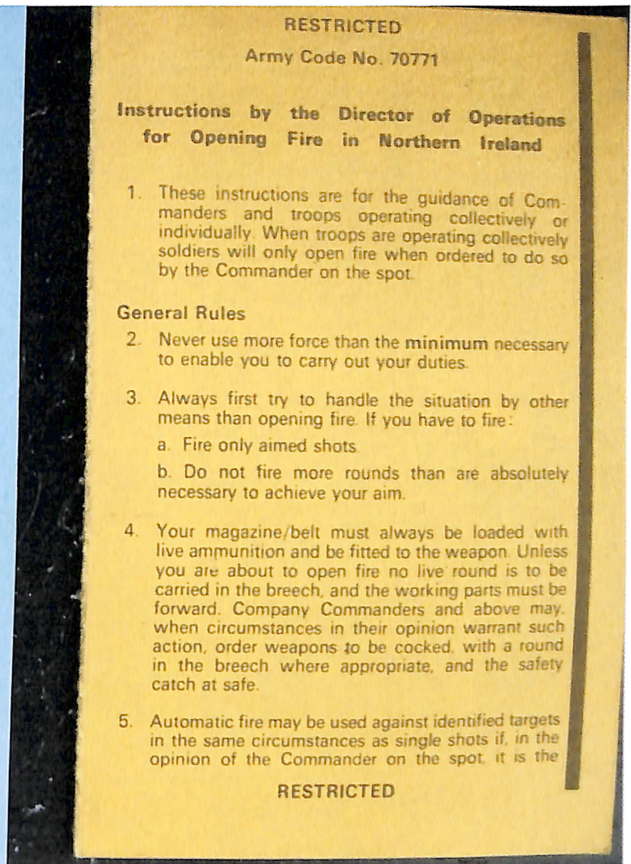
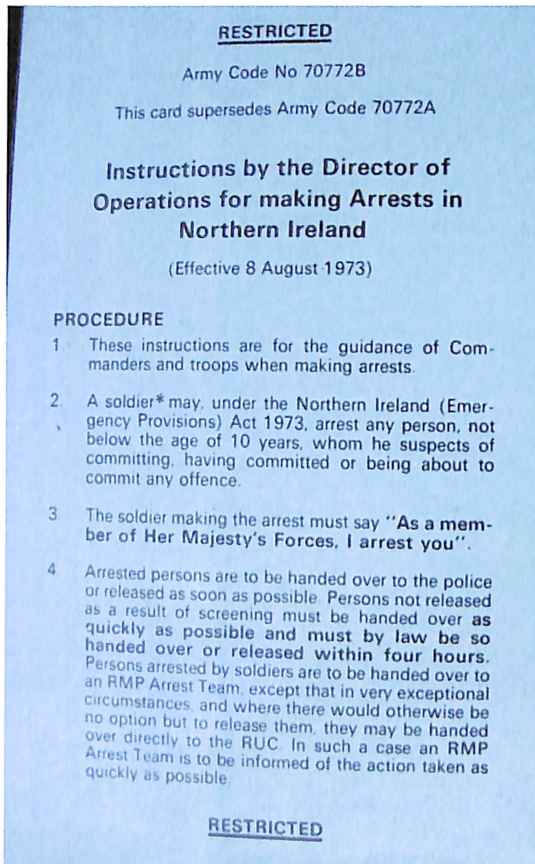
All in all it was a good thing, well done, and will surely have helped to soothe the hurts of those still afflicted or troubled by their service. You are not forgotten.



On the steps of St Paul's after the service.



The veterans march off behind the band.



Operations in Northern Ireland

Operation Banner was the name for the deployment of service personnel to Northern Ireland. It began on 14 August 1969 when 1st Battalion The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire deployed to the streets of Londonderry (and were welcomed by all sectors of the community), and ended at midnight on 31 July 2007. It was succeeded by Operation Helvetic, delivering residual support to the police force of Northern Ireland, with no more than 5,000 personnel in theatre in ten locations, trained and ready for deployment worldwide.

More than 300,000 servicemen and women were deployed in the province in this thirty-eight year span. The first Army fatality was Gnr Robert Curtis on 6 February 1971; he was killed by a PIRA machine gun in the New Lodge Road. The last was LBdr Stephen Restorick of 3 RHA, as a result of PIRA activity near Bessbrook, Armagh.

More than 1,000 armed forces personnel died and 6,116 were wounded. Of the dead, 763 were killed as a direct result of the terrorism, including 651 soldiers and marines, one Royal Navy servicemen, fifty members of the UDR and Royal Irish Regiment, and fifty-one military personnel were killed outside the Province. Some 650 civilians also lost their lives during "the troubles".

The Dukes in Northern Ireland

The battalion served eight tours in Ulster.

- 1971 - Belfast - north, city centre and east
- 1972 - South Armagh
- 1973/4 - Londonderry - city and county, based in Ballykelly
- 1976 - Portadown/South Armagh (Spearhead deployment)
- 1977 - Londonderry
- 1979 - West Belfast
- 1981 - South Armagh
- 1987 - East Belfast, deployment all over the province, based at Hollywood Barracks

Eight members of the Dukes served in every tour. Barry Hey was one of them and he recalls: "The earlier tours (1971-74) were, for me, the better times because in those days as a section commander you took your own section out on patrols. I also enjoyed the tour when as a colour sergeant I acted as Platoon Commander. Another tour of note was as a CQMS at Forkhill, South Armagh, when all movement was by helicopter.

Complaints we hear with regard to clothing and equipment on present day operations were no different in the earlier days of NI. Steel helmets without scrim on,



The Times Magazine photos of some of those who lost their lives on operations in Northern Ireland. Corporal Graham and Private J. Lee's pictures are marked with red crosses (see The Dukes' Roll of Honour on page 78).

DMS boots, woolly gloves, 6/8 waterproof jackets per platoon and carrying the A41 radio as comms (the last two were both on our first tour)." Barry goes on to comment that "Our first tour training was a bit ad hoc.", a comment made by Colonel Alistair Roberts in his article in ID 263, with a response by General Sir Charles Huxtable in ID 264.

The Dukes faced every kind of situation that could arise in Northern Ireland in those difficult and often dangerous days. Riots, from a few stone throwing, cat calling yobbos, to a full scale mob roaring for blood; bombs and IEDs of every description, initially crude, home made affairs, developing over time into highly sophisticated, remotely triggered killing devices; shootings with hand guns, sniper rifles and machine guns; grenades and mortar bombs.

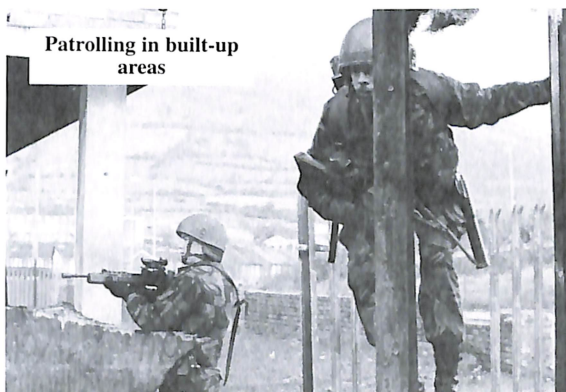
There were long hours of observation, both open and covert, countless hours of patrolling on foot, in vehicles, and with helicopters, even, on a few rare occasions, in a boat. And sometimes just sitting, on standby, waiting for something to happen. We did, in a general way, believe it was necessary for us to be there, to hold the ring whilst political initiatives came and went, some well intentioned, some hopelessly conceived, some frankly cynical, and all for many years doomed.



The eight members of the Dukes who served in every tour
Left to right, standing: Sgt P. Casey, Cpl J. Briston, Cpl P. Archer, Sgt K. Shinn, DSgt A. Horsfall.
Seated: CSgt T. Woodward, WO2 (RQMS) B. Hey, CSgt M. Turner.

But all bad things, like all good things, eventually come to an end. The trouble started amongst the people of Northern Ireland, and only they could deliver any kind of solution, and needed soldiers, sailors and airmen to preserve the fabric of the province and some form of functionality whilst they did so.

If stumbling exhausted into comparative peace counts as a victory then such it was, but it carried a high price.



Patrolling in built-up areas



Lieut Col Mundell and Major Palmer on patrol with Corunna



Vehicle Check Point

The Dukes' Roll of Honour

Fifteen Dukes and one attached Warrant Officer APTC died during service in the province. Of these seven received immediately fatal wounds as a direct result of terrorist action, and the others were a combination of natural causes and accidents of various kinds. The direct action casualties were -

6 June 1972. **Pte George Lee**, 22 from Leeds, was killed by a high velocity bullet fired by an IRA gunman from the direction of Whitecliffe Parade in the Ballymurphy district of Belfast. He was on foot patrol; gunmen had taken over a nearby house to mount the attack.

16 July 1972. **LCpl Terence Graham**, 24 from Middlesborough, and **Pte James Lee**, 25 from Otley, were killed when the IRA detonated a large landmine under their ferret scout car as it travelled along a road between Crossmaglen and Cullyhanna in South Armagh. The mine had an estimated 150lbs of explosive and was detonated from three fields away.

25 January 1974. **2Lt Howard Fawley**, 19 from Shipley, was killed by an IRA pressure mine at Ballymaguigan, County Londonderry. He was searching a field for forensic evidence following a gun attack on an Army vehicle the previous night. The concealed 6lb mine detonated when he stepped on it.

17 March 1974. **Cpl Michael Ryan**, 23 from Leeds, was shot in an IRA gun attack in the Brandywell district of Londonderry. He was commanding a "pig" armoured vehicle which came under fire. The first round struck the side of the pig, and when he leaned forward to see what was happening a second round passed through the window and killed him.

28 October 1979. **WO2 David Bellamy** APTC attached 1 DWR, from Islington, London, was killed in a machine gun ambush outside the gates of Springfield Road Police Station. He was in the back of a landrover, acting as escort vehicle.

16 January 1980. **Pte Errol Pryce** was shot and killed in an IRA gun attack on a foot patrol as it left the Macrory Park base in West Belfast. The gunmen opened fire with an M60 heavy machine gun and several rifles from a nearby house.

The others who died during service in Northern Ireland were -

7 April 1973, **Pte Brian Oram** of Slaithwaite

7 April 1973, **Cpl David Timson** of Edwinstowe

24 May 1973, **Pte James MacGregor** of Scarborough

28 August 1973, **WO2 Peter Lindsay**

7 April 1974, **Pte Louis Carroll** of Bradford

24 February, **Pte John Connor** of Cleckheaton

23 June 1988, **Pte Simon Beetham** of Bradford

25 Nov 1988, **Private Jeffrey Rigg** of Wakefield

25 May 1995, **Pte Jason Cost** of Shipley.

All who died, from whatever cause, are remembered, as the Dean of St Paul's put it, with gratitude and affection, by the Regiment and by their comrades.

Some noteworthy incidents during Operation Banner

14 August 1969; 1 PWO deployed to Londonderry.

11 October 1969; an RUC constable shot by loyalist gunmen during rioting on the Shankill Road.

1 April 1970; UDR formed to replace the "B Specials".

6 February 1971; first Army soldier killed by machine gun fire in New Lodge Road.

30 January 1972; thirteen men shot during a civil rights march in Londonderry; known as "Bloody Sunday".

22 February 1972; bomb detonated outside the 16 Para Brigade Officers' Mess in Aldershot. Five civilian female kitchen staff, a gardener and a Catholic Padre killed.

22 June to 21 July 1972; PIRA "ceasefire", seeking total British withdrawal.

21 July 1972; twenty-two bombs detonated in and around Belfast, killing nine people including two soldiers and injuring 130 civilians; known as "Bloody Friday".

31 July 1972; Op Motorman, involving 12,000 troops, to open the "no go" areas.

6 December 1973; the Sunningdale Agreement about power sharing in the Province.

15 May 1974; Ulster Workers (Protestants) strike, against the terms of the Sunningdale Agreement. Called off on 29 May having brought down the power sharing executive.

29 May 1976; Merlin Rees, Secretary of State for NI, announces policy of "police primacy", to give the RUC the lead in security operations.

27 August 1979; Earl Mountbatten and three others killed whilst sailing off the coast of County Sligo, in the Republic of Ireland. On the same day, six members of the Parachute Regiment were killed by a bomb at Warrenpoint, then twelve quick reaction forces from the Queens Own Highlanders were killed by a second device.

27 October 1980; hunger strike began at HMP Maze.

18 December 1980; hunger strike at HMP Maze called off.

1 March 1981; Bobby Sands goes on hunger strike, and dies on 5 May, leading to widespread rioting.

20 July 1982; Eight soldiers killed and forty-seven soldiers and civilians wounded in two bomb attacks in Hyde and Regents Parks in London.

15 November 1985; Anglo Irish Agreement confirms that NI will remain part of the UK whilst a majority of its citizens wish it, but gives the Republic an advisory role in the government of the province.

16 March 1988; UDA man Michel Stone attacked mourners at the funerals of PIRA men killed in Gibraltar with a gun and hand grenades. Three died and sixty were injured. A few days later two R Signals corporals accidentally drove into the path of the funeral cortege of

one of the victims and were dragged from their car, beaten, stripped and shot.

1 May 1988; three British airmen killed and three injured during two attacks in the Netherlands.

22 September 1989; bomb blast kills ten young Marine bandmen and injures twenty-two at Deal in Kent.

15 December 1993; the Downing street Declaration, reconfirms the right of self determination for the people of Northern Ireland.

1 September 1994; PIRA ceasefire.

13 October 1994; Combines Loyalist Military Command ceasefire.

12 February 1997; PIRA kill L Bdr Restorick near Bessbrook. The last soldier to die.

10 April 1998; Good Friday Agreement establishes the Northern Ireland Assembly and a power sharing executive.

7 September 1998; last RUC officer killed by loyalist bomb at Drumcree.

6 October 2006; HM The Queen presents the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross to The Royal Irish Regiment and the Ulster Defence Regiment.

31 July 2007; Oerationp Banner concluded.

In Conclusion

There is so much more that could be said about the Dukes' tours in Northern Ireland, and will be if readers choose to write or email in with their comments and recollections. As ever the battalion served with cheerful efficiency, worked hard with great comradeship and good humour, and played an important part in bringing about the peaceful state of affairs that the citizens of that province now enjoy. We remember our fallen comrades, the good times and the bad, and we move on. A chapter in the annals of the Regiment has closed.



Lieutenant Richard Holroyd and his platoon in Belfast, 1987.

THE EXTRAORDINARY TALE OF PRIVATE LONSDALE

by Graham Sargeant

(Grandson of Drum Sergeant Major A. T. Sargeant, 2nd Bn Duke of Wellington's Regiment who served 1910-19)

Pte 7471 William (Bill) Lonsdale

Britain declared war on Germany on 4 August 1914 following their invasion of neutral Belgium.

Mobilisation was ordered and just ten days later, on 14 August, the 2nd Battalion The Duke of Wellington's Regiment sailed from Dublin to France as part of the Expeditionary Force. Among the Dukes that day was my grandfather, Pte A. T. Sargeant, who was a serving regular soldier at the time.

The Dukes fought their first battle at Mons just nine days later on 23 August, losing about thirty men. The next day the battalion was dug-in a few miles south of the Mons-Conde canal at a small mining village called Wasmes, as the German Army closed on the rearguard

of the Expeditionary Force. By midday the Dukes found themselves fighting on alone for several hours in and around the village as the general order to withdraw had not got through to them. Over 150 men of the 2nd Battalion were captured that day. The British EF, as a whole, lost around 15,000 men during the next ten days, a great many of them being taken prisoner. These men, captured so early in what turned out to be a four-year war of attrition, were often to suffer most severely in the hands of the Germans. This was primarily because the BEF had helped to prevent the Kaiser's army from achieving its Schlieffen Plan objective of defeating France within six weeks.

As a consequence the 'professional' soldiers of the original BEF were often singled out for the harshest treatment by their captors.

A large percentage of those captured at Wasmes were wounded men who simply could not be evacuated from the battlefield as the battalion hurriedly fell back under the weight of a vastly superior German force. According to sworn statements a number of British wounded found their subsequent medical treatment to be almost non-existent in captivity and many suffered with, or died needlessly from, wounds that did not receive proper medical attention. As they were sent deeper into Germany the fit and the wounded men were often physically attacked and abused by German civilians and robbed of their belongings, greatcoats and money by German troops. They were herded into railway cattle trucks without sanitation and often without food or drink on journeys of up to two or three days. They were often packed so tightly that there was no room for the occupants to sit or lie down.

Several of the Dukes found themselves being held at the notorious camp at Doeberitz, near Berlin. Men held there claimed that conditions were extremely harsh to begin with. All the tents were overcrowded and there were three men for every two beds. New arrivals had to sleep outside in the open on wet grass. There was no heating and fires were not allowed. When the harsh winter of 1914 began to set in, many prisoners were still being held in these totally inadequate conditions, in sub-zero temperatures, under canvas. It was not until December 1914 that the men were moved into wooden huts. The food was generally 'dirty and mouldy'. As the British naval blockade of Germany began to take effect the prisoners were kept on a starvation diet consisting of one mug of 'ersatz' coffee (usually made from acorns) and a chunk of black bread for breakfast and for dinner just a bowl of watery vegetable soup which was unsuitable, over long periods, for the average British digestive system. Over time, this diet led to many cases of 'dropsy,' a condition brought on by the lack of proper solid food. Sanitation at the camp was described as 'bad.'

The men held in Doeberitz claimed that they often suffered brutal treatment from the guards and were subject to severe punishments and beatings for the most trifling offences. These punishments included being tied



Bill Lonsdale.



Lonsdale's wife and children, 1914.

to posts by their wrists with their arms stretched up in the air while standing on tip toe. Many men collapsed during this punishment and simply hung there from their wrists. Later, forced labour became the norm in many POW camps and men were often assigned to dangerous and hazardous jobs or physically punishing tasks such as carrying huge loads on their backs, sometimes weighing over two hundredweight each. One man at Doeberitz, malnourished by the poor prison diet, dropped such a load and received the aforementioned punishment of being tied up outside by his wrists for two hours every day for a fortnight! It was not until the middle of 1915 that orders came down to cease the rough handling and treatment of British prisoners by camp guards which up until that point, was described as 'shocking.' This order was due to the threat of British reprisals against German prisoners.

According to published reports the camp commandant at Doeberitz, the infamous Commandant Alberti, openly stated that he would promote any of his men who shot a British inmate. In fact, he did just that after an innocent man of the RNVR was 'murdered' by a guard. Not surprisingly there were many other cases of prisoners being 'shot' by guards during this period. Early every morning the men were roused and forced to parade outside. No exceptions were made for the sick and wounded who similarly had to get up and stand outside in all weathers. Alberti had another nasty punishment which he would inflict upon the inmates. Outside the camp was a small hillock known as 'Hungry Hill.' Men would be made to stand to attention on this hill without food or water in all weathers at the pleasure of the cruel commandant.

According to witnesses on one November morning in 1914 the guards entered a tent in Doeberitz and began rousing the men from their beds for parade and roll call. They prisoners, including the sick and wounded, were prodded with bayonets. Seeing one of his sick colleagues being jabbed this way. Pte 7471 William (Bill) Lonsdale of the West Riding Regt, complained vociferously. The guard promptly hit Lonsdale in the ribs with the butt of his rifle. Lonsdale jumped up and punched the guard in the face. According to one version of the story, during the ensuing commotion Lonsdale ran into the next tent and had his hair cut and beard shaved off to avoid being identified.

The commandant immediately sent all the British prisoners in the camp to 'Hungry Hill' where they were told they would stay until the perpetrator gave himself up. After two whole days, during which the entire British contingent stood on 'Hungry Hill' without food or water in the freezing cold, Lonsdale finally gave himself up. The following events were to shock the whole world and turn Pte Lonsdale into a 'cause celebre.'

Lonsdale was court-martialed by the Germans and, incredibly, sentenced to be 'shot' for the crime of 'assaulting' the guard! Lonsdale appealed against the decision but when the news filtered home to Yorkshire there was widespread consternation. After news of her husband's 'death sentence' reached her, Pte Lonsdale's wife was interviewed by a local paper in Yorkshire and she was quoted as saying, about her husband's general disposition, that he was - "... *More sharp tempered than the average man!*" though whatever he did at the German camp she was convinced he was "*only sticking up for himself.*"

However, she went on to say that he was a "*splendid husband*" and they had "*always lived very happily together.*" The article continued, "*I don't know what to do*", the poor woman sobbed; "*I feel so helpless. The Germans are bad enough for anything, but it seems hard to realise that they would sentence him to death. It is nothing but murder.*"

An article in the Yorkshire Post followed -

'At the suggestion of The Yorkshire Evening Post, Mr Tom Lucas, Lonsdale's brother-in-law, got in touch with the Lord Mayor of Leeds (Mr J. F. Bedford), who dispatched the following cable to the American Minister at the Hague:

"Leeds citizens are much distressed to hear that Private Lonsdale of Leeds has been sentenced to death in Germany. Can you use any means whatsoever to save his life?"

On Saturday afternoon a message was received from The Hague in the following terms:-

"Have requested the American Ambassador in Berlin to do everything possible for Private Lonsdale" - Van Dyke. American Minister. s'Gravenhage.

In the meantime the Mayor of Leeds sent a police officer to inform Mrs Lonsdale of what had been done, and the relatives expressed their great appreciation of his prompt action. Lt Gen. Sir H.E. Belfield, Colonel of the Duke of Wellington's West Riding Regt also sent the following wire through the War Office to the Lord Mayor:-

"Thank you on behalf of regiment for steps you have taken to save life of Private Lonsdale. I sincerely hope you may be successful." General Belfield, Colonel, Duke of Wellington's Regiment.'

Lonsdale's appeal was heard and the death sentence was commuted, being reduced to twenty years' penal servitude. Lonsdale managed to write a letter home, a copy of which was published in a Yorkshire newspaper.

Dear Wife,

Thanks for the Christmas card which I have received, also the letter of 20th January. I have

received everything until you hear from me again. Of course, you can send a letter in answer to this. You need not be afraid of writing. I shall get them all right. Only, write plainly to make it easier for the interpreters to read, as they have to read everything that comes, and the sooner they read them the sooner we get them.

Don't worry if you wait a long time without receiving a letter from me as I want you to remember that I am not in England now. I can only write to you when the German authorities give me permission to do so.

This is the only chance I have had since I wrote to you at the end of September and I don't know how long I shall have to wait before I write to you again. Hope you are all well. Pleased to say I am in the best of health.

Unbelievably, when the German High Command got to hear about Lonsdale's death sentence being commuted they considered that a twenty-year sentence was 'too lenient' and Lonsdale was again ordered to be 'executed' by firing squad! Once again Lonsdale appealed against his latest death sentence.

Pte Lonsdale, of 'D' Company 2nd Battalion Dukes, had been listed as 'missing' on 24 August 1914. He was one of those men captured at Wasmes. Lonsdale's wife had first heard that he was a Prisoner of War on 30 September 1914 some five weeks after he was captured. In his postcard he wrote -

I shall be with you again when all is settled. Chance an answer to this but don't put anything in your letter about the war. If you can afford it send a parcel of tobacco and papers. Best love to mother and all. Yours affectionately, Bill.

In a post script he wrote:

Kiss the children for me. My address is 7471 Pte W Lonsdale Duke of Wellingtons Regiment, Gefangenen-Lager, Doeberitz, Germany.

Lonsdale was, in fact, a reservist who had been a tram driver in Leeds before the war. About two thirds of the battalion who sailed from Dublin in August 1914 were reservists who had completed their original term of enlistment. These men had returned to civilian life but had been 'called back to the colours' upon mobilisation. This ratio was fairly constant throughout the whole of the BEF.

Eventually, Lonsdale's death sentence was commuted, for a second time, to just three-year's imprisonment and he was kept in solitary confinement in the guard house at Doeberitz. Word was smuggled out that he was in good spirits, being fairly well treated, getting an exercise period every day and receiving letters and parcels.

This particular story does at least have a happy ending as we know that Pte Lonsdale survived the war in captivity, unlike thousands of other prisoners who died in the POW camps from starvation or disease.

Moreover, despite the possible mental scars from his extraordinary personal ordeal and the privations of captivity behind barbed wire for four years he was possibly better off than the majority of the men with whom he had sailed to war. Only around thirty of those 1,000 men remained in the Battalion unscathed at the end of the war, i.e. without being killed, seriously wounded or taken prisoner.

Lonsdale was repatriated to Ripon Dispersal Camp after the war. There he was re-united with his family and interviewed by the newspapers. He claimed that he had 'twice been taken to be shot' but that he had eventually been 'pardoned by the Kaiser!'

So, what was the reason behind the German change of mind over Lonsdale's death sentence? A Swiss journalist claimed that he had visited Doeberitz Camp and he wrote an article saying that the Germans never intended to execute Lonsdale. I find this story to be rather too convenient to believe. Foreign journalists were not allowed into any of the POW camps as a rule and the argument flies in the face of what we know. There was, until May 1915, a history of 'innocent' men being shot by camp guards so why would they not execute a 'guilty' one? Also, if the Germans never intended to execute Lonsdale why did they go through the pantomime of reprieving him once and then sentencing him to death again? This was just not the German way of doing things. There must have been pressure from elsewhere.

It seems that few people in the outside world ever got to hear about the real reason as to how Lonsdale escaped his two 'death sentences'. The earlier interventions by the British Government and the US Ambassador had little effect on the original German decision to execute Lonsdale because after the first death sentence was commuted it was subsequently re-imposed. However, my research has unearthed what appears to be the most likely cause of the German climb-down. The Kaiser was the head of the German military machine and the upper reaches of that machine were almost exclusively populated by the German aristocracy of which the Kaiser, as Emperor of all Germany, was also the head. The worldwide outrage at

Lonsdale's treatment had come to the attention of the military authorities in Canada where many German soldiers were held in POW camps. This next article comes from the Montreal Star newspaper and is dated May 1915.

"Major General the Hon. Sam Hughes (Canadian Minister for War) states that if the death sentence on Pte William Lonsdale, the English POW, is carried out there will be reprisals in Canada. There is a much more serious case against the German mutineers at Fort Henry, Kingston, (Ontario) than against Lonsdale. "Lonsdale attacked a German NCO after much provocation, according to the evidence, while the German prisoners at Fort Henry, without provocation on the part of the Canadian guards, attacked the latter who had to defend their lives. The purpose of the Germans was to escape. If Lonsdale is shot it means that the same sentence will be passed on the Germans at Kingston. One of these Germans who is supposed to have been the ringleader of the revolt is a Count and is the owner of large estates in Western Canada. The case will be dealt with by Court Martial."

I strongly suspect that, at that moment in history, the best leverage over the German military, led as it was by the German aristocracy, came from the threat of reprisals against members of that same aristocracy who were being held in Canada!

Lonsdale must have had some celebrity status after the war as there were postcards made up bearing his photograph which he would autograph. Apart from that he appears to have led a fairly quiet life after the war but it would be interesting to hear of any other tales about him. It may just be that after all this time even his descendants are unaware of the extraordinary tale of Pte Lonsdale; the man who was twice sentenced to death by the Germans but who was finally reprieved by the Kaiser!

During my research I have come across many other fascinating stories concerning the original officers and men of the Dukes who sailed to war from Dublin in August 1914. Readers will be able to find these stories and much more in my forthcoming book to be entitled 'The Death of the Dukes'.

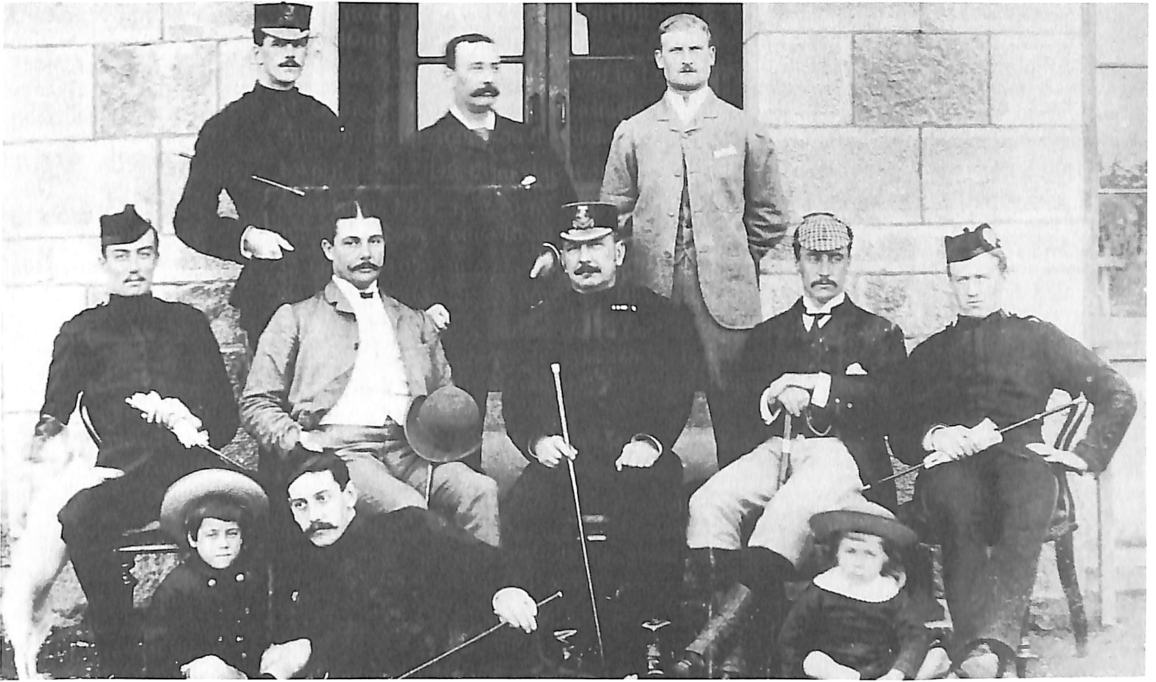
BREVET MAJOR OWEN HARRIS

Brenchley is a beautiful old Kentish village, and its church, All Saints, was built, it is believed, in 1233. It is a curious place to find a brass memorial to an officer of the West Riding Dukes, who died in 1901 of fever, brought about by wounds sustained in the Boer War.

Owen Harris was the only son of Francis Harris MD, of 24 Cavendish Square, London and The Grange, Lamberhurst. He was commissioned into the 3rd Bn The Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment) on 1 July 1881. By 1884 he had transferred to 2 DWR.

In 1886 he embarked on troopship Orontes for Bermuda. In 1888 he transferred to 1 DWR, then in Rawalpindi and was posted to D Company. In the same year he sailed with 1 DWR from Bombay to Aden, arriving on 24 November. Whilst there he carried the





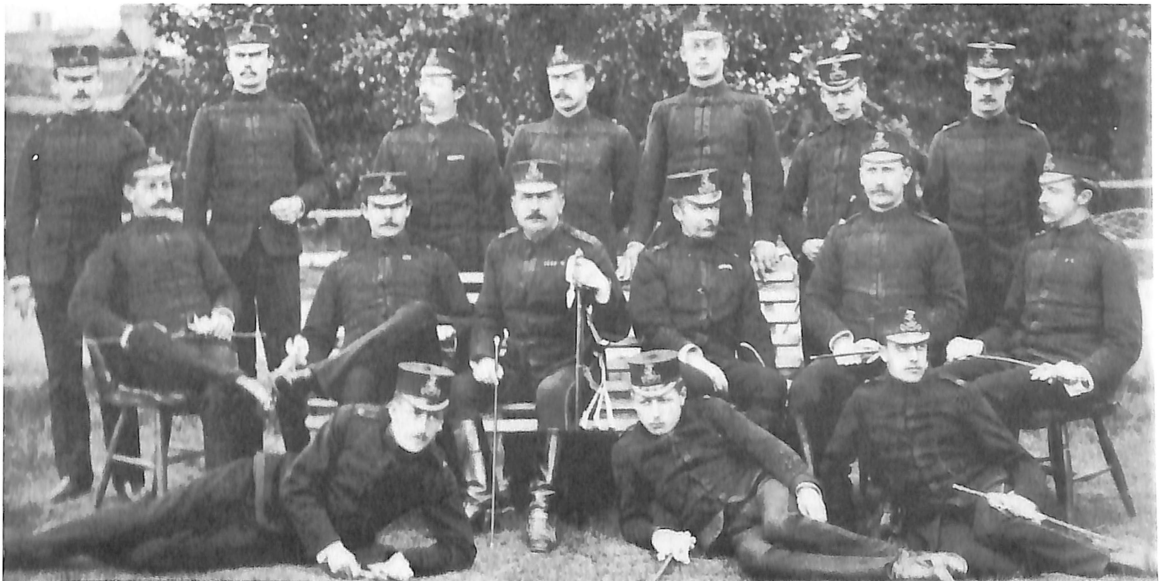
Lt Harris is seated far left with dog. The picture was taken in 1884.

Queen's Colour twice; once for the visit of the Marquis of Lansdown GCMG, Viceroy Designate of India, and secondly for the visit of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava KP, the late Viceroy of India.

On 29 November 1889 1 DWR embarked on troopship Euphrates to Portsmouth, proceeding to Fulford Barracks in York. Harris was promoted to Captain in April 1890, and served as Adjutant to 3 Volunteer Battalion DWR with its HQ in Skipton. In 1897 he

rejoined 1 DWR, by now in Malta, returning to UK the next year on HM Troopship Jelunga, to barracks in Dover. Thus far an interesting but unexceptional career.

1 DWR mustered for service in South Africa in Aldershot and set sail on 29 December 1900, disembarking at Cape Town on 20 January 1901. The same day it entrained for the four-hundred mile journey to Naauwpoort to join the 6th Division under the command of Lt Gen T. Kelly-Kenny.



Aldershot 1900. Harris is standing second from left and Umfreville is fifth from left.

On 16 February Harris was wounded. By April he had recovered enough to take command of H Company (Mounted Infantry) with the local rank of Major. In June he was seconded for service on the Staff, then on 6 November he was severely wounded near Bothaville. Although not shown in our archive, he then returned home, and died of his wounds on 9 October 1901, and his grieving family placed the memorial in Brenchley Church. Records show that he died of enteric fever and pneumonia.

Turning to the events which led to Major Harris' repatriation and death: General Roberts the C in C wanted to capture Bloemfontein, but Cecil Rhodes demanded prior relief for Kimberley, where he was besieged by Cronje. Roberts changed his plans, advancing to Bloemfontein by way of Kimberley, beginning on 11 February 1901. The cavalry under General French moved fast and entered Kimberley on 15 February.

To avoid being outflanked Cronje withdrew along the line of the Modder River towards Bloemfontein. 6th Division attacked him as his forces crossed the Divisional front, firstly with the Buffs and the Oxford Light Infantry, joined later in the day by the Dukes and the Gloucesters, who drove the Boers from two kopjes. From 1 DWR, one NCO was killed and two officers and twenty-seven other ranks were wounded. There followed some heavy fighting for the Dukes around the Modder River. Harris was with the mounted infantry, so is unlikely to have taken part in these actions, at least with his parent Regiment, although around this time he received his first wound.

He received his second wound on 6 November, at Bothaville. On that day the extremely successful Boer commander De Wet, with a strong force Orange Free State commandos, was camped on the Valsch River. De Wet knew that Maj Gen Charles Knox, with a greatly superior all arms force, was only seven miles away, but

he was completely surprised when a 600 strong advance guard of mounted infantry under Lt Col Gallais appeared only 300 yards from his positions. Lt Col HK Umfreville wrote about the battle in the Iron Duke of 1932. His account that follows has been considerably abridged.

"Before dawn we fell in and moved off in as dead silence a possible for mounted troops. Barely two miles from the drift we surprised the Boer 'brandwacht' or picket; they were all sound asleep with their horses knee-haltered and we bagged the lot without a shot being fired. We pushed on over the next rise to see in the dim light of dawn a large laager, wagons, guns and some 2,000 horses, only some 300 yards from us. We charged without any word of command.

The enemy, although surprised, were at least three to one over us in strength. I was on the left of the attack and ... there stood a thick cactus hedge with blue gum trees and a trench running the whole length of it. The very spot for our horses. We headed for this and dismounted, then extended to attack the laager."

A considerable fire fight ensued, described in detail by Umfreville, but we must press on with the Harris part of the tale. There was ebb and flow in the battle, with attack and counter attack.

"After the attack on our right flank ... Owen Harris, who was commanding the 8th Regiment of MI, came across to me and ordered me to lead my men out at once and rush the laager. The ground between me and the laager was as open and flat as a billiard ball table, except for a few odd ant hills of small dimensions. This seemed to me to be a useless waste of life as we had the enemy ringed and time was all in our favour. However, orders are orders and OH was no man to be argued with on or off duty, so I passed the word along. Even the fire eating and ever gallant and fearless Dick Gatehouse crawled over to me and asked me to confirm the order, which I did.



1 DWR crossing the Modder River.

I gave the word 'short rushes by sections, drop and fire'. This we did, suffering casualties as I expected but getting off very lightly considering. I think the sort of jack in a box effect of our short rushes saved us, but it was none too pleasant lying on that bare ground with the zip of the Mauser bullets striking dust and bits of stone in your face.

Owen Harris, who was charging with us, now told me to order 'fix bayonets'. (I hadn't done so hitherto for the very best of reasons - namely that I didn't think ten per cent of the bayonets would fix. They had been used for horse pickets, tent pegs, every sort of manner of purpose except that of prodding the Boers). I passed the order quietly but some NCOs shouted it and the effect was instantaneous. We were fairly close to two cottages and a white flag went up on them both. A subaltern a little to my right got up on his legs and before I could shout 'get down you fool' he was down with a bullet through his brain. It



A Dukes Mounted Infantryman in the Boer War, from a series of post-cards of Dukes' soldiers created for the Regiment's Tercentenary in 2002 by Alix Baker.

was an old trick of the Boers and old hands took no chances. Harris was hit also ...

I found that Owen Harris had a painful but not serious wound, and fixed it up. His language, I remember, taught even me something. He was always like that. Cool as a cucumber in action and the bravest of the brave, but once the fighting was over if you happened to be in his vicinity you heartily wished it could begin all over again. I only saw him in hospital afterwards as he went home, and I don't think he ever recovered properly from his wound and died not long after."

Major Harris came back to the quiet peace of the Kent countryside, and there he died, and his grieving parents put up the memorial which began this tale. He was one of the thousands of largely unsung heroes who wore the badge of the Dukes and who lost their lives on active service since our formation in 1702. May the earth lie lightly on him.

THE NAPIER TRAIL

Captain Richard Jeynes is leading an expedition to Ethiopia to follow the route of General Napier's expedition there in the 1867-68 Abyssinian Campaign.

He is recruiting a team of six + two reserves and has contacted all modern regiments that have a historical association with the original campaign to see if anyone is interested. The 33rd Foot (Duke of Wellington's) played a major role in the campaign.

Magdala is a dramatic hilltop fortress located in a remote part of Northern Ethiopia. In 1868 it became the focus of one of the most dramatic rescue missions ever carried out by the British Army when General Sir Robert Napier led a military force of 12,000 troops, 8000 auxiliaries and 35,000 pack animals (including forty-four elephants) over 720km of desolate terrain to rescue British hostages held there by King Tewodros II.

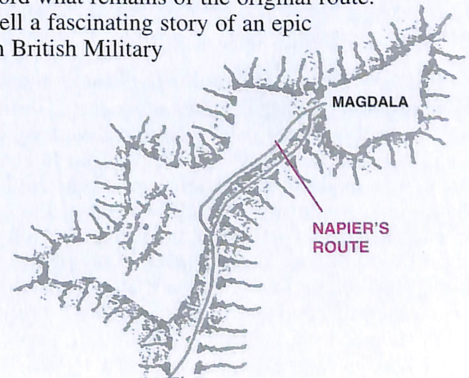
The most expensive military operation ever, the troops faced huge difficulties in penetrating the hostile countryside. A port was constructed, roads built, a railway line laid and supply depots built and defended. Cutting edge technology was employed with the construction of a desalination plant to change sea water to drinking water and the latest signalling equipment was used for the first time by the Army.

Every item of kit, from the heaviest cannon to the smallest ration pack, had to be transported on foot or by baggage animal to the fortress before the Army

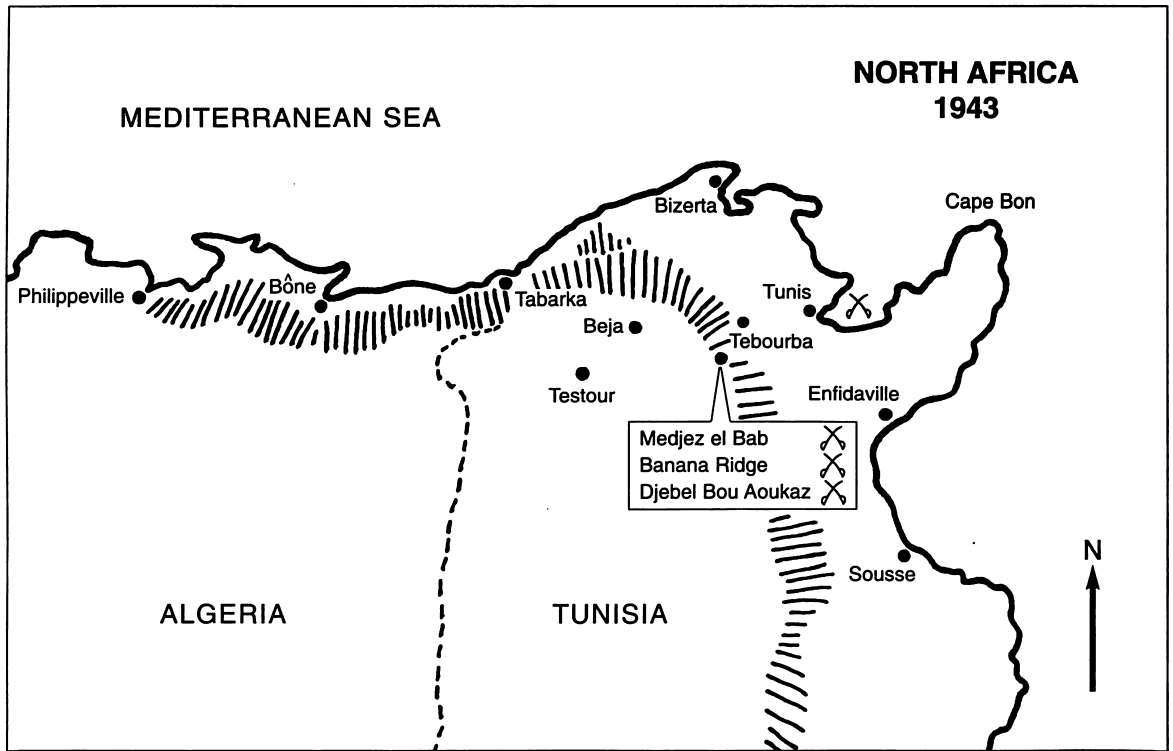
could launch the assault to capture the fort. After bitter fighting the fortress was captured, the hostages were released and King Tewodros lay dead having shot himself in the final moments of the siege. It was an operation of epic proportions and a testament to the "can do" philosophy of the Victorian age and yet it remains relatively unknown today.

The site of Magdala was surveyed by the Scientific Exploration Society in 1996 but in 2009/10 Trailquest intend to mount a motorcycle expedition to follow as closely as possible the route taken by Napier from his initial base to the top of the hill fort. It will be an extreme journey that will follow the original trail, replicate the hardship faced by the troops at the time and record what remains of the original route.

It will tell a fascinating story of an epic event in British Military history.



CHINA GILL'S 27 YEARS IN THE DUKES



New readers will want to know that the late China Gill wrote his memoirs in long hand and presented them to the Editor of the Iron Duke, to do with as he wished. The result has been serial instalments. There is some abridgement, but except where a change of structure or grammar is needed for clarification, these accounts of the sharp end of 1 DWR at war are reproduced in China's own words.

At the end of each instalment of the serial he is usually and cruelly left by the Editor somewhere dangerous and unpleasant! In the Winter 07 edition it was the beach at Dunkirk with German stukas over head, and the last instalment ended with him in North Africa, with the final attack to take Tunis imminent. It is April 1943, and he is platoon sergeant of 12 Platoon. He is going to have a hard time, but for a change we will leave him after a victory parade.

I had now been in D Coy for five weeks and had yet to see my first German despite taking part in three lying patrols and one recce patrol. Now we were to make a daylight attack to take a small ridge and hold it. The attack was made at late afternoon, I was leading 12 Platoon and found myself well in front of the men by quite a distance. I waved them forward to close up. Major Ffoulkes was some distance to my right; I do not know if he thought I was a brave leader or a foolish one.

As we approached the ridge no-one fired at us and we finally reached the objective to find it unoccupied. About half an hour later we were heavily shelled. We were still on the ridge when it was discovered that the

Germans had actually left a small number of men in a well concealed dug out. It was an observation point that gave them a clear view of the country, almost to Medjez-El-Bab.

I think Acting Sergeant Wilkes accidentally stumbled on it by accident and unfortunately was fired on at close range and was instantly killed. Sgt Goldsborough led a section to clear the enemy and in a few minutes a white flag was shown and half a dozen gerries emerged. They were in excellent condition, well dressed, armed and good physique, evidently from one of the elite divisions.

The Bn next moved to an area nearer to Medjez-El-Bab and a couple of days later were ordered to occupy Banana Ridge, a position that ran parallel to the road to Tunis, and was in no mans land. The ridge was occupied by a platoon of Grenadier Guards who were withdrawn. The Bn was ordered not to dig in but lie in the open. The reason was any activity might alert the enemy of operations due to take place. On the plain behind the ridge was the artillery assembly. At night on 20 April it was a scene of an immense concentration of guns, ammunition carriers, and trucks moving into position for the commencement of a great drive towards Tunis. The noise of the concentration must have alerted the enemy. The Bn was warned of an imminent attack.

A Coy was on the left, B Coy in the centre and D Coy far right, well below the top of the ridge. Sgt Hall and myself with 12 Platoon were ordered to occupy a position over the crest of the ridge and lie in a semi-

circular position in the open. An hour or so after dark I noticed some movement some distance below. I alerted Sgt Hall who ensured everyone was prepared. The figures were moving across our front and appeared to be making for the mosque in B Coy's area. As they moved out of the shadows it became apparent that it was a very strong body of enemy who were unaware that the ridge was occupied. Sgt Hall opened fire, also most of the platoon, and another group of Germans were seen. There was no doubt this was a strong attack.

Sgt Hall ordered us to withdraw to the Coy area. This caused some confusion, for as we quickly got over the crest in the dark, direction was lost. I had found a small slit trench on the crest and contemplated jumping into it, but now the strength of the enemy was more clear I decided to leave and carry on down the hill. Suddenly a group of Germans appeared on my right, and I had to keep still until they disappeared. I decided to move to the bottom of the ridge.

By this time the whole front had been alerted. The Germans had poured through the gap between A and B Coys who were firing into their backs as well as towards the attack on their front. The artillery began pulling their guns out. Soon the west of the plain was in German hands; they by-passed Bn HQ and almost reached B Echelon and Bde HQ.

I was still at the rear slopes of Banana Ridge when I met up with Sgt Hall. He decided we should cross the plain where the enemy had passed through. As we made our way across we noted a few guns that had been destroyed by tanks. We came to a hill and were met by a Guards officer; after explaining who we were he said he was short of men and we could join them. Thus we found ourselves in slit trenches with the Guards.

By now the enemy attack was slowing down. Tanks from 145 RAC Regt (8 Bn Dukes) had caused casualties on the enemy. The attack had almost fizzled out. Suddenly our CO appeared and took Sgt Hall and myself back to Bn HQ. Hall explained that we became part of a Guards Platoon. We were taken by truck back to D Coy. The enemy realised their attack had failed and returned to their former positions. I finished up in a slit trench with a German light machine gun, but no ammunition for it.

My account of the battle does not describe the ferocity of the fighting that actually occurred. This is because I am mainly giving my story and I actually only played a small part with D Coy, who only suffered a few casualties, A and B Coys having more casualties with C Coy losing a number of men as prisoners. Total Bn losses were ten killed, thirty-five wounded, thirty missing. CSM Hemblys, our ex Band Sgt, was killed; Capt Huskisson and Lieut Streatfield wounded. The preparation of the big attack of the 1st Army then continued.

The next section of China's memoirs are a little disjointed. China acknowledges that "my memory seems a bit hazy", and that he refreshed it from a Regimental history. To understand the bigger picture readers may find it helpful to do the same.

The CO had been ordered to take over from the North Staffs and Loyals Regiments on Point 174. The Loyals'

CO had been killed but their 2i/c stated no Loyals were on Point 174. B Coy Dukes were ordered to occupy Point 174, C and D Coys to follow. The Bn were then dive bombed; there were few casualties. By this time the Germans had re-occupied Point 174.

Some men had passed Bn HQ saying a tiger tank was in their position. The CO disbelieved this and walked with them to their position confirming the tank was there. He informed Brigade but the result was a shelling by our own artillery. A squadron of our tanks arrived led by their OC. Unluckily the tiger arrived and fired its 88mm gun getting a direct hit on the OC's tank and killing him.

This was the start of a battle between the tanks and the Dukes were in the middle. We could not move and the tanks were firing at each other over our heads and just clearing the ridge. I think the gerries realised that they could not make any headway so withdrew behind their lines. The Bn withdrew and for a week were in reserve and reorganising.

The next objective was a feature known as Bou Aoukaz which dominated the Medjez-El-Bab to Tunis road. This road was the axis of the armoured thrust to Tunis. The Scots Guards actually reached the summit of the "Bou" but could not hold it. The Bde Comd held and O Gp on Point 171. Artillery and mortar bombs became so heavy that the Bde Comd ordered the O Group to fall back to the Grenadier Guards HQ. The boche furiously attacked the forward positions driving the occupants back. The shelling of the O Group position continues all day. The Dukes coys were awaiting the return of the CO to find what the plans were for the coys to attack Bou Aoukaz.

It was about this time that an air strike was requested. About 0900 hours an American Air Squadron flew across the front. Allied forward troops had yellow recognition panels to lay on the ground to indicate they were allied troops. Unfortunately as soon as the pilots saw the strips they bombed troops in front of the panels. The trouble was that troops who were just behind the front line laid out their panels, that is A and B Echelons, resulting in the troops slightly forward were bombed. Bn HQ received a few casualties. An order was issued that only troops actually in the front line would actually display the yellow panels.

For the last ten days the Division's forward troops had been heavily shelled. It was not until about 3 May I realised that we had been having casualties in D Coy. My platoon had been lucky, we had observed all the shelling around us. Just one shell landed on our area; there happened to be some men from the Foresters Regt a few yards away. A shell landed amongst them blowing a body into our position. His legs were missing but his body continued to writhe for a minute.

At the CO's O Groups the plan for the attack had been made. At first the problem could not be solved until the CO found a wadi that the companies could hide in until evening. The wadi was to hold three companies, A, B and D, C Coy would be in reserve. We had to occupy the wadi early morning and resist moving about until late afternoon. It was not until we reached the wadi that I discovered the continuous shelling had affected D Coy.

Our OC, Major Ffoulkes had been wounded, our OC for the attack was Capt Jacobsen, a Norwegian officer, our CSM was now Reg Shilletto, who had been the Orderly Room Sgt. He turned out to be an excellent WO.

Before daybreak 5 May B Coy lay in an olive grove, A, C and D Coys were concealed in the wadi, a section of RAMC joined them. No one could move during the day and enemy shelling was spasmodic. At 1650 hrs C Coy extended to join up with B Coy. We advanced up the hill. Our artillery opened up with HE and smoke. As expected the enemy artillery replied. We heard their six barrelled mortars for the first time. Our troops could be seen falling under the barrage, but they managed to advance. Lts Denham, and Millard were killed, Major Benson wounded. Capt Jacobsen collected the fragments of A, C and D Coys. A feature known as "Dr" was occupied. It was very dark now and the feature known as the Bou was obscured.

Fighting died down for a while, troops scooped out shallow pits and built up the edges with pieces of rock. RE detachment appeared and blew out an emplacement for the artillery OP. The FOO did great work despite enemy snipers being less than 100 yards away. It was extremely difficult to deal with the snipers, they were at the summit of the hill and the nature of the rocky ground gave them the advantage. Sgt Hall used the PIAT gun against the snipers who were shielded by rocky crevices. The PIAT gun was an anti tank projector, it proved its worth against miniature strong points.

As dawn approached the heavy fighting on the right died down and now concentrated on the Dukes. A direct assault was attempted, CSM Shilletto was killed and a

few casualties occurred but did not succeed in making the enemy retreat.

It was thought no vehicle could reach our position, but a bren carrier managed to force its way up with ammunition, so a request for a tank was made with no success. A Coy of York and Lancs were sent for support, but as it was about to be committed the enemy counter attack faded away. It was now daylight and only a few gerry stragglers could be seen.

This action cost the Bn about 150 casualties, but the success meant that the 7th Armoured Div was able to advance along the Tunis road and finally enter Tunis. The enemy forces were forced into Cape Bon Peninsular. With the 8th Army now at Enfidaville, the enemy was forced to capitulate. It was now 13 May.

The Dukes had moved to an area south-east of El Balam and welcomed the return of 2i/c Maj Davie from hospital, Capt Huskisson and Maj Ffoulkes recovered from wounds. About this time we received a welcome batch of reinforcements. Leading them was an old friend from Aldershot days WO2 McCracken. He came to D Coy. I believe the majority of the reinforcements were from the West Kent Regt and they proved to be a fine lot of lads during future actions.

Hostilities ended on 13 May; on 19 May a victory parade marched through Tunis. The Dukes, led by Lt Col Webb Carter, led the marching troops.

The next instalment will find China getting back to the QM's Dept on the rations side and issuing, amongst other necessities, pumpkins and condoms; practice and real amphibious assaults on islands in the Med, and finally landing at Taranto in Italy.

FISHING IN D COMPANY ON THE IMJIN

A portrait of a Yorkshire Soldier by Leslie Winspear

Eddie lived on the corner of Queens Street
Just three streets back of us
His brother had been in the wartime Paras
Then Palestine, hagana and all that fuss.

Got nicked later on for running guns
If you want to believe the rumours.
But his Mother still loved him just the same
Which is true of all Yorkshire mums.

The third Hook battle fell to the Dukes
With Eddie at its sharp end you know
A section leader corporal with the Baron as his boss
Mid the noise, the dust, the smoke, the screams
Of the tunnels, the satchel charges, cordite and phos
To escape; back home, one fine day, in your dreams.

Eddie followed Kelly to the Paras as he should
Didn't make selection, couldn't stand the pace
So now I'm a Duke same as thee
(an' its reet good to sithee, yer lanky sod)
On Airey Hill and Little Wood.
By Ross's Farm and Coombe Bank for a rest
The on to't Hidden City and t'kestrel's nest.

Emma had the best voice in the village
Though never in the choir
(It carried two miles to Airey Hill as good as a
wartime siren). Ronnie, Eddie and Billy set off
From the ambush, bracken and rocks; struck out for the
Railway crossing at a trot; (an ear clip for the last one in).

First light soon on 121, the Hook and Sausage too
"Stand to, fire positions" wasn't called
Too bloody routine to warrant a mention. It was done
Weary eyed at dawn and dusk. Half asleep and grumpy.
By lads trained to act and react, not think
Of themselves or their duties, ranging wide.
Was it pride? In their unit, themselves, or pluck
The sole intention; to get by, with a bit of luck.

So Eddie escaped and then went off fishing
Bought a boat he kept on the coast
His nets were made by Brother Billy, the best
This side of Northallerton Nick
Which was where he'd learned his trade, he would boast.
We jumped in't car wi't' trailer on't back
Johnny the son, Eddie, Billy and me
Left behind the North Sea

Crossed the Pennines at Lonsdale
 Through Carlisle for Luce Bay
 Then Drummore, where the 'Danreb' was lying for sale.

Winched on in a jiffy, the money changed hands
 The Danreb sped off faster than ever
 Any fishing boat should whatever the weather
 On waters so rough they made her dance
 Skimming the white waves like a seagull's feather.

Not long later on Eddie died of a sudden
 His heart wasn't good in his later years
 But he died as he lived as a soldier should
 For today, not tomorrow, for a cause or a reason.

A mission or an "Op"
 And not like a Viking with a joke or a smile
 On his lips as the sagas grant that he could.

Ronnie came to my 70th birthday "do"
 At t' grammar school at Guisborough
 With Deutch and Fatty Mann and Ana Brooks
 And May Balls the nurse and t'others from t' village school

But if they sent Eddie and me across the sea
 To recover Korea as our firm commitment
 We will never know but were glad to go
 For what would life be
 If there wasn't any excitement.

VOGELSANG

by Major Simon Morgan

In a previous edition (*Spring 2007*) I scared a few people, I know I scared myself, by conjuring up the terrible memory of Exercise Snow Boot. It was a risky thing to do. The subconscious buries such traumatic events deep within the psyche for a reason. Once you open Pandora's Box who knows what other ghastly nightmares will come out. Well, recently I leapt screaming off the mattress in the early hours and the word that hung in the air like frozen dog's breath was 'Vogelsang'.

A pretty word really for the German language: bird song, a word redolent with happiness and cheerful sunlit mornings in the glorious Wald. Yet for those who were in 1 DWR in the Spring of 1979 it has no such pleasant connotations.

Vogelsang is a NATO training area in the Eiffel mountains on the German Belgian border. In the WW2 it was where the offensive known as the Battle of the Bulge was launched. Unique and momentous though that campaign was I reckon it a mere side show to what took place there in April 1979 when we arrived.

The first problem was getting there. We were based in Minden and Vogelsang was miles away. There was no way our ancient FV432s could drive there even if we had the track mileage to do so. Instead it was decided to travel by train. This meant the APCs had to be driven down to Minden Bahnhof and manoeuvred onto flats before being shackled into position.

This might sound easy to those who have never had to either drive or direct an APC as it reverses up a ramp and then executes a right angle turn on a platform little wider than its track width. Putting an entire Battalion's worth of tracks onto rail flats was such a palaver that by the time we had finished the MTO had tossed the entire Christmas stock of Hamleys out of his cot.

Once everything was loaded for our night time departure and the troop carriages were added the resultant train had a rather sinister, Schindleresque appearance. The mood was not lightened when the next morning we found ourselves chugging slowly through deep wooded valleys with a sort of Wagnerian mist swirling round us. It was then that the second problem began to manifest itself against the windows: the

weather. The place appeared to have its own unique microclimate that alternated from sweltering sun to Arctic blizzard and then back again within a single hour and on the first evening also delivered a mini, and highly localised, hurricane.

The reason for our visit was to stage the climax of the Battalion inter platoon competition. This involved APCs grinding around a myriad of different stands. The weather played havoc with proceedings. The hurricane reduced much of the tentage to shreds and the hapless staff manning what, in some cases, were quite isolated stands were hard pressed to stay in the field. Indeed when my platoon turned up to the first-aid stand during one particularly icy spell the hapless casualty had transitioned from a simulated motor accident victim into a real hypothermia case which confused the marking system no end.

However, if that wasn't bad enough we had a further problem to contend with: it was the Battalion's Annual Revue of Unit or ARU. Do they still have ARUs? Presumably these days somebody plugs into a USB port in Battalion Headquarters and downloads it all. Back then it was an entirely manual system. An inspection team would be shanghaied from the formation staffs to come and swarm over you like a plague of cockroaches. Of course today all these guys would be far too busy to get involved in this sort of nonsense but back in 1979 staff officers spent most of their time on the Rheindahlen golf course and were fair game for predatory commanders who wanted to make a point.

As you can imagine, some hapless SO3 Blankets who had been plucked from a congenial four-ball on the links and sent to a semi-primeval forest for a week was not likely to be well disposed towards those he was inspecting. When it came to our turn for the 'once-over' I remember being quite alarmed by the sight that greeted me. A positively daunting horde of officers awaited us wearing the sort of expressions you'd expect to find on Martin Johnson if he discovered that Gavin Henson had wee'd on his shoes. Amongst them I noticed a rather ancient looking character dressed in brown khaki battle dress trousers and wearing a beret big enough to take a Chinook.

"Isn't he a bit old to be a staff officer?" I observed. "That is Major General Vickers, GOC 4th Armoured Division," was the rather disconcerting reply.

To my astonishment said General actually inspected my rifle in person. Now, I was very new to all this so the fact that the GOC was checking my rifle was deeply impressive and really rather disturbing. If a Divisional Commander felt he needed to peer down my rifle barrel what would a Brigade and a Battalion Commander want to peer down, or, even more worryingly, up?

As we struggled through our various labours, a rumour began. The competition was due to end the next morning but that left a good seventy-two hours before we were due to go home. What was to happen, a weekend furlough in Aachen? No such luck, instead there was to be a grand finale, a huge set piece Battalion action that would act as a suitable climax to the whole event. Our spirits sank but then plunged further. To set the whole thing up we there was to be, horror of horrors: an escape and evasion exercise.

I understand that quite correctly these things have now been banned except under properly controlled conditions. Back then, however, they were extremely popular because they were so cheap. Split up into little half section groups to infiltrate hostile territory whilst living off the land the miserable soldiery had to abandon their vehicles, compo rations and shelter. This saved fuel, track mileage and the ration account. In short an escape and evasion scheme was a defence accountant's dream.

However, in this case somebody had a sudden attack of common sense and pointed out that 650 starving Dukes wandering around the German countryside may not be conducive to good order and military discipline so perhaps they should at least be given something to eat. Somebody else then had an attack but this time of lunacy and whilst agreeing with the provision of rations came up with a wizard wheeze: why not give them something to eat but in a challenging format; why not issue them with a live rabbit?

The QM was furious. What he was going to save on the ration account was now going to be blown on feeding the hordes of rabbits he was going to have to obtain. Where they came from has never been satisfactorily explained, but they arrived and the stores suddenly became infested by loads of lolling furry creatures. No, not the RQMS and his clerks but bunnies, hundreds of them. The exercise was to start by each section being dropped off by four tonne at an RV to meet with the ubiquitous 'Partisan' who was to issue the hapless rabbit and give details of the route.

However a factor nobody had considered was how sentimental the average British squaddie can be. Hard bitten bruisers who were quite capable of biting the ear off of a Fusilier in the Battling Bratty on a Friday night became all soppy and hopeless when confronted with a fluffy black and white rabbit with big soulful eyes. The idea of actually killing one was greeted with the sort of reaction from the Toms one would have expected if we had ordered them to carry out live grenade practice in a children's ward.

In particular the 'Partisan', who you must understand was sitting in the back of a four tonne with about fifty

of these little creatures, had completely lost it by the time we arrived for our brief. He had given them all names, bedded them down in a number of sleeping bags and was starting to write and illustrate a series of books with them as characters. I asked for our rabbit and he glared down at me as if I had just crawled out of a bit of ripe road kill.

"So rather than letting me keep Mr Fluffkins here so that he can become a pet and a little friend to all the poor, disabled and orphaned children that I will find as soon as I get back off this exercise you want me to hand him over so that you can slaughter him and gorge yourself on his innocent flesh?"

I could feel the baleful stares of the group behind me boring through my back. Hastily I assured him that come to think of it we would not be needing Mr Fluffkins after all. He smiled broadly and sent us on our way.

The plan was for us to negotiate the heavily wooded terrain in order to arrive at a Company RV. We had been briefed that any team caught in the open would be sent back to the start point. Progress was slow and very soon hunger started to gnaw at the old vitals. A number of the team even began to question whether the decision to save Mr Fluffkins might not have been a mite short sighted.

It was at this point that I staged what was without doubt my most audacious and successful coup. When PIRA began its campaign against Army bases in the 1980s and security was so tight that even the Battalion cat was strip searched on entry I was always confident that one sure way of gaining entry illegally was to stumble wheezily up to the guardroom barrier dressed in denims, boots and a hooded sweat shirt and mutter something like: "bloody Brecon training," to the barrier sentry who would let you in without question.

I know this because I actually put it to the test at Vogelsang. After marching all night by breakfast time the team were starving and I realised that I had to make a key decision. Should I press on to the RV as soon as possible as ordered or should I stop and try and find some food? I stopped to think and as I did so my own stomach rumbled. My mind was made up, stuff duty; we needed grub.

The only realistic place to find any quickly was back in Camp. This was when I hit on my idea to disguise myself as a runner. Leaving my team to gnaw on their boot tongues I donned a sweatshirt and with a pack on my back I jogged (I could do that sort of thing then) into the Camp where there was a Belgian NAAFI. I purchased as many portions of bratty and chips as I could carry and returned to the starving troops. That was the high water mark of my popularity: it was all down hill after that.

Eventually we all made it to the RV more or less intact apart from the Company Sergeant Major. He had not travelled that far without a passport for years and felt the distance keenly. Indeed his left knee was giving off a strange noise as if someone had inadvertently stuck gravel in a coffee grinder and then switched it on.

Having fully assembled our final task was now revealed: a Battalion dismounted night attack. Now there are only a small number of things that are absolute

certainties in this life. Death, taxes and nurses are perhaps the three most commonly recognised but I would add a fourth which is this: the quickest way to concoct a right royal cock up involving lots of people, shouting and noise is to attempt a silent dismounted battalion night attack.

For a start it meant Company Commanders giving orders using a model. Do infantry officers still have model kits? In our day it was de rigeur to raid the kids' toy cupboard for model soldiers and tidily wink

counters and the wife's sewing box for odd bits of ribbon, buttons and glass beads. I always wondered what an enemy would have made of these if they ever captured one of us. As always the model bore no resemblance to anything seen during the attack so, true to form, chaos, shouting and noise ensued.

In the end, as in all such events in those days, we won and nobody died. However, I do recall an exercise in which we did not win, But that must wait for another day.

Regimental Association

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, West Yorkshire, HX3 5QB.

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

Secretary: Mrs P. Harley, 11 Wain Park, Berry Brow, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD4 7QX.

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

Secretary: Mr C. W. Akrigg, 14 The Poplars, Sutton-in-Craven, Keighley, West Yorkshire, BD20 7PW.

London: 12 noon at the Union Jack Club on 18 January, 18 April, 21 June, 20 September.

A/Secretary: John Greenway, 35 Church Avenue, Farnborough, Hants, GU14 7AT. Tel: 01252 514786
E.mail: jbkandjpp@aol.com

Sheffield: 8.00pm second Tuesday of each month at WOs' & Sergeants' 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, 101 Bradley Road, Bradley, Huddersfield, HD2 1QU.

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

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THE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AT BRADFORD, 22 OCTOBER 2008

The President led a lively discussion on the Association's calendar of events, and in particular the format for the Annual Dinner and Dance. He said that he had asked Brig Dick Mundell to conduct a study in to current events programme, and make any recommendations.

There are three formal events in the calendar, namely the AGM and Dinner, the Annual Church Service and the Officers' Dinner. In addition there are some informal activities; examples are the Halifax Reunion arranged by John Swain, the Strensall Dinner arranged by Reggie Perrin, the Molars' Dinner and the Dukes London Group. These extra events are all very much welcomed, and the aim should be to provide them with support and encouragement, and to help with publicity.

There has also been recent concern about the Association Dinner and Dance. Over the last few years

this has changed venue a number of times: St Paul's Street Drill Hall in Huddersfield; and Ainley Top Hotel, and now the Bradford Hilton. Until a few years ago it was possible to buy a ticket for the dinner, or, if that was not wanted, to come along after dinner to meet friends and have a beer. However, as a result of some trouble which involved the police, the hotel insisted that it become an all ticket event. The dinner is well attended as it is; 200 in 2007 and 219 in 2008, so numbers are not a problem as such, but there is a strong feeling in some quarters that it is too exclusive.

In discussion the Branch Chairmen made very clear that in their view and that of their members there should be no change to the standards of dress, and they were content with the format. Others noted that the Branches are quite small and there are many other members of the Association, and one way or another an arrangement which makes it clear that all are welcome provided they stick to the codes of dress and conduct laid down, whatever these might be, has to be achieved.

The options that emerged (and there is a great deal of discussion still to be done) seem to be:

- No change. The informal events offer opportunities for unstructured get togethers, and the dinner is still popular as it is.
- Find a new venue that allows people to join after dinner for a drink, and hope for the best.
- Consider an all ticket option, but which charges less - say £5, for a 'drinks only' ticket; (the dinner ticket is £15) - and retain the dress code, whichever ticket you buy.
- Within these, consider whether dancing is sufficiently popular to justify the disco; see if using another room for the "drinks only" group, which is accessible to the diners if they choose.

The Association Committee will take this, together with the broader subject of the Association's events calendar, forward at its meeting in November. The key point is that nobody wants to have a 'them and us' situation, and all - young and old, junior and senior - are welcome at events, but there are standards to be maintained on the formal occasions, and practical issues, such as the requirements and capabilities of venue providers, have to be taken into account.

THE ASSOCIATION DINNER

219 members and guests were present at the Bradford Hilton for the dinner and dance, which was preceded by a reception for those who served on the Bosnia Tour. It was an excellent evening and much enjoyed by all present.

SKIPTON BRANCH

On Saturday 21 June the Skipton Branch had its annual Waterloo Dinner at Skipton Golf Club, with the chief guests being Major Mike Sherlock and his wife Penny. Also among the guests were the Town Mayor Mrs Carol Manley and her husband John. We were also joined by the Chairman of Craven District Council Mrs Marcia Turner and her escort, Mr Paul Whittaker.

Gordon Bell opened the dinner and thanked everyone for coming. Major Sherlock gave a speech of his time in the Dukes, and his future plans after retirement. He is going to work on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway and if anyone sees him on the train they had better have a ticket! There was no band this year, so people were able to chat with friends. As in previous years the raffle was a huge success.



Left to right, standing: Mr J. Manley, Major M. Sherlock, Mr P. Whittaker. Seated: Mrs C. Manley, Mrs P. Sherlock, Mrs M. Turner.



KEIGHLEY BRANCH

The Keighley Branch and friends recently had a visit to Holland, organised by the Chairman, Mr J. Duckworth. There is a sub-branch in Holland, consisting of three honorary members; namely Mr C. Moulton who served with 7 DWR in a Bren carrier platoon and was with them when Ede was liberated. He lives there with his son Cedric. The third member is Mr R. Twyford, whose father also served with the 7th Battalion.

On 17 April, the anniversary of the liberation, wreaths were laid on the 49 Division 'Polar Bear' Memorial at Ede, and there was a short service. In the afternoon Mr Moulton, a recent recipient of the Dutch Liberation Medal, was invited to Wageningen to unveil a plaque to commemorate his friend Cpl Walter B. Dewe who was killed in action on 17 April 1945. The Burghermeester invited all members of the branch to attend the ceremony; we were made very welcome and the event was televised. Also present was a Mr C. F. Petter who holds an Honorary MBE for his work tending the war graves of soldiers and airmen who lost their lives in the Arnhem Operation.

During our stay we visited the landing ground for the paratroopers, various memorials including the bridge at Arnhem and the War Cemetery at Oosterbeek. A number of Dukes are buried there, including Cpl Dewe. Also a private museum 'The Island' consisting of items found or donated by local people. We look forward to returning next year.

Editor's Note - Unfortunately a disk which was thought to contain photographs of the visit proved to be blank; the photographs will be published in a future edition if possible.

LONDON BRANCH

The London Branch AGM in September 2007 was attended by eleven members. A further twelve sent their apologies from as far afield as Northern Ireland (Rodney Owers), Anglesey (David Miller) and Edinburgh (Neil Butler).

The Branch will continue to meet four times a year at the Union Jack Club, with one of those meetings being shared with the PWO London Branch. Dates for 2009 are as follows:

Sunday 18 January, 1130hrs

Saturday 18 April (joint with PWO), time tbc

Sunday 21 June, 1130hrs

Sunday 20 September, 11.30hrs

Details of opportunities to attend London events, such as Founder's Day at the Royal Hospital, will be circulated when available.

Meanwhile, the Branch will, as usual, be representing the Regiment at Westminster Abbey on Remembrance Sunday, 9 November 2008.

REGIMENTAL CHURCH SERVICE

The Regimental Church Service was held in York Minster on Saturday 17 May. Due to the Regimental Chapel undergoing refurbishment the service took place in the Choir which made an interesting change.

ANNUAL OFFICERS' DINNER

The Officers' Dinner Club dined at the Royal York Hotel on Friday 16 May 2008. Forty-two officers were present, and Major General Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter presided.



THE REGIMENTAL MUSEUM

After five years and two lottery bids, known as 'Through Soldiers' Eyes' and 'Forgotten Voices', the new style Dukes' Museum has opened at the Bankfield Museum in Halifax. With a new imposing entrance, the visitor is taken through the history and heritage of the Regiment from 1702 to the present day with selected campaigns and stories of our West Riding soldiers.

In 'Forgotten Voices' they will travel from the Redcoat era in America and Waterloo to the Victorians in Crimea and South Africa and onto World War I. With twenty-two Dukes' battalions, the story is told by members of 2 DWR in 1914/15 in the Old Contemptibles and 1/4 DWR Territorial Battalion on the Somme and Ypres Salient. The Trench completes this story with a Memorial and panels showing the Cost (8,383 dead), the Slaughter, the Stalemate and the Optimism in 1914 - to War.

Onto 'Through Soldiers' Eyes' which opened in 2005. From World War II, Korea, National Service, Northern Ireland, Bosnia onto Iraq and the Yorkshire Regiment - the successors to our heritage.

Backing up these modern displays, eighty-six stories can be heard where our soldiers recall their experiences and exploits. From 1939 onwards the stories are told by the soldiers themselves, and before 1918 through the voices of actors reading from letters and diaries.

The museum was formally opened by Christa Ackroyd, the presenter from BBC Look North on Tuesday 11 November 2008 - exactly ninety years since the guns fell silent on the Western Front in 1918.

Our President, Major General Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter, welcomed the Lord Lieutenant of West Yorkshire and the Mayor of Calderdale, and more than eighty guests including many Dukes spanning the last seventy years. He thanked the Head of the Regional Lottery Board for their essential support and Brigadier Dick Mundell for this 'legacy'. The Lord Lieutenant responded stressing the importance of this type of project and the links to the heritage of the county, and education of school children. Brigadier Dick thanked the small number of workers from the Museum staff and the Regiment involved. He introduced Christa, who is no stranger to Halifax and is passionate about Yorkshire. She expressed her great interest and support and cut the tape to open the Museum.



Dukes assemble at the Museum.



Mrs Crocker recalls her sad news in 1915.



Brigadier Mundell and Lieutenant Colonel Isles brief Christa Ackroyd of Look North.

A short ceremony then followed to mark the anniversary which included the entrance of 'Dukes' dressed as Waterloo Redcoats, World War I soldiers and our soldiers from the 3rd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment. A moving letter from 1915 was recalled and the Last Post sounded followed by two minutes' silence, during which Captain Mally Birkett recited Binyon's 'For the Fallen', to conclude the formal proceedings. The guests then had the opportunity to view the 'product'.

The ceremony featured on BBC Look North that evening.

WRM

THE HINDOOSTAN OPEN - SURREY NATIONAL GOLF CLUB, 7 JULY 2008

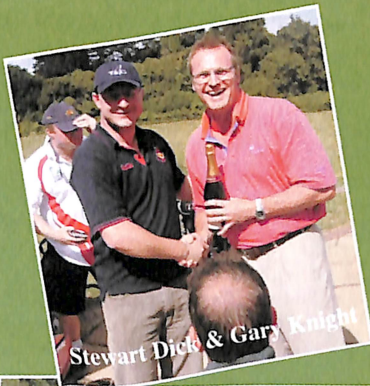
Fourteen members of the Dukes' London Group and their guests foregathered at the Surrey National Golf Club, near Caterham, for the inaugural Hindoostan Open, expertly organised by Stewart Dick. Whilst a larger entry would have been welcome, this was a

good number for the first in what all present hope will become a regular event. **The first Friday in July was agreed to be a good date, so the next one will be on Friday 3 July 2009.** All golfers are welcome; send an email to stewart.dick@danielstewart.co.uk to register your interest and receive information in due course.

The competition was individual stableford with full handicap allowance, and the winner by a narrow margin was Gary Knight. Simon Valentine of CISCO, a guest of Gary Knight, won the nearest the pin, and Mark Crawford managed a prodigious whack on the 18th to win the longest drive.

Although it's not an easy course, with many blind drives and plentiful bunkers guarding the sloping greens, we were favoured by excellent weather. A very enjoyable day out, so make a note in your diary for the next one - 3 July 2009.

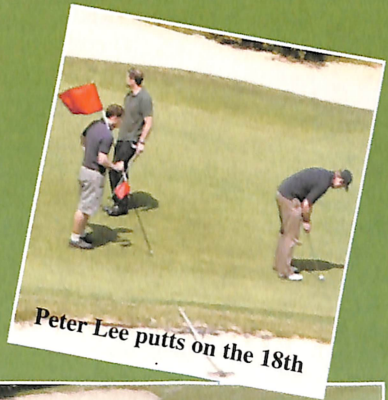
The Yorkshire Regiment has a golf day at Malton and Norton Golf Club on Friday 15 May 2009, and welcomes participation from any Dukes in the area. Contact: rhqyorks@btconnect.com, or 01904 461012.



Stewart Dick & Gary Knight



Stewart Dick & Mark Crawford



Peter Lee putts on the 18th



Toby "I've been on the simulator all week" Smart takes a middle iron to the green



Josh King, Stewart Dick, Mark Crawford & Simon Pearson-Miles leave the 18th



Gary Knight drives off



All Dukes except as shown. Left to right, standing: Stewart Dick, John Greenway, Tim Nicholson, Toby Smart, Simon Pearson-Miles (D&D), Peter Lee, Josh King (RTR), Mark Crawford, Chris Johnson. Sitting: Chris Cherrington (RHF), Simon Valentine (CISCO), Gary Knight, Tom Golding, James Charlesworth.

HAVERCAKE ALE - A CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE

As part of the company's 150th anniversary celebrations Timothy Taylor re-introduced Havercake Ale earlier in the year, the beer it first brewed in 2002 to mark the Tercentenary of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment.

This was the third brewing of this very special pale ale described by Head Brewer Peter Eells as "A robust Yorkshire ale (4.7% ABV) brewed to match the qualities of the famous West Riding Regiment - it has strength, balance, clarity and a good head!"

Like its two predecessors this latest brew was available on draught and in bottles and proved extremely popular, selling out within weeks of going on sale in selected outlets throughout Yorkshire and East Lancashire.

The bottled version was particularly well received, catching the eye of the judges at the highly coveted British Bottlers' Institute annual awards and winning a silver medal in Class B - 4% to 4.9% ABV category.

One or two barrels were, however, kept on one side for three parties in July when the Keighley brewer entertained over 600 guests including shareholders, customers, suppliers and staff to thank them for their continued support in its special year.

As many of you will know, soldiers of the 3rd Battalion have always been affectionately nicknamed 'The Havercake Lads'. The name is derived from the oatmeal bread cake which for centuries was a staple food of the Pennine towns and villages. Reputedly the recruiting sergeant went around with a Havercake on his sword when out looking for 'volunteers'. It seems the promise of being regularly fed on Havercakes was an irresistible bait. No doubt plenty



of ale also played its part in the process!

Timothy Taylor has long had close ties with the 'Dukes'. Indeed, Timothy Taylor himself was a member of the Volunteer Rifle Corps based in Keighley in 1859. Since that time, through successive generations, members of the brewery staff have served with the regiment - most notably Private Arthur Poulter, who won a VC in April 1918 whilst serving as a stretcher bearer. History reveals that private Poulter worked in the brewery's maltings in Leeds just prior to the outbreak of war. He was awarded the Victoria Cross after rescuing ten badly wounded men whom he carried on his back to safety under intense enemy machine gun and artillery fire. All this took place close to the railway crossing at Erquinghem-Lys during the German offensive of April 1918. When asked by a local journalist where he got his strength from he put it down to his days working for Timothy Taylor humping sacks of barley.

In 1998 the 'Dukes' provided the guard of honour when the small French town erected a memorial to Arthur Poulter to mark the 80th anniversary of the Armistice. The Regiment returned to the town in 2005 when they were honoured with the keys of the town and Timothy Taylor provided the ales for the reception which included Havercake Ale.

Managing Director Charles Dent said "On two occasions Timothy Taylor's cask conditioned English ale has been served to the French townsfolk and they loved it. This perhaps is no surprise, for as the Mayor of Erquinghem-Lys explained, it's an area of Northern France that produces and appreciates good beer!"

DUKES LONDON GROUP

The Dukes London Group (DLG) met on 23 June in the BT Tower revolving restaurant, London. We were kindly hosted (in absentia) by Mike Stone, with Nick Borwell, Deano Renaldi, Phil Lewis and Richard Holroyd. The venue is a very special one and we were well looked after. Inter alia, the group resolved to continue their efforts to provide advice and practical assistance to serving Dukes and their friends who have, or are about to, embark on a civilian career. The economy is far from rosy, and certainly less so than it was, but there remain opportunities for ex Dukes so long as they are patient and network effectively.

The group met again on 22 October at JP Morgan in Aldermanbury, thanks to Toby Smart. This was refreshingly different, as we were able to meet many members of JP Morgan staff who themselves had served with the military in some capacity, and indeed our host was an ex Green Jacket. We learned how much value employers such as JP Morgan can place in former military personnel who have the right attitude and are willing to transfer their skills and work hard.

JAMES HAYES

James Hayes, author of our recent feature on Hong Kong, was made an Honorary Fellow of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology in June this year. The award was accompanied by an impressive gold medal, pictured here. We send our congratulations.



General Donald Isles wrote of James - "He will be remembered by older members of the Regiment as one of that band of intrepid subalterns who served the 1st Battalion so well in the United Nations war against North Korea in the early 50s, and in Gibraltar. Afterwards he served with the TA in our 7th Battalion before leaving the country to serve for thirty-two years in the Civil Service of the HK Government, and served in the Royal Hong Kong Regiment (The Volunteers) between 1956 and 1966. He has also been a prolific writer, producing numerous books and learned articles."



View from the BT Tower restaurant, and below at JP Morgan.



BOOKS

CAPTAIN JOHN ORROK

Captain Orrok served with the 33rd Regiment in India from 1803 to 1812. He was a great letter writer, and this correspondence has been brought together and edited by Alison McBrayne, whose husband is Orrok's great-great-grandson. A cousin of Captain Orrok's was a Mrs Freese, who is claimed in Mrs McBrayne's book to have been 'romantically linked' to Wellington.

After service with the 33rd, Orrok returned to London and took up the duties of a recruiting officer, after which he settled in Baker Street and became a bookseller. He was in Brussels on the eve of Waterloo and eventually died in Jamaica.

The book is priced at £11.95 and is available from Troubador Publishing Ltd, 9 De Montford Mews, Leicester LE1 7FW. books@troubador.co.uk, or 0116 255 9312.

THE MAVERICKS

Robert Harvey, author of 'The War of Wars' - reviewed in Autumn 2007 - has now produced a new volume which attempts to describe the genius of a handful of men he describes as 'real professionals of war'. His choice, which he admits is necessarily arbitrary, is - Clive, Wolfe, Washington, Nelson, Cochrane, Wellington, Garibaldi, Grant, Rommel,

Montgomery, Patton and MacArthur. All familiar names to those with a military background.

He says all were “killers by profession and most performed deeds of which few of us would be capable. They were not ‘good’ or ‘bad’ men as such; their art was essential to the times in which they lived and when war, or the prospect of it, was almost a feature of everyday life.” The key thread is that these were some of the most extraordinary men that ever lived, not necessarily because they were the best, but because they achieved feats far beyond ordinary mortals.

He attributes this to their capacity for resilience and endurance, and says that genius is not enough unless it is backed by sheer hard work. “Some of these men were shambling, unimpressive, lacking in elegance, had bad habits and possessed very few human frailties; in the case of the mavericks they got there by determination and talent, not social pedigree ...”. A few were quite literally mad some of the time: a number were superstars in their own time, real heroes who had taken astonishing risks in the service of their country, receiving the adulation of their countrymen of a kind reserved today for “celebrities” - and were not always popular with their superiors.

Mr Harvey has confined his selection to what he describes as the “golden age of military leadership”, when there was opportunity for initiative and independent action, and this lengthy introduction gives the reader insight into the author’s thinking about what characteristics, qualities and achievements were needed to secure a place in his Pantheon.

As noted in “War of Wars” Richard Harvey is blessed with a flowing style which is both easy and enjoyable to read. Given that each of his chosen mavericks gets at best forty or so pages, he is limited in the amount of depth he can give his subjects, but the essentials are there, and we feel we understand what made them more successful than their contemporaries, indeed so much so that their names are so familiar to us even now.

The Mavericks is published by Constable, and priced at £20. It will be in bookshops shortly, and enquiries should be directed to constable@mga-pr.com, or 020 7836 4774.

LETTERS

Answers on a Postcard. Dom Alberic Stacpoole OSB

Dom Alberic Stacpoole OSB, better known to many in the Regiment as John, must be the most prolific sender of postcards in the country. Perhaps others are also the happy recipient of his informative and often entertaining missives. Hence the appearance of this synopsis of some of his recent communications in the letters section.

Halifax achieved Borough status in 1848, and in 1853 a tremendous Town Hall was mooted. The architect of Parliament, Sir Charles Barry, planned it and his son Edward (who also completed Parliament for his father and later rebuilt the Royal Opera House - another son was engineer for Tower Bridge and the Blackfriars Railway Bridge) completed the work, and it was opened by Edward VII before 70,000 citizens on 4 August 1863. How proud of their new Town Hall, and their town for that matter, they must have been.

Busts of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, together with Prince Albert Edward (later Edward VII) and his wife Alexandra, were recently on display in the Town Hall, all together for the first time in fifty years. They were originally presented to Halifax by former Mayors to commemorate the opening of the new Town Hall. The busts flank the memorial tablet of the occasion of the granting of the original freedom of Halifax to the Duke of Wellington’s Regiment.



William Woodruffe, from a Lancastrian weaving family and brought up on Fabian principles, was in the 24th Guards Brigade on the Anzio beachhead, so alongside 1 DWR. The CIGS at the time was Field Marshall Alanbrooke; Woodruffe is reported to have held him in contempt. “On 22 January 1944 when my unit was fighting to secure a beachhead at Anzio, Alanbrooke’s diary starts thus: “Good shoot - shot 172 pheasants””.

On 10 May 1954 Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh visited Gibraltar, where 1 DWR, awarded some sunshine after Korea, was stationed. The Battalion formed part of a large parade at which the Queen took the salute, and all four Colours were marched past her. On board the rather new and splendid Royal Yacht Britannia a dozen Dukes received their Korea awards, including Lt Col Ramsey Bunbury’s bar to his DSO. *(There is a good photograph of this, and the Colours marching past, in the Breerton/Savory history on page 338).* General Franco, upset by the Queen’s visit, promptly shut the border with Spain - a situation well remembered by 1 DWR in their subsequent tour in the mid 80s.

A new book has been written about J. B. Priestley, entitled ‘Priestley’s Wars’. The author is historian Neil Hanson, who had the cooperation of Priestley’s son Tom and stepson Nicholas Hawkes, and the initial focus is on letters written whilst he was serving on the Somme with 1 DWR (presumably similar to that quoted in the last issue on page 7). In the inter-war years Priestley was a very influential writer and broadcaster, and for a while during WW2 gave a broadcast called ‘Postscript’ which attracted sixteen million listeners. His constant demands that British troops should come home to a land ‘fit for heroes’ - not his own experience after WW1 - is said to have infuriated Churchill. Priestley later became a founder member of CND. The book is priced at £20.99 including postage from Great Northern Books Ltd, PO Box 213, Ilkley, West Yorkshire, or 01274 735056, or sales@greatnorthernbooks.co.uk.

From Mr David Gascoyne

I have just re-read the Spring 2008 issue of the Iron Duke. The letter from Richard Ward on page 47 refers to the dedication of the Armed Forces Memorial and the presence there of Ernest Kirk's brother and sister. This prompted me to dig out my small collection of photographs which I took during the Korean War. One, taken whilst the Commonwealth Division was in reserve, is of a group of subalterns enjoying a few drinks in a tented junior officers' mess.

Included in the group are Ernest Kirk and Peter Guthrie of the Dukes, both subsequently killed on the Hook. Others are Bill Oliver, John Keetley, Arthur Fitch and (Lt) David Borwell, plus two that I do not know but believe may have been visiting from the Black Watch. The fact that some are in pullover order whilst the remainder are in battle dress indicates that the latter had just returned from, or were about to depart for, five days' R & R in Tokyo.

Incidentally Ernest's initials were E. C. not C. as in Richard's letter.

Also enclosed for general interest is a picture from around the same time taken on my camera by Bill Blakey, recently deceased, of the officers of A Company, myself included. The 2i/c, John 'Bugsy' Milligan, was for many years at RHQ Halifax.

L to R: 2/Lts Bill Oliver (1 PI) and David Gascoyne (3 PI), Capt John Milligan (2ic), Major Rudolf Austin (OC), 2/Lt John Keatley (2 PI).



Ernest Kirk, top left, and Bill Oliver, leaning over left foreground. Others include John Keatley, full face visible behind Bothwell; Tom Rothery, foreground centre; Peter Guthrie, back right; Arthur Fitch, in front of Guthrie, and David Borwell, partly visible far right.



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THROUGH SOLDIERS' EYES ... CDs FOR SALE

With the successful opening of the Dukes Museum in Halifax, three CDs have been produced to relate the stories of Dukes through the history of the Regiment.

Through Soldiers' Eyes - Stories by Dukes from 1948 -2005

National Service, Northern Ireland, Bosnia and Iraq.

Through Soldiers' Eyes - Stories by Dukes from World War II and Korea

1 DWR in North Africa and Italy.

2 DWR in India and Burma

1/7 DWR in Normandy and in Korea at the Battle of the Hook

Through Soldiers' Eyes - Stories by Dukes from 1702 to 1918

The raising of the 33rd to the American War of Independence

The 33rd and 76th in India, Waterloo, Crimea and

the Boer War, to the tragedy of World War I

These CDs cover the campaigns of the Regiment, where you can hear our soldiers recall their experiences and exploits in true Dukes style; in the first two CDs by the soldiers themselves and in the third through the voices of actors reading from letters and diaries - in all some ninety-three stories, a prayer from World War I and five songs.

The CDs are available from RHQ DWR and cost £4 each, plus £1.50 post and packing; or the set of three for £10, plus £2 post and packing in the UK.

Bob Campbell-Lammerton sent this photograph, which will stir a few rugby memories. His story and other photos will appear in the next edition.



HONDSCHOOTE

Hondschoote lies a mile or less to the west of the France Belgium border. It has a large, typically ornate, Catholic cemetery of black and grey marble tombs enclosing whole families, generation on generation. It is also a war grave site.

There are 54 British soldiers buried here, a few "Known only to God", but most named. The Camerons, Cheshires, Green Howards, Oxfordshire and

Buckinghamshire and West Kent Regiments all have one or two of their fallen lying here, as do the Royal Engineers and RHA. But of the 54, 24 are Dukes.

China Gill told his own personal story of the BEF's retreat from Brussels to Dunkirk in No 263 (Autumn 2007). In this confused encounter in May and June 1940, through this flat, muddy, largely featureless terrain cut up by canals and wide water-filled drainage

ditches, 1 DWR pulled back in as good order as was possible in the circumstances, but taking steady casualties from holding actions along chosen lines of defence, and from air attacks by stukas and artillery.

Now, in well-tended graves at Hondshoote, lie 2Lt Bolt, Cpl Beatty, LCpl Sykes and Ptes Sykes, Mannion, Frame, Dodds, Lewsley, Legard, Marshall, Wike, Mitchell, Westerman, Conroy, Williams, Ellis, Higgins, Guest, Reynolds, Booth, Fallon, Webster and Wigglesworth.

We, my son and I, came across the cemetery during an unseasonal cycling trip through the area. The simple formality of the 54 perfectly aligned headstones contrasts starkly with the elaborate civilian monuments in the much larger town section. In the background is the Moulin du Nord, said to be the oldest remaining windmill of the thousands that once dotted the area.

Not far away to the north another, much larger, war graves site exists at Zuydcoote - indeed there are several in the area. There are no Dukes at Zuydcoote, and the British share the cemetery with French and their Muslim North African allies, and the Germans, and almost all date from WWI, 1917 and 1918 mostly, although there is a separate section for French casualties in World War II. Ypres is not far away.

Elsewhere ancient fortified towns such as Bergues, its walls still largely intact and its belfry rebuilt after being bombed flat in WWII, and, as the local guide book says pointedly, burned down twice before by the French in previous struggles, remind us that this slice of Northern Europe that we now call Holland, Belgium and Northern France, has been fought through and over for centuries. It is not so long ago that the possibility of a Russian invasion through the North German Plain and on to the Channel ports was considered a far from remote possibility.

On the front at Bray-Dunes, another place in China Gill's story, the French have a large memorial to their 12th Division of Motorised Infantry who fought their way back in 1940, holding off the German advance on Dunkirk. "Qui passez, souvenez-vous de l'heroisme de ces soldats".

It is a fascinating region to visit, for its history, food and flat cycling, but next time we might play it soft and go in the summer!



Graves of Privates Sykes and Mannion.



General view with the Moulin du Nord in the background.



Memorial to the French 12th Motorised Division at Bray Dunes.

Obituaries

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

Robbie Burns

Following the obituary in the last edition of Arthur (Robbie) Burns, John Wilson writes:

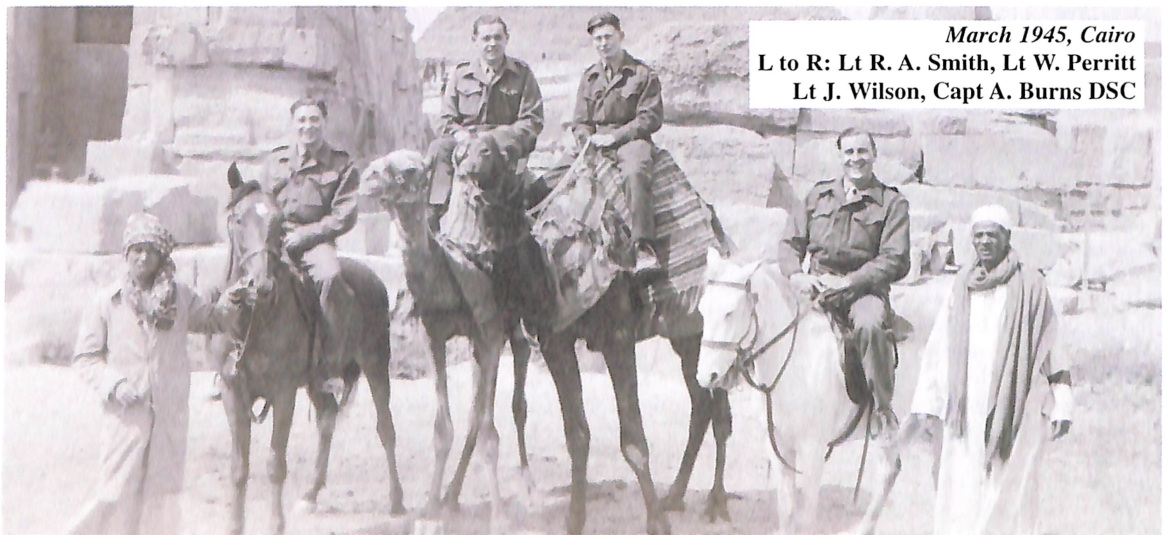
"I met Robbie Burns for the first time on the top of Monte Cece. The Commanding Officer had just been killed and Captain Hathorn, commanding C Coy, was wounded by the same burst of fire. Robbie, on the other side of the CO, escaped by a few inches.

He asked me who I was and I introduced myself. He took command and, as I was the only officer remaining in C Coy he told me to go round all the Company positions and emphasise that there would be no withdrawal and that we were to hold all the Company positions no matter what they threw at us. He also said, "If I don't get back alive, make sure that Private Burton gets a VC". He was inspirational during the following thirty hours or so, before we were relieved by 1 Loyals".



Royal York Hotel, 2002

L to R: Capt A. Burns, DSO, OBE, Capt G. Bullock, Capt J. Wilson.



March 1945, Cairo

**L to R: Lt R. A. Smith, Lt W. Perritt
Lt J. Wilson, Capt A. Burns DSC**

Major David Cowell

(An extract from the address made by Colonel Rodney Harms at Major David Cowell's funeral.)

David was a soldier from 1947 to 1979, service of 32 years. He joined the Army in 1947 and was posted to 30th (Leader) Training Battalion at Elgin, near Inverness. We met one evening in December 1947 when we were both boxing for 30th TB in the Highland District Inter Unit Championships. As 18 year olds

we came up against 28 years old Army PT Instructors, and both lost on points.

His fight was the one before mine, and when I climbed out of the ring, spattered in blood from a noise bleed, I went into the gym to see an equally bloody, disconsolate figure sitting on a bench. I sat down beside him and said "you're Cowell, and you're in the Duke of Wellington's Regiment." He replied, "Yes, and you're Harms and you're in the Duke of Wellington's Regiment." From then on our friendship was sealed.

In early 1948 he moved on to the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, being posted after commissioning to the Dukes who were the Yorkshire and Northumberland Brigade Training battalion. He played whatever sport was available. He continued to box; he was an excellent rugby player, a very reliable hooker and front row forward. From 1949 to 1959 he was always in the Duke's XV, and he played for Harrogate 1st XV in 49/50 and 50/51, and he won an Army Cup medal in 1958.

The shooting in the Battalion improved greatly in 1950 and when we ran the Army Rifle Association Meeting at Bisley in 1951, David became a member of the Army Hundred, the best one hundred shots in the Army. In 1951 the Dukes won many of the prizes in the Salisbury Plain District, Southern Command and Army meetings, and in 1952, after our move to Minden, the Battalion was highly successful in BAOR and NATO forces competitions. He was selected for a number of Army and Formation shooting teams.

He served with 1 DWR in as 2i/c of a Rifle Company for the last six months of Korea and was a Company Commander in BAOR, and was also Families Officer. He held two staff appointments; one in Tripoli, Libya and the other at HQ Yorkshire District. He was Training Major of 3rd Battalion the Yorkshire Volunteers, and then of Northumbrian University Officers Training Corps. His final regular appointment was as Adjutant of the Army Apprentices College at Chepstow. After retirement he took on a retired officers appointment, looking after cadets in the Bristol area.

He was totally trustworthy, always reliable, and always there when he was needed. He was a tough man when necessary, but considerate and fair-minded. He was one of the short list of men you could rely on to watch your back.

Mr Tom Dickie

Thomas Thomson Dickie, always known as Tom, died on 5 May 2008 aged 83. He was buried in the local cemetery at Sedbergh on 15 May, following a service at St Andrews Church which was well attended by family, friends and representatives from Sedbergh School. Lt Col Walter Robbins made an address about Tom's military service and other representatives from the Regiment were General Sir Charles Huxtable, who was Tom's Platoon Commander in Korea, Lt Col Hugh Le Messurier, Johnny Sargeant, Bert Ackroyd, Geoff Baxter and Cliff Morton, all of whom also served in Korea.

Although under the official age for adult service at the time, Tom, an Ulster man, left his home near Ballymoney in 1941 to join the Army. After completing his initial training with the Royal Ulster Rifles he joined the newly formed Parachute Regiment in 1942. In 1944 he

took part in the ill-fated airborne landings at Arnhem and also served elsewhere in North West Europe.

At the end of WW2 he served in India and Palestine with the Parachute Regiment but in late 1948 transferred to the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers in Malaya during the communist inspired insurgency. In 1950 he became an instructor at the Malay Training Centre in Singapore, moving in 1951 to the BAOR Training Centre at Sennelager. In 1952, on learning that 1 DWR had been warned for service in Korea, he applied for a transfer and joined the Battalion in Minden.

During the Battalion's time in Korea, Tom was a member of C Company, taking part in normal front line activities including a number of hazardous patrols. He was also a member of the group that carried out the highly successful daylight raid on the Chinese lines, to destroy tunnels and capture a prisoner.

After Korea he served with the Dukes in Gibraltar, UK, Malta, Cyprus during the EOKA Emergency, Northern Ireland and Kenya. He retired from the Army in 1963 with the rank of Colour Sergeant.

He was a boxer of proven ability being the welter-weight Champion of 1st Airborne Division in 1942/3, the losing finalist in the All India middleweight championship in 1945 and champion in 1946. In 1947 whilst in Palestine he was middleweight champion of Middle East Land Forces.



Cpl Tom Dickie, Cpl A. McKenzie, Cpl Peter Bangs, Jenkins Royal Engineers, Jim Coulson, 2/Lt Ian Orr.

1 DWR Daylight Raid, 24 January 1953. This photograph shows the assault group in full battle equipment. Each member of the patrol wore a combat jacket, combat trousers, peaked cap, rubber soled boots (CWW) and short puttees. Every man carried at least one 36 grenade, a first field dressing, a shell dressing and an eight-foot length of signal cable. The main group of five men was comprised of three Bren gunners, a stretcher bearer and the patrol commander (Lieutenant Harms). The assault party consisted of a cover group of two Sten gunners, and the Snatch party of four men also armed with Stens and carrying a cosh and an 80 (smoke) grenade each.

On leaving the Army Tom continued to wear the Dukes' cap-badge as an instructor with Sedbergh School CCF, a role in which his experience and ability was highly valued. Major Jono Wood writes:

"As a student at Sedbergh and a member of the CCF I remember many afternoons spent on the miniature range under Tom's tutelage and patient guidance honing our shooting skills. There were afternoons when he licked us into shape on the school parade ground. He was a very well known character to generations of Sedberghians. As a distinguished war veteran his approach to his role at Sedbergh was unique. He balanced tremendous enthusiasm with a certain calmness, whilst doggedly imparting military skills to such a ragged bunch of youngsters."

Despite his extensive expertise on active operations and his ability and aggression in the boxing ring Tom was in fact a very quiet and reserved person, even at times a little shy. He was not a man to blow his own trumpet or boast of what he had done. He was however conscientious, loyal and reliable and after many inter-unit moves he was pleased to have a permanent home with the Dukes. In 1959 he married Isobel and he became proud father to David and Carol, and later took great pleasure in watching the growth and development of his grandchildren.

WR

Mr David William Higson

Bill Higson (known to many Dukes as Dave) died on 3 May 2008 aged 81 years. After training at Brancepeth, Co Durham he was posted to India in 1945 where he served in 2 DWR until 1947. Upon his return to England he married Peggy and they had two sons. Unfortunately Peggy died aged 36 but Bill still managed to raise his boys through difficult times. In 1986 Bill met Pam and they became active members of the Skipton Old Comrades Association.

Bill was a great eccentric and kept everyone regaled with his tall stories (although some of them were true!) He was a memorable character and once you met Bill you never forgot him. Bill and Pam travelled all over the world and Bill's love of India drew them back there. He was very proud to be a Duke and loved to take his old Army bush hat on holiday and salute the locals, who always responded with a salute back. Their last holiday in India was in April this year and will remain a very happy memory.

Bill is survived by his wife Pam, two sons and three grandchildren and will be missed by many.

Mr Geoffrey Billings

The funeral took place on 23 April in St. Gregory's Church, Bedal of Geoffrey who died after a short illness aged 75 years. He was a member of 10 platoon, D Company at the battle of the Hook. He, Lance Corporal Trevor Dunn and Charles Daynes were moving out to act as a standing patrol when the attack came in. Trevor Dunn was badly wounded, Charles Daynes less so. Geoff and Charles gallantly supported Trevor for a day and a half to the POW camp despite being threatened with death. Geoff was an early member of the British Korean Veterans Association. Among a packed church

was Colonel Rodney Harnes MC, Lt-Colonel Hugh Le Messurier, who spoke, and Mrs Le Messurier, Sergeant Gordon Simpson, Charles Daynes and BKVA Secretary Hedley Rutherford. Ken Keld carried the Standard. Trevor Dunn was unable to attend. Geoff is survived by his wife Joyce and daughter Dawn.

Mr Paul Cropper

Mr Dave Cropper, who served in the 1 DWR Band, 1974 - 1994, reports that his brother, Paul Cropper, died on the morning of 16 November 2008, aged 45. Paul served in the 1 DWR Band from the mid-eighties until just after the Gulf War in 1991. He is survived by his wife Denise and their five children.

Mr Bryant Fell

Bryant Fell died at the Ysbyty Gwynedd, Bangor, North Wales on Sunday 16 November 2008 after a severe stroke at the age of 74.

He had served with the 1st Battalion in Gibraltar in 1954-55 as a platoon commander in D Coy under Major 'Baron' Emmett. After his National Service, he was at one time a House Master at Millfield School in Somerset where he introduced the modern pentathlon as a sport. He specialised in teaching children with learning difficulties, especially dyslexia. He was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in the 1960s and, because of this, had to take early retirement in 1988 whereupon he and his family retired to Anglesey.

He is survived by his wife Ginny and two children, Alastair and Deborah. His funeral took place at Bangor Crematorium on Thursday 27 November and Major David Miller represented the Regiment.

RHQ has also been informed of the following deaths:

Mr G. Holmes. Former Sergeant Gerald Holmes, who served with the 2nd Battalion in India, died in April 2008, at the age of 81.

Mr R. Usher. Raymond Usher who served in the 1st Battalion, A Company, in Korea, died in July 2008.

Mr C. Wiseman. Charlie Wiseman who was with Royal Signals, attached to the Dukes in Korea, died on 4 August 2008.

Major J. D. P. Cowell. David Cowell who was a Dukes officer from 1949-79, died on 15 August 2008, aged 79.

Captain R. C. Wilson TD. Bob Wilson, who was a Dukes' TA officer, 1947-66, died on 28 August 2008, aged 79. Bob was also the President of the Huddersfield Branch of the Regimental Association.

Mr G. Marsden. George Marsden, who served in the 6th Battalion during WWII died on 21 August 2008.

Mr W. Smith. Willie Smith served in the 1st Bn, A Coy, in Korea and was a member of the Halifax Branch of the Regimental Association. He died on 6 June aged 75.

Mr E. Ellison. Former Dukes TA Sergeant and member of the Halifax Branch, Eric Ellison died in July aged 82.

Mr T. Jones. Thomas Jones who served in the 1st Battalion during the 1960s, died on 2 June 2008.

Mr T. Dunne. Trevor Dunne who was in 10 Platoon D Coy in Korea, died on 17 September 2008 aged 75.

The Dukes' Regimental Association

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS 2009

(please check the website for any subsequent changes to this programme)

Wed 25 February	Dukes London Group
Thursday 26 March	Officers' Ladies Lunch
Saturday 25 April	Annual Regimental Service, Halifax; possible Halifax informal reunion
Saturday 30 May	Strensall 33 rd /76 th Dinner (proposal, not confirmed)
Friday 12 June	Officers' Dinner, RMA Sandhurst
Sunday 14 June	Picnic at Wycombe Abbey School, High Wycombe, Bucks
June (date tbc)	Dukes London Group
Friday 3 July	Dukes London Group Golf Day, Surrey National ('The Hindoostan Open')
September (dates tbc)	Battlefield Tour, Spain
Saturday 3 October	Association AGM and Reunion Dinner, Bradford (venue tbc)
October (date tbc)	Dukes London Group

The dates of OCA Branch meetings are shown on page 91, under the Regimental Association main heading. Other events may be arranged from time to time. Event organisers are asked to remember to keep both the DWR.org Webmaster (charles.cumberlege@googlemail.com) and the Iron Duke Editor (tim_nicholson@btconnect.com) informed.

**For further information on any of these events visit the
Association's website**

www.dwr.org.uk