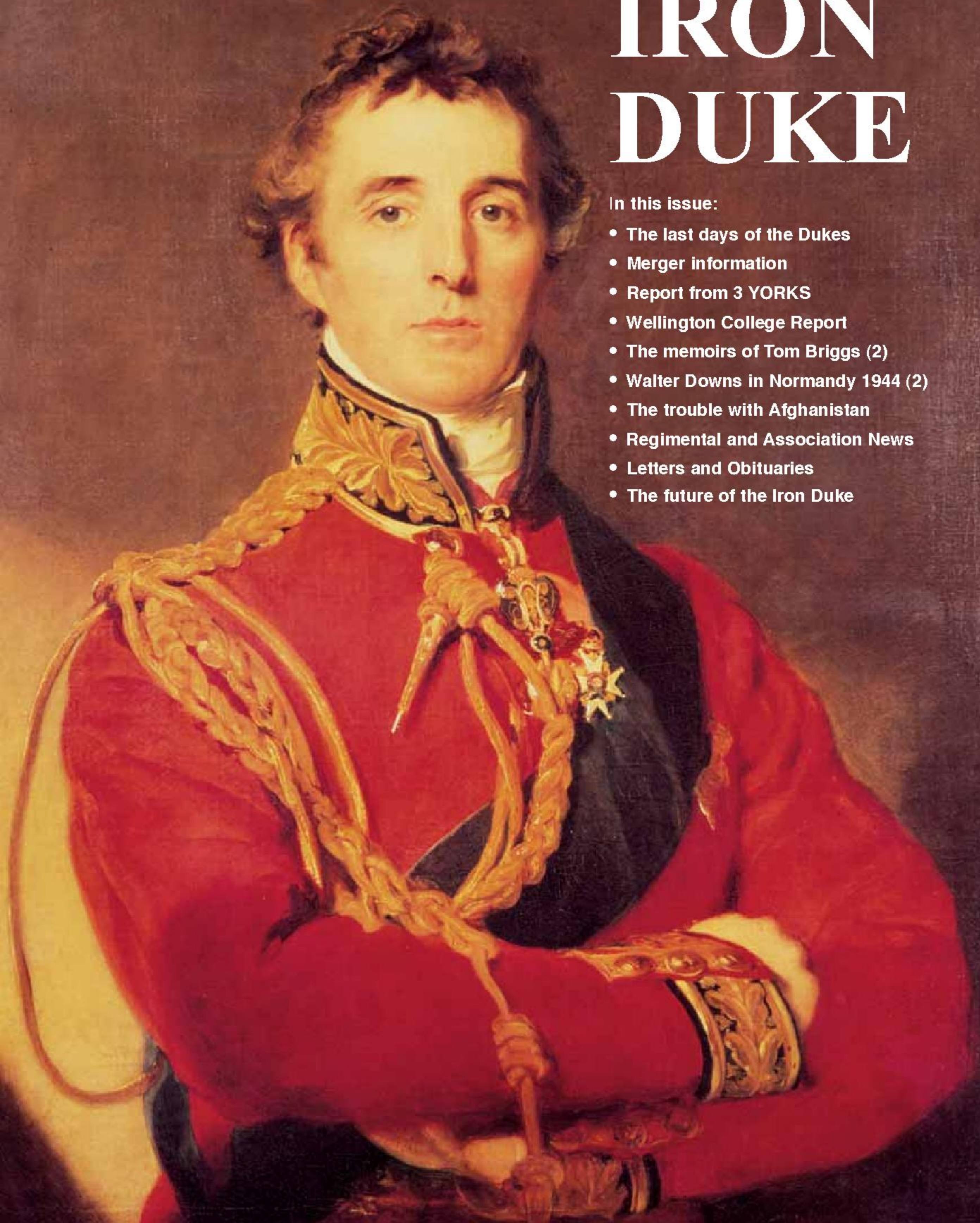


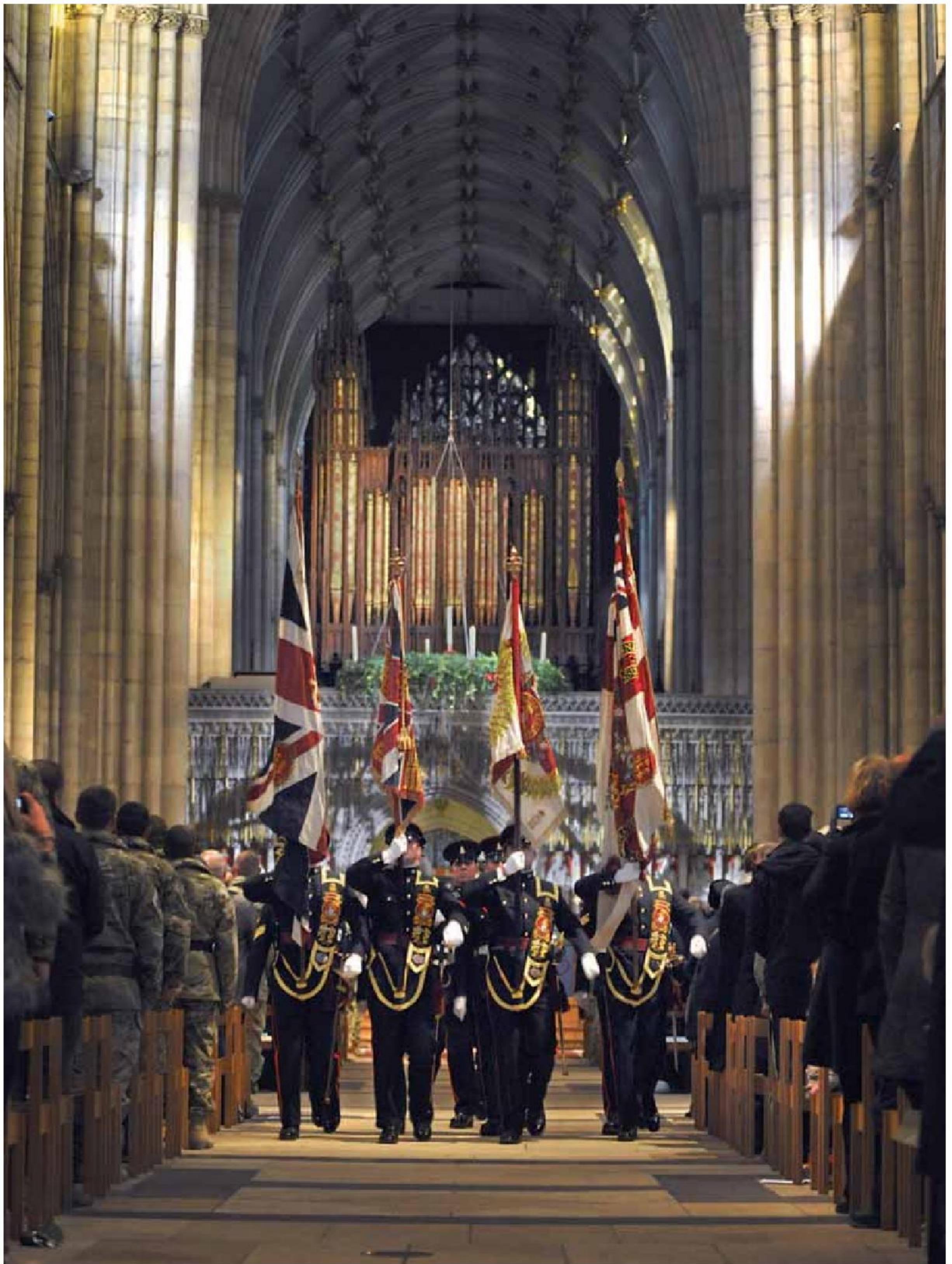
SPRING 2013  
No. 274

# THE IRON DUKE

**In this issue:**

- The last days of the Dukes
- Merger information
- Report from 3 YORKS
- Wellington College Report
- The memoirs of Tom Briggs (2)
- Walter Downs in Normandy 1944 (2)
- The trouble with Afghanistan
- Regimental and Association News
- Letters and Obituaries
- The future of the Iron Duke





**The Colour Party marches out of York Minster**

# THE IRON DUKE

*The Regimental Journal of*

## THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S REGIMENT (WEST RIDING)

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



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

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### BUSINESS NOTES

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# Editorial

## THE LAST DAYS OF THE DUKES

This is the last Iron Duke to carry the report of a Duke of Wellington's Regiment regular battalion. Some would say, with a measure of truth, that this happened in 2006 when the Yorkshire Regiment was formed, relegating the name of a proud County Regiment that had then been in the line for 304 years to an afterthought in brackets. But however styled, the Dukes lived on. It was a brief respite.

A summary of the restructuring decisions taken can be found elsewhere in this issue, as although the details are probably well enough known it is as well to have something on record in our Journal. Most Dukes have accepted the inevitable, but we must be permitted our regrets, and maybe some surprise, that in what appears in effect to have been a competition in which only the strongest, best recruited battalions would survive, the Yorkshire Regiment – “the second least sustainable regiment in the Infantry” – lost.

So, we move on and ask if anything is left, and the (perhaps somewhat grudging?) answer is yes, quite a lot. Our Association remains in place and we have The Yorkshire Regiment consisting of two regular and one TA battalions: the bath water has mostly run away but a baby is in there still, and will need a good deal of nurturing. All the old associations and relationships with urban and rural Yorkshire can continue, and there is a great deal to do here or we will lose the goodwill and rich recruiting potential of our county, and to some extent must already be some way down that road and need to haul our way back. (Within my own family, albeit at some remove, a young man from the West Riding has recently joined the Rifles and not The Yorkshire Regiment.)

Those of us who find solace in a glass of Bordeaux know that there are three key elements that decide if the wine is to be good or just ordinary. The first is the terroir; the earth in which the vines grow with its natural minerals and salts, soil type, which way it faces, how much sun and rain it gets and so on. The essential flavour of the wine comes from the terroir. Next is the management of the land and the vines, pruning and wiring and constant attention until finally picking at the right moment, weeding out grapes that are not of the quality required. Last is the skill of the people who actually make the wine, a complex process demanding skill and experience and “feel” for the particular characteristics of any given year's crop of grapes.

All of these elements can be found in the Yorkshire Regiment's current situation. The Regiment's terroir, Yorkshire, is unchanged by this merger: the opportunity to manage relationships, the “vines” in this analogy, throughout the County remains wide open: given sufficient raw material in the form of recruits, cannot soldiers as good as any that went before be formed? To this editor at least the issue now seems not to be about any changes of names (which are regretted of course) but whether in the course of this merger the old comrades will be left behind clinging to the past or, as must surely be right, will retain proper

pride in their own service but also get onto the front foot and support our boys under their new name just as earlier old comrades in their day supported us.

Just taking account of branch activity there would seem to be only modest remnants of our Association, but this is a false assumption. Just a handful may turn up on the second Tuesday of each month or whatever in a pub or drill hall, but there are thousands of ex Dukes, Green Howards, PWO, and Y&L, throughout the County, who got something special out of their service, retain their pride in their old regiment, and with a little encouragement might be persuaded to wish the new one well, and maybe more. In Regimental News we report that 270 attended this year's Bradford Dinner, an excellent turnout. The request for readers' views on the future of the Iron Duke, again reported elsewhere in this issue, revealed only one respondent who wishes to have nothing to do with the Yorkshire Regiment, although there were several who expressed some doubts about the future and will need to be persuaded to become active supporters.

We cannot change what has been done, however much we regret the loss of our cherished old Regiment, but we can, if we choose, have a benign influence on the future of the new one. No doubt a huge amount of head scratching went into how to merge three regular battalions into two: what is needed now is a similar effort to connect The Yorkshire Regiment's regular and TA battalions, the new and old associations, the “old and bold” throughout the County and elsewhere and, the cities, towns and villages of Yorkshire. This won't just happen, and all elements must be in the mix. Leadership, vision, fresh ideas and renewed energy served by an active and effective communication strategy will all be essential.

It is clear from the papers that follow that the Regiment recognises this, although may find itself challenged to deliver it all **and** get on with the routine. More emphasis on communication would be encouraging and perhaps only those who have enjoyed the benefits of a well known and punchy nick-name can understand how useful, even powerful, such a device can be, and although it is expressly ruled out by the Colonel of the Regiment maybe attitudes will shift in time and with the Duke of York and the Duke of Wellington at the head of our Regimental Family no prizes will be awarded for suggestions of what it might be!

One day, if we get all this right, new generations will look on The Yorkshire Regiment with the same passion that their forebears had (and have) for The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, The Green Howards and The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire. In the jargon, it's a big ask. But it has to be done.

### Apology

In our last issue the editor's email was printed wrongly on the first page, which I know proved extremely irritating for a number of people. I don't know how but somehow that section reverted to my old business email. My apologies.



# YORKSHIRE REGIMENT NEWS

*Fortune Favours the Brave*

## THE YORKSHIRE REGIMENT – MOVING FORWARD

*The letter below was sent to Association Presidents and others on 21 January 2013 to outline the process and aims of the merger from three regular battalions to two. It is followed here by an RHQ YORKS paper giving more detail – this paper has been somewhat abridged as part of its content may not be of general interest.*

From: Major General GJ Binns CBE DSO MC Colonel of the Regiment  
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 22 January 2013

In the summer I outlined how the Yorkshire Regiment would approach the merger required by the Army 2020 reorganisation. Whilst a reduction in the number of our regular battalions, and anticipated changes to the structure of our reserve battalion, was clearly unwelcome, I directed that we would lean into the change, managing its negative implications, taking our military heritage forward and ensuring that we exploited the opportunity to build on the work of the Regimental formation in 2006.

Progress has required us to address two difficult tasks. The first has been to determine how we will physically merge the 2nd Battalion with the 1st and 3rd Battalions, ensuring that our people are appropriately informed, led and managed throughout. Given the early date of our merger we are at the head of much of the Army 2020's re-structuring. New ground has had to be broken at speed in terms of Army policy and procedures. Considerable work has been done across the Regiment and with Army HQ for which I am grateful. The process for the merger of personnel has now been agreed, individual preferences where required have been sought and endorsed and we

have a clear way forward. The majority of personnel in all three regular battalions are now aware of their future movements with a small number awaiting final decisions regarding opportunities beyond the Regiment. We will need to oversee the implementation of these plans carefully over the following months, including managing those affected by Tranche 3 Redundancy. I have been struck by the resolution of the Regiment as we deal with the significant regimental and personal uncertainties that all this has involved. We must continue to maintain this spirit and approach.

The second task has been to determine how we build upon the foundations and identity established by the Formation in 2006; in sum, how best to take the enduring elements of our fine military heritage forward and blend it with the unique aspects of the Yorkshire Regiment. The Yorkshire Regimental Board and Commanding Officers have consulted widely. I have been grateful for the various contributions, including from those representing the Antecedent Associations. Identifying the way forward has required some hard choices; these have been made with the purpose of delivering a strong regimental



**Officers attending a briefing on the Afghanistan tour and the merger given by 3 YORKS at Warminster on 26 February 2013. General the Lord Dannatt stands front row centre with Lt Col Stenning. Dukes officers present were Brigadiers Walker, Bray, Sanata-Ollala and Meek, Colonels Borwell, Roberts and Newton, Lieutenant Colonel Nicholson, and Majors Heron and Harrap**

identity, that draws strength from its history and its unique links to the County, and which is blended with a forward looking spirit that seeks and delivers excellence from the battlefield, through the sports field to career management and development.

The attached document lays out the principle aspects that define the Yorkshire Regiment. It has been endorsed

by the Regimental Board and approved by the Colonel in Chief. It constitutes regimental orders. A regimental briefing team will cascade the details over the next few months. I look to commanders to drive the changes necessary and to all ranks to implement it fully, exploiting all the opportunities offered to forge the strongest regimental identity.

### The RHQ YORKS' paper

1. The merger of the regular battalions, whilst challenging in many ways, offers the Yorkshire Regiment a positive opportunity to strengthen the regimental identity, to focus our efforts to attract and nurture talent, and to improve the manner by which we operate as a Regiment.
2. Our regimental strength is dependent upon drawing forward the enduring elements of our antecedent past, blending it with the characteristics of today's soldiers and supporting it with a mechanism that advances the Regiment.

#### OUR IDENTITY

3. Central to our identity, which is to be reflected in all our activity, is a Regiment that:
  - a. Seeks and delivers excellence from operations to sport.
  - b. Attracts and rewards quality.
  - c. Punches above its weight on the battlefield, on the sports field and across the Army.

- d. Is highly regarded as a county regiment from the County of Yorkshire.

#### WHAT MAKES US DIFFERENT

4. We have much that makes us unique across the Army. We must also seek and deliver standards that set us apart. We must not be reticent in playing to our strengths and advocating them with passion, stressing:
  - a. Our unique association as the County Regiment of Yorkshire.
  - b. Our military heritage.
  - c. Our operational excellence.
  - d. Our Yorkshire character and the special relationship of our officers and men.
  - e. Our sporting excellence.
  - f. The quality and style of our officers and men.
  - g. Our pivotal role in some of the most challenging appointments across the Army.

## WHY SHOULD QUALITY OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS JOIN US?

5. Other Regiments, Arms and Services recruit from Yorkshire but none can claim so close an association. We must be energetic in strengthening our County ties and assertive in attracting quality soldiers from across the County and first rate officers from the region and beyond. To those of the right quality it should be clear that we offer:

- a. Officers: Quality officers commanding Yorkshire's finest soldiers.
- b. Yorkshire men - The County's First Choice commanded by officers of the highest quality.
- c. For all, we are a Regiment that:
  - (1) Is a vibrant meritocracy.
  - (2) Nurtures, rewards and realises quality and talent (cradle to grave).
  - (3) Is welcoming, plays to strengths, is resolute and loyal.
- d. A Regiment recognised across the Army as intelligent, forward thinking, adaptable and an energetic driver of Army change.
- e. A Regiment recognised across the Region as the local Regiment; respected, supported and a source of pride across the County.

## ORGANISATION, SYMBOLOLOGY, BRANDING

6. The strengths of our antecedent military heritage, much of which was focused towards individual battalions, will now be rooted in the Regiment as a whole. We will draw forward and emphasis those aspects which underline our identity, which resonate today, and which serve us for the challenges ahead.

- a. Regimental Command:
  - (1) Colonel in Chief: The Duke of York.
  - (2) Deputy Colonel in Chief: The Duke of Wellington.
- b. Colours:
  - (1) The Colours of the 3rd Battalion will be laid up.
  - (2) The Honorary Colours are a distinction of the Regiment and will be treasured by the Regiment. They will be rotated annually between the regular battalions in turn, their handover and takeover being the subject of a formal parade. In the first instance, post merger, they will be relocated to the 2nd Battalion, Cyprus.
- c. Battalion Titles: Post merger, battalion titles and locations are:
  - (1) 1st Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment – Warminster
  - (2) 2nd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment – Cyprus
  - (3) 4th Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment – York
- d. Company Titles. The Regiment will retain company titles for each battalion. These will be based on regimental battle honours; they underline the richness of our military heritage and refresh our understanding of it. Company titles will be common across all three regular and reserve battalions.

- e. Motto. Our motto is Fortune Favours the Brave.1 Widespread use of this distinguished motto is strongly encouraged.
- f. Nickname. There is no explicit requirement for a nickname. We will be known as The YORKS. The use of all antecedent nicknames will cease with the merger.
- g. The Duke Of York's Medal (The Duke's Medal). The Duke of York will present The Duke's Medal annually for exceptional regimental service.
- h. Dress: One change to our regimental dress is required by the merger. The regimental coloured lanyard (currently worn by the 4th Battalion) will be adopted by all battalions.
- i. Property: We have a unique military heritage to treasure and enrich our service today. Existing battalion collections will be grouped into smaller collections centred on a particular narrative. These will be re-located in the three battalions with supporting educational material. Illustrative key narratives are:
  - (1) The raising of the antecedent regiments.
  - (2) Alma, Imphal, Waterloo, Quebec, D Day.
  - (3) Military Role models:
    - (a) The 1st Duke of Wellington.
    - (b) Regimental gallantry award winners.
    - (c) Distinguished senior regimental officers.
  - (4) The defining elements of our distinctive military heritage.
  - (5) Recent operational exploits.
- j. Battalion and Company Competitions: Each battalion is directed to run two competitions annually: the Duke of York's Cup (military skills) and the Duke of Wellington's Trophy (sports).
- k. Regimental Sport: Regimental sport is a critical part of Service life and our ethos. We will seek widespread participation and, in designated representative sports, the highest level of excellence. Regimental representative sport will be aggressively and actively managed. Regimental funding will be allocated and delivery targets directed. Key participants will be 'whole fleet managed' across the Regiment dependent on the forecast battalion commitments to deliver international, national or Army level success. Sports of regimental focus are: rugby (league and union), athletics, skiing, football, and boxing.
- l. Music: The Regimental Marches reflect our unique heritage and will not be altered. They remain: Quick March: Ca Ira; Slow March: The Duke of York.
- m. Association: We have been well served by the Yorkshire Regiment Association. The current level of support given to, and by, the Yorkshire Regiment Association must be maintained but greater integration is to be actively pursued over time.

## **3RD BATTALION THE YORKSHIRE REGIMENT (THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S)**

*The following honours and awards have been announced*

New Year's Honours List: Captain NS Wilson – MBE.  
 Operational Awards - Afghanistan.  
 Lieutenant LT Mason – The Conspicuous Gallantry Cross (CGC).  
 Lieutenant Colonel ZR Stenning MBE – OBE  
 Major ERH Colver – MBE  
 Private LT Murphy – Queen's Commendation for Bravery (QCB).  
 Lieutenant JN Kume-Davy – Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS).  
 WO2 EJ Whitehouse – Joint Commanders Commendation (JCC)  
 Lieutenant T Appleyard – JCC  
 Corporal R Bishop – JCC  
 Captain I Martin – JCC  
 Lance Corporal P Skidmore – JCC  
 Private S Magic RAMC attached 1 YORKS – JCC.

# **The 3rd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment (The Duke of Wellington's)**

## **BATTLEGROUP HEADQUARTERS**

Commanding Officer	-	Lt Col Z Stenning OBE
Second in Command	-	Maj B Terry
Adjutant	-	Capt S Davis
Ops Officer	-	Capt H Stow
RSM	-	WO1 (RSM) Syzmanski
Intelligence Officer	-	Capt AD Ross
RSO	-	Capt CJ Ibbotson

### **COMMANDING OFFICER'S REPORT**

I last contributed as we were nearing completion of our Operational Tour in Nahr-e Saraj (NES). The ISAF presence in NES has now changed from when we arrived with the HQ elements withdrawing to MOB PRICE and the ground holding sub units having been replaced with a much more reserved structure moving to a mentoring role. This clearly shows progress in the development of the ANSF. Since then the 'Team of Teams' has returned to the UK proud of its achievements throughout the 10 months of deployment and, whilst remembering our fallen and injured, we have continued to develop, forging towards our next milestone.

The period before the New Year saw a number of homecoming parades in Huddersfield, Warminster, Halifax and York. Each parade saw huge numbers turning out despite the cold weather to welcome the Battalion home. The parades culminated in a service of

remembrance in the York Minster led by our own Padre John Duncan, with the Colonel in Chief, the Arch Bishop of York and the families of our fallen also in attendance.

These moments remain with us for a long time as it is humbling to see the support from the public at these events and we thank them all for their efforts whilst we were deployed and upon our returning. After the parades all the soldiers fell out for some well deserved Christmas leave.

The past 6 months have had the potential to have been fraught with uncertainty and change due to redundancies and the merger. Whilst the latter cannot be avoided, the leadership shown by the Officers and SNCOs has been evident in guiding the soldiers through these difficult times and we now stand prepared having embraced change as, not only inevitable but also a catalyst for good.

We have continued to support the training of the next Brigade to deploy to Afghanistan in the summer of this





**Service of Remembrance**

year providing man power but most importantly our experiences to ensure those deploying are as well trained and informed as they can be.

Op RESET, which is focused on the moral, physical and conceptual rebuilding of the battalion, has seen a large number of expeditions and adventure training opportunities come to fruition. It will continue through 2013 with over 25 individual expeditions and some 400 soldiers enjoying some form of challenging yet fun activity, the majority taking place abroad. Skiing, sailing, surfing and running with the bulls are but a few of the activities taking place in other countries.

It only remains to thank the families and the Rear Operations Group for their time and patience during the final months of the tour and the unending support upon our return. We are eternally grateful to them as they have provided a Bastion here in the UK.

The Battalion is due to become the Land Warfare Centre Battlegroup (LWCBG) in the summer of with plans and training continuing apace. Those plans are now being executed with large numbers of driving, commander and gunnery cadres, amongst others, being attended in preparation for what we know from experience will be a busy time.

**ALMA COMPANY**

Officer Commanding	-	Maj Finlay Bibby/ Maj Chris Armitage
Second-in-Command	-	Capt T Flecchia
CSM	-	WO2 DC Wyeth
CQMS	-	CSgt S Harrison
WSM	-	CSgt A Moore

**1 Platoon**

Pl Comd – Lt Tom Appleyard  
 Pl Sgt – Sgt S Lynch  
 WR Sgt – Cpl A Williams

**2 Platoon**

Pl Comd – (Gapped)  
 Pl Sgt – Sgt L Burrows  
 WR Sgt – Cpl C Jones

**3 Platoon**

Pl Comd – Lt Calum Cameron  
 Pl Sgt – Sgt R Bishop  
 WR Sgt – Cpl B Johnson

Following the handover of the Patrol Base 1 (PB1) Area of Operations to Charlie Company 40 Commando, Alma Company enjoyed decompression in the comparatively cold and windy beaches of Cyprus before landing in RAF Brize Norton and travelling back to Battlesbury Barracks in Warminster. The Company marched onto the Parade Square with gusto to a fantastic reception by emotional family and friends before heading into the Wellesley for a beer and a catch up.

Unfortunately, and very sadly, there was a farewell to make to Sergeant Gareth Thursby at his funeral, which his wife requested be delayed until Alma returned to the UK. It was held in Skipton, his home town and was galvanising to see the support of the local Dales community in a packed church spilling out in the popular market town. It was a much needed opportunity for the Company to say goodbye properly.

The Company was, was however, tragically informed of the death of Kingsman Ryan Ward soon after the funeral. A popular attachment for the operational tour from 1 LANCS, he took his life after finding it difficult to live with the aftermath of events in Afghanistan. He was an outstanding addition to the Company and will be sorely missed. His funeral was held in Kendal, which saw the High Street lined from end to end with those wishing to say farewell.

The week before Christmas leave saw the whole Battalion move north to Yorkshire where in the lashing rain of Halifax and the bitterly cold streets of York homecoming parades were held. Alma enjoyed being at the front of the Battalion as it passed through the Regimental home towns where, despite the typical wintery weather, people had come out in force to welcome us home.

Fortunately the parade in York marked the start of five

weeks post tour and Christmas leave, it provided the opportunity for us all to settle in and see our families and finally relax. It was re-assuring to see how the men of the Company looked after each other in these weeks, keeping in touch and keeping an eye on one another.

The bliss of leave did not last too long and before we knew it we were back in Battlesbury with a new task and a new mission. Alma Company is to return to the Armoured Infantry role which equates to a frenzy of activity, a multitude of courses to re-qualify ourselves on the armoured vehicles. The majority of the men relish the idea of returning to our 'bread and butter' but some would inevitably prefer to keep themselves as pure-bred bayonet fighters. The past few weeks have seen a hive of activity, dusting off driving licences following the arrival of the Warrior Sergeants and Warrior Sergeant Major, whilst the Company has split to the four winds on driver, gunner and commanders cadres.

There have been several personnel changes to the Company since our return from Afghanistan, with goodbyes to Captain Sparks (an instructional role at Operational Training and Advisory Group [OPTAG]); Lieutenant Dan Arnold (liaising with 2 YORKS in Cyprus); Sergeant Phil Smith (returning to The Mercians)



**Alma  
Parade  
in  
York**



**Alma Company**

as well as our Duke of Lancaster's Regiment Battlefield Casualty Reinforcements (BCRs) and the 4 YORKS TA cohort. The OC, Major Finlay Bibby, moves on but remains in Warminster at the Collective Training Group (CTG) after two and half years in command of the

Company. He left his indelible mark on the Company in the form of a fantastic Spartan Helmet as his gift to the men of Alma. Major Chris Armitage leads the Company through the Armoured Infantry re-conversion and into the Land Warfare Centre Battlegroup (LWC BG) role.

### BURMA COMPANY

Officer Commanding - Maj R Singleton  
 Second-in-Command - Capt A Lewis  
 CSM - WO2 G Anderson  
 Company Quartermaster Sergeant - CSgt M Lightowlers

#### 4 Platoon

Pl Comd - Lt A Ledger/Lt A McClement  
 Pl Sgt - Sgt S Hunter

#### 5 Platoon

Pl Comd - Lt T Glover  
 Pl Sgt - Sgt M O'Hara

#### 6 Platoon

Pl Comd - Lt K Quraishy  
 Pl Sgt - Sgt L Senior

On return from Op HERRICK 16 the Company enjoyed a period of normalisation training which included a half marathon, paintballing and, of course, a beer or two. After an initial period of leave our attention turned to drill and the parades in Warminster, Halifax and York before a long period of Post Operational Tour Leave (POTL) over Christmas.

2013 saw a significant change in personnel across Burma Company. Old faces leaving included Captain Carter (the self styled 'Lion of the Bowri') who moved to Mortars Platoon; Captain Townsend began a tour as a Platoon Commander at ITC Catterick; Lieutenant Wood moved to AFC Harrogate as a Platoon Commander; Sergeant Pears moved to Leeds as a PSI with 4 YORKS;

Sergeant Shaw moved to Coronna Company as a Platoon Sergeant; Sergeant Marshall moved to ITC Catterick; Sergeant McConnell began a tour in Javelin Platoon and Corporal Bishop was promoted and took over a Platoon Sergeant slot in Alma Company. We have also provided soldiers to both Support Company and the CIS Platoon and they are all doing well in their new jobs and are demonstrating their versatility. Arriving in the Burma team are Colour Sergeant Lightowlers from ITC Catterick and Sergeant's Senior, O'Hara and Hunter as well as Corporal's Lawton and Bingley from other Companies in the Battalion.

Finally, and worthy of a special mention, WO2 Seviour moved on from the post as CSM Burma and is now busy



**Major Singleton presenting Burma Company for inspection in Halifax**

in the Unit Welfare Office as he transitions into civilian life – his hard work and enthusiasm throughout two challenging years is hugely appreciated.

The company is now returning to conventional basic skills in preparation for our new role as the light role company in the Land Warfare Centre (LWC) Battlegroup beginning on June 13. We have conducted lots of live

firing and are currently focussed on Section and Platoon level training with two weeks of CT level 1 and 2 training scheduled for Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA) and Brecon in April 13. As a taster we will challenge our mental and physical grit with an inter-platoon navigation exercise over Pen-y-Fan in Wales in March 13.

**CSM Seviour  
marches  
Burma Coy  
to their  
families**



**CORUNNA COMPANY**

Officer Commanding	-	Major E Colver MBE
Second-in-Command	-	Capt N Ross
WSM	-	CSgt A Rudd
CSM	-	WO2 Whitehouse
Company Quartermaster Sergeant	-	CSgt D Bagnall

**7 Platoon**

Pl Comd - Capt D Brennan  
Pl Sgt - Sgt S Watts  
WR Sgt - Sgt I Lockwood

**8 Platoon**

Pl Comd - 2Lt T Burnham  
Pl Sgt - Sgt P Shaw  
WR Sgt - Cpl M Maguire

**9 Platoon**

Pl Comd - Capt C Becher  
Pl Sgt - Sgt T Brennan  
WR Sgt - Sgt I Bowan

Corunna Coy has been a hive of activity since returning from HELMAND in September. Drill practice under WO2 Whitehouse's expert tutelage, Combined Field Exercise (CFX) commitments in support of 1 RRF who are about to deploy to theatre in the AI role, and a host of other activities and training has ensured that the Officers and Soldiers of Corunna have continued to be tested.

Contrary to the Company Sergeant Major's wishes it hasn't all been square bashing and exercises though; there have been moments to savour as well. The Officers' and senior NCOs' dinner night which took place in mid Sept 12 offered the perfect opportunity to celebrate the Company's return to Warminster. WO2 Garbutt, having served with the Coy in HELMAND before returning to the Rear Operations Group, attended the evening along with Captain Pringle (Fire Support Team Comd) and Captain Castello (Battle Captain).

In mid November Corunna deployed north to celebrate our homecoming amongst the people of Huddersfield and Kirklees. This special part of our heartland has paid a heavy price in Afghanistan and it was felt appropriate that we should recognise their support, love and sacrifice by marching through the town and having a service in the central church. It was both extremely moving and very rewarding to see the people of Huddersfield lining the streets to welcome the soldiers of Corunna home. My special thanks go out to Major (Retd) Bob Heron for all his hard work to make the day possible.

That was not the end of marching for Corunna as we joined the rest of Battalion to march through Halifax and York. This was another special moment for the men and women of Corunna as it brought us back in line with our friends and colleagues in the other companies and ended our time as an independent unit. Furthermore, it was a

chance to take stock and appreciate all that each Coy had achieved and endured.

Our commitment to Zulu Company, 1 RRF has seen many of Corunna hierarchy deploy on their MST as observer mentors culminating with a FTX on Salisbury Plain designed specifically for the AI Coy which was long overdue. Scenarios were written from our own



**Corunna Company marching**

experiences in Helmand and designed to test the Fusiliers in a contemporary environment, or at least as close to it as you can get in December on Salisbury Plain.

The past few months have seen many personnel leaving and joining Corunna. Special mention and thanks must go to Lieutenant Kume-Davy, Colour Sergeant Kitridge, Sergeant Daniels, Sergeant Reid and Corporal O'Grady who have all been posted outside of the Battalion. We wish them all the very best in their new roles and look forward to seeing them return soon. We have also said goodbye to numerous other key personalities who have taken their expertise elsewhere in the Battalion, once again thank you for everything.

There are exciting times ahead for Corunna with adventure training, sport and new challenges around the corner. Although change is difficult I am confident that the men and women of Corunna will approach it with the same inspiring drive and attitude that has got us through the past 18 months.



**Major Colver leading Corunna on parade in Battlesbury Barracks**

### **FIRE SUPPORT COMPANY**

Officer Commanding - Maj D P Holloway  
 CSM - WO2 (CSM) Egbury  
 Company Quartermaster Sergeant - CSgt Lambert  
 WSM - Sgt Kipling

Recce Pl Comd – Capt R Taylor  
 Recce Pl 2ic – CSgt McKie

Mortar Pl Comd – Capt A Hammond  
 Mortar Pl 2ic – WO2 Hopkinson

FSG Comd – Capt I Martin  
 FSG 2ic – Sgt Mcconnell

Sniper Pl Comd – CSgt Edley

Since my last submission to the Journal the Company has recovered from Op HERRICK 16 after handing over the Company tasks to 40 Commando Royal Marines.

The Company recovered back to the UK via decompression in Cyprus complete less for the Mortar Platoon, who recovered back with their attached

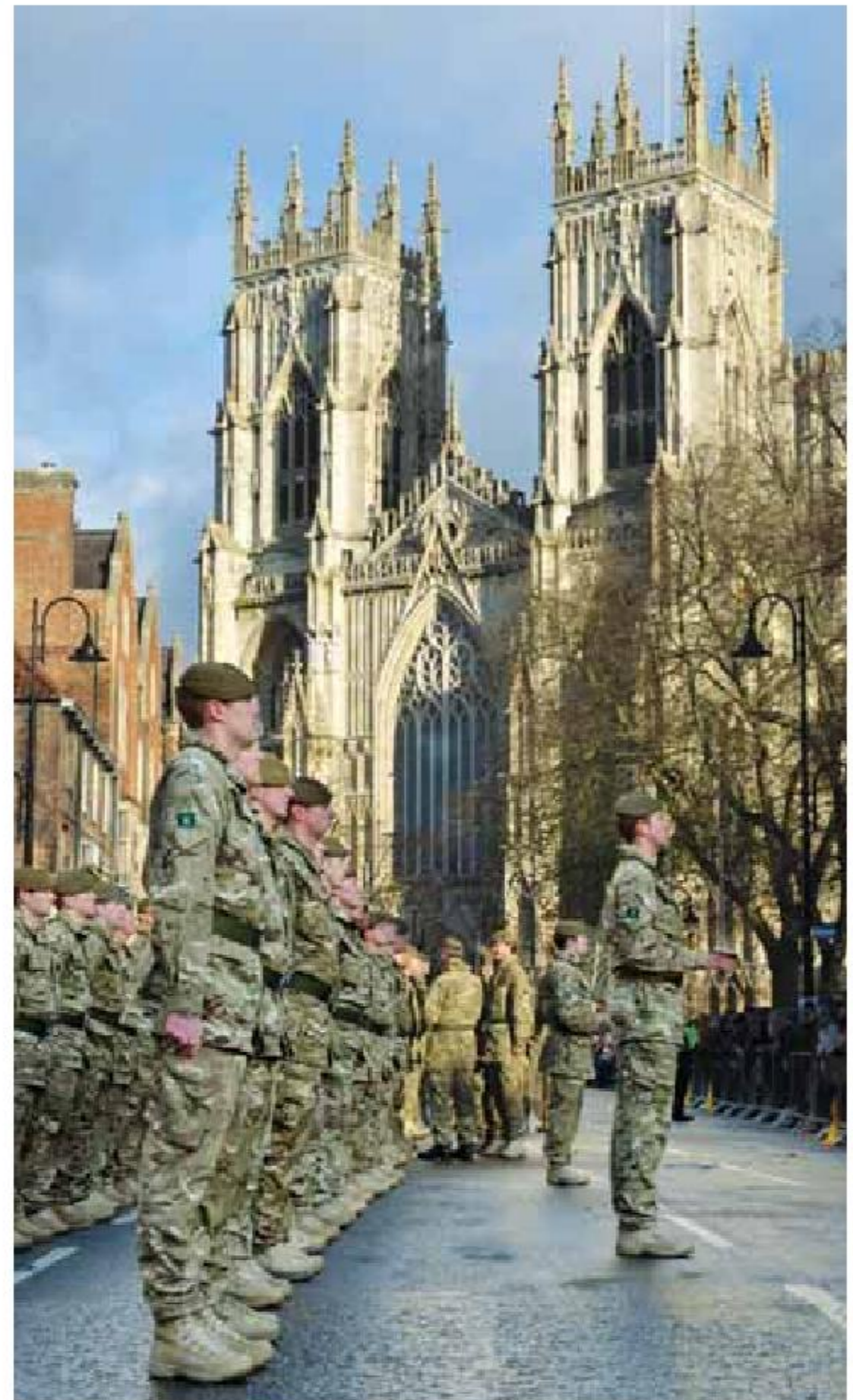


**Somme Company in Afghanistan**

company. Although many of the Company wanted to return back to the UK without decompression, they fully enjoyed their time on the beach and drinking their four cans of ale. It had to be said that four cans is quite enough ale to help Lance Corporal Nunn, Privates Woodward and Miller to join the band on stage and sing. Mr Egbury also took a lot of the brunt of the jokes from the comedian.

On return to Battlesbury Barracks the Company was met by our families from throughout the country which was a huge boost for morale. We spent a small amount of time with our loved ones before the RSM was drilling us around the Parade Square in preparation for the freedom parades. The CSM was very complimentary about the Company Officers' drill, in particular Captain Martin's. With a plenty of drill under our belt and lots of support from the local people, Number 4 Guard marched through Warminster to the Minster to conduct a moving service and receive the Freedom of Warminster. The afternoon saw the Company receive our campaign medals from Brigadier Jackson and march pass His Grace, The Duke of Wellington. This was only a taster for the support we received while marching through Halifax and York, it was quite outstanding how many people turned up on a wet day in Halifax and a very cold day in York. They are days that will live in our memories for many a year. For those readers who turned up to support, thank you. After a special service in York Minster, the JNCOs and Privates fell out for a hugely deserved leave, while the Officers, Warrant Officers and SNCOs celebrated Ruperts. As expected the Companys' SNCOs outshone the competition, with a superb skit about the Platoon Commanders, especial Captain Taylor's infamous recce patrol.

After Christmas leave the Company returned straight back to a series of cadres in preparation for the take-over of the Land



**Somme Company on parade outside the York Minster**

Warfare Centre Battle Group. The Company has been concentrating on converting back to Armoured Infantry and learning our core Fire Support skills. We received over 26 new members into the Company in January in order that we have the required manning for the new role. The WSM has been incredibly busy coordinating driving, gunnery and commanders cadres for Warrior/Bulldog/CVR(T), which have been nonstop, but have been enjoyable for the students and for the young RIGs and DMIs. Colour Sergeant McKie coordinated the Surveillance and Target Acquisition cadre which was the first step towards the Platoon specific cadres and concentrated on navigation and reconnaissance. The Mortar Platoons' time has been taken up with conversation to Armour and the 12 Mechanised Brigade Mortar Concentration which has started this week. Over the next month we will see the Platoons deploy on light role exercises learning their basic skills again prior to collective armoured exercise in the build up to CAST and CATT.



**Mortar Cadre**

Fire Support Group. Finally as a Company we also express our deepest sympathy to WO2 Jason Hopkinson for the loss of his wife Tracey after a long battle against cancer. Our thoughts go out to him and his family.

### **Headquarter Company**

The Company returns from some well-deserved

Congratulations to WO2 Burke who was selected to become a RQMS at Chicksands, also to Sergeants Barnes, Senior and Brennan on their move to become rifle Platoon Sergeants and the training wing. We have been reinforced with Sergeant Kipling who has filled the WSM appointment and Sergeant McConnell who has moved into

Christmas Leave, and life continues at high intensity once again with the Battalion running at full capacity getting ready for the challenging year we face in 2013. The Company will be training to get the basics right and re-familiarising ourselves with armour thus taking up the first quarter of the year.

Everybody has worked hard and I am extremely proud of what Headquarter Company has already and will continue to achieve this year. The Company is full of professional men and women often working long hours behind the scenes ensuring that the Battalion's needs are met in a timely and professional manner.

The individual Platoons and Departments describe their own experiences as you continue to read on.

### **Catering Department**

By the end of October all the chefs had returned from Afghanistan. There were many challenges throughout with severe weather, chefs being casevaced and equipment failures but the team did an outstanding job and gained much praise for their determination and professionalism. Post Tour Leave followed as well as a fantastic Homecoming Party. Outside caterers were brought in to enable maximum attendance from the chefs and a great night was had by all, it was good to be home.

Back in the home base Sergeant Marston had run the Rear Operations Group catering, doing a sterling job of supporting the families of the deployed as well as catering for the Funeral Parties. She also trained with the Combined Services Catering Team ahead of the Culinary Olympics in October. The team went to Germany representing Great Britain and came a very close second to the Swiss Team. Sergeant Marston gained 2 Golds in the Cold Platter and Hot Kitchen categories.

A busy Christmas period followed with Medal Parades and Freedom Marches all attended and supported by the chefs. OP RESET was the focus after leave, Private Cozens deployed with the football team to California and a number of chefs prepared for cycling the American West Coast, surfing in Newquay and scuba diving in Gibraltar. We now look forward to the role change to the Land Warfare Centre and much time on Salisbury Plain!

### **CIS PLATOON**

RSO: - Capt C Ibbotson

RSWO: - WO2 G Hind

The CIS Platoon returned back to Warminster after a very successful and busy tour on H16, for some well earned Post Op Tour Leave (POTL). Since returning from leave the CIS Platoon have been busy preparing for the new role within the Land Warfare Centre Battle Group (LWC), working hard to ensure Battlegroup HQ can move out onto Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA) and be able to communicate with the rest of the Battle group.

The arrival of nine new members to the platoon was welcomed by all especially Private Simpson and Ward who are grateful of the fact that somebody else can drive 0B instead of them, (I think LAD will be happier as the new guys might be able to drive them better). The coming

months will remain very busy for CIS Platoon with the introduction of the new Infantry Platoon Radio Operators Cadre (IPRO) being introduced, keeping all instructors on their toes and training members of the Battalion to be platoon and Coy radio operators, along with CAST and CATT being chucked in there to keep us busy as well.

The CIS Platoon are looking forward to the arrival of the manpower from the second Battalion, all of whom will be welcomed with open arms, to bolster the platoon up to full strength before taking on the LWC role in June. Finally the CIS Platoon would like to congratulate Lance Corporal Stokes and his girlfriend on the birth of their new born son Dillon Jacob.

## QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

QM: - Maj S Caine  
 RQMS: - WO2 M Connell  
 QM(T): - Capt N Wilson  
 RQMS(T): - WO2 Simms

With the tour ending like any other for QMs department we were the last group out of Afghanistan having to closing down the final parts of the Battalion's HERRICK 16 tour. With no rest, we picked up the G4 reins from the Rear Operations Group who had done an outstanding job holding the home base while we were away. We now set our sights on another demanding training year whilst preparing in earnest for the Combined Assurance Week (the old LSI/ECI inspections) in April. Straight after that, we get ready to receive the uplift of Vehicles and equipment ready for the new role of Land Warfare Battle Group again in June.

Congratulations to Captain Nick Wilson,

Quartermaster Technical on promotion to Major later this year and on getting an MBE in the New Year's Honours List; it is well deserved after nearly 3 years serving the Battalion as the Unit Welfare Officer. Congratulations also goes out to the two RQMS's who are both promoted to WO1 RSM in 2013, WO2 Simms to RSM 3YORKS and WO2 Connell to RSM 4YORKS.

As a closing note, I leave the post of QM in April and move on to Belize. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all current and past members of the Quartermaster's Department that I have served with, for their help, support and guidance. I wish them and their families all the best for the future in whatever they do.

## LAD

EME: - Capt M Cary

Now that we have had a chance to regroup from Op HERRICK 16, the LAD is getting stuck into building core competence and relearning the 'New Basics' that have been somewhat forgotten during MST. This includes working hard on the Battalion's extensive A Vehicle fleet that includes 19 x WARRIOR, 14 x 430 Series Bulldog and 8 x CVRT; not to mention over 80 other B Vehicles and pieces of equipment.

We have had a huge change around of characters in the LAD – over 20 personnel posted out and many new arrivals getting stuck into their new appointments. This includes a new WSM (Staff Sergeant Irwin) and 3 new Artificer vehicles. We have also taken the time to enjoy

a week of Adventurous Training; 25 members of the LAD visited the REME Lodge in Bavaria and conducted Ski Foundation training. The photo below is of the ski team plus attachments including the Regimental Medical Officer (Major Nick Walker) the Adjutant (Captain Simon Davies) and OC Mortars (Captain Hammond) outside the REME Lodge in Gunsried-Sage.

After an extremely busy year that included countless family events, dinners, theme park visits and days out the Unit Welfare Office turned its attention to the closing events of the tour.

First up were the Welcome Home Parades; wives, children, girlfriends, boyfriends, mothers and fathers



**Ex  
 BAVARIAN  
 DUKE  
 Group  
 Photo**



## Welfare



**Families await the return of the battalion**

flocked to Battlesbury Barracks on mass to welcome home their loved ones. Emotional scenes erupted and tears flowed as the families reunited once more.

Warminster too welcomed home the soldiers, who marched through the town centre to rapturous applause. The town has been impressively supportive of 3 YORKS throughout the tour, standing by us in the most difficult of times.

The soldiers received recognition for their service at the Medals Parade; once again proud families were drawn to Warminster from all over the country to support our soldiers.

The children of the Battalion's soldiers have had a difficult year with a parent away in Afghanistan, so in recognition a bespoke medal was commissioned to acknowledge their strength and support. The presentation took place on a crisp winter's morning but the bouncy castles helped to keep the kids warm while they awaited the appearance of Peppa Pig, Bath rugby team players and British Olympic athletes who carried out the presentation.

Christmas saw the annual wives party which has been



**Children's Medals**

our biggest ever, with first rate entertainment, prizes and food; it offered a fantastic end to this challenging year.

We are looking forward to welcoming some new arrivals this year, as families from 2 YORKS join us here in Warminster, where they are most welcome.

### Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess

Early 2012 seems a very long time ago. Mess members were scarce and widely spread with pre-deployment training and sub unit preparation for HERRICK 16 well under way. This did not hide the fact that the Mess needed gutting, and all property removing for refurbishment whilst deployed in Afghanistan. IC Property Sergeant Pears and living in Mess members took on the painful task of ensuring this happened. Their pain was eased by a pint or two of the finest Timothy Taylors quality ale. On return the transformation was outstanding, in essence a brand new Mess. The Commanding Officer officially opened it and joined us for a happy hour(s). When Mess members were complete and back in Warminster, the need to get together was high on the to-do list, and what better way to do it than a traditional Regimental Dinner with our long awaited ladies. This was a perfect chance to also take the opportunity to bid farewell to WO1 Angelo (ASM), Staff Sergeant Andrews



**Bath Rugby and Olympic athletes present children's medals to Chloe Dixon**

(RLC) and Sergeant McGregor (3 YORKS) on completion of 22 years colour service.

3 YORKS marched through the Towns of Warminster, Halifax and the City of York, culminating in a spectacular Remembrance Service in the York Minster. The change from pounding the hot dry desert in Afghanistan to pounding the drill square in sub-zero temperatures was quite a culture shock. It was at this time the CSMs clicked into drill mode, the shouting and screaming by all lasted about a day before voices gave way to high pitched squeals no matter how many lozenges were sucked upon. It was now time for drill to be conducted via proxy and Platoon Sergeants were rotated through.

The long lasting tradition of Rupert's was ever amongst us and as always we had prepared in grave detail. The Officers had left the brunt of the work to Captain Stow, who might I add pulled it right out of the bag. Colour Sergeant Edley's skit of Captain Sparks who was up to no good in a Patrol Base somewhere in the Nareh-e Saraj district in Helmand was hilarious, I'm sure all who were there will agree.

It is with great regret one key member is no longer with us, WO2 Terry Conley. His larger than life personality, banter and drive especially during Rupert's will be sadly missed.

The Battalion suffered some great losses last summer, and so did our Mess. It is with great sadness that Sergeant Nigel Coupe (LANCS) and Sergeant Gareth Thursby (3 YORKS) are no longer here to share our times to come. Men you are gone but never forgotten.

On the 15 Feb 13, WO2 Jason Hopkinson lost his beloved wife Tracy, mother to Amy, Lucie and Poppy in a very brave battle with cancer. She was a dear friend to all and will be most definitely be missed by everyone, our thoughts remain firmly with them at this time.

As a result of recent Promotion Boards congratulations are in order firstly to WO2 Wyeth on being appointed as the RQMS (T), 3 YORKS. WO2 Connell RQMS (M), on promotion to WO1 and will be taking over as 4 YORKS RSM in the near future. WO2 Simms RQMS (T) who will take over as RSM 3 YORKS. Finally WO1 Szymanski (RSM) on a well deserved promotion to Captain who will soon move over to the dark side and assume the appointment as the MTO 3 YORKS.

WO2 Whitehouse PMC

### Officers' Mess

It has been a turbulent time for the Officers Mess since returning from HERRICK as we have had to move into temporary digs whilst the main Mess building is renovated. This has seen a move to the upstairs of the Wellesley Club and commandeering of half of the Corporal's Mess for meal times and functions. Although far from ideal it has not stopped us from throwing our fair share of functions. Prior to evacuating the Mess we dined out Major's Bibby, Wade-Smith and Driver and Captain's Ross and Bond and we wish them all the best in their new jobs either in Service or on civvi street. Just 24 hours and many white van loads later we had emptied the Mess and threw our first function in the Wellesley to thank our Ladies for all their support over the past 12

months. There was much scepticism as to whether the new location would have the atmosphere required but I think it fair to say the combination of much hard work from the subalterns and Mess staff, a vibrant disc jockey and our ever faithful band 'Foreplay' made a good night for the both the Ladies and their men.

Silly season was a little different this year with Ruperts being run up in Strensall Barracks, York due to the whole Battalion being there on welcome home parades. Although the location was different we once again managed to make the most of things with the Officers' winning the skits hands down thanks to an acting and ad-libbing master class by Captain Henry Stow. Both messes then retired to York for a few quiet beers before bed, enough said!

The New Year brings new challenges but the Mess remains strong and we look forward to a busy and social 2013.

### Rugby

The 2012/13 rugby union season has been somewhat limited for 3 YORKS this year due to Op HERRICK but also the weather which scuppered our efforts to play some fixtures both pre and post Xmas. We have only managed one fixture, 14 Regiment RA, at the time of writing and I am pleased to announce we are currently unbeaten! The rugby league team goes from strength to strength though and I would like to congratulate the Rear Ops Group once again for the amazing feat of winning the Army Cup once again.

The club is looking healthy, training is well attended and we are looking forward to two tours in 2013. The first, in March, will be to Yorkshire where we will play three games (two Union and one League) and the second to Australia in June/July. We are extremely fortunate to be the only unit in the Forces to have been granted authority to tour Australia this year due to the British Lions touring at the same time. We will not take this fortune lightly and plan to use the tour as an opportunity to educate and share experiences of Afghanistan with our Australian partners. I would like to thank all those who have already sponsored the club for the Australia tour and I look forward to writing about it in depth in the summer issue of the Journal.

Major E Colver

### Surfing

Mid November may seem like an unlikely time of year to venture into the Atlantic Ocean for fun, but that was exactly the plan for 12 members of 3YORKS who journeyed to the south-west in late 2012. Their trip, part of the Op-RESET drive was the first to have taken place, and there was much excitement amongst those members of Corunna Company who departed early on November 21. Having teamed up with ex-military instructors from the charity company 'Surf Action', who seek to use surfing as medium for assisting service personnel, the soldiers took to the waves. It was a fantastic few days in excellent conditions, which allowed individuals to develop confidence and progress at their own pace. Such was the enthusiasm shown by those who took part that a second trip to the same location is being planned for later in the spring.

2nd Lieutenant Tom Burnham

## EX TOUGH GUY



**Captain Ross, Corporals Oldham & Skidmore, and Private Skidmore, all unaware of the pain to come**



**Corporal Skidmore fighting off the cold at the finish line**

The 27 January 2013 is a day that will stay with me for a long time to come. For some of the participants it was a great victory, but for others, they experienced defeat at a new level. Preparing for success on the Tough Guy challenge takes twenty percent fitness and eighty percent stupidity, probably something I already have in abundance. At the beginning of race day, we seemed to be cracking the fitness before the race had even started, having to push the nine seat minibus out of a boggy field on the way to the event. This was not the start we had in mind. The atmospherics were of no surprise; people clinging to the last bit of warmth out of the elements and others embracing the event in their crazy fancy dress outfits. Finally, we had registered for the challenge and stood at the start line. We knew who the real tough guys were; short shorts and the YORKS cross country vests were good enough for these Yorkshire warriors.

From the word go it was on for the straight ten miles of muddy hills, chest deep waters with ice like slates of granite, fire and even electrocution was involved. So far the race was deserving of its title. Besides the devastating nature of the course, it was hypothermia that was the main challenge of the day. There were marshals on quads with foil blankets, and making good use of them with the broken contenders.

Besides the carnage of the gruelling conditions and savage obstacles we all succeeded in completing the challenge. The team had three out of the four of us finish in the top one hundred; a great achievement in a race that had three and a half thousand entrants. Despite the pain and discomfort only time will tell if the YORKS Adventure Racing Team will be tough enough for the 2014 race.

Corporal Jamie Oldham

## Wellington College Combined Cadet Force (CCF)

Wellington College Combined Cadet Force started the second half of the year in full flow, with activities covering the full spectrum of Cadet syllabus included the whole Corps attending Field Day training, an overnight Field Exercise at Sandhurst for elements of the Advance Infantry and Junior Leadership Cadre and the Corps of Drums supporting the School Field Gun Team at the British Military Tournament at Earls Court. This term also saw our Cadet RSM, William McCreadie installed as a Lord Lt's Cadet for Berkshire, which has led to him being in attendance with the Lord Lt at numerous events around the County.



### RN Section

The RN section focused very much on the basics bring the new draft up to speed on all things nautical, however they did find time to enter the CCF Regatta to maintain their sea legs.

### Royal Marines Section

The Pringle Trophy was the main effort this term after coming third in the competition last year expectation was

high, however it was not to be, a poor start meant the team was always behind the front runners and finished mid table, with lesson learned we look forward to next year competition with vengeance. We also say goodbye to one of the stalwart of the Royal Marine Section Captain Gareth Pearson, who has for the last five years given sterling service and has stood as a role model to the Cadets of how an officer should conduct himself, he leaves us for the position of Deputy Head, Lord Wandsworth School and we wish him God speed.

### Army Section

Junior Leaders Cadre (L6th). The JLC in its quest to produce leaders and to develop potential NCOs expanded its curriculum with confidence building on the new High Ropes Course (HRC). The HRC puts an onus on inter-dependability, team work, leadership and mutual trust with all tasks only being able to be accomplished by the Cadets working to together and supporting each other throughout, a great asset for the development of the Cadet and Leaders.

**Corunna (The Advanced Infantry) Coy:** The Field Day at Sandhurst in October had Corunna Coy testing its Fieldcraft skills against one another in the form of a stalking exercise along with first aid, casualty evacuation, and section attacks. The term culminated in the Advanced Infantry Badge Test and Live Firing on the Ranges at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.

Waterloo Company: The 4th Form Coy continues to find innovative ways to complete the CCF basic training with Fieldcraft interspersed with an introduction to military ethos which this term has included a visit by all platoons to the REME Garrison at Arborfield.

### RAF Section

As the RAF had a very different style of training, an increased focus on drill and turnout did not detract from the key objective getting as many Cadets to RAF Benson to experience flying as possible, the success of Adult Instructor (soon to be commission) Clare Edwards in developing the flying curriculum among the Cadets has been of particular note.

### British Military Tournament (BMT)

As always the College Field Gun Team and the Corps of Drums took part in the BMT at Earls Court. A combination of heady atmosphere, and exciting spectacle all make this probably the most rewarding event for the Cadets involved, may it long continue.

### Light Cavalry Section

A great year for the Light Cavalry Section, Miles O'Donnell and Ella Wheeler led a team of four CCF cadets to victory at the Honourable Artillery Company International show jumping competition. Miles and Ella were selected from 25 riders from all over the country who competed at the home of the Light Cavalry in Windsor to win their place on the team of 4 cadets. They were joined by two other cadets to make up the only cadet team to be invited to participate in this prestigious event. The riders were allocated King's Troop horses who are not natural show jumpers, and were strong and in some cases very young and inexperienced. It was a true test of horsemanship just to get round the course safely across the two rounds of jumping. Miles and Ella had very difficult horses and rode fantastic rounds. The competition was tough with 25 teams from all the mounted units from the UK, Belgium, France and the

Netherlands. The CCF team finished first an amazing achievement given the company they were in and a huge testament to the quality of their riding. Miles O'Donnell was also awarded the best cadet rider, the award for which was presented by Colonel Booth, an OW (Benson) - a great birthday present for Miles who turned 15 today. It was a huge honour to ride at the new home of the King's Troop in Woolwich, and to know more about what they do and of course to ride their beautiful horses.

### Around the Corps

The College CCF also increased its links to the Academy in Tidworth, the support for this new CCF is one of the key elements in the growth of CCF in state schools, and we will continue to strengthen these links in the future. The Term also saw the Remembrance services with all elements of the Corps being in attendance with Wellington record of selfless commitment in both World Wars and other conflicts this is a pivotal time in the school calendar one that the School and the Corps observe with utmost respect and knowledge of those who went before us.

Major Gerry Long, College Adjutant

### JUST A THOUGHT

Wellington College unveiled its plans for a Shanghai campus in March this year and one can only wish it the very best of good fortune as it seeks to attract Chinese pupils who can both afford the fees (probably not very difficult in today's Shanghai) and will benefit from an English public school type of education. We must hope that there will be an equivalent of the CCF, that keystone to the development of character in the better schools, with many excellent lessons for life, such as standing still and not fidgeting; polishing your shoes; getting your hair cut; ducking the more onerous duties; claiming credit for your juniors' achievements; and so on.

Better still, the cadets should wear the Duke of Wellington's badge in their headwear (in passing I hope His Grace is getting a cut of this deal, for the use of his name) and keep the Latin motto, both things shared of course with the late and soon to be even later Duke of Wellington's Regiment.

In fact, there is an opportunity here for a regimental entrepreneur. The British Government has decided that it can keep our citizens safe without the Dukes, so what about setting up a "proper" regiment of that name in China, fully integrated in the Peoples' Liberation Army but offering a different and distinctly up-market kind of soldiering? A family regiment, with its own band and drums of course, an RHQ staffed by a couple of ROs and ex Chief Clerks, an Old Comrades Association and Branches, and all the trimmings. The Dukes London Group should probably appoint the first few Commanding Officers and a sprinkling of other key personnel, in the Gurkha fashion. RHQ in Hong Kong perhaps; they know us there.

I can't think why nobody has thought of this before.

Editor

### The Memoirs of Lt Tom Briggs MC, 2/7 DWR.

*Lt Tom Briggs landed in Brittany in April 1940 with 2/7 DWR, and was captured after a disastrous campaign on 12 July in Normandy, although the majority of the battalion managed to get away by ship. This story is about Brigg's experiences as a prisoner, rather than how he became one. For the next 3 years he was held in a number of camps, and in the course of his captivity he met a Dr Falkner, who maintained an interest in both his welfare and his connections back home in UK.*

*In July 1943 he was told that he, alone of the PoWs in his camp, was to be moved to Berlin. No explanation was given. He was escorted as a prisoner by train and on arrival in Berlin was taken directly from the station to again meet Dr Falkner. He realised that for some unknown reason he was some kind of special PoW, and was billeted in a camp within the city for "selected" prisoners. He was even able to do some sightseeing, on parole and under loose escort, and to ask successfully that his brother in law, Lt Col Taylor, be brought from a camp elsewhere to join him.*

*Nearly a year passed, until in June 1944 he was again sent for by Dr Falkner. At last he was to learn something of the reason for his unusual treatment. There is some abridgement of the narrative.*

"Lieutenant Briggs, I should be pleased if you would walk with me this afternoon at 1400 hours. Please come to my office." I attended punctually and Dr Falkner was waiting for me; we proceeded without comment down a country path towards a river, well beyond the perimeter of the camp.

"I have brought you here so that no-one can hear our conversation but, before we proceed, I must ask one question and I will understand your answer whatever it may be, for you have been a *kampfanfänger* for approximately four years and attitudes can change. The question, Lieutenant, is a serious one. Are you prepared to lay down your life for your fellow prisoners?" It needed little thought to answer, "I have done this before and I am perfectly happy to do it again provided the exercise is neither impetuous or foolhardy." Falkner then said, "My next question is one of absolute necessity and, in giving me your word of honour, I will, with equal honour, tell you that no act which I ask you to do will be dishonourable to you or your Regiment. Think carefully before you answer me because, from this moment, you and I must have absolute trust in each other. My question is, will you give me your word of honour as a British officer that you will not disclose any detail of anything that I may communicate to you this afternoon. I will tell you the reason as soon as I have your answer." I replied, "It is on your undertaking that there is nothing dishonourable in what I will be expected to do that I give you my word of honour not to disclose any part of our conversations this afternoon to any person." "That means, Lieutenant, any person, including your fellow officers, and I promised to tell you the reason. It is simply that I am a small part in a very important organisation and the Gestapo would go to unlimited lengths to disclose the people involved in the project I will discuss with you, and that means that my wife and children, my mother and father may well be tortured in front of me until I disclose names of people who are involved. This I will not risk and if you cannot accept

what I tell you as true I have no alternative but to shoot you and say that you were escaping from the camp."

I replied that the project was obviously of importance. I had often appreciated from his conversations that he was not in favour of the actions of the Führer and his entourage, but I did not understand why he had chosen me for the task, whatever it may be.

"That is a question that I anticipated and I will tell you why I have chosen you, and you alone. The first is that I know you better than I know most prisoners of war. I have had more conversations with you than any other prisoner. You have been given opportunities to break your parole and escape on several occasions in Berlin, but you honoured your word. I know that you can speak some German for I taught you. You will recall that I was Chief Censor at several of the camps that you have been in and I know from your correspondence that you have influence in England and here is, in fact, a list of the important people to whom you have written whilst you have been a prisoner of war." At that point he pulled from his pocket a long list of ambassadors and noble personages to whom I had written on behalf of the young man in my room at Camp VIIC. I thought it inappropriate to tell Dr Falkner that I had never met one of them, for it was obvious that some extraordinary plot was to be disclosed and, after four years of inactivity, the thought of being useful again in the war was an enormous thrill to me. He then went on to say, "You may not know that you have been recommended for the award of the Military Cross and I have knowledge of the citation. It has, therefore, been proven to me that you have the requisite contacts, the integrity and the courage to carry through what we have in mind. May I now make it abundantly clear that I have your consent to risk your life and your word of honour for secrecy under any circumstances." I simply replied, "Yes." "Well now," he said, "we have not been able to put this plan into effect until now because not enough Germans were convinced that the Third Reich is a disaster for them, but now most

thinking Germans realise that they cannot win the war and that nothing will be left of Germany if we allow the Russians to take over, which it is conceivable that the Americans will permit. It is, therefore, our wish that a responsible, high ranking German will be taken to England by you on the strict understanding that you will obtain an interview with Churchill for him. I remonstrated that this might not be possible, but he replied at once, "You are acquainted with one of his chief Aides and if you cannot accomplish it no-one can." I continued, "Surely you are wrong, for you have one 'in the bag' already, Elphinstone who is the Queen's nephew and whose father is Master of the King's Archers, an honorary title but one of importance, and you also have Hopetoun, who is the son of the Earl of Linlithgow." "May I tell you Lieutenant that both these people have been considered and it is thought by my colleagues and I that you are more suited to the task." "You have not yet said what benefit accrues my fellow officers." "That is quite simple, the lives of more than 1,000 officers will be at serious risk if our plans are not successful for it has been decided that all British officers will become hostages for the safety of Adolf Hitler in the event of a defeat of the German Armies. They will be moved to camps in southern Austria and held as hostages there if the Führer can get back to the vicinity of Berchtesgarden. Before we discuss the method are you prepared to accept the assignment?" "Most certainly if the alternative jeopardises 1,000 lives."

"Now as to the method, as from tomorrow you will be responsible for the purchase of vegetables for the camp and you will go into town each day and buy the vegetables from a grocer's shop. You will always enter the shop alone and any German guard who is with you will remain outside. You will proceed through the shop and up the stairs at the back on to the first floor, where there is an office and most of our meetings in future will be held there. The guard will be given an adequate reason for your delay and will not be suspicious. When you have met all the people concerned you will be asked whether you wish to leave Germany by parachuting into the British or the American lines in France or whether you prefer to go via Switzerland. If you choose the latter it will be necessary for you to wear German uniform and have German papers prepared for you and, you will appreciate, that if you are caught on German soil you could well be shot as a spy." "But surely," I said, "I could prove that I am a POW and I have my German identity disk." "It may not be possible to take this with you and there is the added difficulty that a secure route will have to be worked out in Switzerland so that no informer there will report back to Germany that you have been seen there. Thus, as soon as you were in Switzerland you would wear normal civilian apparel until you were safely inside the British Legation at Berne. I should tell you that the man you will take with you will endeavour to negotiate surrender terms for the German Army."

"Surely," I replied, "it has been said on more than one

occasion that only unconditional surrender would be acceptable to the Allies." "Everything has a price, Lieutenant, and the stakes for both sides at this moment are very high. There is a condition on the whole of the venture which you may consider unusual. It is that you undertake to accompany the chosen person to Churchill and that you personally will be responsible for his safe conduct and his safe return to Germany. You will return with him to this camp, or to some other place that the tide of war may make more safe, and I will require an undertaking from you not to communicate to any person, which includes your mother and your fiancée or any close friend in England, and that you will communicate only with any necessary contact to facilitate the purpose of introducing the two people. The purpose of this secrecy is that no whisper of your presence in England must come to the knowledge of anyone in Germany for there are many informers in England who would be pleased to give such information. So far as your absence here is concerned, this camp will be informed that you have been returned to your Oflag. The Oflag will be informed that you are on the roll of this camp. The period of the venture we wish to be limited to ten days, but more of the details later."

"May I state my views on this?" "Most certainly." "You are risking too much on the life of one person, namely myself, and the plan would be better if you could allow Colonel Taylor to come with me – he could then take over in the event of anything unfortunate happening to me, for he is my future brother-in-law and knows most of the people that I know in this matter. He would, I am sure, be of considerable value."

Dr Falkner then replied that whilst he appreciated the logic, this had not been envisaged by either him or his colleagues; three people were more difficult to move than just two but he would discuss it with his colleagues and let me know the following day. In any event no part of this could be discussed by me with Colonel Taylor for he was included in the security blanket and, in the event of the idea being acceptable, Dr Falkner would inform Colonel Taylor.

The following day I was instructed to go into town to buy the vegetables and, proceeding to the room as previously instructed, I found Dr Falkner waiting for me. He informed me that they would accept Colonel Taylor and he would discuss the project with him that afternoon. If Colonel Taylor would accept the terms and conditions he would be included in the party and, on the next day, when I went into town I would be introduced to Oberst [Colonel] von Spooner who would be in control of the venture so far as I was concerned.

I returned to the camp and said nothing to Colonel Taylor except to tell him it was likely he would be asked to attend at the Kommandatur the next day following my suggestions that he could be very useful to his fellow prisoners of war. He asked a series of questions which I

said I could not answer and I passed the rest of the day wondering what I had let myself in for.

As arranged, I went into town again for the vegetables and went up to the room. The guard once more remaining outside, and there, sitting at the desk was Oberst von Spooner with Dr Falkner standing at his right hand side. He looked the very picture of a Prussian Colonel with a severe countenance, though not a big man. The sort of man you could well expect to have a sabre scare down his cheek but none was visible. I saluted and he returned the salute and asked me to be seated. He asked several questions in German and Dr Falkner, realising the limitations of my German, asked if he could interpret to avoid any misunderstanding. This privilege was granted and I was asked if I would prefer to drop by parachute into British or American forces in British uniform or enter Switzerland in German uniform. I said I had considered this and, although the parachute drop would be quicker, it had an added risk that if I were seen by any of the forces I should be dead before I reached the ground and, at best, there was a risk of separation from anyone who dropped with me. Also, I thought the Americans might have air supremacy over their own forces and the plane itself could be shot down so, since the object was to get to England and back, the journey through Switzerland seemed a little more secure. Von Spooner said he felt the risks were approximately even for it was by no means easy to get across the border, passing both German and Swiss guards, minefields, wire and dogs. If we crossed at the ordinary control point too many Germans would know, or discover subsequently, but since I had expressed a preference of one particular method over the other that would be granted. Within the next few days my papers would be prepared together with photographs in German uniform. The interview was curtly terminated and I returned to camp.

That afternoon Dr Falkner sent for Colonel Taylor and, from subsequent conversations, it appeared that he had

discussed almost an identical proposition with him, stressing only one point that, for the purpose of the journey, I would be in command and not he as Colonel. Colonel Taylor gave his word that he would not divulge any of the conversation except to me and this was accepted.

Later that afternoon Dr Falkner sent for me, told me that he had informed Colonel Taylor of all the salient factors and that I could discuss the problems with him and him with me.

Two days later the photographs were taken in the German uniform of a Hauptman [Captain]; I never saw my papers nor my photograph which I would love to have had.

On the 3rd July Dr Falkner again asked me to accompany him on a walk to the river. As we walked he said that this was a further conversation on my parole; the plans were now advanced and all the events leading to my departure for Switzerland would take place towards the end of July. I asked if the plans were advanced did they know who was going to accompany me and he said, "Yes, it is known but it cannot be disclosed." He went on to say that Colonel Taylor and I would be sent back to Eichstatt VIID the following day and recalled later in the month, but we would be taken to the shop in the village. I asked if I could mention my departure to all my friends and he said I could, it would not look normal unless I did, so I went back into camp, discussed with Colonel Taylor our departure the following day, informed Colonel Needham that I would be leaving and someone would have to take over my duties as I had been informed that my 'rest period' had terminated and we were to be returned to our ordinary camp. The following day we went by wagon to the station and back to Eichstatt which was still under the control of Major Higgon.

*This series will conclude in the next Iron Duke.*



**2Lt Henry Kelly, VC, MC and Bar**

### **Regimental VC – 2Lt Henry Kelly**

Henry Kelly served with 10 DWR, and was awarded the Victoria Cross for most conspicuous bravery in attack at Le Sars on 4 October 1916.

He twice rallied his Company under the heaviest fire, and finally led the only three available men into the enemy trench, and there remained bombing until two of them had become casualties and enemy reinforcements had arrived. He then carried his Company Sergeant Major, who had been wounded, back to our trenches, a distance of seventy yards, and subsequently three other soldiers.

He set a fine example of gallantry and endurance. (London Gazette 25 November 1916).



## ACCOUNT OF 1/7th BATTALION WORLD WAR 2 BY 4613505 Sgt Walter Downs Part 2

*Editor's Note : Walter Downs was born in Sheffield on 24 December 1920, the son of a Hallamshire (York and Lancaster TA) Battalion Sergeant. The family moved from Sheffield to Huddersfield, so Sgt Downs transferred to 7DWR, at the Milnsbridge detachment. In due course Walter also joined 7 DWR, as a boy soldier.*

*In the first part of this memoir 6 and 7 DWR had embarked in HMS Cheshire on 10 June 1944 and arrived off the Normandy coast on 11 June. 7 DWR had been engaged in a number of actions and had moved several miles inland from their beachhead. Walter Downs was in D Company, and his OC was Major Kavanagh. may wish to link back to extracts from Lt Col JHO Wilsey's battle notes and account of this campaign in the last issue.*



Our next objective was a town named Fontenay-le-Pesnil, and the Hallamshires and Lincolns were to join us into the attack, we being on the left flank. My platoon went ahead of the rest of the Company and we came across positions that appeared to have been abandoned, as lots of tinned food was lying about. I told my section to pick up as much as they could carry, as you never knew when it would be needed, so, whilst the rest of the platoon remained there, I took my section forward to a small wood where we stopped and laid low. By this time it was dark and we heard lots of noise from about fifty yards ahead of us, so, telling the lads to stay quiet and remain there, I crawled forward to find a road where the Germans were gathering with their vehicles, ready for moving off.

I returned to my section to find Major Kavanagh had come forward and we went back together and watched from under cover, about ten yards from them. The Major said, "What do you think would happen if we lobbed a couple of hand grenades in amongst that lot." I replied, "Well Sir, the first thing is we would be signing our own death warrants. I think our best bet is to leave them be and for us to return to my section." "I agree entirely, let's

get back," said the Major, so we did just that. When we rejoined my section, Major Kavanagh said he had not eaten since breakfast and was very hungry, so we brought out the tins of food we had collected on our way and had a real feast of cold sausage and vegetables, followed by cold rice pudding. He asked how we came to have this food and, when I explained to him, he told me that the Royal Scots Fusiliers were supposed to be holding that position until we passed through and they deserved to lose their rations.

The attack on Fontenay had been successful although our Company had not been involved, having been on the left flank, and we dug in on the southern edge of the town. During the morning Major Kavanagh came to my section area to tell me of a special patrol he wanted me to take on a reconnaissance as, immediately to our front, was St Nicholas Farm, the object of an attack later that day and I was to find out if the farm was occupied and its strength. I chose two from my section, Boyes, my Bren gunner, and Dilworth, a rifleman, and we set off along this narrow country lane, myself leading on the left; Boyes, with his Bren gun, on the right and Dilworth twenty yards to our rear as the getaway man.

We advanced about 400 yards, I was watching my side when, suddenly, Boyes yelled out, "look out!" and, glancing to my left, I was just in time to see a German disappearing below the hedge. I was carrying a grenade in my left hand and, quickly pulling out the pin, counting two and throwing it over the hedge, I had hardly hit the ground when the grenade exploded. I was on my feet and running back down the lane like an Olympic sprinter. My two companions, with a few seconds start on me, arrived back at our starting line at the same time as myself, to be congratulated by Major Kavanagh. When the attack took place later that afternoon four dead Germans were found with two Spandau guns. Their identification photographs were taken and our Commanding Officer sent them to Major Kavanagh, asking him to pass them on to me, and I still keep them among my Army memorabilia.

Whilst the attack on the Scots Fusiliers was taking

place, our Company was given the task of taking Tessel Wood, on our right, and we advanced in a long line, with my platoon on the right flank. As we went forward, three Germans appeared at the edge of the wood, one carrying a Spandau gun and the remainder carrying ammunition boxes, obviously withdrawing, so I quickly fired a long burst with my Sten gun, killing all three of them. At that moment our Platoon Commander, Mr Alexander, joined my section, all of whom had dropped down into the corn, expecting the Germans to fire at us.

Seeing the situation, Mr Alexander gave the order to advance, unfortunately, at that very moment, a Tiger tank broke cover about three hundred yards away and fired one shot which landed about thirty yards in front of us and caused a number of casualties. Mr Alexander was hit in his throat and, although he could walk, he was unable to speak. Lance Corporal Dobson was hit in the mouth and cheek. Henderson, an old soldier, was hit in the leg and I received a piece of shrapnel in my left wrist which, whilst it bled quite a bit, was not serious. I applied my field dressing and took charge of the platoon, obeying Mr Alexander's signals to take the platoon back to the start line.

Whilst this was going on, three Sherman tanks had come up to support our attack but they immediately came under attack from a Tiger tank which, with three separate shots, knocked out the three Sherman tanks. Crawling through the cornfield back to our start line, I was the back man, ensuring that the wounded kept going and did not drop out. As we passed the end tank, I heard a moaning sound coming from the other side of the tank and, moving towards it, found a wounded Captain, face and hands blackened with burns and in agony. He was unable to move himself, so I managed to get him on my back and, crawling and crouching, managed to carry him about 150 yards, where some stretcher bearers met us and took care of the Captain.

Major Kavanagh was taking care of our own wounded and I put him in the picture about what was happening. He informed me that we were expecting an attack by German infantry, supported by the Tiger tank. He told me that the artillery were bringing a gun up to engage the Tiger tank and asked if I would take a Bren gun up on the right flank and fire on the Germans as they advanced. I agreed to do this and set off, carrying a Bren gun and a box of magazines, and found myself an ideal spot on a banking giving me an excellent field of fire. I was protected by the banking and could see the Tiger tank in its original position and surrounded by what looked like hundreds of German soldiers.

A signal was given and the Germans came forward with the Tiger tank, leaving the edge of the wood and coming into the cornfield. At that moment the artillery gun fired and scored a direct hit on the Tiger which immediately blew up, one of the wheels went over 60 feet. The soldiers carried on walking upright through the corn as though they were on a parade ground. Once within range I opened fire and they began falling down, the remainder just kept marching on, no notion of any battle drill or defensive action. I was kept busy, mag on carry on firing, over and over again, until all my

magazines had been used and, fortunately, no Germans were left standing. I reported back to Major Kavanagh and we rejoined the rest of the Company, where we learned that the action had been completed and we were to dig in on our final objective.

Once we had dug in the normal routine began, with stand-to and patrols re-starting and here we received some very welcome news. Mobile showers with hot and cold water were to be installed in a nearby wood and we were to take it in turns to shower off and to receive a change of underwear and socks. This, after being three weeks in the same clothing was something to look forward to. When our turn came, we made our way to the shower area where we were told to strip off, leaving our shirts, vests and socks in a pile, taking our battledress tops, trousers and boots to another area, collecting towels and soap and then into the shower. What a wonderful feeling that proved to be, beautiful, hot, soapy water pouring down upon you was heavenly. This fantastic bliss was shattered when a German fighter plane suddenly flew over the wood, firing at us as he came. What a frightening experience, being in the nude and being fired at; the German pilot was called some obscene names. Fortunately, no-one was hurt and, after changing into clean underwear and feeling much cleaner, the incident was soon forgotten as we went back to our positions.

At six o'clock that evening, having had our evening meal, those not on duty were relaxing in our slit trenches when in the distance two aeroplanes appeared, a German fighter being chased by a Spitfire. The lads rose as one and, at that moment, the Spitfire hit the German and the pilot bailed out. As his parachute opened, several guns opened fire on the German, who was dead when he hit the ground, our lads claiming revenge for the shower incident.

We continued our patrolling for two more days when we learned that the Durham Light Infantry had passed through our position and we were to attack and take Rouray. We heard a lot of artillery fire and small arms fire for quite a while and learned that the Durham Light Infantry had been heavily counter-attacked and we were to go forward to relieve them. When we arrived near the area we were told that there were lots of casualties and the houses were occupied by some fanatical German troops who were still firing. Major Kavanagh called for some tank support and, when they arrived, we found they were equipped with flame throwers. They did not hesitate but went within twenty yards of the houses and opened up with their flame throwers.

It was a frightening sight, with streams of flames shooting into the houses and the Germans rushing out of the houses, many of them in flames, to be cut down by the tank crews. The rest were taken prisoners and, along with ourselves, set about burying the dead. I was supervising my platoon digging graves for the and the Durham Light Infantry casualties, when I noticed a soldier lying there with a camouflage net over his face, arms by his side, and no sign of injury whatsoever. Curiosity got the better of me and I bent down and removed the net to find that he had been hit with a piece

of shrapnel in the face. I hastily replaced the net and told the lads to leave it like that.

After our action at Rauray, our Company moved forward to a small hamlet called Tessel, which consisted of a school, two farmhouses and several cottages. On the edge of the hamlet was a war memorial honouring the victims of the First World War. We dug our slit trenches about two hundred yards from the houses and posted sentries. We were told that the Germans were in position about half a mile in front of us and we were to be aware of German patrols infiltrating through our positions. Realising that we were on the bridgehead, everyone became very alert. Fortunately the night passed quietly and we 'stood to' as dawn was breaking.

The day passed with an occasional shell burst and, in the late afternoon, our platoon commander, Lt Lappin, was ordered to take out a patrol to a small copse about four hundred yards in front of our position and form a listening post. The patrol included Tommy and Jimmy Simpson and Johnny Preston, also two more, all nineteen years of age. On arrival at the copse they settled down and within half an hour the lads became restless and persuaded Lt Lappin to allow the three pals to move forward to a farmhouse about three hundred yards ahead of them.

It was very dark when they set off and, on reaching the wall surrounding the house, they moved along until they came to a gate leading into a large garden. They entered and Johnny Preston noticed a large sheet of corrugated iron, which he thought would improve his slit trench, so he lifted one end up and pulled it to one side to discover that it had been covering a slit trench which contained a German. The soldier must have thought he was being wakened to go on duty as he rose out of the trench, yawning and stretching out his arms, whereupon Johnny dropped the sheet and, before the German could cry out, shot him. All bedlam broke loose as the garden was full of sleeping Germans, with a flying patrol doing the rounds of the farm complex. As our lads ran through the garden the patrol appeared and were shot by Jimmy Simpson, who then led the other two off the country lane they had used to reach the farm, into the wood which ran parallel to the lane. The Germans put down a heavy barrage of small arms fire down the lane whilst our lads were able to return to their listening post. For this action Lt Lappin was awarded the MC and Jimmy Simpson received the MM.

*End of this second part; there is one more part to come in the next Iron Duke.*

## THE TROUBLE WITH AFGHANISTAN

Lt Col Tim Nicholson



Our battalion is home and NATO troops are into their extended planned withdrawal from Afghanistan so readers may feel that it is too late to be looking back into history for any lessons worth learning. However with three Afghan wars behind us and a fourth still in progress we may be fated to continue some kind of involvement with the place – and we will certainly be drawn into conflict in places like it in future - and perhaps should not dismiss it from our minds too quickly. Let us at least remember the history of our past association. With seven countries bordering Afghanistan and key routes passing

through it, the politics of any given situation are bound to be complex; what follows is much simplified.

### The First Afghan War

The new Governor-General of India, Lord Auckland, was responsible for “the most disastrous policy undertaken by any governor-general”<sup>1</sup> when in 1839 he approved an expedition to unseat the Kabul based principal ruler in Afghanistan, Dost Mohammed (there was an independent ruler in Herat and effectively another in Kandahar - or Quandahar - although the latter was nominally a fief of Kabul, so it was not a united country). The British Government had trouble enough on the North West Frontier and feared that the current Persian siege of Herat would open a gateway into the country for the Russians. So a strategy was developed to take over the entire country; today we would call it regime change.

The British choice of ruler was Shah Suja, who had earlier been ousted by Dost Mohammed with some ease as Suja was unpopular with the people and much disliked by the Afghan chiefs. His being forced back onto the throne by combined Sikh and British force of arms was not likely to endear him to those already his enemies, but this point was insufficient to prevent the expedition setting off despite the disapproval of C in C India and a comment from the Duke of Wellington, who knew his India, that it would lead to “a perennial march into Afghanistan”.

Kandahar was occupied in April 1839, and Ghazi was

taken by storm in July, at which point Dost Mohammed left Kabul and Shah Suja was called up and installed. It was now winter, which made large scale military movement impossible, but giving Shah Suja time to win over the most powerful Afghan chiefs, which he signally failed to do. The Indian Government would be unable to keep a large force in Afghanistan and if Shah Suja was unable to maintain his position with his own troops, which were being trained by British officers, the expedition would have to be withdrawn. And so it proved, although Auckland was unwilling to accept that the position was untenable, taking no steps to improve matters or assist the Kabul garrison. To compound the error subsidies to Afghan chiefs to allow passage through key passes were reduced, with the result that agreements and treaties underpinned by these payments were flouted.

To worsen an already hopeless situation Major General Elphinstone, who took command of the 33rd in September 1813 and was wounded in 1814 at Bergen-Op-Zoom during the campaign against Napoleonic forces in Antwerp but recovered in time to re-assume command for Waterloo, and who some twenty five years later was sick and protesting at his unwillingness and unfitness to take the task on, was sent to Kabul to command the British force there. The stage was set for disaster.

As the local chiefs turned against the British force of 4500 in Kabul (some 650 Europeans, the rest Indian) and with all treaties in disarray, before long the garrison was cornered and starving. On 6 January 1842 Elphinstone ordered a retreat which was both disorderly and dangerous. Hampered by a mass of camp followers and their own wives and children, under attack at every stage along the route to India, the expedition was slaughtered: there was only one survivor. There were however surviving garrisons under siege in Kandahar and Jallalabad and prisoners in the hands of Dost Mohammed, who quickly re-assumed power, in Kabul.

A force was now grudgingly mounted in India to relieve Kandahar and rescue the prisoners. The troops marched through the Khyber Pass to find that the spirited Jallalabad garrison had already defeated its besiegers and the Kandahar Garrison was holding out. The relieving force joined up with the garrisons, destroyed the fort at Ghazni and re-entered Kabul, freeing the prisoners. The entire force then withdrew back to India. Some prestige had been restored by this effective response, but at a considerable price in lives, treasure and, what probably counted most, reputation.

### **The Second Afghan War**

The Second Afghan War can be disposed of quite briefly. Concerned at expanding Russian interest and influence in the area, and finding the ruler Sher Ali disinclined to cooperate with British ambitions, a three army invasion was authorised. One army went through the Khyber Pass and captured Jallalabad; another through the Kurram pass and defeated local opposition at Peiwar Kotal; and the third started from Quetta and occupied Pishin and, in January 1879, Kandahar.

A treaty conceding control of all the passes to the British was signed and a Mission was established in triumph in Kabul. In a few months all Afghan objectives had been brilliantly achieved, and no doubt cigars were lit, the port circulated and everyone relaxed. Alas for such dreams. In September 1879 the Legation at Kabul was stormed and the Minister and all his suite and escort murdered. The war had to begin all over again.

Major General Roberts VC led a relieving force which restored the situation in Kabul but elsewhere British forces fared less well. At Maiwand a British force under inexperienced command was utterly routed and the 66th Foot (Berkshires) practically annihilated (an action recorded in the Kipling poem "That Day"). Roberts came from Kabul to the rescue of what remained of the other forces, and then withdrew them all to India. No further mission was sent to Kabul, although Roberts's demonstration of a show of effective force brought about a degree of understanding as to how the relationship between Britain and Afghanistan could in future be conducted. Cautious respect on both sides perhaps summed it up, and in practice there was a great deal of cooperation in the next 40 or so years, with Britain having an important influence over Afghan foreign policy.

### **The Third Afghan War.**

During WW1 Afghanistan, despite taking a distinctly hostile stance on a number of issues, remained neutral, although with so much of the Indian Army engaged elsewhere there was little chance of reprisal had it declared for the German Axis side. However in 1919, after a succession of internal power struggles and assassinations, one Amanulla emerged victorious. Convinced of British weakness and exhaustion after a long and appallingly costly war in Europe, he decided to invade India.

In the event the Indian Government assembled a sizable force (including 10 British battalions amongst which were 1 DWR, 1 Green Howards and that curious unit 1st Kent Cyclist Battalion, though whether with or without their titular transport is not recorded). The British force suffered severely from disease (the great majority of their 1700 or so casualties from the campaign were not from combat), but Afghan forces were repelled from India and the nascent RAF bombed several Afghan towns and cities. No British force remained in country. It was a tactical victory of a sort, but British influence declined as a consequence even further and Afghanistan began a mutually beneficially relationship with Russia which endured right up to the Russian invasion in 1979<sup>2</sup>.

### **Conclusions**

This is not a happy story. The Indian Government, or anyway its troops, Indian and British, for the most part worked and fought with great zeal, often pitting small forces against much larger ones with great courage and skill, winning the local battle. But military victory was never underpinned by a workable vision and sustained political success; Afghan rulers and policies changed

without warning or apparent reason, and anyway powerful chiefs took little if any notice of treaties or the proclamations of their own national government; diplomatic missions were doomed to fail, usually with loss of life<sup>3</sup>; invaders' commitment faltered and fell away, and there was often confusion and little accord about why they were there in the first place, and they were driven out. We pursued our own interests, offered nothing, and got less than nothing in return.

Arguably the last successful conqueror of Afghanistan was Alexander in 330 BC<sup>4</sup>, but his conquest was short-lived although he left a Hellenic culture and regional governance structure that survived for several centuries. Persians, Greeks, Turks, British and Russians have all tried to impose themselves on a country that somehow soaked up their best efforts and carried on regardless in its own largely dysfunctional way.

The first two Afghan wars were entirely about the British interest, as, it could be argued, initially at least, was the fourth in that the aim was to prevent the country being a base from which terrorism could spread across the western world, and whilst we were about it, stop the flow of drugs. Having recently received an excellent briefing on 3 YORKS 2012 tour, it is clear that the lives of many ordinary Afghans are being changed for the

better, with schools open for boys and girls, relative safety for normal life in towns and villages, economic development of a sustainable kind, and other benefits. Will it be enough to prevent a slide back into the old order? Only time will tell.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Llewellyn Woodward "The Age of Reform 1815 – 1870", Oxford History of England.

<sup>2</sup> This Russo/Afghan cooperation culminated in the invasion of the country by Russian forces in 1979 on the orders of Russian leader Leonid Brezhnev, who wished to support the presidency of Hazifullah Amin, head of a communist coalition government in Afghanistan which tried to end Muslim domination of every aspect of life. Muslim opposition, hugely backed by the USA (President Jimmy Carter gave the initial orders) and other western powers, was massive and a costly decade later the Russians withdrew.

<sup>3</sup> The US Ambassador to Afghanistan was captured and later killed by Islamists in 1979.

<sup>4</sup> Alexander conquered by the ruthless application of military force for three years 300 – 327 BC, and then won over the people of the country by, amongst other things, marrying the daughter of a powerful warlord.



## DUKES' DIARY

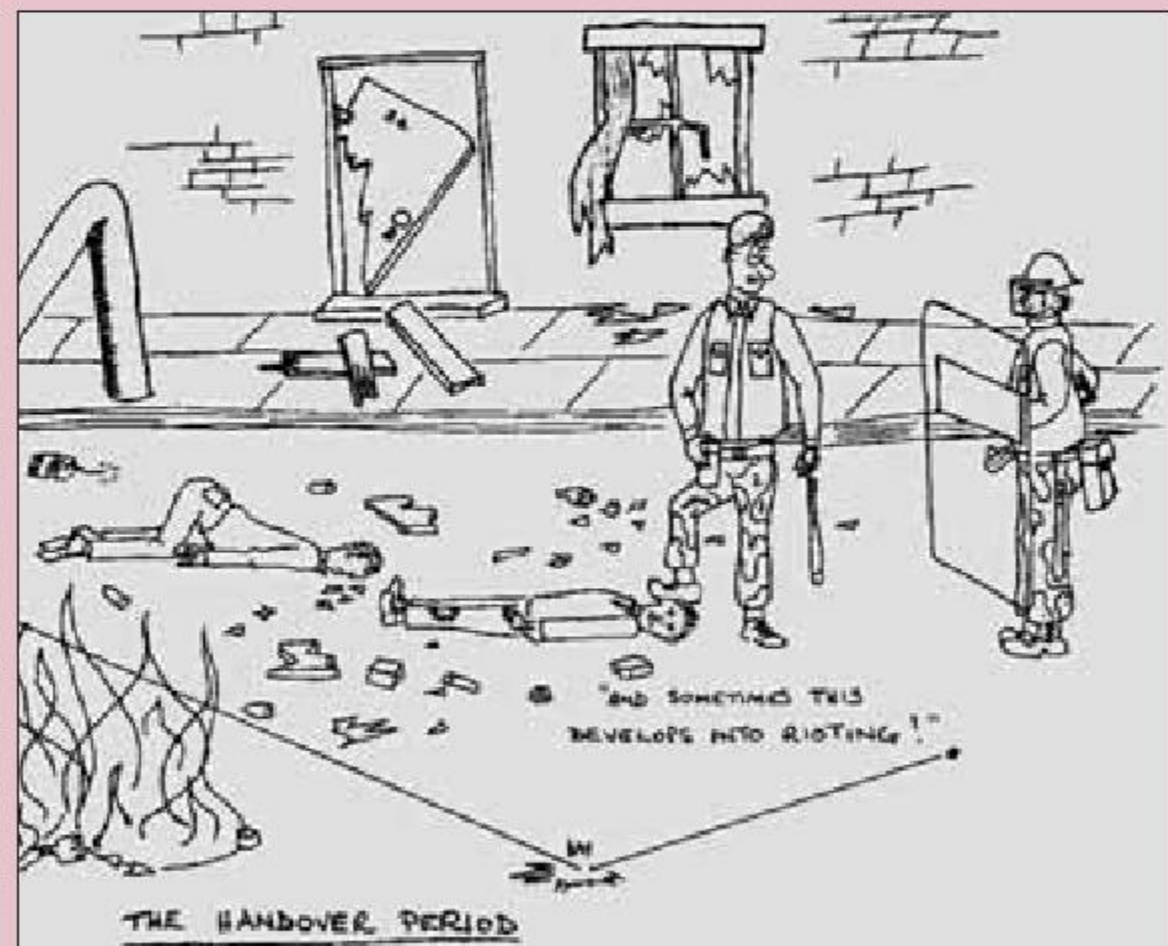
In late 1970 I DWR returned from Hong Kong to a freezing Catterick Camp, took Christmas leave, started 1971 by doing public duties in London, and then deployed to Belfast for a four month "emergency tour". In the absence of any internet, Twitter, Facebook or other social media sites it was quite difficult communicating to the families what the battalion was up to, and especially following the internment operation after which Belfast exploded into fire and disorder eventually requiring some thirteen battalions to keep some kind of lid on, TV and press news was so horrendous that the entire Province, and especially its capital, appeared to those at home to be nothing short of a war zone.

To bring some kind of balance to this picture the Dukes' Diary was produced. At least two editions appeared during that tour, and then there were a couple for the split battalion UN/SBA tour in Cyprus in 1975, and again for the Belfast tour in 1979/80. Perhaps it appeared at other times as well. Many of those active around the Association were involved in those tours some extracts – cartoons, photos, poems and whatever else can be found, will be featured in the next Iron Duke.

### DUKES' PICTORIAL



Men from B Platoon, Berma Company, face an angry mob in the New Lodge Road—10th August, 1971.



# Association News

President: Colonel Nick Borwell OBE.

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

## BRANCHES

**Halifax/Bradford:** 7.00 for 7.30pm second Tuesday of each month in the Saville Room, North Bridge Leisure Centre, 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 the Keighley TA Centre. *Secretary:* Mr David Connor, 144 Whitehead Lane, Keighley BD22 6LU

**London:** 12 noon at the Union Jack Club; Sunday 16 June; Sunday 15 Sept (AGM). *As/Secretary:* John Greenway, 35 Church Avenue, Farnborough, Hants. GU14 7AT. Tel: 01252 514786. E.mail: jbkandjpg@aol.com

**Sheffield:** 8.00pm second Tuesday of each month at WOs' & Sergeants' Mess, 38 Signals Regiment, Manor Top, Sheffield. *Secretary:* Mr C. Withers, 18 Wheel Lane, Grenoside, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S35 8RN.

**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, The Old Rectory, The Green, Marston Moreteyney, Bedfordshire, MK43 0NF.

## AGM AND DINNER DANCE; BRADFORD HILTON, 16 FEB 2013

This event had been planned for October 2012, but was deferred until Spring this year. This seems to have been a popular move, as the attendance at the dinner was 270, a splendid turnout for a very successful event.

### Annual General Meeting

- The AGM was held on the 6th floor of the Bradford Hilton at 1800 hours on 16 February. Routine business was quite quickly dealt with:
- The Association has about £419,000 in hand in its several funds.
- Substantial grants were made by the Trustees in 2012 to enable the Commanding Officer to plan and implement an ambitious plan of training and development on the Battalion's return from Afghanistan.

The Yorkshire Regiment, which assumed responsibility for benevolence grants from the DWR after £1,000,000 was given to it in 2006, disbursed some £150,000 in grants in 2012, including some £50,000 which was donated by other service charities, such as SSAFA.

The main item for the agenda was the merger within the Yorkshire Regiment, reducing the regular battalions from three to two. Coupled with this is the loss of the old regimental names, even in brackets, and therefore of the extremely well known and popular nickname, The Dukes. Clearly no-one liked this but it will happen and shortly before the AGM the Colonel of the Regiment, Major General Graham Binns, wrote to the President with details of how the merger would be done, (see Yorkshire Regiment News at the beginning of this issue

for the main headlines).

The discussion was full and interesting. One major concern is the loss of a direct relationship with a regular battalion; once the antecedent name is taken out of the brackets at the end of the battalion title, as in 3 YORKS (Duke of Wellington's), then, at least on paper, that link has gone. In practice old habits die hard, but nevertheless 3 YORKS (which will become 1 YORKS just to keep us on our toes) will have wider responsibilities, and will for some years be the only one of the two battalions in the UK, no doubt required from time to time to provide a presence in Hull, Middlesbrough and Leeds, as much as in Sheffield and Halifax.

A further point discussed was how the Association and in particular its branches will respond to the merger. It is unlikely, some suggested unthinkable, that the name of the Dukes will not predominate in our Association for many years, but we do not wish to be thought of, nor be seen to be, just a bit of fading history. The Yorkshire Regiment has to capture the hearts and minds of the people of Yorkshire, just as the old Regiments did, and it will help if a strong link between the old regiments and the new one is forged and widely known. Usually it will be the associations "on parade" on such occasions as Armed Forces Day and Remembrance Day, not regular troops, so it will be of value to somehow project the Yorkshire Regiment as well at these times. Early days and an interesting discussion.

## Dinner Dance

Lt Col Zac Stenning and several of his officers, warrant officers and SNCOs were welcome guests of the Association, and stood to be introduced to warm applause. Col Stenning gave a briefing on operations in Afghanistan, including showing a short video. He spoke with feeling of the casualties, both men killed and seriously wounded, that the battalion had taken, and made special mention of 18 year old Private Thomas Wroe, who was killed in action on 15 September

2012, and whose parents and other family members were present. Despite the casualties and hardships, the Dukes' performance throughout the long, hard tour was excellent.

He went on to mention "Op Reset" in which over 400 members of the battalion would go somewhere to do something special and memorable, including sports tours overseas. He also said that whilst the merger will remove the name of the Dukes, so far as he is concerned he very much wishes to maintain the close relationship between the Battalion and the Association, and would be considering how best to achieve this. At the end of his presentation the diners stood and applauded to show their appreciation for an excellent and informative speech and, in a wider sense, for the way that our battalion has conducted itself in its last operational tour as "The Dukes".

The Association President, Colonel Nick Borwell OBE, had earlier welcomed



**Col Nick Borwell, with Lt Col Stenning beside him**



**The Commanding Officer's briefing**



**The scene at the Hilton**

everyone to the event, and later made a number of points about the merger. It is no longer a matter of debate; it will happen, and details of how it will happen have been released. Our Association made a significant contribution to the decision making process, and a number of our ideas have found favour. For example, the Honorary Colours will be retained with one of the regular battalions on a rotation basis; rifle companies will be given the titles of battle honours, as has been the custom in the Dukes; there will be considerable emphasis on sport as a means of projecting the Regiment's name positively both in the Army and outside it.

There is no suggestion that the heritage of the Dukes and the other antecedent regiments will be forgotten, and much of what has been highly valued will continue,

although with less familiar names. Meantime, the Association will look to improve its communications with the members. Col Borwell thanked Major David Harrap and Major Bob Heron for all they have done for both the Battalion and the Association in the last 18 months.

He exhorted everyone to visit our highly successful museum at Bankfield, Halifax. He mentioned that there will be a battlefield tour to Spain in 2014, and that 2015 will be the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo, and there will be a number of celebrations and events to mark it. Finally Col Borwell said that this event, the AGM and Dinner Dance, would next be held in March 2014, with the probability that the shift from October will become a permanent change.



**Still  
coming  
up the  
hill!**



## Officers' Lunch



Once again Brigadier Michael Bray organised a lunch in London, this year at the East India Club in St James's Square, for former officers' and their wives. Attendance could have been better – there was terrible snow in parts of the country, although a number of intrepid souls managed to make it from the North – but a cheerful and enjoyable time was had by all. It was particularly good to see Tom Moore with his daughter (see report of the 9th Bn DWR reunion on page 95 of the last issue). This is a really good event and all officers are encouraged to come and meet old friends.

## The Alleyn Club



Brigadier Johnny Walker OBE DL has taken over as President of the Alleyn Club, the Dulwich College Old Boys' Association. His predecessor, seen handing over the chain of office on 2 November last year, is Dr Bruce Smith CBE, a scientist.

## Remembrance

### London Branch at Remembrance Events – 2012

Each year the London Branch is responsible for co-ordinating the attendance at the Regiment's Memorial Plot in the Garden of Remembrance beside Westminster Abbey, which has been established by The Royal British Legion. On the Thursday before Remembrance Sunday, after a brief Service of Dedication, a member of the Royal Family walks round and speaks to the Regimental representatives.

Ticket-holders only were admitted; nonetheless the large crowd prevented much photography. David Miller,

with his step-daughter, Jackie, and Donald Palmer attended, as did Mac and Bidy Dowdy, Fred Richardson, Bob Temple with Mavis and John and Judith Greenway.

On Remembrance Sunday itself Bob, Mavis, Fred, John and Judith were delighted to be joined by John and Patricia Lobonow-Rostovsky, our country members from Somerset. Our brief Ceremony of Remembrance was attended, as is now usual, by a small number of people associated with the other Yorkshire Regiments alongside.



**Bob Temple and Mavis flank In-Pensioner Fred Richardson, with John Lobonow-Rostovsky (right) and John Greenway on Remembrance Sunday**



**David Miller (right) with Donald Palmer on the Thursday**



**The Ceremony of Remembrance**

## Fenchurch Street Station Poppy Collection



**Andy Shand and Rob Douglas looking welcoming!**

This is organized by ex Duke Lt Col Malcolm Norman, within the overall London collection day. Each area is looked after by a retired officer of one of the armed services and the City of London collection bands meet up afterwards in the historic setting of Leadenhall Market for a pint or two.

Fenchurch Street Station serves the parts of Essex that border the northern bank of the Thames Estuary, and it is probably fair to say that these are not the smartest parts of the County. However, the commuters from those parts are extremely generous and over a dozen collectors are kept busy selling poppies for the three or so hours of the morning and evening journeys of thousands of City of London workers. Retired Dukes who work in London make up a good part of the collection force. The London collectors as a whole raised £759,079, which, when some “corporate matching” is added will achieve the target of £1M, and Fenchurch Street Dukes raised £12,550, a 306% increase year on year.



**Major Donald Palmer and Andy McNeillis in full flow**

## Korea

The obituaries section records the deaths of several Dukes veterans who fought with 1 DWR in Korea. In Pensioner Fred Richardson has sent in a copy of the Royal Tank Regiment Association Newsletter (Dec/Jan 12/13) which has a feature article on 1 RTR's service in that conflict, when they were equipped with Centurion tanks. An extract follows.

"The tanks proved so effective in their role of direct fire support that the Chinese communist forces tried on several occasions to force them from their hilltop positions through intensive artillery bombardments with 76mm, 85mm, and 122mm howitzers and anti-tank guns. Although many tanks were hit repeatedly, crews that were safely inside incurred no casualties: testament to the excellent armour protection of the Centurion....

..... On occasions this proved crucial such as during the final Chinese offensives to capture the key Hook feature that dominated the road to the South Korean capital of Seoul. Throughout the night of 28/29 May 1953 the Chinese mounted repeated human wave attacks against the Hook that was defended by the Duke of Wellington's Regiment. The assault was broken by the concerted fire of divisional artillery which fired 30,700 rounds and the tanks of C Squadron 1 RTR which fired 504 20-pounder rounds and 27,000 rounds of small arms ammunition. On 27 July 1953 an armistice came into effect. During five months in the line the Regiment fired 23,800 main armament rounds and the tanks received 68 direct hits."

*Please also see the letter from Colonel Peter Mitchell in the letters section.*

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## Thongsbridge Army Cadet Unit

Burglars ransacked the Thongsbridge Army Cadet Unit's headquarters on 2 March 2013, and the electronic equipment stolen had all been bought by the cadets themselves, through fundraising activities. Police investigated the break-in and appealed for witnesses. The Huddersfield Daily Examiner reported that the burglary was discovered on Saturday, when Cadet Sgt Dan Heneghan, the Detachment Commander of Thongsbridge Army Cadet Unit, arrived to find that the base which

serves the Holme Valley had been broken into and had been turned upside down. Mr Heneghan said: "I had popped down to do some paperwork and take some cash to the bank to find that doors were open and rooms were a total bomb site. They had smashed their way into the office and took the keys to every cupboard and room we have. The whole place was turned upside down, but whether or not that was just to cover their tracks I don't know." However there is some good news. After reading



**Mr and Mrs Wroe make the formal presentation in memory of their son Private Tom Wroe, a former cadet member of the Detachment**



**The cadets with their new equipment**

the report in the Huddersfield Examiner, Dr Jan Telensky, a generous supporter of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment, replaced all items of IT equipment stolen. Unfortunately, Dr Telensky was involved in a long traffic jam on his journey from Luton to Huddersfield and was unable to attend the presentation. His colleague Terry Butterworth, a former Dukes officer, made a short speech on Jan's behalf and handed over the IT equipment to Mr Mick Wroe, a former Dukes soldier, who presented the equipment to the Cadets in memory of his son Tom. Tom

was a former Cadet from this Unit who was shot and fatally wounded by a rogue Afghan Local Policeman at Checkpoint Tora in the Nahr-e Saraj district of Helmand province, on 15 September 2012. Mr Wroe was accompanied by his wife Claire and daughter Demi who has now joined Thongsbridge Cadet Unit. The continued support of Mr Telensky for our Regiment is much appreciated by everyone, as is the work done by Terry Butterworth to apply that support where it is most needed. Our grateful thanks to you both.

### **London Old Comrades Associations' Lunch**

Organised by the DWR London Branch, representatives of the PWO, Green Howards and DWR Associations London Branches (including at least two former York and Lancasters) met together at the Victory Services Club, Seymour Street, London on Saturday 13th April 2013, for an informal meeting, lots of chat, and lunch. The guest was Major Mick Sullivan from RHQ Yorkshire Regiment. Twenty four people attended.

During the meeting the concept of making this an annual event under the Yorkshire Regiment banner was discussed and strongly supported. There is no need to change any branch titles or centralize anything: simply, on this day each year, a lunch will be organised and will be open to the members, and their guests, of the three antecedent associations and the Yorkshire Regiment Association, and a guest who can tell those assembled something about the Regiment's broader activities will be invited.

Dukes, PWO and Green Howards much enjoyed the occasion and a good lunch, and (as usually happens) discovered they all had friends and a great else deal in common. Subject to availability, the 2014 Yorkshire Regiment Associations' London lunch will be on Saturday 21st April at the Union Jack Club, organised by the PWO Association London Branch.



**A good selection of regimental ties, buttons and badges on display**

# BOOKS

## Books “Standing Tall” – Andy Reid

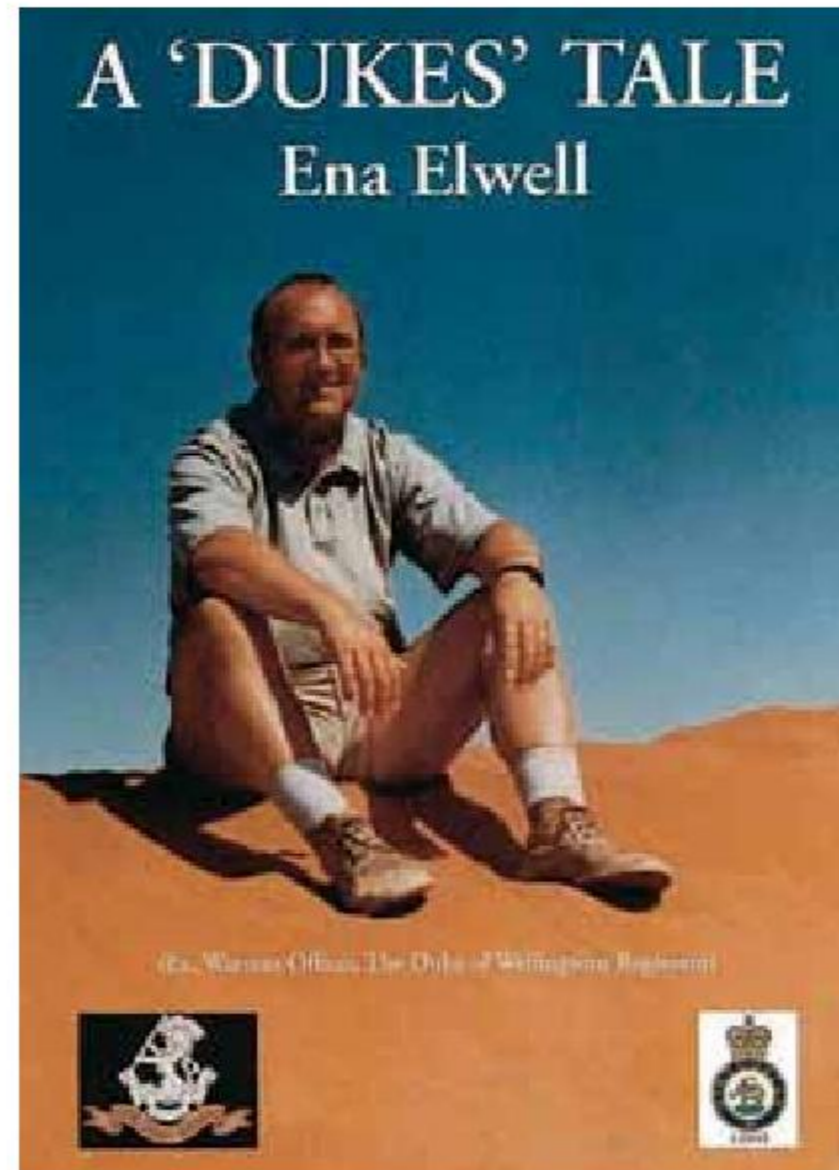
*(See photo inside back cover)*

Former Corporal Andy Reid has written a splendid book entitled “Standing Tall”, a typically defiant name for the story of how he recovered from the loss of both legs and one arm as a result of an IED in Afghanistan. Andy says that the style he wanted was as if he was standing in a bar with a group of friends telling them the tale, and it comes across just like that, fresh, often funny, very down to earth and practical.

The book looks back to his childhood, revealing that his Mother had had a leg amputated as a result of a motorcycle accident, and so a prosthetic limb was something the family knew about and accepted. The story tells how this – shall we say “lively”? - lad from Lancashire eventually managed to join an Army reluctant to take him, and then found his way across the Pennines to 1 DWR from 1 QLR, following his wish to do more of his soldiering sitting down, and had seen Warrior armoured vehicles on exercise in Canada. The Dukes had Warrior, so when he got back to UK he volunteered to transfer.

There then followed service in Kosovo and Iraq, before, as a section commander, deployment to Afghanistan in 2009. You should read the rest for yourself. It is an inspirational story of a man who has been devastatingly wounded in the service of his country and who has fought his way back to lead a good and useful life, and kept his sense of humour in the process. The book is available from Amazon in hardback, or you can download it to your Kindle device, or you can visit [www.andyreid.org](http://www.andyreid.org) and buy it direct.

## “A Duke’s Tale” – Ena Elwell



Former WO2 and Dukes rugby player Ena Elwell has written a book and says: “did you serve or grace the sports fields with Ena Elwell? Maybe you just knew him as a friend or an acquaintance? If so you may be part of “A Duke’s Tale”, Ena Elwell’s story. To obtain your copy contact Ena on (home) 01904 668233 or (mobile) 07787 703070 or email [philipelwell@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:philipelwell@yahoo.co.uk).” The Iron Duke will be glad to publish a review in due course.

# LETTERS

*The Editor reserves the right to edit all letters in the interests of clarity and space.*

*(See photo on page 93 of the last edition for a photo of the first two correspondents.)*

## From Colonel Peter Mitchell (CO 1DWR 1972 – 74)

Dear Sir

May 2013 marks the 60th anniversary of the Battle of the Hook in Korea, during which 1st Battalion the Duke of Wellington’s Regiment held the position against a regimental size Chinese attack. The battle lasted ten days, starting with probing attacks against standing patrols sited on the approaches to the company positions and artillery ranging fire, and culminating in an all out attack at last light on 28 May.

Overall casualties in the Battalion during the battle amounted to 176, of which 126 (including 20 killed)

were sustained during 28/29 May. It is worth recalling that the Battalion was then 60% composed of young National Servicemen.

It is ironic that this anniversary should coincide with the disappearance of the Regiment from the Army List, thus ending a long and glorious history.

## From Dr John Reddington PhD, Psychologist (RSO 1 DWR 1951- 52).

Dear Colonel Nicholson

Thanks very much for the insertion of our Signal Platoon (Chisledon ’51, Minden ’52). Ian Warrington and

Roddy Barnes would have been chuffed to see their photos in the DWR rugby team 1951, published alongside international stars Mike Hardy and Dennis Shuttleworth.

The longevity of our group is unusual; but is a reminder of the considerable benefits of National Service. Something like it today might be one of the ways to address social dysfunctionality and crime. All those men in the photo (page 98 last edition) were lance corporal company radio operators, except one. Most became successful business men – Alan Hirst as a “lender” for the Midland (granted loans to Murdoch), and Ian became a director of British-American Tobacco; Bob Dawson has a degree in German and French, and John Little who died last year was a successful music teacher (members of the group attended his funeral).

Only myself and two regular lance corporals went on to Korea. One became an instructor at Hythe. The other I had to have reduced to the ranks for failing to open up the radio when the line failed. I have always had qualms about this, but Walter Robins (the Signal Platoon Sergeant) reassured me 51 years later, when we had a curry in Halifax, that it was the right decision.

It was the 60th anniversary of the day I was wounded (New Year’s Eve 1952) on Monday. Nick Norton took over and Charles Huxtable took over as Assistant RSO. I only lost an eye but this triggered PTSD (thus named 40 years later). Invalided “...partly attributable to gunshot wound to right eye”, notice the Crimean War vernacular!

*(Dr Reddington then included some remarks about the future of the Iron Duke, covered elsewhere).*

Thanks again for the article on the Signal Platoon of yesteryear. Yes, there is “something about” signallers.

### **From Paul Taylor (Corporal, Signal Platoon 1962 – 1971)**

Further to Brigadier Michael Bray’s sailing memoir

(ID 273), the crew on board RASMUS set off from Kiel Harbour Army Yacht Club in June 1965. Passing the “U” boat pens we approached the Harbour Master’s office and we saw a flag with a black circle and triangle, we questioned the skipper as to its meaning and we were told “don’t worry about it”.

We sailed on into open sea which was getting a bit blustery. A “round of tea” was the call and I went below to put the kettle on the stove, which was swinging quite nicely. I prepared the cups and by this time the boat began rolling very strongly. The kettle was having a right swing, so I grabbed hold of it while struggling to stand, hit myself on the head and fell over. I thought “sod this I’m going to have a word with the driver”.

As I appeared from below I saw everyone had lifejackets on and seeing a wave aft as big as Blackpool Tower I brushed the tea leaves off my head and I put my life jacket on. The skipper sent two of us to pull down the jib; what a struggle, crawling back aft the next order was to reef the mainsail. “What?” was the thought! Again a big struggle reefing and returning aft.

In the distance a tanker kept disappearing in the waves and getting desperate, “engine” was mentioned, “no way” the skipper shrugged. It was getting worse, big waves above us, behind, then in front of us so it was decided to return to Kiel Harbour. Eventually the skipper did put the engine on and we safely returned to our berth.

Only now have I found out that the black circle and triangle was a “Don’t Sail” warning! This information I got from one of our companions on the Italian Battlefield Tour, known as “Big Jack”, who had been a merchant seaman, plus this was the skipper’s first sail in command and in actual fact we had been in a force 9 – 10 gale! The skipper did get his hand in his pocket and a well earned evening meal was enjoyed.

Enclose photo of the crew in Copenhagen Harbour, left to right Gordon Bell, Albert Bowes, Bob Heron, Dan Bennett and Paul Taylor. The photo was taken by Geoff Hunter; the skipper was missing as he was “courting” at the time.



# Obituaries

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

## **Lt Colonel AWR (Bill) Brook.**

Correction: the Winter 2012 edition obituary notice for Lt Col. AWR [Bill] Brook noted his wife had survived him however we must advise that Bessie died in 2008.

## **Mr John Lester Thompson**



Lester Thompson died on 5 February 2013, aged 85. A Yorkshireman from a farming family in Upper Wensleydale, he became a regular soldier and served in the MT Platoon with 1 DWR in Korea and Borneo with the Green Howards. Following his Army service he became a bus driver and later had a

smallholding. He was a member of the British Korea Veterans Association, Scarborough and Ryedale Branch.

His funeral was held at St Aidan's Church, Catterick Garrison on 12 February 2013. A Guard of Honour was provided by Veterans from the Malaya and Borneo Association. His Branch President, General Sir Charles Huxtable KCB CBE DL and Lieutenant Colonel (retd) Hugh Le Messurier, NE Area President, attended. He is survived by his wife Elizabeth, whom he married in 1958, and family.

## **Captain Geoffrey Bullock**

Geoffrey Bullock came to 1 DWR in March 1945 shortly after its arrival in Palestine, and became a platoon commander in the newly reformed D Company. He had recently been commissioned from the Middle East OCTU at Acre. He remained with the battalion during service in Palestine, Syria, Egypt and the Sudan.

Subsequent to being a platoon commander he became Intelligence Officer and later OC HQ Company. He also played as a second row forward in the Battalion rugby team. After serving for two years in the Middle East he was posted home from Khartoum in April 1947 and was appointed Education Officer at the DWR Depot before his demobilisation in July 1947.

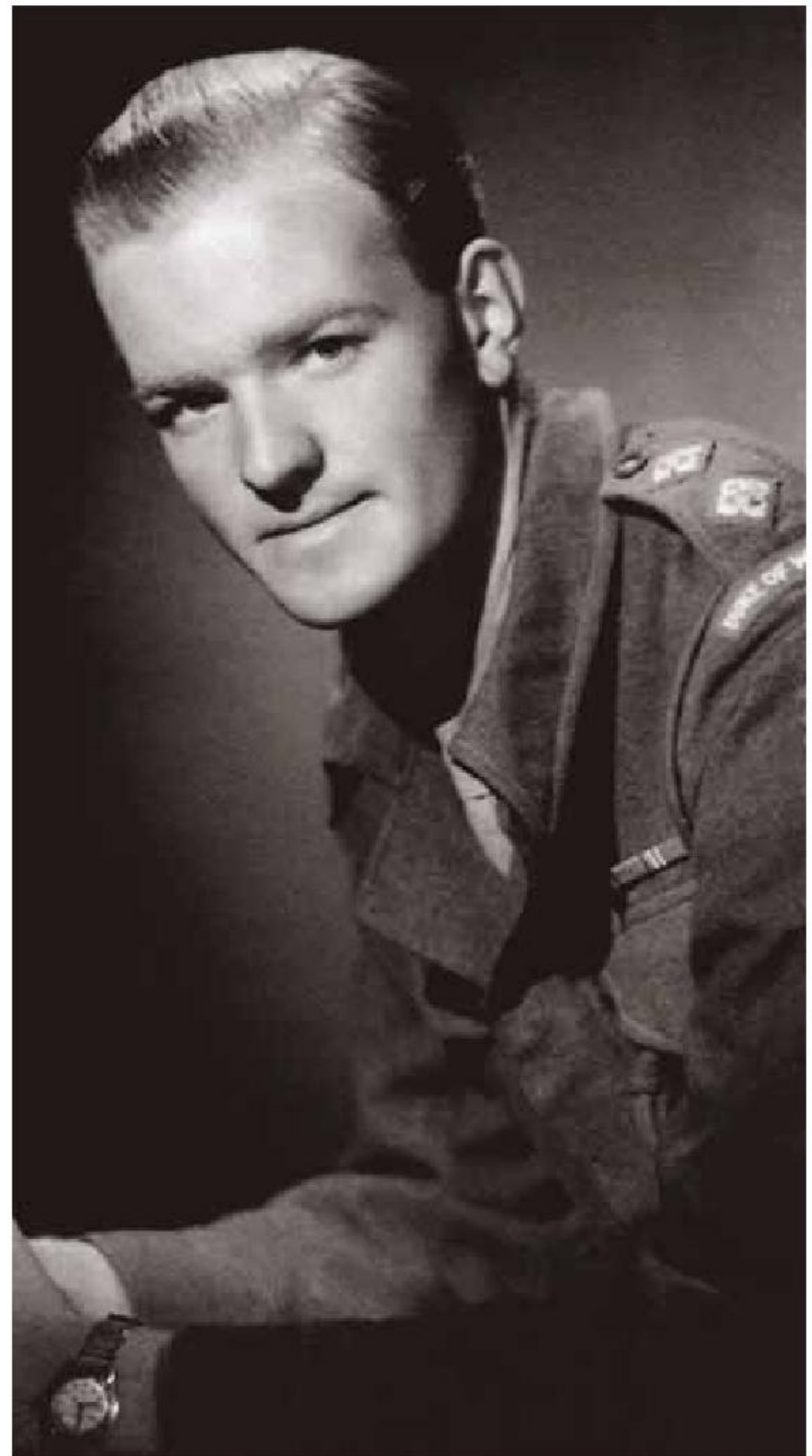
After studying engineering at Glasgow University he joined John Holt and Co (Liverpool) Ltd and became their trading agent in Nigeria. However the West African climate did not suit his wife. He therefore returned to the UK and in 1958 joined Harrisons and Crossfield Ltd as Export/Import executive in their London Office. He remained with them until his retirement in 1989.

He was a devoted family man. After marrying Avril

Bisset in 1952 they had three sons, Robin, Timothy and Rupert, all of whom survive him. Sadly Avril died suddenly in 1994.

He took an active part in charitable work, notably the Red Cross and the St John's Ambulance Service. He received numerous awards and recognitions, the more meritorious of which were the Badge of Honour in the years 1979, 1992 and 2001. For his work with the International Red Cross in their tracing and messaging service he was awarded a Certificate for Distinguished Delivery in 1994 and in 1997 he received the prestigious Muriel Monkhouse Award.

He was a member of the Regional Pensions Committee



**Geoffrey Bullock in Egypt in 1946**





**Receiving an Award from the International Red Cross, presented by Princess Alexandra**

and Liaison Officer looking after the interests of war disabled members of the Armed Services, their widows and also retired members of the VAD who had served during WW2. For those services to the Joint War Committee of the British Red Cross and St John's Ambulance he was granted the dignity of Serving Brother of the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem.

He was a judge of elkhounds at dog shows. He was a regular attender at regimental functions and battlefield

tours even though, in more recent years, he had to make extensive use of a wheelchair.

He died peacefully at home on 20 January 2013, and the funeral was held at the Chilterns Crematorium at Amersham. Many of his friends and associates from the Red Cross were there and the Regiment was represented by Major General Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter and Captain John Wilson who also represented Captain Diacon and Captain Goodman-Smith.

### **Association HQ has been informed of the following deaths**

#### **Peter Harley**

Peter Harley, who was a National Serviceman with the Dukes, died on 9th December 2012, aged 78. Peter served with the 1st Battalion in Korea 1952-53; he was a member of 6 Platoon, B Company. Peter moved with the Battalion from Korea to Gibraltar, before ending his National Service. For many years, almost up to his death (from cancer), Peter (together with his wife Patricia), was a very active committee member of the Huddersfield Branch of our Regimental Association. He is sadly missed by his many friends in the Dukes.

#### **Clifford Moulton**

Clifford, who served throughout WW2, including in the 7th Battalion of the Dukes (1942-45), died on 4th March 2013, at the age of 88 years. Following his

service, Clifford married a Dutch lady, 'Willimpye' and spent most of the remainder of his life living in Snede, Holland.

#### **Ronnie Smailes**

Ronnie Smailes, who was a member of 10 Platoon, D Company, 1 DWR, in Korea 1952-53, tragically was killed with his wife in a car accident on 23rd October 2012.

#### **Captain Robert Macintyre**

Bob Macintyre, who served in the 9th Battalion (146 Regt RAC) in India and Burma during WW2, died on 3rd March 2013, at the age of 91. Bob, together with his wife Gwyneth and daughter Diane, were regular attendees at the annual 9th Battalion Reunion in Leeds.

## The Future of the Iron Duke

I am very grateful for all those who took the trouble to respond to my invitation to express a view on the future of our Regimental Journal. In the last issue I outlined some possible ways forward without closing the door on any other ideas. All three options received some support and it will surprise no-one that there is no clear consensus. However I think we can find amongst all the replies a drift of ideas will gradually meld to reach an acceptable outcome in the end. Of course, central to having a plan for the Iron Duke is the larger question of having one for the Association as a whole, but that is another matter.

Several people pointed out to me that quite a number of “old” regiments have maintained their associations and magazines for many years after their disbandment, merger or removal by other means from the Army List. Regiments that were “axed” in the sixties or earlier have associations that are still going strong. Investigation of one or two of these shows that what remains is, in practical terms, largely for officers, and I don’t think that is what we want, but it is undoubtedly the case that the Duke of Wellington’s Regiment’s Association, and its events and communication media, can continue for as long as it is wanted and someone is willing to put time and money into keeping it going.

Put the name of virtually any regiment into Google and you will find museums, websites, societies and all kinds of links and activities, and all of that reflects considerable voluntary dedication and a true sense of purpose. It is not just a British tendency. The King’s German Legion, raised in 1803, famed for its defence of La Haye Sainte at Waterloo and disbanded in 1816, has a website and a re-enactment society. The Sherwood Foresters (45th and 95th) have a re-enactment society in Memphis, Tennessee of all places. It rests with us to establish our own future. Meantime, there are some things that people suggest the ID can and should be doing.

Firstly, you say we do want a journal of some kind for the foreseeable future. Readers seem to be very flexible about the style and format, (so, for example, we could at some time abandon our Sir Thomas Lawrence portrait as a cover if that seemed a good thing to do, and revert to a less formal “up-market tabloid” type of publication), and the main content should be about our people and the things they are doing. The principal role of the Association’s publication, whatever form it takes, should be to enable former members of the Regiment and their families, and all who have been associated with it, to keep in touch.

Secondly, a clear majority want to maintain a link with the Yorkshire Regiment and its regular and reserve battalions, and all those who continue to wear that cap badge. To this end we will try to find ways to continue to carry reports from 1, 2 and 4 YORKS, and affiliated organizations, although they might not be as current as that of 3 YORKS is now. There is no real desire for us to simply mirror the detailed reports that will no doubt continue to appear in the Yorkshire Regiment Journal (YRJ), so some sort of summary will be needed.

Thirdly we should offer more of our Association news, reports on activities and events, and perhaps some of our more interesting historical articles to the YR J, so that those old comrades who choose to take only that Journal, and those who leave the battalions in future, will have an information link back to the Dukes. RHQ YORKS have expressed willingness to enter into the sort of cooperation envisaged here, and we will work on the practicalities.

Most correspondents can see a day when the YRJ is the principal regimental journal for us all, with, perhaps, a “Dukes’ family newsletter” side publication for the material that does not fit comfortably with the former.

*Our letters page is open to further thoughts and ideas.*

## Keep in touch with the Regiment and your old service friends and colleagues through:

- The Iron Duke, the Journal for all who served with the Duke of Wellington’s Regiment. Published twice yearly, price £10 per year.
- The Duke’s website, {<http://www.dwr.org.uk>}, for latest news, historical information and an opportunity to comment through the forum. Contact {<mailto:editor@dwr.org.uk>} with your news.

A portrait of a man in a military uniform, wearing a brown jacket, a white shirt, and a green tie. He has several medals pinned to his chest. The background is black.

THE *SUN*'S MILITARY  
AWARD WINNER

**ANDY  
REID**

# STANDING TALL

THE TALIBAN NEARLY KILLED ME...BUT THEY  
COULDN'T TAKE AWAY MY FIGHTING SPIRIT.  
THIS IS MY INSPIRATIONAL STORY.



**HRH The Duke of Edinburgh approaching the Dukes' plot at the Garden of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey on 8 November 2013**