

1942
IN MEMORY OF OUR DEAD
44th (HOME COUNTIES) DIVISION



1939 - 1945

The Journal of
The Regimental Association of
The Queen's Own Buffs (PWRR)

60th Anniversary Edition

Number 11

Autumn 2005

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The late Colonel H B H (Blick) Waring OBE
on parade at Maidstone
7th July 2005

EDITOR'S PAGE

Welcome to a rather special issue of The Journal to mark the 60th Anniversary of the end of the last war. The commemorative front cover is a collage of photographs of both Buffs and Queen's Own reflecting, in a small way, the theatres that battalions of both regiments served in. I am indebted to Phyllis Daniels and Les Crouch for their contributions.

Every issue, very sadly, includes obituaries of individuals who have meant a great deal to fellow comrades. In this edition an obituary is published of a man whose life has touched so many and whose passing marks the end of a lifetime of service to Queen, Country, Regiment and the Association. The death of Colonel 'Blick' Waring brought to an end an era with which most of us identify, especially those comrades of Blick's in the Queen's Own. In retirement he worked tirelessly for the Queen's Own Museum in Maidstone and the immaculate presentation of the Regimental Museum reflects his extraordinary energy and attention to detail. His passing leaves an enormous gap in the life of our Association and in particular in the lives of those ex members of the Queen's Own and Queen's Own Buffs who served with him and knew him so well.

This year's design for the annual Regimental Association Christmas Card has proved to be extremely popular and over 1,600 have been sold to date. There are still some available so if you need more or if you have yet to order some then please fill out the order form enclosed and send it to The Editor, 54 South Eastern Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 9QE together with a cheque for the amount due. Cheques should be made payable to Queen's Own Buffs, Gen. Ac.

As you are no doubt aware, new postage charges will be brought in soon to reflect not just the weight of a letter or package but also the size. This will inevitably mean that our postage bill will increase. That together with increased paper and printing costs may mean, and I emphasise may, that we have to increase the subscription rate for The Journal to keep in the black. If an increase does prove to be necessary then there will be a formal proposal made at the Association Annual General meeting in April 2006.

Whilst we are talking about subscriptions several of you will have received reminder letters with this copy of The Journal. The timely payment of subscriptions

is of enormous help in keeping the Journal account in the black. For some of you the reminder letter is for subscriptions that are only overdue by a matter of a few days or weeks. Some however reflect an overdue situation of 1 year and in some cases 18 months or more. At the time of going to press the total of overdue subscriptions is in excess of £2,000 and that situation has got to be addressed. Consequently, after a reasonable time, if overdue subscriptions have not been received then I will be left with no alternative but to delete those names from the database. Before you ask the old question about Direct Debits etc. the answer is NO, RHQ, who control our accounts, will not accept Standing Orders or Direct Debits so I am afraid it is back to the memory cells, a diary entry or reminder letters.

Over the past three years many of you have sent in photographs for publication, not always with any record of who has sent them. If you have sent in photographs and articles and need them returning then please contact me with a description of the article or photo.

If you intend sending in photo's, documents etc, and please do, then it will be of great help if you would mark them clearly with your name and address.

I am glad to say that I can report an increase in the number of subscribers, albeit slight. In the main this increase has been brought about by current subscribers recommending The Journal to their friends and colleges. This is excellent news and I am very grateful to those readers. If any of you know or come across any ex members of the forebear regiments who are not receiving a copy then do your best to recruit them please.

Should you need to contact me then please write to me at the address already given above or by telephone on 01843 580914 or by Email at: thejournal@peter-white.go-plus.net

I hope that you enjoy reading this issue. All that remains is for me to wish you all, wherever you are, a very happy Christmas and a peaceful, prosperous and healthy New Year.

God Bless

The Editor

BRANCH NEWS

SITTINGBOURNE BRANCH

SECRETARY: Mr A Chesson, 16 Cedar Close, Sittingbourne, ME10 4TV

MEETING PLACE: The Ypres Tavern, West Street, Sittingbourne

MEETING: 1st Tuesday in the month at 19.30 hours.

We have a new Chairman. Jim Read, who has served us so well for some years has decided to call it a day and is now a back-bencher. Jim, a genial and very likeable man, has done a very good job, and no doubt will be extremely helpful to his successor. We are fortunate to have a very good man in the post. He is George Dunk, and although a comparatively new member, has already shown that he knows what it is all about, and will handle us all very well.

Although attendances at meetings have been very good in the past there is now a continuous slight fall in numbers meeting after meeting. This is worrying, but of course not surprising, as we are all getting older and not so sprightly. I, myself, have now given up doing the mile in four minutes. Some branches are folding, and we have a member from the Medway Branch joining us, Mr Jim White of the Queen's Own Buffs. We welcome him and his wife and hope he enjoys our company.

Another of our stalwarts has died. Fred Giles, an almost ever present, who attended most meetings and social functions in company with his two mates, Joe Fosbraey and Les Stelfox. They were known as the "Three Musketeers", hardly ever apart. Fred was a quiet man, and in his spare time extremely interested in tracing his family tree. Our thoughts are with his family.

The re-union at Canterbury was, as usual, a great success. It was nice to hear the Parade Marshal congratulating the parade on the standard of marching. The service at the cathedral was excellent. All very nice. We boarded our coach and arrived at Leros Barracks to find everyone enjoying the band playing in the sunshine. But guess what? Again no seats for us! This caused a lot of grumbling, and spoiled the occasion. We are all getting on a bit and unable to sit on the grass. Someone kindly found me

a seat, for which I am grateful, but this was at the rear of the bar, right out of the way. We need seats where we can sit in the sunshine, have our refreshment, and listen to the excellent Kohima Band. Please, will someone listen and make it right for next year?

I am indebted to George, our Chairman, for the following account:

On Saturday, 2nd August, 2005 the Branch made their Annual Pilgrimage to Ypres for the Evening Ceremony at the Menin Gate. The coach left Sittingbourne at the ungodly hour of 6.30 a.m.; the weather was overcast but fine, little did we know what we were in for later on! The ferry crossing was reasonable and soon we were on our way to Talbot House at Poperinghe, but not before we had made our two obligatory stops for "booze" and "fags". It was at the second stop that we were given a foretaste of the weather to come, it absolutely bucketed down just as members were making their way back to the coach.

We duly arrived at Talbot House and were made very welcome, given a brief talk by a member of staff and then made our own way round. I won't describe the place here as this was amply covered in an article by John Bishop in the Autumn Edition of the Regimental Magazine 2004. Suffice to say it was a most interesting and informative visit, the cup of tea went down well too! On to Ypres for an excellent meal at the Sword Restaurant and then a wander round before the Ceremony.

Despite the weather the Menin Gate was crowded with members of the public, the Branch duly formed up. Shortly before the Ceremony started an alteration to the usual procedure was made by the Last Post Association President; Bernard Foulger, our Padre was whisked off with the microphone and loudspeaker to conduct the Service from a point near the buglers, our Standard Bearer, Keith Hoult, displaying his usual immaculate smartness and bearing, took up position at the other end of the Gate, whilst our Chairman, George Dunk, was required to march into the centre of the road and deliver the Exhortation on behalf of the Branch. A most memorable and moving ceremony.

Back to the ferry, for a final drink and get together during the crossing, and then home about 12.15 a.m.

A long but very enjoyable day, and our thanks go to our Events Secretary, Paul Fleming, for all the hard work he put in to make this such a success.



Sittingbourne Branch, with other Association representatives, at Tong Memorial Park, 9th July 2006

A short postscript, our Chairman, being one of the "oldies" discovered the difference between a kilogram and a pound when he bought 2 kilos of Belgian chocolates and found he was carrying nearly four and a half pounds, costing 25 quid!!!

The local service to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the end of the War was held at the Tong Memorial Park. The Drumhead Ceremony was well organised and conducted by our Padre, Bernard, but, in my opinion, not too well attended by the public. The reasons were that it was not publicised enough and the venue, although a very nice place, is a bit out of the way. This parade should have been held in the town centre.

A coach load of us attended the concert provided by the Kohima Band at Leros Barracks, and what a concert it turned out to be! Congratulations must go to all concerned. Good music played by excellent musicians and conducted and compered by the very amusing Bandmaster. What about the 1812 Overture and the paper bags!! Whoever thought that one up is a genius.

The Maidstone re-union I did not attend, but I am informed that it was, as usual, a very good occasion, enjoyed by all.

E.A.W.

LONDON (BUFFS) BRANCH

SECRETARY: Leroy Gittings, 4 Prospect Cottages, Wandsworth, London. SW18 1NW.
Tel No. 0208 870 7290

MEETING PLACE: Ives Lounge, The Royal Hospital Chelsea.

MEETING: 3rd Saturday in the month at 19.00 hrs..

The year 2005 has been a busy year up to now. It stated at the March Branch Meeting, when Bill Pinder retired from being Branch Secretary (a very hard act to follow) also the Branch Chatrrnan Geoff Kirk stepped down due to health. however. both positions have been filled and we will be carrying on 'London Buff Style'.

On 3rd July 2005, The London Buffs attended a day at Dover Castle for the 'Spirit Of The Regiment' event The aim of the event was to host WW2 veterans and to give young people the opportunity to learn about their experiences during the war. The Veterans enjoyed a free lunch after which the Kohima Band gave a concert. Some of us toured the war tunnels which were most interesting. The weather was good to us and all too soon another good day out came to an end.

Between the 4th and 9th July was Kent Veterans Week and a series of parades and services of commemorative and thanksgiving were held week at Rochester. Maidstone, Canterbury and The Mall London. The Branch Standard Bearer. Joe Correa attended all these parades which were well supported by many members, families and other Regimental Associations.

We thank Canterbury and Maidstone Reunion Committee's for their hard work in arranging the two main reunions. It was a privilege and an honor for Henry Parker and John Field to lay a wreath at the turning of the page at Maidstone All Saints Church.

It was a disappointment that the Standard Bearers competition was cancelled due to lack of entrants, however the London Buffs standard bearer Joe Correa who won the competition in 2004 still holds the title.

The Tower Service on 4th September went very well again this year and we enjoyed the much appreciated support from Sittingbourne, Canterbury and those old stalwarts from Ramsgate complete with their

standard. We thank them all most sincerely. The Rev Paul Abram, who spoke well of the Regiment, conducted the service which was very touching. After the service the parade reformed and was inspected by Colonel Champion. Our thanks goes to Frank Hills for escorting the standard.



Frank Hills (center) has asked me to point out that the picture of him above is AS an escort and not one of him UNDER escort!! (The Editor)

We then retired to have our Annual Branch lunch at the Tower Hotel- a lovely end to a perfect day.

It has been a year of memorable events celebrating the 60th anniversary of VE and VJ day and the ending of WW2. The London Buffs has been very honoured and proud to be a part of it all. We thank all that have worked so hard making the arrangements for us and to make these events possible.

We now look forward to our next function which is at the Garden Of Remembrance at Westminster on the 10th November and I am sure several in attendance will retire afterwards to the local for a few pints and sing along to re live the WW2 experience. On the following Sunday, 13th November, we shall be on parade at the Cenotaph for our annual National Service of Remembrance hopefully it will be well attended.

It is hoped that a strong contingent from our branch will be attending the Carol Service at Canterbury this year another event to look forward to.

Well on that note we at London Buffs Branch would like to wish all other Branches and members of the Association our best wishes for Christmas and a prosperous NEW YEAR in 2006.

BC

RAMSGATE BRANCH

SECRETARY: M. F. Milham. 185 Bradstow Way. Broadstairs, Kent. CTIO IAX

MEETING PLACE: The Royal British Legion Club, Allenby House, 14/16 Cliff St. Ramsgate.

MEETING: 3rd Friday in the month 19.45 hrs

Hi everybody, lets start off with a bit of good news instead of the usual sadness that normally occupies this spot. Terry McClean is once again back in the fold after suffering from a debilitating virus, not back to 100% but now, once again, a regular face at our branch meetings. We also welcome a new member to our branch, Graham Thomas who has now joined us.

Well, what a busy year this has been for everybody, covering all the normal annual reunions along with the celebrations for the anniversary of the ending of WW2 Horace Cook was lucky enough to get invited to Buckingham Palace for lunch with the Queen and then was also a guest at Dover Castle. The majority of our branch attended the Lord Lieutenants parade at Canterbury and according to all reports it was a fine parade. We were also represented at the parade in Rochester.

What a lovely day we had for 'Buffs' Sunday at Canterbury, perfect weather, a good turnout for the march and then at Leros Barracks we were joined by our 'walking wounded' to enjoy our picnics or the excellent buffet lunch provided by our hosts. Eric Deuters once again travelled down from Cambridgeshire and joined our branch for the march to the cathedral, great to see him, we all wish he lived a little closer.

We once again joined up with Canterbury Branch and sent a full coach to the parade at the Tower of London and also for their visit to Ypres.

For my part I was honoured to be able to join the group turning the page in Canterbury Cathedral. On my first duty day, on turning that day the first name I saw was that of my uncle, Vic Milham who was killed in May 1940 whilst serving with 2nd Battalion The Buffs. Later in the year, on my first duty day in August, the very same thing happened, can it possibly happen again in December? Because of my Royal Navy service I still have the Trafalgar 200th

Anniversary parades to deal with, but as they say 'if you can't take a joke, you shouldn't have joined'.

By the time you read this, we will have held our annual dinner and dance once again and the season of good will and heavy spending will be upon us. So from all of us in Ramsgate we wish you all that you would wish yourselves and look forward to seeing you again in 2006.

MM

DENMARK BRANCH

SECRETARY: Andrew Breining, Kildehojen 15, DK 4690 Haslev, Denmark.

MEETINGS: Contact the Secretary for details.

Greetings from the Denmark Branch to all our British comrades. I hope you have all enjoyed the good weather this year, we had a superb summer here in Denmark that has lasted into autumn.

On 19th August 05 we had the Branch summer meeting in Bendt Ole Arndt's summer house in the north of Zealand, and the weather was very fine, and everybody enjoyed themselves, only Tom Jensen and his wife were unable to attend. Enclosed is a group picture, and as I took the picture, I have inserted a small picture of myself, to complete the group.



left to right: Font row: Birthe Passarge, Joyce Arndt, Inger Passer Iversen, Lis Breining, Karen Birch Nielsen, Else Madsen, Inger Korff.

Back row: Erik Jorgensen, Bendt Ole Arndt, Kaj Madsen, Mogens Birch Nielsen, Knud Passer Iversen, Andrew Breining, Kay Weeke.

Christmas is just around the corner and this issue gives me the opportunity, on behalf of the Branch here, to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy and prosperous 2006.

AB

CANTERBURY BRANCH

SECRETARY: H G B Delo, 46 Ulcombe Gardens, Canterbury, CT2 7QZ

MEETING PLACE: The Chaucer Club, Chaucer Hill, off Military Road, Canterbury.

MEETING: Last Thursday of month at 20.00hrs.

Since the last issue of The Journal the Branch has taken part in many activities starting with our Annual Albuhera Dinner which was held at the Canterbury Golf Club on Saturday May 14th. Our guests this year were the Editor of the Journal and his wife, Vivienne. Good food, good company and the wine and port flowed well along with a large raffle organised by our Social Secretary and his helpers.

At the end of May members went to Italy for a 10 day holiday which was again well organised by our Treasurer, Allan Marchant and his wife Sylvia. Our thanks were afforded to them for all their work. They are already looking ahead to another trip in 2006.

On Saturday 28th May some members travelled with the Ramsgate branch to the Major. General's. review on Horse Guards Parade, London. For anyone who has not been this is an excellent rehearsal of Trooping the Colour. We would like to thank the Ramsgate Branch for their hospitality.

Saturday 9th July saw the WW11 Commemoration parade in Canterbury. Under the watchful eye of RSM Osborne of 3PWRR. members of the Branch joined by other Branches of our Association formed the largest of the Service Association Contingents and, may I add, the smartest on the parade. This was not just my opinion but expressed by many members of the public watching the parade. You could hear the calls of "Steady the Buffs".

The older people of Canterbury still remember the good old days when the regular army Buffs used to march through the High Street to the Cathedral for

their Annual Service of Remembrance ie. "Buffs Sunday".

At our monthly meeting congratulations and thanks were recorded in the minutes to Major Dennis Bradley for all his work keeping our Association in step on the parade when we could not hear the band playing several times during the march to the Cathedral. "Thank you Dennis from us all".

After the Cathedral service those members who had taken part in the parade were invited by RSM Osborne back to Leros Barracks for drinks and a BBQ. We thank him for his very kind invitation and for a very enjoyable afternoon.

For our friends in Denmark, - we did carry your Standard on the parade along with other Branch Standards. We take your Standard with us wherever we go and are very proud to look after it on your behalf.

I hoped you all enjoyed the excellent Band Concert given by the Kohima band at Leros Barracks on Saturday 25th June, it was a sell out and if another 50 tickets had been available these would have been sold with no hesitation. The food was again outstanding for which we thank the cooks of 3PWRR. There was also a grand raffle with the proceeds going to Association funds. We thank Major Dennis Bradley, and Major Peter White for their organisation and for the help of the Canterbury Reunion Committee for which the Band Concert was a trial run for the serving of the food for the Canterbury Reunion.

Our annual visit to Ypres, Belgium took place on Sunday 17th July. On our arrival in Ypres we had an excellent lunch with liquid refreshments and afterwards some members made a visit to Hill 62 where there is a very good museum and others went shopping and drinking in Ypres. At 20.00 hours we paraded at the Menin Gate along with the Canterbury and Denmark standards for the Last Post Ceremony. We thank Mr Bernard Miles for taking the parade. We must not forget John Bishop who does all the hard work making the arrangements for us in Ypres, his work is greatly appreciated by everyone involved. "Thank You John". The weather was again kind to us all day, "Very Hot".

The Canterbury Reunion, well, what can you say but one of the best for many years. The reunion committee did a grand job to ensure we all enjoyed

ourselves. One small hiccup, which will be rectified next year, was the seating arrangements; this has been a problem now for many years. When we were at Howe Barracks, "not enough chairs" was always the cry but where do you draw the line with unknown numbers attending and no army stores available. However steps are now being taken to purchase more chairs, which will alleviate the problem.

The Tower of London parade and service was as usual very well organised. The Branch travelled with Ramsgate Branch to London and we are most grateful to them for organising the coach. In the afternoon Deric King, the Ramsgate Branch Social Secretary, organised a visit to the Army Museum at Chelsea which was very enjoyable. Whilst in London our Chairman Harry Crooks made a presentation to Joe Chester who is now an in-pensioner at the Royal Hospital of a framed certificate making him an Honorary Life of the Branch. Joe wondered what was going on but was over the moon to receive such an honour.



Harry Crooks with Joe Chester supported by Len Holman

Twenty-Two members, the most for many years, attended the Maidstone Reunion which they thought was well planned by the reunion committee. The parade and wreath laying at Brenchley Gardens went well apart from one little slip up which will go unmentioned, the march to the church led by the Kohima band was just the right paces for the oldies, a very good church service along with a very good sermon.

The Band concert in the Kent Hall was of its usual excellence, but again this year the lunch was very

disappointing for the cost. All in all a very good day was had by all who attended. We would like to say "Well Done" to those members of the reunion committee who worked so hard during the day to make thing go as planned.

On behalf of all members who "Turn the Page" every day at the Warriors Chapel in Canterbury Cathedral we would like to take this opportunity of saying a big "Thank You" to Mrs Pauline Nicklin of RHQ for all her work organising and sending out the rota's to us each month. She does a fabulous job which is really not easy when you do not know the people you are dealing with, her work is greatly appreciated. This is a very important ceremony which must not slide away.

Christmas will soon be upon us so we take this opportunity of wishing all Association Officers, Staff at RHQ, all Branches and members far and near a Very Happy Christmas and a prosperous and healthy New Year.

We hope to see you at the Carol Concert on 11th December. That's your lot for now

HD

BROMLEY BRANCH

SECRETARY: B L Bartlett, 185 Park Crescent, Erith, Kent DA8 3EB.

MEETING PLACE: Bromley United Services Club. 33 London Road, Bromley.

MEETING: Last Saturday in the month at 20.00 hrs.

COLCHESTER BRANCH

SECRETARY: G. Arnot, 30 Cairns Road, Colchester, Essex CO2 8UZ. Tel: 01206 520145

MEETING PLACE: As arranged by the Secretary each month. Please contact him for details.

MEETING: 3rd Sunday in the month at 10.00 hrs.

We start the notes from Colchester with the very sad news of the death of Cliff Wheeler on 17th October. Cliff was only 61 and had been ill for a relatively short time. The funeral was well attended by friends

and colleagues from across the country and reflected how popular Cliff had been. He paid a full and active part in the life of the branch a branch which he, with Jimmy Burr, had helped to form. Our deepest sympathy goes to Val and family, he will be very missed greatly by us all.

We at Colchester are sorry that we have not provided any notes for the last two issues of the Journal, but I hope that we are in time for this publication. Please note our change of meeting place to the new venue is given above.

Our sick list has been quite large over the past few months which for such a "young" branch is unusual. It all started with yours truly having to have a major operation, I am glad to say that everything went well and I am now back in good health again. We hope that the others on the list, John Rolfe, Barry White and Pearl Mitchison will soon be fighting fit again. John Knowles has been in hospital for an operation but is now back to his normal self. Finally that well known character, Scouse Sturgeon, is recovering well from his hip replacement operation, the bar profits will no doubt also recover now.

Our social year started off with the annual Valentines Dance which is our best fund raiser for the Branch. We always share this great evening with many locals who live in the vicinity of Thorrington. Our Albuhera Dinner was once again well attended by members, their wives and friends This was followed by our annual Bar B Q with many camping out in 'Scouse' Sturgeon's garden. It was good to see Major John Barrell at that function, we hope that he enjoyed himself meeting many old friends.

Once again the two reunions have passed us by and we must thank the two organizing committees for their hard work not only on the day but also throughout the year. While we are on the subject of thanks we must not forget Sittingbourne Branch for hosting the Association Annual General Meeting.

At our Branch Annual General meeting earlier this year all of our committee were returned back to office so the branch must be happy with the work we are doing.

It may be a little early but Christmas greetings to you all from Colchester Branch.

GA

MEDWAY BRANCH

SECRETARY: Marilyn Devonshire, 136 Brompton Lane, Strood, Kent ME2 3BA

MEETING PLACE: The R.A.F.A. Club, Riverside, Chatham, Kent

MEETING: 1st Wednesday in the month at 20.00 hrs.

MAIDSTONE BRANCH

SECRETARY: Mrs. D Hall-Richardson, 31 Bychurch Place, Waterloo Street, Maidstone, ME15 7UQ

MEETING PLACE: The Eagle, Upper Stone Street, Maidstone.

MEETING: Third Tuesday in the month at 19.30 hrs.

HYPHE & FOLKESTONE BRANCH

SECRETARY: Mr. S C Macintyre, Quarry Lane Cottage, Hythe, Kent CT21 5HE. Tel: 01303 266778

MEETING PLACE: The Royal British Legion Hall, St. Leonards Road, Hythe

MEETING: Second Thursday in the month at 7.30pm.

SANDWICH BRANCH

SECRETARY: Mr. D G Hogben, 75 Burch Avenue, Sandwich, Kent CT13 0AN. Tel: 01304 612920

MEETING PLACE: The R.A.F.A Windsock Club, The Market, Sandwich

MEETING: 2nd Wednesday in the month (except August, at 19.30 hrs.

RAMSGATE BRANCH

(Ladies Guild)

SECRETARY: Mrs. Molly Webster, 11 Turnden Gardens, Cliftonville, CT9 3HB . Tel 01843 295005

MEETING PLACE: The Royal British Legion Club, Allenby House, 14/16 Cliff St. Ramsgate

MEETING: 4th Friday in the month(except Oct & Dec) at 19.45 hrs.

The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment



The Regiment continues to be in fine form and has been supporting operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. After the plethora of bravery awards most people military and civilian have now heard of The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. The Regiment has now made its mark! We are not prepared to be complacent and everyone strives to be that little bit better.

The 1st Battalion is now well established in Paderborn in Germany. They are based in Barker Barracks which is an enormous old German Army Barracks. It was the main SS Barracks pre war and is rumoured to have a network of tunnels and vast chambers under the current roads and buildings. The Battalion share it with The Royal Engineers and REME. They are part of 3 Division and 20 Armd Bde. They have been on exercise to the Old East Germany to a training area near Berlin. They have also gone as a Battle Group (with Queen's Own Hussars) to exercise in Poland. Lt Col Mat Maer has now departed on promotion, and handed over to Lt Col Roger Thompson (ex RRF). At the end of November 2005 the Battalion moves into TELEC training in preparation for their next tour to Iraq in April 2006. This tour is quite soon after their last one but all are looking forward to the challenge. Their tour will be TELEC 8.

An update on Pte Beharry VC. He is still 'Y' listed. This means that due to his injuries he is still medically down graded and is not allowed to serve with the 1st Battalion due to those injuries. He is continuously being treated at Headley Court and we wish him a speedy recovery.

The 2nd Battalion is still commanded by Lt Col Jon Wright. The Battalion had a very successful tour in Iraq from January to July this year. This was not in the Armoured Warrior role but in soft skin vehicles i.e. Land Rovers, etc. They had a platoon deployed in Baghdad which added that element of alertness as they were serving alongside the U.S.A Forces. They had a few wounded or casualties of Road Accidents who are still under medical care. After well deserved leave they are home preparing for the Arms Plot move from Ternhill to Ballykelly (Northern Ireland) on 12th December 05. They will complete two years there and then (at the moment) are scheduled to go on a two year posting to Cyprus.

Whilst in Northern Ireland they will be part of the historic run down of the force levels to what it was pre 1969 - i.e. perhaps three residential Battalions. However we wait and see.

The 3rd Battalion is now commanded by Lt Col Adam Edmunds with Lt Col Tony Guthrie moving on promotion, within the Territorial Army (TA), to full Colonel. The TA is once again going through re-organisation. The 3rd Battalion will inherit C Company which is based in Portsmouth and at the moment part of The Royal Rifle Volunteers. This change should be effective in 2006. The Battalion will also form a fourth Rifle Company in Chatham & Rochester. This is an expansion for the 3rd Battalion. This year they completed a very good Annual Camp at Penally and were visited by their Honorary Colonel, Mr Alan Willett CMG who is the Lord Lieutenant of Kent.

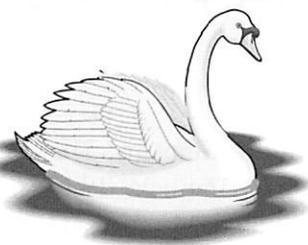
Over the period of the past two years 40% of the Battalion has deployed on Operational tours with some soldiers completing two tours. The Battalion currently has 31 soldiers deployed in Iraq with The Royal Rifle Volunteers and they return on 26 November 2005. The TV scenes of the burning Warriors being attacked by mobs also involved members of this platoon.

B Company and C Company, the two independent companies, continue to provide manpower for operational tours.

B Company has a successful Annual Camp on Salisbury Plain and C Company went to Oakhampton. The TA restructuring leaves B Company still as part of the London Regiment and C Company will go to the 3rd Battalion. The Companies close involvement with operational tours and the professionalism required to meet the demands of modern day soldiering demonstrates how good the TA is. The modern trend is more to become reinforcement units as opposed to formed fighting units. This may be the way ahead.

In summary the Regiments are in fine fighting form.

Major A Martin



George J. Harris
(Design & Print)

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CANTERBURY REUNION (BUFFS SUNDAY)

SUNDAY 7TH AUGUST 2005

Once again the Canterbury Reunion was blessed with good weather and the parade fell in at the appointed time. By then many old friendships had already been revived and the faces of those who have passed on sadly missed. The streets were lined with a great many people who were glad to add their thanks, in this the 60th Anniversary year, to the many veterans who were marching in the parade.

The service in the Cathedral was particularly poignant and as the final notes of the Last Post echoing from the high vaulted ceiling faded, there was not a single sound during the Act of Remembrance. The strident tones of Reveille then broke the spell and with it the veteran's memories of times long ago and lost comrades. The address was given by the Dean, the Very Revd. Robert Willis.

After the service the salute was taken by The Sheriff of Canterbury, standing in for the Lord Mayor, Mrs Attwood, who had been taken ill a few days before. We all send Mrs Attwood our best wishes for a very speedy recovery with our thanks for all the support she has given the Association in the past.

The reunion in Leros Barracks late saw everyone relaxing in the sunshine. After an excellent buffet lunch, the Invicta Band played tunes from the wartime era whilst the picknickers enjoyed their sandwiches. However despite bringing in an extra 120 chairs we were still short. To overcome this problem once and for all the Association President, Colonel Champion, has given permission for the purchase of 150 extra patio style chairs.

After a very successful raffle, organised by Canterbury Branch, the reunion was entertained by a



**The Invicta Band conducted by
Arthur Healey MBE**

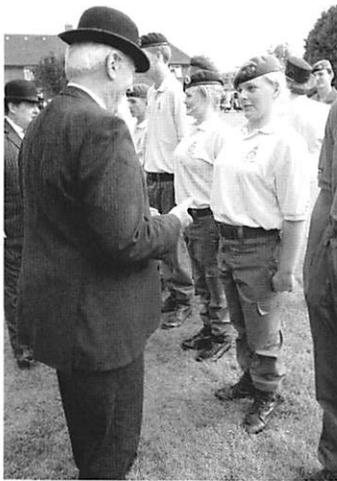
KitKar display team of Sussex Army Cadets which everyone enjoyed especially the Sheriff and his wife who were driven around the arena in the completed cars. Finally the Kohima Band marched on and provided their usual impeccable display. Prior to the playing of Sunset and Beating of Retreat, a very well deserved Meritorious Service Certificate was presented to Mrs Marilyn Devonshire, the Secretary of Medway Branch, for her considerable hard work and dedication to the Branch and for the support she has shown to Association over many years. This was followed by the presentation of Certificates of Wartime Service to some of our veterans of the 2nd World War. It turned out that there were far more certificates to present than originally planned and the Kohima Band were kept waiting far too long. This was much regretted and our sincere thanks must go to them for their patience.



The Sheriff on his grand tour



**Marilyn Devonshire receiving her Meritorious
Service Certificate from Colonel Champion.**



**Colonel Champion
chatting with some of
the cadets**



Eric Deuters and Henry Parker

Leros Barracks is proving to be an ideal venue for the reunion and our thanks must go to the Commanding Officer of 3 PWRR, the PSAO, Captain Alwyn Lord, the caretaker Mark and the 'Head Chef' and his staff.

Finally many thanks to the Reunion Committee of Canterbury Branch, Harry Crooks, Henry Delo, Maurice Samson, Sammy Supple, Colin Smith, Stan Wooldridge and Brian Dudman. Their hard work made the 2005 reunion one to remember.

Some of the veterans pictured below with the DL's Mrs. Tricia Shephard MBE DL and Colonel Peter Bishop OBE DL.



Sid Pullen and Peter Turney



**Major Derek Poulsen
MBE**



Bill Truelove



Dennis Mills and Ken Blake



Harry King and John Field



Robert Ship and Victor Uden

THE MAIDSTONE REUNION 2005

After the 'Fall In' the parade was inspected by Colonel C. Champion, The Association President. There followed a short service after which wreaths were laid at the Queen's Own Cenotaph in Brenchley Gardens.

The parade then moved off for the traditional march through Maidstone led by the Kohima Band of 3rd Bn. The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. The salute was taken by the Mayor of Maidstone supported by the Mayoress together with a considerable number of councillors. The parade fell out in the grounds of All Saint's Church where there was a formal service, Act of Remembrance and Turning of the Page in the three Books of Remembrance. The address was given by Terry Waite CBE who later joined the veterans for lunch. Lunch and the reunion was held in the Kent Hall, during which the ever popular Kohima Band gave a concert which was much appreciated by all.



The parade, led by The Kohima Band, marching past the saluting base. The Mayor of Maidstone, accompanied by Colonel Champion and supported by many of his councillors, took the salute



Colonel Champion talking with the wreath laying party. L/R Tug Wilson, Harry King, Harry Crooks, Mrs Ann Shin and her son



In step, backs straight. It was undoubtedly the smartest parade for many years.



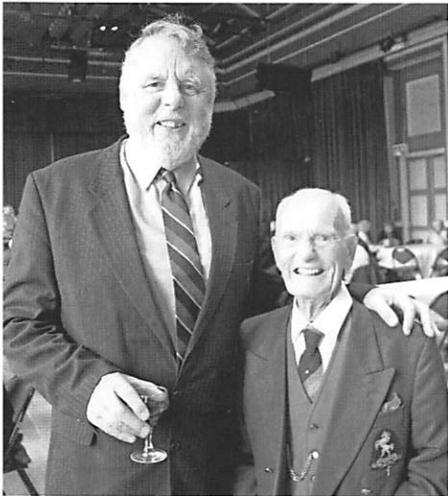
Mrs Ann Shin, escorted by Harry Crooks, laying a wreath in memory of her father, Fred Bucknell MM, who recently passed away.



**The three 'Page Turners' and three 'Wreath Layers:'
L to R: John Field and Henry Parker (London Buffs),
Tony Chessun and George Dunk (Sittingbourne),
Harry King (Ramsgate) and Harry Crooks
(Canterbury)**



Who cracked what joke to whom is not known but a good laugh was enjoyed by all.



Terry Waite with Frank McMurchie



The annual Standard Bearers Competition was cancelled as there were only two entrants, Joe Correa (London Buffs) and Alan Buddle (Ramsgate), both were presented with a cut glass mug by the Association President.



From Left to Right: Harry & Derec King, Sid Watler sharing a joke with Terry Waite.

During the reunion Certificates of Service were presented to four Queen's Own veterans of the last war, Frank McMurchie, Don Bowden, Harold Acott and Len Jones MM.



Sid Bowden, receiving his certificate from Colonel Bishop. Sid enlisted into the Queen's Own at Maidstone in 1937. He served with 2 RWK in Malta, Palestine, Egypt, Syria and Leros. After the fall of Leros he escaped in a rowing boat and was picked up by a Greek destroyer and taken to Alexandria. The story of Sid's escape from Leros was told in the April 2003 issue of the Journal. It was a great shame that Sid's best pal, Don Bush, could not be with him at the reunion.



Harold Acott, above, enlisted into the Queen's Own in 1937 and served with the 2nd Bn. in Palestine and Malta during the seige after which he was transferred back to the UK. A little known anecdote (certainly not by his seniors) is that in Malta Harold was given a 48 hour pass. He talked his way onto a RAF bomber and accompanied the crew on a bombing run to Italy. On the way back they stopped in Egypt to refuel before returning to Malta. Harold, was discharged in 1947, joined the TA in 1956 and served until 1961. He then joined The Kent Army Cadet Force as a Sergeant Major instructor leaving in 1980. From September 1980 Harold worked in the Officers' Mess as a Silverman and apart from a break of three years finally retired in December 1998 after a lifetime of service.

Frank McMurchie, pictured below, with Colonel Bishop after receiving his certificate. Frank enlisted into the Queen's Own at Maidstone in 1934. After training he served with 2nd Bn. in Palestine in 1938 and from 1940-42 with the battalion in Malta during the seige. After brief stays in Egypt and Syria the

battalion landed on Leros just before the German attack. After the surrender Frank attempted to escape but was discovered by a German motorcyclist. Frank and other POW's were later packed into cattle trucks, with just a bucket of water and some biscuits, for a journey that was to take 12 long days and nights to the POW camps in Germany. The farther north they travelled the colder it became and the prisoners, clothed only for service in warmer climes, suffered intensely especially at night when the temperature dropped to well below freezing. The water soon ran out and they survived only by sucking the icicles which formed inside the trucks. By the end of the journey 25 of the POW's in Frank's truck alone had died, some in the early stages of the journey. In the spring of 1945, Frank escaped and made his way westward to meet the advancing US Army. Frank, now nearly 94, always attends this reunion.



Len Jones MM, pictured above, at the book of Remembrance in All Saint's Church. Len was called up in January 1940 and was trained at Maidstone. He later joined the 6 RWK which was reformed from Dunkirk survivors. In 1942 Len sailed with the battalion, as part of 1st Army, for Algiers and served with them in North Africa, Sicily, Italy and Austria. Len was decorated with the Military Medal for his actions during the Italian campaign when at Acqua Salata, Camaggio his platoon came under sustained and heavy fire from a machine gun which caused several casualties. Len, the platoon sergeant, led the charge that silenced the gun.

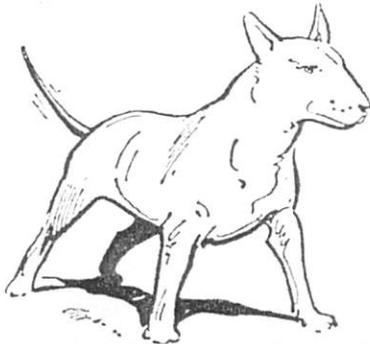
If you require general information about the Maidstone Reunion in 2006 please contact the Reunion Secretary, Mrs Jacky Allen, 3 Sermon Drive, Swanley, Kent BR8 7HS.



CRIB OF THE BUFFS (A shaggy dog story ?)

In February of this year Sean McCarthy wrote a letter to Henry Delo who passed it on to me for publication. Sean's letter reads:-

"Many years ago I was a boy collecting Warlord comics. Included in these were regular features entitled "Mascots of War". One of these articles was the story of "Crib of The Buffs"



MASCOTS AT WAR

I subsequently lost that particular issue but remembered the story. I subsequently tracked down a copy on ebay.

I have photocopied it for you. Is there anybody who may know anything about this dog?"



Here then are a few extracts from Warlord illustrating the story:- *"It is 1814 and the Duke of Wellington's Army, including The Buffs, The Royal East Kent Regt, are marching on Toulouse. But lying in wait are two French snipers.*

But Crib, out hunting rabbits spotted the snipers and raised the alarm and then attacked the two French snipers.



Crib was wounded in the throat and it proved impossible for the Regimental Surgeon to remove the musket ball.

Crib made a very rapid recovery and was soon trotting along beside the regiment again.

When the British Army got to Toulouse the French Army came out to meet them. The French Regiment opposite The Buffs also had a dog mascot called Alphonse, a very large and ferocious poodle.



Then Crib got the French dog by the throat, and the fight was over.



The two dogs met between the two regiments and squared up to each other baring their teeth. Crib was at a distinct disadvantage as he was still weak from his wound and the other dog was twice his size. No one, French or British, really gave Crib much of a chance.

For ten long minutes the savage fighting continued and the little British dog fought bravely against his much larger opponent. Then, against all the odds, Crib seized the French dog by the throat and the fight was over.

Crib's victory did much to restore British, and in particular Buff, morale and in the ensuing battle the British Army won the day."

At first this seemed to be a bit of a romantic "tall story", Ray Cox, of London Buffs Branch, undertook to investigate it and to try and find Crib's grave. Having visited St Martin's, Ray drew a complete blank, Crib's grave could not be located, the church had no record of it and to all intents and purposes that was the end of an interesting but fanciful tale.

However, Phil Holden, a member of Canterbury Branch and a collector of all things military remembered seeing a reference to Crib in a book that

he had and he found it. Sure enough the story is contained in 'Military Customs' by Major T. J. Edwards MBE., F R .Hist.S. published by Gale and Polden Ltd in 1950 which reads:

"The Buffs had a bull terrier named "Crib" which went through the Peninsular War. He was wounded by a bullet which lodged in his throat and remained there throughout his life. Before one of the battles he fought a duel with a poodle from the French lines. The dogs met in no man's land between the armies with soldiers from both nations cheering in support of their dog. "Crib" killed his opponent, which his regiment hailed as a good omen for victory in the forthcoming battle.

"Crib" was most discerning and had a keen sense of duty. If anyone in uniform came to the house where he lodged he would let him in and out, but if an officer or man in plain clothes came he would let him in, but



would not let him out again, although he may have known him, until one of the family came to the rescue.

"Crib" served with the Buffs in America and also Australia. He died on 1st January 1830, at the age of eighteen years and was buried in St. Martin's-in-the-Strand, London"

(My thanks for Sean McCarthy for sending in the photo copies of the comic, to Ray Cox for trying to find the grave and to Phil Holden for finally solving the mystery. Finally my sincere apologies to Crib for having doubted him. The Editor)

60th ANNIVERSARY PARADES



The Guard of Honour formed by 3rd Battalion The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment presenting arms to the British Legion, various Regimental Association and our own Branch Standards at Canterbury Cathedral



The Lord Lieutenant talking with Joe Correa, Standard Bearer London Buffs



The Lord Lieutenant chatting with Jim Nankevis and Ken Parker at the Maidstone Parade



The large Association contingent passing the saluting base on the 60th Anniversary Parade in Canterbury

THE LAST POST

COLONEL H. B. H. (BLICK) WARING OBE.

General Sir Geoffrey Howlett KBE, MC writes:



As a great many of you here know, The Royal West Kent Regt, or The Queen's Own as we like to be known, has not technically existed for the past 45 years thanks to three separate amalgamations with others from the South East of England. That it still does exist in the hearts and

minds of so many, and that is so well demonstrated by the large turnout of Queen's Own today, is almost totally because of Blick.

The son of a regular Queen's Own officer, Blick left Marlborough in 1937 and Sandhurst in July 1939 to join the Queen's Own as a regular, a few months before the outbreak of war. Within a very short time he was chosen to be the Adjutant, the principle staff officer to five different units in Kent, Egypt and Italy, emphasising his ability, at a very early age to plan, think ahead, administer and, above all, to pay great attention to detail, for he was a perfectionist.

Later on, and just after the war, he was to become a Company Commander and 2nd in Command of the 1st Battalion in Italy, Greece and Egypt, even commanding the Battalion for 2 months in 1947 at the age of 27. He came home to attend Staff College and then to be Brigade Major of the Kent & Sussex TA Brigade based in Tunbridge Wells. Whilst there, he very wisely married Myra, over 53 years ago. They almost at once set off for Malaya for Blick to spend three years as a Company Commander chasing terrorists and to be Military Assistant to the CINC in Singapore. Among others he had Richard Neve and I as young Platoon Commanders. He was wounded in a Kuala Lumpur Police Station by a Malay police constable running amok and firing in all directions with Blick and a Police Lieutenant each trying to get out through a swing door first in a rather undignified manner. A bullet wound in the calf and Myra's pregnancy with Richard led them to be known as 'Dot' and 'Carry One' as they hopped round the Cameron Highlands on Blick's convalescence. His time as 'C' Company Commander was perhaps best known for

his Company soldiers taking on and beating up the SAS in a well known bar in Kuala Lumpur after a three week jungle operation. Blick had wisely and typically warned the Military Police that it could happen and helpfully all 'C' Company soldiers were delivered back to barracks without charges.

From Singapore he, Myra and young Richard, came back for a very happy 2 years commanding the Regimental Depot at Maidstone, where he'd been born, and producing Sarah who was then shortly to be joined by Michael, born in Cyprus where once again Blick, as a Company Commander, was chasing terrorists- EOKA this time. Two tours at the Ministry of Defence, either side of Command of the newly formed amalgamated 1st Bn.. The Queen's Own Buffs as only their second CO, took him to Folkestone, Colchester and British Guyana. His tour included an immaculate Trooping of the Colour at Folkestone 40 years ago planned and executed by Blick to perfection. As a Commanding Officer, Blick played a huge part in blending the two Kent regiments together and ensuring that his soldiers got everything possible that was their due. He was immensely loyal, both up and down, totally straight and a man of great honour.

As a full Colonel he again went terrorist chasing in South Arabia before a fascinating 3 years in Australia as Military Assistant to the British High Commissioner and finally he led the Personnel Branch at SHAPE near Brussels as part of NATO.

He had been appointed MBE in Cyprus, OBE after command and was three times Mentioned in Despatches in Greece, Malaya and Aden. He and Myra had lived in over 20 houses in 22 years of Army married life.

On returning to Kent, here to Headcorn, Blick at once took on, for 10 years, the job of County Emergency Planning Officer at Maidstone which he did with much more vigour than National or County Authorities gave it. Only last week in a tent at the Cricket Week at Canterbury, a distinguished old leader of Kent County Council said to me that Blick was quite outstanding and an example to everyone. But above all from 1974, for over 30 years, he has been the totally 'hands on', dedicated, spirit and soul of the Queen's Own Regimental Museum at Maidstone which has been his particular baby and I doubt that it would exist today without the time he gave it and his inspiring leadership. The Regimental

Association, The Officer's Club and indeed The Queen's Own Buffs Regimental Association have all been succoured and driven by his will power. Throughout his service, and that lasted from 1939 to last month, he gave everything he knew to the Regiment he was born into, served and loved. Together with Myra they were generous, welcoming and kind hosts. In spite of his sometimes detailed fussyness that could almost drive you mad, he was nearly always right and he had an impish sense of humour and an ability to sink a pint of Kentish beer in a very few seconds. He had a deep love of mankind, especially if they happened to be Queen's Own (or even Buffs). A loving and very loved husband, proud father and grandfather he will be quite incredibly missed throughout the County he served so well.

QUO FAS ET GLORIA DUCANT INVICTA

FRED STANLEY BUCKNELL M.M.



Fred Bucknell passed away on 11th August 2005, aged 88 years. At the funeral, on 31st August, Fred's long time friend and comrade, Maurice Lowe, gave the eulogy:

"Fred was born in Somerset in 1916. At the tender age of 3 years he

was placed in a children's' home. At the age of 14 Fred had to leave the home and he found lodgings with a very kind lady who took care of him. Work was found for him on a local farm and he stayed in that situation for some years.

Fred told his family many years later that one of his jobs was to take the milk, on a horse drawn cart, to the railway station, leave the milk there and return to the farm. On a particular day in 1934, the 28th December to be exact, Fred carried out his normal task and took the milk to the station but he did not go back to the farm. Instead he made his way to the Depot, Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, Maidstone and duly enlisted.

I was given the opportunity to read Fred's Discharge Book. It reads as follows Home-India-Palestine-Malta(during the siege) - North Africa-Home-North West Europe-Home-Singapore-Home-FARELF Malaya-Home. It was 1944 in Belgium that Fred was

awarded the Military Medal. He retired from the army on 6th July 1957, 22years, 191 days after signing on, a long and distinguished career. Fred will no doubt be remembered by many who served in Malaya with the Queen's Own.

On retirement Fred did not put up his feet for a well earned rest, far from it, he took up a busy occupation as a pub Landlord and over the next few years ran "The Old Oak" at Sittingbourne, "The Yew Tree" at Wychly and the "King William" at Chatham.

Fred's daughter, Ann, was born into the regiment and talking to her is just like talking to a West Kent. She has an extensive knowledge of many of Fred's comrades and of the regiment itself.

About 27 years ago Fred moved to Norfolk with his wife but sadly she passed away not long after the move. I have been told that Fred then got himself very involved in local events and organisations and that he raised considerable funds for the very ancient church of St. Peter & St. Paul at Fakenham in whose cemetery he now lies and which, as a keen gardener, he often tended. In the latter years of his life Fred asked that he never be put into a care home and although at times he was very ill indeed Ann, his daughter, with help from other members of the family, managed to care for him at home.

Fred's funeral was carried out with great dignity, simplicity and military tradition. His medals were placed on the coffin which was draped with the Union Jack. There were three standards on parade representing the Royal British Legion, the St. George Cross Association and Brian Bartlett bearing the standard of the Queen's Own Association. As Fred was laid to rest beside his wife the Last Post was sounded, it was very moving. With Fred's family, I returned to the grave a few hours later for a private moment when something occurred which was quite symbolic. A lone Hurricane flew over - Fred would have liked that. It was a fitting, albeit coincidental, tribute to a brave soldier, stalwart comrade and much loved father and grandfather.

ML

LT. COLONEL E.S. SCOTT MBE.

Michael Scott writes:

My father was born into comfortable Edwardian society (George V had been on the throne for a mere 2 years), grandson of the 3rd Earl of Eldon, godson of Arthur Conan-Doyle and 4th of 5 brothers. So life was

competitive from an early age, but carefully ruled by the benevolent dictatorship of Nanny, whom Vronkie and I just knew.

My grandfather was a Wykemist but knew Beelow, a housemaster at Winchester who became Headmaster of Bradfield. So he sent 1,3 & 5 sons to Winchester and 2 & 4 to Bradfield. From there my father went to Sandhurst as a Gentleman Cadet for which my grandfather had to pay the fees, arriving as the smallest cadet less a Burmese prince, but luckily grew enough to be able to be commissioned in the Buffs.

My father's attitude, philosophy and peaceful equanimity was conditioned by the golf genes flowing through his blood from his family, in particular, his charismatic aunt, Lady Margaret Scott, who won the Ladies Golf Championship 1894,5&6 until stopped from entering further by her father who told her it was unladylike to win something more than three times running. Golf, like snooker, is not necessarily played by gentlemen but it is indeed one of the last sports where the ethics and behaviour expected of gentlemen are apparent. My father was in the last 8 in the Boys' Championships in 1929. He played for the Army and his Regiment; the latter from 1932 until 1988. Unbelievably his handicap was reduced at age 87. He loved to play at Broadstone, particularly as he had been a member for so long and reached such an age that he no longer had to pay a subscription! The Club, which was only 14 years older than him, gave him a very handsome plate on his 50 years membership in 2004. Golf pervaded and influenced his life and there will be few of you here who dared to interfere with a golf day on Mon, Wed and Fri.

When golf allowed, he was an accomplished professional soldier. On his 28th birthday, May 1940, he had the misfortune to be Adjt of the Buffs when they were overrun by a German tank division at Arras. The Battalion split up into small groups and dispersed the best they could. My father collected waifs and strays as he went along and was eventually extracted by boat through Cherbourg, via Rouen and Nantes sometime after Dunkirk. He was Mentioned in Despatches for his exploits.

He had a number of adventures. At one point his little band had to cross the river Somme. As all the bridges were guarded by Germans this presented a major problem. The strongest swimmer went into the water but was overwhelmed by the current. Just then - rather like the disciple saying "There's a boy here with 5 loaves and 2 fishes" a soldier said to Dad he could see a French peasant watering his cows in the reeds. So he

was dispatched to see if the man knew a way across. The soldier returned, saying there was no trace whatsoever of the peasant and his cows, but there was a boat with oars. Thus they crossed the river and my father firmly believed it was the hand of God.

Later, after having little to eat for 4 or 5 days, they came across an abandoned logistics store, stuffed with tins of pilchards in tomato sauce, on which they gorged themselves with predictable results. From then on, for the rest of his life, my father never touched another pilchard.

He returned on D +2 through Le Havre as a staff officer in Gen 'Bubbles' Barker's famous 49th Polar Bear Division for which he was made MBE and then fought across NW Europe for the rest of the War, eventually commanding battalions of the Essex and Lincolnshire Regiments.

He was, throughout, supported by his beloved wife Anne who multi-tasked the family both during the War and when he was subsequently away in the Canal Zone and Kenya. He had a wonderful batman called Pte Tufts, who wasn't the smartest of soldiers despite having been in service in some grand family before the war. Tufty was much loved by us all. At one stage, Dad was posted, without Tufty, to the Canal Zone. My mother realising how detrimental this would be to my father's well-being, drafted a telegram herself to Pte Tufts ordering him to proceed without delay, to join Major Scott in Tel-El-Kebir, using this signal as authority, ostensibly signed by an important-sounding officer in the War Office. Of course, it worked much to Dad's and Tufty's delight.

Failing to command the Buffs due to a cock-up in the MS department - no, really -my father retired to take up pig farming at Arne in the late 50's. It was hard physical work and I expect the golf suffered but he was much supported by his eldest brother Harold at Encombe and the Estate. After yet another night-time spent capturing errant pigs or acting as a sow's midwife, my mother threatened to write her autobiography to be entitled "Mud up my Nightie". Luckily for all of us she didn't.

Eventually my parents gave that up and concentrated on - yes, golf- the Wareham Younger Set (the local party going elite of the time - you all know who you are) and intrepid journeys by caravan the length and breadth of Europe.

My mother died 11 years ago but typically, before she did so, ensured my father could look after himself, with Marie's indefatigable help. However, his real,

and unending support came from so many of you here. You were all marvellous to him and were so kind about his lunch parties with their unchanging menus; the dreaded Sara Lee puddings when, of course, all my father wanted was cheese and biscuits. I am not going to name you all because that is a recipe for certain disaster and I would be bound to leave someone out - you all know who you are. But I must mention two; Jack Smith who must have played more rounds of golf with my father than he has had hot dinners, and Pauline Ferguson, (who sadly cannot be here herself today) who provided those hot dinners at the wonderful Knoll House and gave him so much love and affection.

However, his final months were made exceptionally comfortable and serene by the loving care of his nurses, Andrea, Linda and Maureen but led by the ever-present and tireless Sue Beeling who was so good to him and whom he dearly loved. But the weight and responsibility rested, night and day, on my wonderful sister, Vronkie, and her supportive husband, Christopher, without whom my father would have ended his days in some dreary home. He, and the rest of the family, owe you more than I can say.

So passed, a calm peaceful man, not easily angered or upset and even aged 93 was able to charm and make young ladies laugh. I know we will all miss him.

Lt. Colonel E. L. C. Edlmann MC writes:

Eric Surtees Scott, who died on 1st August 2005 aged 93. was commissioned into The Buffs from Sandhurst in 1932. He served in the 2nd Battalion at Shorncliffe and Bordon, where he became the Battalion Signals Officer, and in due course in 1939 was posted to be Adjutant of the 5th Battalion (TA) which at short notice, ill-equipped and virtually untrained, was among T.A. units sent to Northwest France on guard duties at the same time as the German invasion of Belgium in May 1940. The Battalion was overrun by a German armoured Division in the area of Arras and Doullens, and Eric was very fortunate to evade capture. and with a few others found his way, after many adventures, to Cherbourg and from there to escape across to England after the Dunkirk evacuation. He was awarded a Mention in Despatches.

As the war progressed he gained promotion and on D-Day plus 2. 1944, was holding a Staff appointment in the 49 "Polar Bears" Division in Normandy. He was awarded an M.B.E. and rose to command Battalions

of the Essex and Lincolnshire Regiments in the fighting after the breakout from Normandy eastwards towards victory in Germany.

After the War, back to peacetime regimental soldiering, he became 2nd in command of 1 Buffs which in the early .50's was on active service first in Egypt and then in Kenya both centres of anti-British unrest. In Kenya (1954) he made the surprising decision to retire although he was in line to get command of the Battalion, and embarked on pig farming in Dorset; it was hard work, but was successful.

Last, but by no means least, Eric Scott was a scion of a great golfing family, from a charismatic aunt, Lady Margaret Scott, who won the Ladies Golf Championship 3 times running in 1894-1896 down through him being in the last 8 of the Boys Championship in 1929 and playing for the Regiment (often being Army champions) for 50 years up to 1988. As his son, Lieutenant-General Michael Scott said, "Golf pervaded and influenced his long life, and, unbelievably, his handicap was reduced at age 87".

Apart from his prowess on the golf course he will also be remembered by those whom he commanded, as a leader who always remained calm and philosophical, with a cheerful and warm personality.

His wife Ann predeceased him in 1994.

ELCE

COLONEL. NEALE FRANCIS GORDON-WILSON MBE.

Neale Francis Gordon-Wilson was born on 5 July 1920. The son of the Reverend S. Gordon-Wilson who was a Chaplain in 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 wars. He was educated at the Kings School, Canterbury and was due to enter Kings College Hospital, London for medical training in October 1939. However, whilst still at school he enlisted in the Artists Rifles. He served in the Royal West Kents and was commissioned in the Buffs in March 1941. He served with the 2nd Bn from 1941-1944 in the Western Desert, Syria, Persia and Iraq. He was Adjutant of the battalion at the time of the Teheran Conference attended by Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin when the 2nd Bn found the guards in the Legation and on the airfield. He attended the Middle East Staff College in Palestine in 1944 and was then posted as a GSOIII Ops) to HQ 13 Corps in Italy where he served until the end of the war.

He then attended the Staff College, Camberley and moved to Burma as a DAQMG in 1946. Whilst in Burma he was responsible for the organisation of the repatriation of the surrendered Japanese Army of 350,000 men to Japan. (MBE). He then rejoined 2 Buffs, again as Adjutant, in Hong Kong. He returned to the UK in 1949 and then served at HQ Rhine Army in Germany as GSO2 (SD).

In 1952 he was appointed Brigade Adjutant of the Home Counties Brigade during the Coronation until joining the 1 Buffs for the Mau-Mau campaign in Kenya. In 1954, after completing "P" course, he was posted to the 3rd Battalion Parachute Regiment with whom he served in Cyprus during the emergency. He attended the Joint Services Staff College in 1956 and then returned to Cyprus as GSO2 (Ops) to the Governor and C-in-C Field Marshal Sir John Harding. He later rejoined the 3rd Battalion Parachute Regt, at the time serving:ng in Jordan and subsequently, became 21C.

In 1960 appointed GSOI (Intelligence) at the Central Reconnaissance Establishment of the RAF. In 1962 he commanded the 2nd Bn Parachute Regt until 1964 when he went to the Radfan, Aden in command of a mixed British and Arab Brigade Group in the rank of Colonel.

On return to the UK he attended the Senior Officers War Course at the Royal Naval Staff College, Greenwich. After a period as Colonel GS at RARDE he was appointed to command the Joint Operational Computer Projects Team in the rank of BGS (ADP) . He retired in 1969 and became Chief Executive of the Royal Hospital for Neuro Disability,. Putney where he remained until final retirement in 1980.

FREDERICK JACK GILES.

The Revd Bernard Foulgar writes:

Fred was born in Newington on the 6th January 1920, one of a family of 10 children and is survived by brothers - Bill, Neville, Michael and Victor and sisters - Betty, Violet and Jennifer.

On completing his school education at Bobbing School, he began work at the age of 14 years for Wills & Packham Brick Manufacturers. At the age of 19 he joined the Territorial Army and was attached to the Royal Artillery Regiment (known to others as the long range snipers).

Came the second World War, and Fred was called up and was posted overseas in 1940. He saw much action in the North African Campaign and was part of the Desert Army and the famed 8th Army. He was then involved in the Italian Campaign where he was to meet up with his brothers Phil and Bill. Later Fred was wounded and in 1943 he was transferred to the Royal East Kent Regiment - The Buffs.

At the end of the war Fred returned home to his family. Later he was to meet Lily, the lass who would become his future wife. They formed a friendship, courted, fell in love and were married in Holy Trinity Church, Milton on 22nd September 1945. They had a very happy marriage and a son Douglas. Sadly, Fred's wife Lily died in 1990 which left a big gap in Fred's life having been married for 45 years. With the love and help of family he was able to continue with his life.

Fred worked for the Bowater Paper Corporation at their Sittingbourne Mill for some 38 years and received a gold watch on retirement for his loyal service.

A member of the Royal British Legion and Queen's Own Buffs Regimental Association for many years and both were represented in the guard of honour together with their standards.

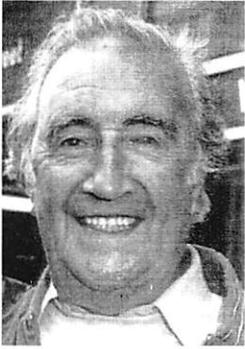
Fred, together with special friends, Joe and Les, were known affectionately by all the ex-service associations as the 'Last of the Summer Wine Crew' or the 'Three Musketeers'. He was always there to give a hand at poppy time, helping on Remembrance Sunday and on many other occasions. He was a keen supporter of the Demelza House Children's Hospice where the children knew that with the appearance of Fred, there were sweets to be had.

Fred was a quiet kindly man always ready to help others in need. He enjoyed playing football and cricket in his younger days going on to watch it on TV in later years.

Fred was admitted to Medway Hospital on the 1st June and sadly he died there on the 25th June. Douglas, Sandra and I visited him a few hours before his passing.

Fred was a very much loved and treasured Dad, brother, relative, friend and neighbour. For myself as Padre, together with friends and members of the Associations, we have lost a dear friend who will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him.

FREDERICK RICHARD POVEY DCM.



Fred Povey, who won the Distinguished Conduct Medal whilst serving with the 6th Battalion The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, died aged 86 years on 22nd September 2005.

The citation for Fred's medal reads "For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty at Djebel Aboid on 17th November 1942 when commanding an Anti Tank gun.: At 13.30 hrs Lance Sgt Povey saw a German column consisting of approximately 18 tanks and some lorried infantry approach his position. With great coolness and gallantry L/Sgt Povey and his men waited until the leading tank was within 100 yards and then opened fire, setting the tank alight. His gun then came under most heavy fire, but he continued to engage other tanks which were within range, until they moved to a hull-down position. On being told that he could withdraw he refused, and remained in his position until dark. Lance Sergeant Povey's personal bravery was an example to his detachment throughout the action."

Fred was born on 22 October 1918 and was educated at St. Mark's School, Rosherville. After school he started work at Vickers (Dartford) Ltd until he joined the colours just after the declaration of war. He saw service in France and did not escape from there until one month after the evacuation from Dunkirk.

On 1st November 1942 he took part in the North African landings and subsequent to the defeat of the Germans served in Sicily and Italy where he was wounded in the leg. Returned to the UK to convalesce he was discharged from hospital in 1943 and rejoined his Battalion to take part in the battle of Monte Cassino and other offensives. He remained in Italy until the war ended and on December 17th 1946 he went to Buckingham Palace to receive his DCM from King George VI.

After the war Fred worked on the docks in Gravesend a town where he lived for virtually all his life. He attended as many reunions as he could and although he rarely talked about the war, after a few beers he would exchange a few stories with his comrades from those days. He was a very popular member of the community and well liked by everyone who met him Fred loved his golf, a few beers with his friends at the

local and his garden but in the main kept himself very much to himself.

Fred is survived by his widow Irene, his son, daughter, two grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

LT. COL. R G (GEOFF) WINSTANLEY OBE.

(Colonel D. E. Blum OBE writes:)

Geoff Winstanley, who died on 19th August 2005, had two interesting careers which were both influenced by his ability as a French Speaker. He joined the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment as a regular subaltern in Egypt in 1947 following National Service with the Gordon Highlanders in NW Europe. His regimental service was interrupted by a period of secondment to the Uganda Battalion of the King's African Rifles. Following qualification for staff training he studied at the Belgian Staff College. This led later to his appointment as the British Liaison Officer to the Belgian Army in Germany. He had earlier completed a tour as a liaison officer with the Danish Army.

Command of a TA battalion should have come his way but before he could take it up that battalion ceased to exist. Geoff's final military post was as a Grade 1 staff officer at SHAPE. He decided to take early retirement and, living in Belgium, he became interested in joining the European Commission which was then recruiting British officials. He was selected as Deputy Director (later Director) of an E.C. department which administered over 70 small E.C. offices in former colonies in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. In the 15 or so years in this post he must have visited all of them on several occasions. Following his retirement he was awarded the OBE for his work with the E.C. As a retired official he had an exciting few months as a member of an E.C. team monitoring violence in South Africa.

Geoff Winstanley always kept in touch with those he had served with, the Gordons, the KAR, the Belgian Army as well as his own regiment and he went out of his way to help his old friends. He was instrumental in introducing three former Colonels to E.C. employment knowing that their experience well suited them for particular posts. After 30 years in Belgium he moved with Audrey to Canterbury where he undertook SSAFA casework and he became a regular escort for parties of French tourists visiting the city.

Sadly Geoff's health deteriorated and his last few months were mostly spent in hospital watched over by Audrey, his wife for 57 years and his son Robert, a senior BP executive in Tokyo.

CLIFFORD VICTOR WHEELER.

David Irving James writes:



Cliff who served in the Buffs, Queen's Own Buffs and 2nd Queen's passed away recently aged 61. Originally Cliff was a bandsman in 1 Buffs band but later transferred to the Signals Platoon in the Queen's Own Buffs. He served 22 years and retired in 1985 as MT Sgt. of 2nd Queen's. The only time that Cliff served away from the

battalion was the two years he spent as the MT Sgt at Netheravon.

Cliff was always a very popular and much respected man. Over the years he had kept in touch with many of those who had served with him especially the ex members of the Signal Platoon of the Queen's Own Buffs. It is their intention to arrange for a memorial plaque to Cliff to be placed in the crematorium.

Together with Jimmy Burr, Cliff helped to form the Colchester Branch of the Regimental Association and served as Branch Secretary for many years and played a full and active part in Branch affairs..

It is a mark of the respect in which he was held that so many of Cliff's comrades attended his funeral some travelling a considerable distance to be there. Our deepest sympathy go to Cliffs partner Val, his mother who is now 91, his sister Pauline who had travelled from Australia. and to his four children Karen, Teresa, Stephen and Scott.

DIJ

LT. COLONEL FRANCIS DE REIMER MORGAN MC

Francis de Reimer Morgan passed away on Sunday 30th October 2005 aged 84. An obituary will be published in the next issue of the Journal.

MRS. B. A. TALBOT:

Mrs. B. A. Talbot, widow of the late Major General D. E. B. Talbot CB., CBE., DSO., MC., passed away on Tuesday 22nd September 2005. The funeral service was held on Saturday 1st October 2005 at St. John's Church, Barham.

LT. COL. B. MCGRATH MC & BAR

We have been advised, by his widow Helene, of the death of Lt.Col. Barry McGrath MC and Bar who passed away on 11th October 2005 aged 90.

An obituary will be published in the next issue.

DAVID SMITH

We have been informed of the death on 4th November 2005 of David Smith. David served as a regular and territorial soldier in the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment.

JOHN SHOPLAND

Information has been received from Douglas Atkins of the death of John Shopland on 19th October 2005 at the age of 66. John served in the Queen's Own Buffs and 2nd Queens in Hong Kong and Borneo. We join with Douglas in sending our sincere condolences to his wife Barbara.

MAJOR N. MORRIS

Major Noel Morris, late The Buffs passed away on Wednesday 9th November 2005. A Thanksgiving Service will took place at St. John the Baptist Church, Westfield, Nr. Hastings at 11.30 am on 19th November.

An obituary will be published in the next issue.

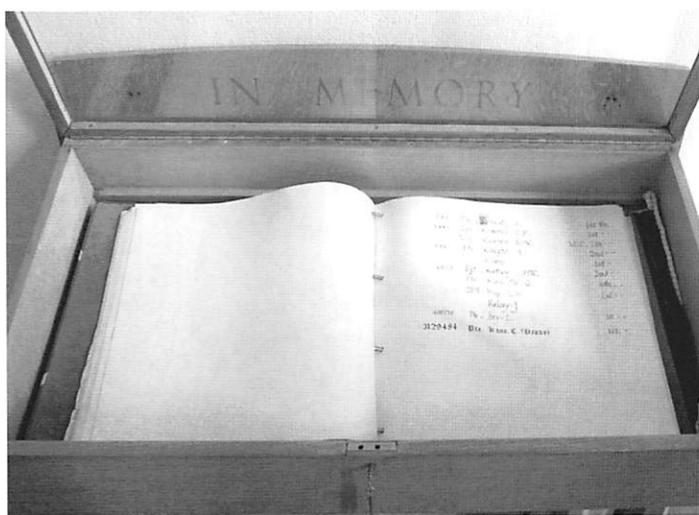
GEORGE R. GORDON BEM DCM passed away on Tuesday 18th October

An obituary will be published in the next issue.

**LONDON BUFFS BRANCH
SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE, TOWER OF LONDON
Sunday, 4th September 2005**



The parade, commanded by Major Brian Wright, marching into the Tower. The sentry can be seen presenting arms as the parade passes.



The Book of Remembrance



The Association President and Mrs. Champion seen here thanking the Revd. Paul Abram.



Top Left: The beautiful Chapel Royal, St. Peter Ad Venicular. Above: Standard Bearers Joe Correa and Allan Buddle.

Left: The parade formed up awaiting inspection by Colonel Champion:

Below: Association members with their supporters club:

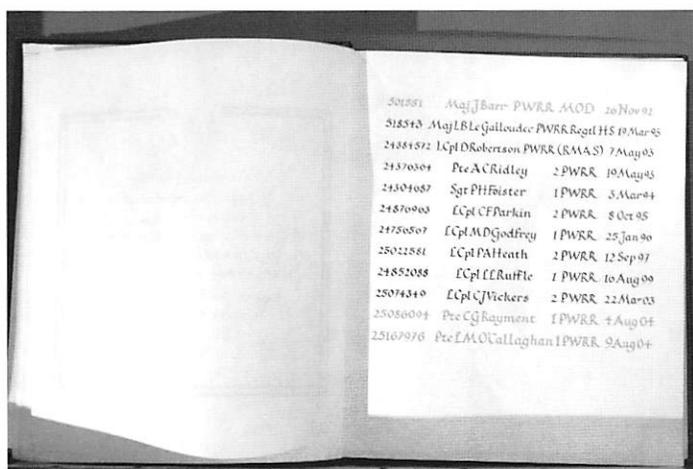


TURNING THE PAGE

On August 9th and 10th two very special 'Turning of the Page' ceremonies were held at the Warrior's Chapel. On these two days the pages in the Book of Life were turned by family representatives of two soldiers of 1st Battalion The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, Pte. Chris Raymant and Pte. Lee O'Callaghan, who were both killed in Iraq. The Regimental Secretary, Colonel Mike Ball, was present accompanied by the Forebear Regiments Secretary, Major Dennis Bradley BEM and by members of Canterbury Branch. On each day, after the ceremony, the families were entertained in the WO's and Sgts Mess at Howe Barracks by Colonel Ball and members of Regimental HQ PWRR.



The family of Pte. Chris Raymant, with Colonel Ball and Major Bradley.



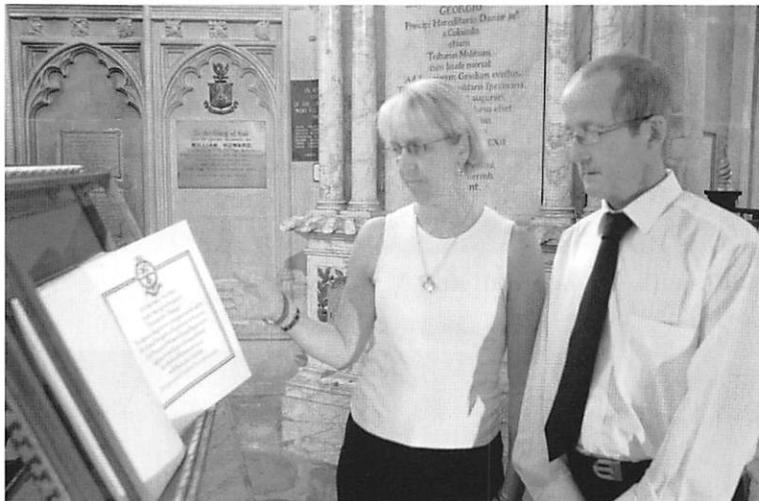
The PWRR Book of Life



Mr. & Mrs. Raymant, Chris's parents, holding the Christopher Raymant Memorial Cup which will be presented to the most spirited boxer of the year



The family of Pte. Lee O'Callaghan with Colonel Ball, Major Bradley BEM and the Branch Standard Bearer, Brian Dunman, and members of Canterbury Branch of the Association.



(Above left) Mr. & Mrs. O'Callaghan, Lee's parents, Turning the Page and (Above right holding the Lee O'Callaghan Memorial Cup which will be presented to the most spirited footballer of the year

HOW WE WON WORLD WAR 11

OR

“IF ONLY HITLER HAD KNOWN”

by The late Major Geoffrey Cox MC

PART 2

In the summer of 1941 I was promoted to A/Captain and posted to 70th Buffs, a Young Soldiers' Battalion, commanded by Lt Col C E Wilson known not unnaturally as “Tug”. The Colonel was an absolute martinet, who inspired great respect, tinged with a certain amount of fear by all those who served under him. He was a good instructor and a fine administrator, who taught me a great deal. He had lost his right arm in the first World War but in spite of that he was a first class shot, played golf and would dive off into the sea from the tubular scaffolding which formed part of the coastal defences. He would also at times drive his staff car, which could be a frightening experience for his passengers for he would let go the steering wheel, pressing on to it tightly with his stomach, whilst he quickly changed gear.

I joined the battalion in Old Park Barracks, Dover, which housed Bn HQ and two rifle companies, the remaining two being out on detachment guarding airfields at Manston and Lympe. One night there was a sharp raid on the town and harbour and there was a great deal of ack ack fire and noise in general. I remember going round the barrack rooms to see that all was well. I was preceded into one room by a private soldier, who accidentally knocked down a broom, the handle falling off to the floor whereupon one of the soldiers in bed shouted out “Can't you be more bleeding careful waking me up when I am trying to get to sleep”. The next morning I had Adjutant's parade and one of the subalterns, John Warren, was late on parade. I asked him why he was late, he replied he had overslept, so I awarded him four days orderly Officer. Imagine my embarrassment some days later, when we were having breakfast and listening to the 8 o'clock news, when the announcer said “The George Medal has been awarded to Lieut John Warren of The Buffs for conspicuous gallantry during a night raid on Dover”. He had spent several hours helping to rescue a woman during the bombing, which was the reason for his fatigue.

We moved from Dover to Napier Barracks, Shorncliffe where the Battalion was able to

concentrate on collective training. The Young Soldiers were magnificent material and having weeded out the elderly officers and NCOs who at first commanded them, and replaced them with younger men, they were formed into a first class battalion. Sadly they never went to war as a unit but were broken up to become reinforcements for the active battalions. It was very noticeable how many of them, together with the original Militiamen, formed the backbone of the senior WOs and NCOS in The Regiment at the end of the war.

It was whilst we were at Shorncliffe that early morning runs before breakfast were ordered by the Commander SE Command, Lt Gen B L Montgomery. I remember the CO and I routing out one very unsatisfactory young officer, whom we found in bed, asleep. He was later dismissed the Service but I hear did rather well on the black market. Whilst on the subject of unsatisfactory personnel, one day a soldier was brought up in front of the CO for robbing an old lady during the blackout. When questioned as to why he had done it, he replied he was fed up with inactivity and wanted to get at the enemy. A Court Martial sentenced him to six months detention. Some months later the same man was in my platoon in 5 Buffs when we were in Sicily. We had just taken a small town called Adrano and were resting and cleaning weapons. This man had removed the pin from a Mills 36 Hand Grenade and seeing it smoking he put it down and jumped over a wall into a ditch without giving any warning. The grenade exploded, killing one and wounding a number of his comrades. With difficulty I succeeded in saving him from being severely manhandled; he was court martialed and sentenced to a year's detention. Later he returned having received remission but absconded again as we were moving up into action. So much for his brave declaration in Shorncliffe.

One day I was sitting in my office in Napier Barracks when the phone rang and a voice announced that “It is the Brigadier speaking”. Well at this time there was a silly game being played in which people used to ring up pretending to be some one else. Thinking it to be the Assistant Adjutant I said “You're no bloody

brigadier, you can't fool me". On this there was a great guffaw and I realised instinctively that it was indeed Brigadier Hewitt, who fortunately had a good sense of humour. From Shorncliffe, we moved to West Kent and occupied a number of company positions along the A26 from Maidstone to Tonbridge. Bn HQ was in Hadlow, where we were housed comfortably in the brewery of Messrs Kenwood and Court, with the offices in the brewer's house. After we had been there for a few weeks the officers, WOs and Sgts were invited by the brewery to a concert, held in the cellars. It was a most enjoyable evening and I remember the staff coming round with watering cans full of beer to replenish our empty glasses. After the concert some of us were invited to continue the party but the CO decided to withdraw. His son Peter, who was either still at school or up at university, was present and asked his father if he could stay on. The Colonel agreed provided I kept an eye on him and saw that he returned at a reasonable hour. Later on, realising that Peter was getting a bit high, I told him he should return to the mess and to be careful that he did not wake up his father. Unfortunately as he entered the kitchen in the dark he fell over, bringing a number of saucepans etc clattering to the floor. Next morning I was on the mat for failing in my duties. A few weeks later after a party I awoke feeling like death with a large hangover. The MO, an Australian, was most sympathetic and covered up my lack of cohesion by telling the CO that he was overworking me. As a result I was given a week's leave.

It was early in November 1942 that we heard of the 8th Army's great victory at El Alamein and the church bells, which had been silent since the outbreak of war, were rung to celebrate the event. Shortly afterwards, the Young Soldiers battalions were broken up and drafts were sent off to reinforce other battalions. I was posted to 10 Buffs, a holding battalion whose task was to provide reinforcements for the battalions serving overseas. The battalion was stationed in the village of Hedon, a few miles north of Hull. It was not a very happy or efficient battalion and soon after I arrived the brigadier (Brigadier Hewitt who I knew already from Shorncliffe days) came to inspect the battalion. He was not pleased with what he saw and we were given three weeks to put things right before he came to inspect us again. We succeeded in satisfying him on the second occasion. I remember a number of ex 70th Bn personnel telling me how they wished they could return to it and adding "Colonel Wilson was a hard CO but fair and he did see that we were properly

administered". This last remark reminded me of occasions in the 70th Bn when we had to send off drafts. These were always personally inspected by Colonel Wilson and often the men would have to strip down to their underpants and woe betide company, platoon commanders, CSMs and sergeants if anyone had as much as a hole in his sock.

Whilst in 10 Buffs, I took part in a Battalion Battle Course, which lasted about ten days. I remember it well for the sheer physical discomfort and never having a dry pair of boots throughout the course. The objective of the DS did not appear to teach the students good tactics but merely to make them uncomfortable and on numerous occasions when we could have gained an objective by a good dry route, we were forced to crawl up some wet ditch. On 27th April Dreda and I were married in Sandgate Parish Church by my brother John, who was a curate at St Paul's, Deptford in London's dockland. My best man was Jeremy Pym. It was a glorious sunny day and we were not troubled by air raids or cross channel shelling. Our wedding cake was a scrumptious chocolate one and we were indebted to several of our friends who gave us their coupons to enable us to buy the ingredients. As it was not possible to go abroad for our honeymoon, I booked the first week at the George Hotel in Cranbrook and the second week at a pub in Robertsbridge. Having no car we went by train to Ashford and thence to Cranbrook by bus, arriving at the George in time for dinner. After dinner there was a very convivial party in the bar, which resulted in us not getting to bed until the early hours on the following morning. One of the leading lights in the party was Malcolm Muggeridge, well known journalist and later editor of Punch, who was staying in the hotel as he was visiting his two sons who were at Cranbrook School. At the end of a week. we moved on to the pub at Robertsbridge but on being shown our bedroom we found the bed unmade and an empty whisky bottle on top of the chest of drawers. It had just been vacated by an American sergeant and his girl friend. We moved out and took a bus back to Hawkhurst, where we booked into the Queen's Hotel. This was delightful, with flowering wisteria covering the walls and a very talkative and entertaining mina bird in the bar. Sadly when we re-visited Hawkhurst at the end of the 1970s we found the building empty and derelict but fortunately it has since been rehabilitated and is a pub once again. After a few days here, I was recalled from my honeymoon to join an overseas draft

and Dreda and I were separated for the next two and a half years.

The destination of the draft was secret but as we were kitted out with pith helmets and Khaki drill, we assumed that we were bound for North Africa where the campaign was drawing to a close. We entrained at Hedon, passed by Old Trafford Cricket Ground, Manchester (where it was raining) and detrained at Liverpool. We embarked on a Dutch East India liner, The Johan van Oldenbarfl Velt, a most impressive ship. Accompanied by a merchant ship we sailed down the Mersey, into the Irish Channel and made our way to Cardigan Bay, where we were supposed to join a convoy but it had sailed. Accordingly we retraced our steps up the channel, on to Glasgow where we waited for another convoy to form. Rumours were rife, North Africa had fallen, even the war was likely to end but alas this was not true and when all the ships had assembled, we set sail. The voyage took between two and three weeks and we pushed far out into the Atlantic before eventually turning for the Mediterranean. Our journey was uneventful except for a lone enemy bomber which focused its attention, unsuccessfully, on our escorting aircraft carrier. The Johan van Oldenbarfl Velt was a large ship with many decks and I often wondered what I should do if we were torpedoed, wait until the ship had settled down in the water or jump from a great height and risk breaking my neck. The ship survived the war, was sold to a Greek shipping line and became a cruise liner. She was burnt out in the 1950s in the Mediterranean with considerable loss of life and I wondered on hearing the news how many people had been too afraid to jump. The food on board ship was wonderful, white bread, something that was unheard of in severely rationed Britain, and four or five course luncheons and dinners, served by very efficient Javanese stewards. There was however no liquor, as when America entered the war all troopships became dry. Accommodation was tight, I was in a four berth cabin and the troops were very overcrowded in the lower decks, sleeping in hammocks which had to be stowed away during daytime. Training was very limited and confined mostly to Weapon Training and RT. Emergency boat drills were carried out daily, when life jackets had to be worn. The previous wearer of mine must have had scabies, as I contracted this unpleasant skin complaint, which made shaving a painful business. I had to report to the sick bay daily where my neck was treated with jenson of violet, which gave me the appearance of a clown but it

cleared up the complaint and I was free from it by the time we came to disembark at Algiers.

We approached Algiers at dawn and with the early morning sun shining on the white buildings, from a distance it was a very beautiful sight. I thought of The Desert Song, Beau Geste etc. and my mind conjured up pictures of Bedouins clad in flowing white robes, dashing by on fiery Arab steeds. Alas my fantasy was shattered when I disembarked, for the first Arab I saw was a poor beggar lying in the gutter covered in sores and flies, Another disillusion was the foul smell of bad or nonexistent drains.

The day before we disembarked, I was told that my draft was posted to the IRTD (Infantry Reinforcement Training Depot), which was situated about twelve miles outside Algiers. We would march there from the boat and anyone who was not fit to march would travel on the baggage trucks. I had one chap who was unfit, so detailed him to ride. When we were about to set off I was not very pleased to find out that he had missed the vehicles and after a short distance we had to prop him up and I had to carry his rifle. It was all the more annoying as all along the route, sympathetic French women kept on saying, "Oh le pauvre soldat Anglais".

Fortunately we were not in the IRTD long and a few days later we left en route for 5 Buffs (36 Brigade, 78th Division) who were located in a place called Quelma, approximately fifty miles from the Tunisian border and about one hundred and seventy five miles from Tunis itself. As we marched down to the station we passed long columns of German POW, who looked very bronzed and fit. They were singing their marching songs, loudly and well and their morale seemed to be high in contrast to many we passed on our rail journey to Quelma. These were securely battened down in overcrowded cattle trucks and guarded by French colonial troops. They were begging for water and cigarettes.

Our troop train mostly consisted of goods wagons, "quarante hommes ou huit chevaux". which had a plentiful supply of straw on the floor for added comfort! During the day the officers had hard arsed wooden seats in third class carriages but at night were able to use their camp beds in the goods waggons. The journey was about three hundred and forty miles and took three or four days and our progress was most erratic. We were served up with hot meals at various

stops along the line and during the intervals we made do with hard rations, bully and biscuits, We never knew how long the stops would be. Sometimes we were told that we would be stopping for an hour, so would get out and start to brew up or shave only to hear a toot on the engine's whistle some twenty five minutes later with a resultant rush to clamber aboard as the train gathered speed. On other occasions we would be told not to de-train as we would only be stopping for a few minutes and would remain parked for an hour or more. On arrival at Quelma station we were met by an officer and climbed on to three ton trucks, which transported us to the 5th Battalion bivouac area, a few miles outside the town. Here we were greeted by Major Guy Oliver (21C), Hugh Collins (Adjutant) and amongst others Gerald Proctor (OC C Coy), with whom I had served in the 4/5th Buffs before the War and also in 70 Buffs. Gerald had asked for me as one of his platoon commanders, so I was given command of 13 Platoon, a lucky number for me as twice I went into action on that date and survived. Since the end of the North Africa campaign, the Battalion had been resting and carrying out a little light training. Close by our company lines there were some hot sulphur springs and each morning we shaved and bathed in their refreshing water. After a week or so I felt rather off colour, combined with an attack of diarrhoea. Now the officers latrines were a few hundred yards away and the final approach was up a narrow footpath. One morning I rushed to the lats but before I had traversed the path I realised I was too late. Gingerly I straggled back to the company lines, to be greeted by my batman, Pte Grey who always had a melancholy look, with the words "Oh no sir, not again!" Feeling wretched I reported sick, where it was discovered I had a very high temperature. Dysentery was diagnosed and I was evacuated to a Field Hospital. On arrival I was put to bed and given a very large dose of castor oil, which I thought was rather peculiar treatment in the circumstances, followed by a liberal dose of white pills which were referred to as "cement tablets". My chief claim to fame whilst in the hospital was my score of fifty runs in a day and there was a beaten track from my bed to the lavatory. Dysentery is not a pleasant ailment and when one is passing blood it is both painful and frightening.

Shortly after my return from hospital, the Battalion moved to Hammamet, which is situated about fifty miles south east of Tunis on the Mediterranean coast. It was a delightful spot and we were camped only a few yards from the sea. Bathing was a daily

occurrence but one had to be careful due to dangerous currents and sadly this accounted for a number of drownings. Here our Division, the famous Battleaxe Division (78th) because of our yellow battle-axe sign on a black background (also known by the Germans as "Churchill's Butchers") was transferred from the 1st Army to the 8th Army, much to the disgust of the old soldiers who had fought through the North Africa campaign. There was no love lost between the two armies. General Montgomery decided to inspect all the units in his new division, so in due course our turn arrived. We were drawn up in the famous army formation known as a hollow square; Gerald was in front of C Company and I was a little behind him in front of 13 Platoon. As we were standing easy waiting for the General to appear, I remembered how back in England when Monty inspected a unit, he expected the Company Commander to know all about his men, their names, whether married or single, what they did in civvy street etc, etc. I thought I had better warn Gerald, so I whispered the information to him. Having heard what I had to say, Gerald turned round, called the Company to attention and said, "Pay attention. If, when the General comes round the Company, he says to me what is that man's name and I reply his name is Bollocks and he is a baker, your name is Bollocks and you are a Baker - got it? Stand at ease, stand easy~" The whole Battalion including Colonel "Ginger" McKecknie dissolved into laughter. When Monty arrived he had changed his style. Arriving in an open staff car, he stood up and said, "What's all this, come on, you came to see me and I have come to see you so break ranks and gather round". He won over his audience immediately.

Whilst at Hammamet we took part in a tough exercise, code name "Crackers", which involved marching about fifty miles in forty eight hours and also fighting a battle. On the march out, when we were resting by the side of the road, a very smart Arab went by dressed in pure white robes. Alf Smith, one of the other platoon commanders stopped him and said "You speakee English", whereupon the Arab replied fluently "As a matter of a fact I do, I was up at Oxford before the war". Poor Alf. As a result of this exercise I made a very serious error of judgement concerning one of my corporals, Corporal Wyatt. As we force-marched back he moaned continually about his feet and I regret that I did not take a very sympathetic view. Some days later on I had to nominate a corporal for Y Company ('A' Company re-designated) so I nominated him as I was not

particularly keen to keep him. Four months later in October 1943, we were engaged in a fierce battle with German Panzers at Termoli and without proper anti-tank defences, the situation was very dicey. At a crucial stage Corporal Wyatt ran forward with a PIAT (Projector Infantry Anti Tank), fired it at a Mark IV tank, hit it but unfortunately the bomb failed to explode and bounced off harmlessly. Undaunted he fired again and the same thing happened. A third time he fired with the same result, so finally he gave up the unequal struggle and withdrew with the rest of us. In May 1944, in the Liri Valley when the 2nd Bn Lancashire Fusiliers were attacked by Panzer Mark IV tanks, L/Cpl Jefferson destroyed one with his PIAT and was very deservedly awarded the VC. Fortunately by then the PIAT ammunition had been improved.

There was an Officers' Club in Hammamet, which we visited in the evenings if we had nothing else on. I remember returning one night after a party in the jeep and Gerald had given a Gunner subaltern, who was much the worse for wear, a lift back. We were travelling along at about 60 mph when the officer announced this was where he got out so Gerald told the driver to stop. The driver immediately slowed down but we were still doing about 30 mph when the officer said "Good night, sir" and stepped out. Fortunately he was so drunk that he just crumpled into a heap and came to no harm.

It was at this time that all Company Commanders, who were Captains, were elevated to Major and to celebrate the occasion Gerald treated us to a party in the Officers' Club. On the way back to our lines, Gerald saw an American Jeep approaching and to demonstrate the importance of his new rank he told us he would stop the jeep and tear "the bloody Yank off a strip". We watched him step into the middle of the road to carry out the deed, with much elation. A few seconds later the vehicle came to a grinding halt and we heard Gerald saying "I am most terribly sorry sir, absolutely my fault sir, I have stopped the wrong vehicle". He had only halted a 1 star general!

One of the highlights in one's life was the arrival of the NAAFI ration which, in the case of officers in addition to a beer ration, included a bottle of spirits. How one disposed of one's ration was a matter of individual choice but in C Company, Gerald laid down that we would pool our resources and have one good party, to which we would invite friends from other companies to join us rather than check it out

over a long period. For as he pointed out, "it would be a crying shame to be killed before one had finished one's bottle and in any case if we finished ours we could always call on our friends". One night, the NAAFI ration having arrived early in the day, we had a monumental party, singing bawdy songs well into the early hours to the accompaniment of a piano which we had obtained from somewhere and carted into the middle of the olive grove where the company was located. Next morning after breakfast Gerald announced that he was going up to Battalion HQ to see if anything was happening. Shortly after he had departed, a DR arrived from Bn HQ with a letter addressed personally to Major Proctor and marked "Private and Confidential". Some time later he returned and remarked that there was a rather strained atmosphere at Bn HQ for which he couldn't account. At this moment I handed him the envelope which had arrived for him. Inside was a letter from the adjutant asking him to report to Bn HQ to explain to the CO the reason for the disgraceful noise that had been emanating from C Company lines during the previous night. Gerald had been entirely oblivious of this instruction when he had cheerfully greeted the Colonel. The CO, Lieutenant Colonel A D McKecknie, known affectionately as "Ginger" was a most able commander, greatly respected by all ranks. Before the war he was a stock broker by profession and served in the famous City of London regiment, The Honourable Artillery Company. He took over command of the 5th Battalion in January 1943 from Lt. Col. T N Penlington. One thing "Ginger" McKecknie liked was a fresh egg for his breakfast and on one occasion when the Battalion was moving location he was reported to have a chicken run on the roof of his staff car, housing a few birds for this very purpose.

On 8th July 1943, 5 Buffs moved from Hammamet to the Sousse area and after further training we embarked in landing craft for Sicily on 24th July. The afternoon before we sailed, it became very dark and we had a violent thunder storm. A number of steel cables which secured barrage balloons were struck by forked lightning and down they crashed. The journey across The Mediterranean was uneventful and we landed safely a day later on the beach at Cassibile, south of Syracuse. Here someone had put down a red carpet and there was a large banner on which was written "Welcome to Sicily". Before leaving North Africa we had been told that the Italian people were near to starvation, water was very scarce so the

greatest discipline was to be exercised over drinking from water bottles and most dogs suffered from rabies and were to be destroyed. Within a few hours of landing we found that the countryside was full of tomatoes, grapes and other fruits, there were numerous wells and shortly after establishing a cookhouse it was surrounded by a pack of assorted hounds, who soon became fond pets and camp followers.

After a short rest, we embussed into RASC 3 ton lorries to move up to the divisional assembly area SW of Catenanuova. We travelled by night, without lights and we had not gone very far when I realised that the driver of the truck carrying my platoon didn't know much about night driving. I asked him if he had driven at night before and he confessed he had not and shortly afterwards we landed in a ditch. My platoon sergeant then said he could drive a truck so I instructed him to take over; he managed to get the vehicle on the road again, only to land it in a ditch on the other side of the road. Realising there was not much future to this and as we had lost the rest of the convoy, I decided that we would wait until dawn before moving on. When we were still some miles from our destination I saw a column of smoke billowing up on the horizon and on reaching the spot saw Richard Ravenhill, who was on the Brigade staff, standing forlornly by a blazing motorcycle. Cheerfully I asked him if he was having trouble, a remark which he thought was pretty humourless especially as only a few minutes before he had been riding in a 15 cwt truck which had turned over.

Whilst in the assembly area we were attacked by enemy fighter bombers and I can remember taking cover under a 15 cwt truck, which afterwards I realised was a pretty stupid place. Fortunately we escaped casualties but a number of cows were killed. Whilst on the subject of cows, it was always pathetic in the battle area seeing the poor wretched animals wandering about full of milk and in great discomfort. Often soldiers, ex farm hands of whom we had several, would relieve this suffering by milking them. This only happened when farms had been abandoned but in most cases the Italian peasants were very stalwart and stayed put.

On the evening of 31st July the Battalion moved forward to attack the village of Centuripe, which 'resembled one of those mountain top villages pictured in Grimm's fairy tales. C Company objective

was the grave yard, which in common with those in most other Italian villages contained numerous very substantial mausoleums and was surrounded by a very thick stone wall. Such graveyards were often stubbornly defended by the Germans, as they made ideal defensive positions. As this was a night attack, we approached our objectives on compass bearings and after advancing for close on an hour I saw what I thought to be the outline of the graveyard. Consequently I deployed my platoon, drew my revolver and went into the final attack, only to find that the supposed graveyard was a pile of rocks. After conferring with Gerald Proctor, my company commander, who was close behind me we set off again and very soon came under heavy fire, which halted progress. We realised that the weapons shooting at us were Bren guns and after some confusion and shouting we discovered that we had run into advance positions held by the 1st Bn East Surreys in 11 Brigade. It was now just past midnight and having sorted ourselves out, we pushed on and then enemy aircraft arrived overhead dropping flares and bombs. One bomb exploded very close slightly wounding Gerald, who realising we were completely lost, decided to call a halt to the advance and to continue on again at first light when we would be able to establish our whereabouts.

As dawn approached I decided to make a recce to find out where we were and having gone a few hundred yards I fell over a recumbent figure, who turned out to be a signaller at Battalion HQ. This proved that the whole Battalion was hopelessly mixed up and this was later attributed to the fact that our compasses were all haywire due to the heavy amount of iron ore in the soil. Colonel McKechnie quickly reorganised the Battalion and the attack was resumed with A Company in the lead and sadly they soon lost their dashing young commander Paul Davies Colley, aged 19. The 8 Argylls now took up the attack and were held up short of Centuripe, having suffered many casualties, including several officers. Our Company was placed under command of The Argylls and Gerald sent me forward to contact Colonel Scott-Elliott for orders. This meant crawling up a very exposed mule track, with the lugubrious Grey, my batman, a journey which appealed to neither of us. Colonel Scott-Elliott told me that he wanted C Company to occupy a hilltop away to our left, so back we crawled to pass on these instructions to Gerald. Gerald studied the objective carefully, checked it on the map and noticed a very nasty wadi, which we would have to traverse en route

and which was in all probability an enemy DF task. He then looked again at the objective through his binoculars and noticed that there were soldiers moving about in a manner that meant they could only be British. Accordingly he told me to go back and tell Colonel Scott-Elliott, so back we crawled. The Colonel was furious and told me to tell Gerald that if he did not obey orders he would have him court martialled. I passed on the message but fortunately our brigadier, Brigadier R Howlett (known affectionately as "Swiftly", having been a fast bowler for Kent) arrived to see how things were. Gerald told him about the orders he had just received, which the brigadier immediately countermanded as it was 6 RWK occupying the hill. Shortly after Centuripe was captured by The Irish Brigade.

One incident during the attack on Centuripe is worth a mention and concerned Alf Smith (an East Surrey), who commanded 14 Platoon. Alf had received an infantry commission after joining up in the Army Pay Corps. He had very bad eyesight and had to wear strong glasses. His platoon was pinned down by

heavy and accurate fire from the German paratroops, when they were joined by Lt Col Wigram (the inventor of Battle Drill) who was attached to the Battalion as an observer. He took charge, shouting out, "Right flanking Mr Smith, right flanking" Alf obeyed and immediately fell down the side of a quarry, breaking his glasses and consequently was of no further use. Wigram later temporarily took over command of the Battalion as Col McKechnie had been taken ill and Major Oliver wounded. When he returned to London after the Sicilian campaign, Col Wigram reported that apart from 78th Division he did not consider that the 8th Army was properly trained for European warfare, which was not altogether untrue as all their previous fighting had been in The Libyan Desert. He was sent for by Montgomery, who happened to be in London, told that he himself should learn something of infantry tactics and posted to 6 RWK as a major. On 3 February 1943, he was killed leading a party of Italian partisans in a raid deep in enemy territory.

To be continued.

6348085 PRIVATE ALBERT TRUE

6th Bn. QUEEN'S OWN ROYAL WEST KENT REGIMENT

(Follow up story by Ken Clarke)

(I have received a letter from Ken Clarke concerning the article published in the last issue about Albert True. I am very grateful to Ken. His letter is published below. The Editor)

"The article concerning the murder of Albert True is basically accurate but the actual details are slightly different.

I was taken prisoner at Dunkirk, being a stretcher bearer I was left to look after the wounded and spent most of the next five years in a variety of prisoner of war camps ending up, in February 1945, in a camp not far from Danzig on the Baltic. The Russian Army was by then pushing into north eastern Poland and it was no surprise when on February 15th we were marched out to join a large number of other prisoners from camps in the area and began the long march along the Baltic Coast. Almost three months and some 900 miles later our, by now, much reduced column arrived at the village of Putlitz and were housed in the barns

of a deserted farm. We were told that we would be able to rest for a few days and small parties were taken into the village to do various jobs including helping in the local bakery. On the day in question Albert True went with a party of four to work in the bakery along with one of the German guards.

I hadn't really known Albert, being from different battalions of the R.W.K's, and we were never on the same working party nor indeed in the same camp. However the day before he was shot I came across him in a farmyard and discovered he was a West Kent man. We sat on a wall and chatted for a couple of hours. At that time we were all certain that the war was nearly over and hoped to be back in England fairly soon.

The next day, having finished work in the bakery, the four men were on their way back to the farm with the guard when they were overtaken by a small convoy of three German Army vehicles which stopped just ahead of the prisoners. An officer in the first vehicle

asked the German guard who these people were. The guard explained who they were and what they had been doing and that he was taking them back to the farm to rejoin the main group. This officer, a Major, then ordered the guard to go and that he would take charge of the prisoners. The guard protested that he was responsible for them and that he would get into trouble if he returned without them. The officer then drew his pistol and pointed it at the guard and threatened to shoot him if he did not obey. The, by now terrified, guard left at the double and ran back to the farm and alerted the Commandant. Meanwhile the German Major had ordered the four prisoners to march in front of his vehicle on which a machine gun was mounted. As they reached the entrance to the farm the prisoners started to turn into the gateway but the officer shouted at them to carry on. They had only gone a short distance past the entrance when we heard shots. Guards and prisoners together rushed out into the wood to see the German vehicles disappearing

along the road and the four men lying in a pool of blood. They were carried into one of the barns where three were found to be dead and the fourth, Albert True, badly wounded, sadly he died a short time later

The Commandant, a veteran of the first world war, sent for the senior British NCO and the German guard who had been with the prisoners and said that he was disgusted with what had happened, tore the medals for his jacket and said he was ashamed to be an officer in the same army as the Major responsible for this cold blooded murder. The following day the Commandant arranged for a party of British prisoners to go into the village and attend the funeral of the four men.

This was a very sad end to what had been a fairly peaceful stay in Putlitz and more so as only eight short days later we were liberated by a tank unit of the American Army."

REFLECTIONS

The following is an extract of a letter from Lt. Colonel R. Talbot which was to be read at the retirement party of a certain Captain Neil Pearce who may be remembered my ex members of The Queen's Own Buffs.

The letter reads.

"Thank you for your note about Neil's pending retirement. I was amazed. I thought he had retired 30 years ago and had "gone fishing"! Actually, upon reflection, I thought he was retired when I first met him!

I will not be with you in person tonight but we will be with you in spirit (or at least, if Neil is paying, in home made wine!) For those of you who have known Neil and Denise for some time you will appreciate how hard it is to come up with something to say that is unusual or shocking about them. Fact exceeds fiction! In fact most of what has happened to them you couldn't make up - even if you tried. In any event, most of it has already been published in The Times Colonist! However there are still a couple of gems about Neil that are not well known.

I have known Neil for more years than I care to remember. In fact, although it is hard to believe, I even knew him before he took up salmon fishing and long

before he caught Denise (or was it vice versa?). I first met Neil when he was a young bachelor officer serving in my regiment, The Queen's Own Buffs. I know this is hard for most people to believe but in those days he looked like a lean, mean fighting machine. However, to the rest of us born killers we always had an inkling that there was a "softer side" to Neil.

I first found this out for myself during the Indonesian campaign. Our regiment was stationed in Borneo on the frontier between Sarawak and Indonesia. Our two main tasks were firstly to prevent the Green Beret trained RPKAD (Indonesian Parachute Commandos) from crossing into Sarawak and, secondly, to seek out and hunt down any local CTs (Communist Terrorists) that were operating in our area. This was specialised work for professional soldiers and could be extremely hazardous. Shortly before our regiment's arrival the 1st/10th Ghurkhas, from whom we took over, had suffered major losses in an RPKAD ambush and the Ghurkha patrol commander had subsequently been awarded the Victoria Cross for extreme heroism under enemy fire! The result was that, whenever we ventured out on jungle patrol, we were always on the alert for such ambushes. Not a word was spoken for days at a time, the safety catches were off on our weapons and the adrenaline constantly ran high as we

cautiously trudged our way through swamps filled with leeches and mosquitoes.

On one occasion my patrol was returning, extremely cautiously, to one of our base camps near a village called Tebakang. Suddenly we heard movement ahead so we dived into the jungle. As the sounds grew louder we saw it was Captain Neil Pearce leading a patrol going in the opposite direction, Imagine the look of surprise from my battle hardened veterans as we saw Neil tripping lightly along in the lead with his rifle slung over his shoulder, munching on a banana and, sticking out of his backpack, a very conspicuous badminton racket! We were even more surprised to see that he wasn't the only one and that all the members of his patrol also carried badminton rackets

Later we heard that Neil had really taken to heart the call from the new Commander-in-Chief that, whenever we were out on military operations, we should also try to win the "hearts and minds" of the local Dyak people by providing medical assistance

and by generally interacting with them. Neil's ingenious solution to this challenge was to play badminton against the local villagers.

There was, I regret to report, a less ingenious reason why Neil selected badminton as his answer to the "hearts and minds" campaign. In the Tebakang region all the unmarried girls go topless! It is as a direct result of this that I believe that Neil's team never won a single village game. In fact it is my understanding (from reliable eye witnesses) that Neil never actually hit a single birdie over the net: he was too busy gazing at his jiggling opponents!

Hopefully, as Neil prepares to retire, he will have slowed down a bit since those dimly remembered days. However, if you ever see a faraway look come into Neil's eyes, and you think he has both his deaf-aids turned off, just whisper "Tebakang" and watch him run for his badminton racquet!"

Richard Talbot

NOTICE BOARD

NEW MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Mr. M Featoney	3rd Queen's	76-80
Mr. M. E. Mace	1 Buffs	56-58
Mr. D. Law	1 Buffs	54-57
Mr. A. L. Taylor	2 Queen's	64-76
Captain I. MacDonald	141 Regt	43-46
Mr. T. Wood	1 Buffs	56-58
Mr. C. Apps	1 Buffs	55-57
Mr. S. G. F. Love	1 Buffs	55-60
Mr. J. Hayward	1 Buffs	56-59
Mr. S. W. Ashby	6th RWK	45-48
Revd. NWF Setchell	1 QOB RAchD	60-65 81-93
Mrs V Shinn	(Fred Bucknell's daughter)	
Mr. D.W. King	QORWK's	56-58
Mr. R. Funnell	2nd Buffs	45-47
Mr. D C Brown	1st Buffs	60-62
Mr. T D Deery	1st Buffs	

CONGRATULATIONS:

Many congratulations to Alf and Greta Addy who were married on Saturday 23rd July 2005, at All Saints Church, Military Road, Canterbury.

Our heartiest congratulations to Captain Eric Hoggart and his wife Kath on their Diamond Wedding Anniversary which was celebrated on 3rd November at their home in Wilmslow, Bucks. Eric was the last QM of the Queen's Own and the first QM of the Queen's Own Buffs. Eric and Kath who were married at New Malden in 1945 received a telegram of congratulations from Her majesty The Queen on the 3rd Nov.

MAIDSTONE REUNION

The Maidstone Reunion will, in future, be held on the third Sunday in September, which for 2006 will fall on Sunday September 17th. This arrangement will allow for a two week break between the London Buffs Service of Remembrance at Tower of London which is always held on the first Sunday in September. This change of date may increase attendance at the Maidstone reunion.

BOOK REVIEW

MALTA G.C. REMEMBERED

The above book, edited by Frank Rixon BEM, who served in 2nd Battalion QORWK's during the siege, is a compilation of 28 individual stories written by 'Those who were there'. H RH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh has written the foreword, the last paragraph of which reads: *"I am sure that anyone with a general interest in the history of the Second World War will be impressed by these detailed accounts, and this 'source material' will certainly be most valuable for future historians. I hope it will be also be read by the descendants of the authors, and by those who had friends and relations serving in Malta during the war. It is a tribute to their dedicated service."* The book is illustrated with some quite unique photographs and brings the gallant story of the Siege alive to those who were not there and must be a vivid reminder for those who were. This book is

dedicated to the memory of all those who served in the defence of Malta G.C. The book is now on sale, at a special introductory price of £12 and can be ordered from Woodfield Publishing, Babsham Lane, Bognor Regis West Sussex PO21 5EL. or by telephone on: 01234 821234. All profits will go to the George Cross Island Association.,

ANNUAL CAROL SERVICE

The annual Carol Service organised by Canterbury Branch will take place at the Franciscan Study Centre, Giles Lane, Canterbury on Sunday 11th December 2005 at 2.30pm. All Association members are welcome to attend this very popular event which really gets everyone into the Christmas spirit.

If you require any further information please contact George Croxford, Vice Chairman Canterbury Branch on 01227 265

A BATTALION AT WAR

The Story of 2nd Battalion The Buffs

Part 1. France 1939-1940

The outbreak of war found the 2nd Battalion at Pembroke Dock where the battalion was brought up to strength with a full complement of reservists. On 16th September 1939 the battalion embarked at Southampton, landing the following day at Cherbourg from there they proceeded by train to Blain, 20 miles to the north-west of Nantes. By the first week in October, 1 Corps had taken up defensive positions on the French border and 2nd Battalion The Buffs joined them. In early May 1940 the Battalion, 25 officers and 732 men strong, crossed the border into Belgium. On 16th May (Albuhera Day) the Buffs were detailed to a position in front of the village of Petegem, less than two miles from the battlefield of Oudenarde, where 230 years before, their predecessors had taken part in the

great victory by the Duke of Marlborough over the French.



Officers group at Fontaine, France, April 1940.

L to R, Capt. E.L.C. Edlmann. Capt. R. Grace, Capt. R. F. Parry, Capt. R. Murphy, French Officer, Major P. Dare, Major B. Hammond-Davies, Capt. F. Crozier, Lt. G. Blaxland. Lt. Crosskie, 2/Lt Minnear

The Buffs were dug in on a wide frontage of 2,000 to 3,000 yards. On May 20th artillery fire was opened on The Buffs. Over the next few days the battalion fought gallantly but by 22nd May the Division was given orders to retire. The BEF were now committed to a westward withdrawal and with the capitulation of the Belgians on the night of 27th/28th May the left flank was completely exposed. 44th (Home Counties) Division were given the task of holding the enemy in the Meteren area and on the 27th May 2nd Battalion took up a position west of Merris.

On 28th May, the various companies were split up 'A' Company in position on the Strazeele-Vieux Berquin road and with part of 'B' occupying an area south-west of Strazeele 'C' & 'D' Company were detached under the direct orders of 131 Brigade this leaving the CO with but half of the Battalion under command. Many gallant actions followed with the inevitable casualties including Capt Huggins who was killed leading his men in a bayonet charge. There followed a fighting withdrawal into the Dunkirk pocket by a few of the survivors of the Battalion. Of the 757 officers and men who had crossed the frontier into Belgium just 2 weeks before nearly 400 had been killed, wounded or were missing.



Group of Warrant Officers at Fontaine, April 1940

L to R: PSM R Calloway, CSM G. Saunders, PSM A. Banks, RQMS M. F. Papworth, PSM C. Charlton, PSM H. Tracey, PSM H. Dumont, PSM P. Belson. CSM H. Osborne, RSM G. Brophy

The survivors of the Battalion embarked at Dunkirk at the end of May 1940 and subsequently went to a collecting centre at Oxford. It was noted by an officer of the Oxford & Bucks Light Infantry that "When the fighting men, tired with indescribable fatigue of the retreat and evacuation from Dunkirk, dribbled in in ones and twos, one party of the 3rd of Foot made a lasting impression. There were fifteen of them. They marched across the square with their helmets and arms glinting in the rays of the setting sun as if they were mounting guard."

ROLL OF HONOUR

Bufs of 2nd Battalion who were killed at Petegen 1940 at rest in the cemetery at Esquelmes between Tournai and Courtrai.

5043545 L/Cpl G. Bennett , 6288762 Pte J. W. Larn, 6289045 Pte. J. P. Law, 6284789 Pte. R. J. Lloyd, 95577 2/Lt D. C. Pearson, 6287914 Pte. H. C. Peck, 6283707 L/Cpl E. F. Penfold, 6399017 Pte. F. G. Pullen, 6288774 Pte. H. J. Pye, 6285462 Pte. R. F. Quinton, 6283773 Sgt. H. Smith, 6288879 Pte. H. M. Care, 6282412 Pte. T. Brackley, 6734127 Cpl. A. Brockman, 6527117 Pte. G. D. Burnett, 6289192 Pte. H. H. Carey, 6283161 Pte. A. Crowhurst, 6087357 Pte. P. Donovan , 6283874 Sgt. C. D. Griggs, 6283874 Pte. R. G. Hillier, 6287326 Pte. W. G. Janes, 6283859 Pte. T. J. Tucker

Bufs of 2nd Battalion who were killed in action in May 1940 who lie in the Mont de Merris Cemetery, Bailleul, France

6288679 Pte. B. Austin, 6896727 Pte. A. E. Backhouse, 6289146 L/Cpl W. E. Chapman, 6288906 Pte. V. T. Church, 6286111 Pte. F. S. Collier, 6282456 L/Cpl F. W. Elderkin, 6284694 Pte. W. H. Hodgkins, 6286457 Pte. E. King, 6388885 Pte. W. Knowles, 6286424 Pte. D. W. Mackrow, 6283863 Pte. R. G. Moat, 858138 Pte G. E. Moys, 6284162 Pte. F. A. Parker, 2037406 Pte. J. R. Skinner.

After Oxford the Battalion, under the command of Lt. Col. B. E. Hammond-Davies, moved to Lincolnshire where they remained until October 1940 when it moved to Wakefield and then on to Nutley in Sussex and then back to Kent where it formed part of the anti invasion force. In May 1942 the Battalion, now under command of Lt. Col. J. G. Nicholson, moved to 44(Home Counties) Division's concentration area in Sutton and on the 28th May embarked on TSS Laconia for North Africa..



Above: Building a Field Kitchen (CSM Calloway in charge) at Fontaine, France April 1940.



Above: Pte. Skinner, in his 'billet' somewhere in France (He was Killed in Action a few days later)



Officers of 2nd Battalion The Buffs 1941. Painters Forstall, Faversham, Kent

2nd Lt's D. Hearn, ??, I. Percival, ??, H. Julian, J. Munr (later KIA Burma), D. Rennison, Lt R. Croucher, Captain R. Marchant, 2nd Lt's N. Gordon Wilson, C. Sharpe (later KIA Burma), J. Clarke, ??, ??, ??, Lt. D Norris, Padre, Major M. Alexander (KIA N Africa), Capt's. J. Ponder, A. Ravenhill, M. Sherwin(Adjt), Lt. Col. Hammond Davies(CO) Major B. Craig(2i/c), Capt's. P. Ransley (QM), P. Buckwell (KIA Alamein), D. Whitcombe (MO).

Battle Honours

2nd Battalion The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment) were awarded the following Battle Honours for operations in 1940 :

Defence of Escaut 1940, St. Omer-La Basse 1940, North West Europe 1940.

(The above photographs, and those in Part 2 -North Africa and Middle East and Part3-India and Burma which will appear in the next two issues, are published by kind permission of Mrs. Phyllis Daniels whose husband, the late Ginger Daniels, compiled the unique record of these historic event..)

EVERY DAY A BONUS

by
Ken Clarke

This is a record of Ken's early childhood and as a young boy soldier in India during the 1930's. In France in 1940, during the retreat to Dunkirk, Ken was captured and became a POW finally returning to England in 1945.

I was born on 16th January 1918 in Kenilworth, Warwickshire, opposite Kenilworth Castle, the youngest of three brothers. In February 1922, when I was just four years old, my mother, weakened by the privations of the First World War, and struggling against poverty to bring up three small children, died during an influenza epidemic, aged 46. My father, who had been a gentleman's gentleman' in his younger days and then a wartime munitions worker, was unable to cope with bereavement, ill health and three small boys. Five months after losing my mother he died of pneumonia on 10th July 1922, aged 42.

My brothers and I were cared for by a neighbour for a few weeks until we were taken into care by the Waifs and Strays Society and sent to an orphanage in London. My elder brother was taken by an aunt and uncle who lived at Chalford in Gloucestershire, my mother's home before she married, then in November 1922 my other brother and I were fostered by a family living in Warminster, Wiltshire. They had four-grown up daughters, three of whom still lived at home, and already fostered an older boy. With five adults and three boys things were rather cramped in the small rooms of the two up and two down cottage and we three boys all slept on the landing. We attended the local school and church and on the whole led the normal life of country children at that time.

We were visited every six months or so by a representative of the Waifs and Strays Society to check that we were being properly looked after and were in good health. According to the Society's records I was reported as being intelligent, obedient, usually bright but occasionally sulky!

The system at that time required children to be returned to the care of an orphanage when they reached the age of ten, consequently my brother was taken away after a few years and sent to St. Andrew's

Boys Home in Reading and replaced by another orphan boy. In May 1928, when I was ten, I was also sent to St. Andrew's in Reading and reunited with my brother until he was transferred to the Gordon Boys' Home in Woking two years later.

St. Andrew's Home housed 45 boys, half of whom marched daily to one local school and half to another where we were always easily recognised and known as the Home Boys. We were rarely, if ever, allowed out of the Home's gate without having to march in a column to school, to church twice on Sundays, or a rare visit to the local park.

The Master in charge was an ex-army officer, Captain John Godfrey Churchill, a strict disciplinarian known to us as The Boss, His wife was the matron. Our routine followed a distinct army pattern from getting up when reveille sounded at the nearby Brock Barracks, to making our beds, washing by dormitories and carrying out an allotted task. My job was cleaning the drains.

On Saturday mornings we cleaned windows, scrubbed floors, gardened or helped in the kitchen and after dinner sat on our lockers in the day room to learn the collect for the following Sunday. We were not allowed to go down to the playground until we were word perfect.

We were given a penny a week pocket money and later, when classed as a senior boy, received twopence. Each week we collectively had to produce sixpence for a 'freewill offering' envelope to put in the church collection. Twelve boys each paid a halfpenny which meant that we contributed once every three or four weeks.

Apart from Christmas Day dinners were the same week in week out. On Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays we had meat and potatoes with rice pudding for 'afters'. The rice was in a solid block and was cut up into squares to be served. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays we had a bowl of stew with half a slice of dry bread and a piece of cheese for 'afters', and on Fridays (fish day) a kipper with haricot beans followed by bread pudding.

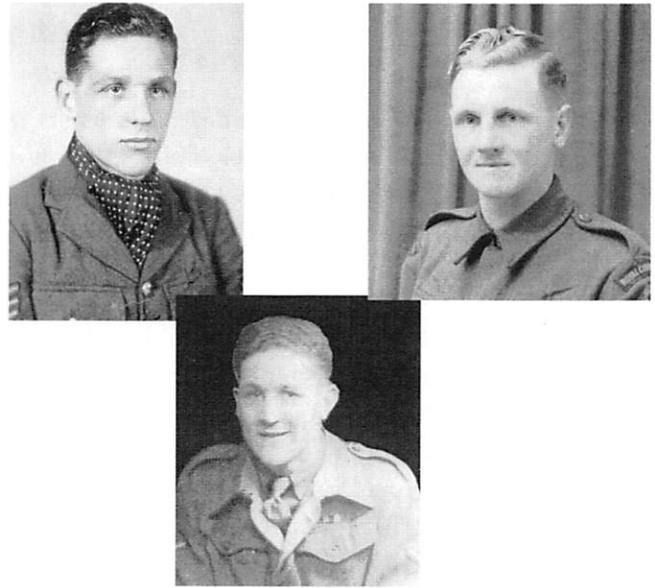
Visitors were allowed on one Sunday afternoon a month so some of the boys with relatives who lived not too far away were able to spend a couple of hours with them. During my four years at St. Andrew's I had just one visit, from my foster mother.

We looked forward to the summer school holidays when we went off for two weeks in the country at Padworth, five or six miles from Reading. We camped in a field near Padworth House which was owned by Major Darby-Griffiths, an army friend of the Churchill's. He and Captain Churchill went out shooting most days and brought back rabbits and pigeons to go into the stew for our dinner. Huntley & Palmers, the Reading biscuit makers, provided a couple of barrels of broken biscuits which were issued out to us in the evenings, a great treat. On most afternoons we were allowed to explore the area or swim in the river nearby. Major Darby-Griffiths always arranged for us to have a sports day on the lawn at Padworth House during our stay.

Christmas was a special time and on Christmas Eve carols were played on a gramophone on the landing when we went to bed. Those boys who had been confirmed attended an early service on Christmas Day at St. Mark's Church and after breakfast everyone received a present. We went to morning service at St. Mark's and then had traditional Christmas dinner during which there were visits by the Mayor and Mayoress of Reading, aldermen and councillors and other local dignitaries. Later in the week we usually paid our annual visit to the local picture house, arranged by supporters of the Home.

I did not return to school after the Christmas holiday of 1931 and spent the next few months doing jobs around the Home. In April 1932 I was placed in a 'situation' with a parson in Weymouth. Here I found myself being house boy, errand boy, cook's assistant, gardener etc. for which I received three shillings a week and, my keep. This life did not suit me and it obviously showed for after a few weeks I was returned to the care of the Waifs & Strays Society. My next stop was St. Augustine's Orphanage in Sevenoaks, Kent, which had a bias towards training boys for army bands. After a short stay here I was taken to Maidstone Barracks in Sandling Road. The gates were opened by a sentry and we were ushered into the guardroom at the Depot of the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment where we were told we were to join the army.

A Soldier in the King's Army:



**The three Clarke brothers:
Fred who served in the RAF, Ken centre, Reg
who served in the Royal Signals**

After a medical inspection attestation forms were filled in by the recruiting officer which required us to sign up for boy's service until the age of eighteen and then serve with the Colours for a further nine years. This would be followed by a further three years on the Army Reserve. At the tender age of fourteen all this routine paper work did not really sink in and we duly signed and took the oath in which we swore by Almighty God to be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, his Heirs and Successors and in duty bound faithfully defend His Majesty etc. against all enemies. Without really thinking about it I had just committed myself to serving in the army for sixteen years. I was then given the army number 63'42369 and the King's Shilling and led off to the dining hall where I had about the largest dinner that I'd seen for years. After the meal we were shown our barrack hut, allotted beds and then told we could go off into the town but to be back for tea at 5.30 p.m. This all seemed too good to be true, a healthy meal, a shilling in my pocket to spend on whatever I liked and freedom to walk around the town of Maidstone. Life was suddenly becoming a great adventure.

New recruits over the age of eighteen remained at the regimental depot for a period of six months to learn the basic army drills and skills with the rifle and other weapons but as boys we were not issued with

weapons and were sent direct to join the home based battalion of the Regiment.

The following morning three of us, Harry Hudson, Bill Worsley and I were given railway warrants and packed lunches and, taken to the railway station. Harry, later on, became the MO's truck driver and was taken prisoner at Dunkirk along with myself and others from the battalion. Whilst out on a working party he was shot, out of hand, and killed by a German guard and is buried in the British Cemetery at Malbork, Poland. Bill Worsley needs little or no introduction. After Dunkirk he stayed with the 1st Battalion and went to North Africa where he was captured but subsequently released. He became a CSM and served throughout the Italian campaign during which he was awarded the DCM. After the war he formed the old comrades '62' Club.

The other three boys in our party, Wilf Handley, Walter 'Slim' Thompson and Lee Bullock were kept at the Depot for a while as they had been declared under weight and needed fattening up before being sent to join the battalion. -Wilf Handley was at Dunkirk and whilst there volunteered to go alone with a message to one of our platoons which was cut off by a German tank unit. Wilf got through and was then able to guide them back to rejoin the battalion. He was awarded the MM. - Slim Thompson got back to England from Dunkirk and was then transferred to the 6th Battalion and went with them to North Africa. He was promoted to Sergeant and served through the Italian campaign. - Lee Bullock also survived Dunkirk and was transferred to the 6th Battalion and served with them in North Africa. During the fighting at Djebel Bou Diss his company became pinned down and he charged the enemy position alone, firing his Bren gun from the hip and forced the enemy to withdraw which allowed his company to gain their objective. He was awarded the MM.

Aldershot:

We arrived at North Camp station, Farnborough, and found our way to Blenheim Barracks, Aldershot, where we joined about sixteen other boys who were training to become either bandboys or drummer boys. We were still wearing our orphanage clothes, short trousers and long socks, so the next morning we were taken to the Quartermaster's Stores to be issued with uniforms. I began to feel quite grown up as I put on my first pair of long trousers, the heavy serge khaki uniform jacket and

a peaked cap. An assortment of badges, a pair of heavy 'ammunition' boots and a couple of rough angora shirts began to fill up my kitbag. Next came a knife, fork and spoon, various brushes, something called a button stick and a holdall in which to keep all these items. When laid out for inspection the holdall had to have the contents placed in the following order - knife, fork, spoon, razor, comb, lather brush, toothbrush, button stick, button brush. There was also a 'housewife' (pronounced huzzif), a small cloth holder containing needles, cotton, wool and spare buttons for running repairs. We were also given a suit of brown canvas fatigue dress which we soon found we would wear more often than our ordinary service dress uniforms. The older soldiers could be easily distinguished by the colour of their canvas suits. When first issued they were a dark reddish brown but with constant washing the colour faded to a light fawn.

I was 5' 1" tall when I enlisted and we were not allowed to shorten our canvas fatigues because as boys we would eventually grow into them and so we had to turn up the bottoms. I had a turn up of about 6" on mine and Harry Hudson, who was known as Tich, had an even larger one.

Our next stop was at the barber's shop or 'Nappy' as he was known, where we were given a short back and sides haircut which we later learned had to be paid for out of part of our pay which was held back to cover this. Our pay was in fact one shilling a day (5p) although we actually received only three shillings a week, the remainder was withheld to cover the various stoppages. At the end of each month we were paid the balance of our pay after all the deductions had been made and this was known as a 'big week'. After a 'big week' we would often treat ourselves to a 'death ray' in the canteen - a flakey pastry filled with jam and cream, topped with pink icing and costing 3d.

We soon learned how to use the strange looking brass item known as a button stick which prevented polish marking the material of our uniforms when cleaning buttons and badges on our tunics and greatcoats. The metal polish was known throughout the army as 'Bluebell' whether or not it happened to be of any other brand name. The heavy ammunition boots with which we were issued came covered in a protective layer of grease which had to be removed before we could begin to produce anything like the highly glazed polish required. This we discovered was achieved by applying layer after layer of polish using spit and energetic

buffing with the handle of an old toothbrush and then a soft cloth, hence the well known phrase 'spit and polish'.

Another item of equipment was the white buff belt with brass buckles and fittings which was worn on ceremonial occasions and when walking out and was yet one more item to be polished and whitened with Blanco.

The uniform jackets and greatcoats were issued from the Quartermaster's Stores with standard pattern, or universal buttons which carried the design of the royal coat of arms. One of our first tasks was to cut these off and replace them with buttons of the regimental design, the universal buttons being retained to use on our canvas fatigue jackets.

The assortment of badges issued to us had to be highly polished and attached to our uniforms. The cap badge depicted the White Horse of Kent with the motto 'Invicta' beneath, plus a scroll with the words 'Royal West Kent'. A pair of collar badges, dogs as they were universally known, and two pairs of brass shoulder titles, one for the service dress jacket and one for our greatcoats. The collar dog design was the Royal Crest, a crown surmounted by a lion because of the regiment's connection with Queen Adelaide, wife of George IV. For this reason the regiment also had the title of 'The Queen's Own' Regiment. The royal crest was also worn on the buttons. The shoulder titles, R.W. Kent, were always known as numerals, the reason being that prior to the reorganisation of the army in 1881 all infantry regiments were known by a number which they wore on their shoulder straps. In that year the 50th Foot, 'The Queen's Own' and the 97th Foot, the Earl of Ulster's, regiments were amalgamated to form the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment. Another badge we acquired was a brass lyre and crown which we wore on our right sleeve and denoted that we were members of the band.

We discovered how to put a crease in our trousers by damping the seam, running a piece of soap down the inside and then laying them on a piece of cardboard under the mattress at night. The mattress came in three sections which were known as biscuits and in the morning had to be piled one on top of the other with folded sheets and blankets on top ready for the daily barrack room inspection.

After much practice we finally mastered the art of putting on puttees in the particular manner required by

the Regiment. Most regiments simply wound the puttee round the leg with more or less equal spacing between each wind but for some reason I have been unable to discover the West Kent Regiment had a different method. This entailed two straight winds at the bottom and then the formation of two inverted Vs, finishing with another three straight winds before tying off the tape at the top. A number of other regiments also used this method of putting on puttees and at least one other, the North Staffordshires, put Vs in the back of theirs, but the reason for this still eludes me.

My years at St. Andrew's Home now paid off when we were taken on to the barrack square to learn foot drill. Some new recruits appeared to have two left feet but for me it came easily and the NCO's wrath was usually directed towards someone else.

Sometimes we were taken for drill by the Company Sergeant Major, Darkie Fox, and one of his favourite remarks to anyone not properly dressed or with dirty boots or buttons was 'If my ruddy wife could see you boy she'd ruddy well give birth'. His bark was however worse than his bite.

As boys we were not issued with rifles or side arms and so spent most of our drill periods carrying out foot drill on the large barrack square alongside the single storey blocks. We learned to drill with the swagger cane with which in those days all soldiers were issued and had to carry when on orderly duties or walking out of barracks. The white metal top which carried the Regiment's crest had of course to be polished.

I become a Band Rat:

For some unknown reason boys in the band were known throughout the army as band rats. This was accepted as the norm and no offence was intended and none taken when we were referred to by this name. We were introduced to Bandmaster Holloway and the Regimental Band although some of the other boys had already begun to learn to play instruments while at St. Augustine's Home. To me music was still a closed book. For reasons best known to himself the Bandmaster decided that I might become a French horn player and so when we attended band practice I had to stand with the French horn players and learn to turn over their music when required, hopefully learning something about the instrument at the same time.

Written on my attestation form when I joined up was 'Enlisted for the 1st Battalion for training as a

musician'. The 1st Battalion as it happened was serving in Bangalore, India, and so our new batch of boys, having now been joined by the undernourished ones, were simply attached to the 2nd Battalion at Aldershot awaiting a draft to India. Any serious musical training given to us would only have benefited someone else and so there was no great effort made for this to be undertaken.

As boys we had to attend school on a number of days a week and we went off to a Brigade School to join boys from a number of other regiments stationed in the area. We were taught maths, English and history as well as army and regimental history and after a couple of months I took and passed an examination for the Army Certificate of Education, Third Class.

Blenheim Barracks at Aldershot consisted of rows of identical long brick bungalows with an entrance way in the middle of the block, barrack rooms at each end and a washroom and single toilet in the centre. In fact almost all the barracks in North Camp looked very much alike and were built in 1885 replacing old wooden huts which were originally on the site and built in 1860 for soldiers returning from the Crimean War.

There were five infantry regiments stationed in North Camp in what was called Marlborough Lines and the barracks were all named after famous battles fought in Belgium in 1709 -Blenheim, Malplaquet, Oudenarde, Ramilies and Tournay. A detachment of the Royal Artillery was also stationed in nearby Lille Barracks and the infamous military prison known as the glasshouse and feared by British soldiers the world over was also located in North Camp.

The barrack rooms were very basic with scrubbed wooden floors, a row of iron beds down each side with a shelf behind each on which to put equipment. A large wooden box was placed at the foot of each bed for kit and down the centre of the room were a couple of scrubbed top trestle tables and some forms. A black-leaded grate stood in the middle of one side with a huge cast iron coal box alongside - one of the many items that had to be either polished or scrubbed. Again, having been used to institutional life, barrack room life did not present me with too many problems as I had been used to getting up at reveille, making my own bed and washing in cold water for a number of years already.

Although a bugler sounded lights out at 10.15 p.m., each evening boys had to be in bed by 9.30 p.m. The

routine of P.E. before breakfast was also not new to me although occasionally we were able to visit the Aldershot Command swimming bath in Queen's Avenue which was quite near to our barracks and some mornings we had cross country runs across Farnborough Common.

During our morning breaks from band practice we made for the NAAFI (Navy, Army & Air Force Institute) canteen. Sometimes the ladies serving in the canteen would be kind to us young lads and only charge us half price for our tea and buns as they knew that we were only paid a few shillings a week.

Within a few weeks we had begun to look something like soldiers, albeit very young ones, and with boots and buttons polished, creases in our trousers, blanco'd white belt and the ability to recognise officers who had to be smartly saluted we were allowed out of barracks. On Saturday afternoons, with our three shillings jingling in our pockets, we would head for the town of Aldershot with shoulders back and swinging our swagger sticks.

One of the standing orders for boys read 'Boys shall not associate with females' which somewhat reduced our rare spare time activities. Another rule was that 'Boys shall not smoke or drink alcohol but at the age of 14 these orders did not bother me too much. We could at least get into a local cinema for fourpence (2p) or another which was a bit more upmarket for sixpence. Even better, just down the road from Blenheim Barracks was a corrugated iron hut in Queen's Avenue known as 'The Gaff' which showed films for only twopence. Inside were rows of wooden benches and before the film began we could buy packets of unshelled peanuts for a penny. The floor would soon become littered with peanut shells with a constant crunching as soldiers came in and out in their heavy army boots.

Woolworths, then a 3d and 6d store, was also a delight to explore on our Saturday afternoons out and offered a variety of treasures that we could afford. An open market was also worth exploring and bargains such as slightly damaged fruit could be picked up for a few pence.

On the way back to barracks we often called in at the Smith-Dorrien Soldiers Canteen at the top of Hospital Hill for a cup of tea and a wad - army slang for cake or bun. It was named after Lieut. General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, a survivor of the Isandlewana

massacre during the Zulu war of 1876. He later became General Officer commanding Aldershot District before the 1914-18 war and instituted many reforms for the benefit of the troops.

On Sundays all the regiments held their church parades and military bands leading long columns of soldiers converged on the local garrison churches. Stationed in Malplaquet Barracks which adjoined ours were the Gordon Highlanders and next to them in Oudenarde Barracks were the Cameron Highlanders. The sound of bagpipes fascinated me and I enjoyed watching the jocks march past with their colourful plaids and swinging kilts. On Sunday evenings we would sometimes visit the Wesleyan soldiers' institute in Farnborough or the Church Army rooms where we would attend a short service, after which we were rewarded with tea and cakes. A popular venue.

In October a draft of men were due to leave for India to join the 1st Battalion of the Regiment at their station in Bangalore, but as I, with a couple of other boys who were due to join the 1st Battalion, was still under age our group was kept back until the next draft.

The Trip to India 1933

1933 came all too soon and with it both my 15th birthday and orders for an Indian draft. We were issued with skeleton equipment consisting of a haversack and a waterbottle, a khaki drill suit and a pith helmet. After various inoculations we packed our kitbags, labelled Bombay, and on the 4th February paraded on the barrack square of Blenheim Barracks for the last time.

On a cold winter's morning, looking very self-conscious in our tropical clothes and pith helmets and our greatcoats rolled up and slung over our left shoulders, we set off behind the Regimental Band for North Camp station. Our destination was the docks at Southampton where we joined drafts of men from other units and went aboard the troopship HMT Dorsetshire, a vessel of 9647

tons, the largest that I had ever seen. In the afternoon with a loud blast from the ship's siren we set off into the Solent on what for me was to be a great adventure. The coast of England gradually disappeared from view and it was to be five years, all but two weeks, before I was to see it again.

Once under way we were allotted an area on a lower deck that we were to occupy and went to the ship's

store to collect our hammocks. A tough looking Petty Officer explained how to hang our hammocks up and how to get into them and told us in no uncertain terms that he expected them to be correctly rolled up in the mornings when they were returned to the store. The space where we slept became our mess deck during the day. We were shown our lifeboat stations where the life-jackets were stored and how to put them on.

As we crossed the English Channel and began running down the French coast I noticed that the ship was beginning to roll slightly more than it had earlier and as we neared the Bay of Biscay the sea became decidedly rough and my inside began to object. This was my first time at sea and although I had heard about seasickness I was not prepared for the days that followed. By the next morning the ship was really rolling and I began to feel very unwell and went up to the top deck to get some fresh air where I found the ship's rails lined with men being seasick. It wasn't long before I joined them. Then I lay under a life' boat with my head near the gutter that ran around under the rails and after a few hours thought that I was going to die. For two days I was so violently sick and ill that I don't think I cared whether I survived or not as the ship rocked and rolled through the Bay of Biscay and down the coast of Spain and Portugal. On the third day out the seas calmed, the weather cheered up and so did I and. I began to take an interest in the surroundings, even looking forward to a good meal again.

Rounding Cap St. Vincent we headed for Gibraltar and the Mediterranean and some sunshine. As we steamed into the Straights of Gibraltar and sailed past the coast of Tangier I could hardly believe that it was happening to me. Only six months before I had been confined in an orphanage and not in my wildest dreams would I have thought that I would now be seeing parts of the world that I had only read about in school books. I spent hours in my favourite spot, lying under a lifeboat on the top deck, not being sick this time but gazing out at the land we were passing and watching the schools of porpoise as they leapt and played alongside the ship.

As we neared Gibraltar we passed many Royal Navy ships ranging from small motor launches to large battleships with their huge guns pointing fore and aft. I had hoped that we might stop at Gibraltar but we steamed along the North African coast, past Algiers, and then lost sight of land. By now we had got into a regular routine - reveille, roll-up and stow away hammocks, P.T. consisting of a steady jog around the

upper deck and some physical jerks, and then breakfast. Apart from lifeboat drill the rest of the day .was our own. A canvas plunge bath had been erected on the deck, about ten by eight feet, and although it became rather crowded it helped to while away the time. Housey-Housey (Bingo) schools were started and I soon learned the meaning of Kelly's Eye and Top of the Shop. In the evenings impromptu concerts were organised with singers, banjo and mouth-organ players coming into their own. There were married families on board, women and children going out to join their husbands and fathers in India, but they were segregated from the men in a separate part of the ship.

We continued sailing through the Mediterranean for some days and as we approached Malta we were once again welcomed by ships of the Royal Navy. Leaving Malta we headed towards Egypt and a few days later arrived at Port Said at the entrance to the Suez Canal. This was our first introduction to the East and I was fascinated by the white robed Egyptians in their red fez hats and sandals and the lines of camels loaded with sacks of grain and spices lumbering along beside the harbour. It was a bustling colourful scene with ships of all shapes and sizes loading and unloading and a constant din from working cranes and shouting men. The harbour was Lull of small boats containing Arab merchants going from ship to ship trying to sell their various wares. These 'bum-boat wallahs' as they were called would approach the ship and call out to the men lining the ship's rails and hold up the articles they had for sale - silk shirts, scarves, boxes of Turkish Delight, Egyptian cigarettes, cigars, watches and a whole host of items which the bum-boat wallah would describe in glowing terms. He would throw a rope up to the deck which someone would catch and haul up a wicker basket. The Arab would haggle a price for a particular item, the purchaser would send his money down in the basket and the article would be hauled up. Sometimes the 'green' soldier was in for a shock when the item he received was not what he expected but there was not a lot he could do about it.

Small boys would also row around in little boats and shout for men to throw coins into the sea. They would then dive in and recover them and probably did quite well as we knew that once we arrived in India our English coin would be of no use to us and so a lot of small change was thrown overboard. One bum-boat wallah was selling newspapers with cries of 'News of the Next World' - they were about two weeks old.

The day we spent in Port Said was probably the most interesting I had ever spent up to then. So much was happening, an ever-changing scene and all quite different from my previous experiences. I was quite sorry when in the late afternoon the ship's mooring ropes were cast off and we began to move slowly into the Suez Canal. At this point the Canal was very narrow and after the days we had spent out of sight of land it seemed strange to be sailing along with land only a few yards away on either side.

The next day we continued alongside the coast of Egypt with plenty of interesting sights still to see. The road ran parallel to the coast and was fringed with palm trees and the traffic ranged from donkeys and camels to modern motor cars. Many of the buildings were flat topped and whitewashed, with an occasional Mosque towering up above the rest. Passing Ismailia we moved into the Bitter Lakes where the land again vanished into the distance and awnings were put up on the upper deck to give some protection from the sun and the noticeably rising temperature. Once we passed Port Suez it was to be some days before we were again within sight of land. Shoals of flying fish appeared, skimming along above the water, joining the porpoise as they continued to escort us on our journey. Just over two weeks after leaving Southampton we arrived at the port of Aden to refuel and take aboard fresh supplies. Aden appeared to be rather a dismal place compared I with all the excitement of Port Said,,being a huge oil terminal with ugly storage tanks everywhere you looked and surrounded by bleak hills. We moved off once more into the open sea and it would be six days before we would sight land again. As we entered the Arabian Sea a massive water spout spiralled its way across in front of the boat, sucking up tons of water and spraying it back down as fine rain. Fortunately for us it was far enough away to be of no danger to the ship.

Twenty one days and 6,000 miles after leaving England we came in sight of the coast of India and slowly approached the harbour at Bombay. The first building of any consequence to catch the eye was the huge archway known as the Gateway of India which stood on the quayside and had been constructed to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria. At the age of 15 I was to become part of the British Raj until 1938.

THE UNVEILING AND DEDICATION OF THE THE NATIONAL MALAYA AND BORNEO VETERANS ASSOCIATION MEMORIAL PLAQUE

by Ron Harper ex Q.O.R.W.K.

At 11.30 am. on Thursday 21st April 2005 a dedication Service took place in the Chapel of St. Faith, within the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral, London

The occasion was the unveiling of a plaque to remember and honour all servicemen who gave their lives during the Malayan Emergency and the Borneo and Indonesian Confrontation. It had taken the National Malaya & Borneo Veterans Association (N.M.B.V.A.) many years of endeavour to raise funds for such a worthy cause and seek a permanent location for the long overdue memorial. This memorial is dedicated to those servicemen who had laid down their lives during the Malaya Emergency and the Borneo Confrontation with Indonesia which took place during the late 1940's through to late 1960's.

The congregation numbering almost 400, which included H.R.H. The Duke of Kent, the Lord Mayor and the Sheriff of London, filled the beautiful Chapel to hear the bidding and prayer spoken by The Rev Canon Buckler. Then the hymn "Immortal, Invisible" was sung by the superb Cathedral Choir.

General Sir Gary Johnson KCB., OBE., MC., the patron of the N.M.B.V.A. then read the lesson -John 15, 9-7 which includes the lines "No one has greater love than, to lay down one's life for one's friends".

A rousing rendition of "O God our help in ages past" was sung by the gathering, after which H.R.H. The Duke of Kent unveiled the plaque. This was followed by prayers led by the Rev. Laura Burgess and the Association prayer by the Rev. David Osbourne, Chaplain to the Bridgend branch of the N.M.B.V.A.

The Hymn "Guide Me O Thou Great Redeemer" (tune Cwm Rhondda) was given special emphasis by the assembly, thanks, surely to those Welsh members in attendance-it could probably be heard on Ludgate Hill- great stuff.

The blessing and the National Anthem ended the service and the congregation left the Chapel with the

opportunity to view the newly unveiled plaque, now a permanent reminder of the comrades who never returned from those "forgotten jungle wars" of nearly half a century ago.

When the service ended, the guests were invited to attend a reception given by the Lord Mayor, Mr. Michael Savory, at the Mansion House - his residence during his term of office. The route from St. Paul's to the Mansion House along Cheapside going eastwards toward the Bank of England. Cheapside for centuries, had been a bustling thoroughfare where vendors and merchants would gather to sell their merchandise to the citizens of London. "Cheap" comes from the Saxon word meaning "market" - which is exactly what Cheapside was.

In the City of London's "Square Mile" there are no roads, only streets, lanes and courts, the names of which around Cheapside give some indication of the goods sold;- Bread Street, Wood Street, Poultry Street, Ironmonger Lane. Honey Lane, Milk Street etc.

Halfway along Cheapside, on the south side is The Church of St. Mary Le Bow, the bells of which were heard by Richard (Dick) Whittington calling him back from Highgate Hill to become Lord Mayor of London in 1397 and a further two terms in 1406 and 1419.

The City of London is rich in history and a glance back to see the dome of St.Paul's was a reminder of the famous photograph taken in 1940 when, although surrounded by flames and smoke, the Cathedral survived the "Blitz".

The Lord Mayor's reception at the Mansion House was held in the magnificent 90 feet long Egyptian Hall. The entry by an elegant stairway was made even more impressive by a "Guard of Honour" formed by twelve N.M.B.V.A standard bearers and ten serving Gurkha soldiers of 36 Engineer Regiment, based at Invicta Lines, Maidstone, under the command of Lt. Uttam Sherchan. Friendly staff bearing trays with glasses of wine and soft drinks, welcomed the visitors

to the Hall and made sure that glasses were never allowed to become empty and there was buffet food in abundance.

In the Lord Mayor's speech of welcome, he paid tribute to the Veterans for preserving the freedom of South East Asia. In his response, Sir Gary Johnson expressed gratitude for the honour and appreciation shown by the Lord Mayor to the ex-servicemen present.

The Malaysian High Commissioner was a welcome guest and he announced that it is the wish of his government to award the Pingat Jasa Malaysian Medal to all Commonwealth servicemen who served in the region between 1957 - 1966. A gracious gesture and gratefully accepted by the Australian & New Zealand governments on behalf of their veterans. However, the British Government will not allow our ex servicemen to accept the honour.

During the afternoon at the reception for their services to the N.M.B.V.A. awards, in the form of scrolls, were presented by the Association Patron, General Sir Gary Johnson, to Patrick Baldwin, Terry Clark, George Tullis, Bert Godsiff and Les Paddon. David Neil, President of the N.M.B.V.A. presented the Lord Mayor with an Association wall Plaque which was gratefully received.

The Egyptian Hall by now was buzzing with conversation, many glasses to toast "absent friends" were raised, past times revived and old friendships renewed.

Patrick Baldwin of the North Kent/S.E.London Branch had written a poem dedicated to those who died in the Far East.

He had served in Korea and Malaya and over many long months has been tireless in his efforts to help make this day possible. His poem "Sleep well you Bonnie Lads" was read to a silent audience and many were visibly moved by the lines, in fact, Patrick himself found it difficult to speak the last words of his moving tribute. The long applause of appreciation when he finished said it all.

Eventually it was time to leave, it had been a great day from beginning to end. The organisation had been superb. the hospitality at St. Paul's and the Mansion House quite overwhelming, a credit to those who made it possible - the day was to remind us of those

"Bonnie Lads" who never came home- They are not forgotten -

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

The following members of 1st Battalion The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment lost their lives in Malaya 1951-54



Pte James Bardell

Pte. Derek Brown

L/Cpl. Robert Chambers

Pte. John Cheeseman

Pte. Derek Coleman

Captain Edward Deed

Pte. Charles Denton

Pte. Dennis Elsley

Pte. Leonard Hand

Pte. George Heath

Cpl. Thomas Henderson

Pte. Leonard Holman

Pte. Leonard Hollerbon

Pte. John Knight

Pte. Donald Latter

Pte. Albert Lepper

Pte. William Lowday

2/Lt. David Manning

L/Cpl. Daniel Molland

L/Cpl. Ernest Newell

Pte. Maurice Pelling

Cpl. Harold Culley

Pte. Horace Stevenson

Pte. Richard Villers

Pte. Patrick Whitmore



FROM THE WEB SITE

www.the-queens-own-buffs.com

NOTE:

The regimental Web Site has now been revamped, colour system changed, new features added including a Notice Board upon which up to date information is posted. One of the new features is 'A Battalion at War', a pictorial history of the 2nd Bn The Buffs 1939-1945. It is quite a unique feature and well worth a browse as it contains many rare photographs. I am indebted to Phyllis Daniels for lending me the original album, composed by her late husband "Ginger" who meticulously built up this record. It now stands as a tribute, not just to 2nd Buffs but all those men in the various battalions of The Buffs and Queen's Own who fought in the last war.

Another new feature "With 2 Pln A Coy 1 QORWK's in Malaya" is a collection of photographs kindly submitted by Ron Howe.

RECENT MESSAGES POSTED ON THE SITE:

Note: If you want to reply to any of these messages but do not have access to the internet please write to the Editor and he will pass your reply on.

From: David Sheath

Email address: david.sheath@connectfree.co.uk

Philip "Bris" Brissenden

I have a letter written to my Grandad "Bris" of 2nd Buffs, from "Tich" containing many references to the following people. I would like to hear from any of them, or their relatives, who might remember my Grandad. He was in Burma 1944/45. Most of all I would like to know who "Tich" was.

The other names mentioned are: Avery, Steve "Griff" Troy, "Nobby" Essex, Harry Graham, "Ginger" McVay, "Doughy" Baker, "Boy" Howe, Alf Russell, "Sully" Southwell, Gil Bishop, George Butler and "Dixie" Dean.

From: Andrew William Handover

Email: awh61@yahoo.com

Major Philip Stewart, Buffs

Can anybody shed some light on my research of my Great Great Great Grandfather Major Philip Stewart who served with 'The Buffs' in the 1800's?

He had a daughter, my Great Great Grandmother, Madalena Stewart who married Rev., Thomas Agar Holland, my Great Great Grandfather who was Vicar of Poynings, in Sussex.

She was born in the Channel Islands, so I'm hoping the Stewart Family also came from there.

From: Ron Howe

Email: ron222@btinternet.com

Mogadhisu

I wonder if anyone can help me recall something from 1949?

I went to MOGADHISU for about 6 months but cannot remember if it was with THE BUFFS or the EAST SURREY'S. We were there for 6 months to keep the peace we were relieved by the Italians as the place was called Italian Somaliland then

From: T. MacWilliam

Email: tm006h4412@blueyonder.co.uk

ITALY WW2

My Grandad, Alexander Benjamin MacWilliam and his brother Donald MacWilliam both served in the Buffs. They both had a Scottish accent and signed up around the age of 18. I wondered if there are any readers who knew of them.

From: Matthew Fortune

Photos 4th BN Buffs World War 2

I know its a long shot but I was wondering if anyone has pictures of the 4th Bn Buffs. In particular I am looking for a picture of my Grandfather Pte. Arthur William Fortune. He served in Malta and was killed when HMS Eclipse was mined en route to Leros Oct22/23 1943. We have one photo of him in uniform

but I have no idea where it came from. He also served in the Ox and Bucks from 1930 to 1938. Any help or advice would be gratefully appreciated.

From: Liz Grover

Email: lizzor2000@yahoo.co.uk

Charles Stephen Albert Kennard

I am trying to piece together my Grandfather's service history. He joined in about 1930 and retired as a Warrant Officer Class 11 in 1961. After that he became Chief Clerk at RHQ-QOB and later at RHQ the Queen's Regiment. He was also the Editor of the quarterly newsletter. If anyone can help me I would be very grateful.

From: John Ireland

Email: jri2272@btconnect.com

4 Buffs France 1940

My father was posted to 4 Buffs from the Depot on mobilisation (he was a regular) and went to France with them in 1939. When the final German breakthrough occurred, the main party of the Bn. left via Le Havre but small parties of men made their way back to the coast to get out on their own after being cut off. My father was a Cpl. and led his section to the coast picking up a Household Cavalry SC of H and stole(!) a fishing boat intending to sail back to England. They were picked up in the Channel by the Destroyer HMS Greyhound. In the rear of his AB64 (paybook) is the list of names of those soldiers Gavert, Phillippe, Leaming? Marks, Woodhall, Swales, Palethorpe and Morgan also SC of H Partry.

I wonder if any of those are still alive.

From: Dighton Brown

Email: ditesmbali@aol.com

Dad and Grandad

I hope that someone remembers my Dad, Robert Brown, as he would not talk a lot about his army days and sadly he has now passed on.

My Dad was with the 1st Battalion The Buffs. He was born in Folkestone, Cheriton. His Army Book 111 has

the following info No 538212, His army number was 22747749 Group no. 5223.

At the bottom it has INF/AER CAT11(B). He was discharged in Kenya and never came back to the UK.

My Grandad, Arthur Edwin Francis Brown, went off to World War 2 from Cheriton and was never seen again. None of the family know what happened and being in Africa has made it hard to access information. He was a groom in civilian life.

Can anyone fill in the gaps?

From: Christopher Shaw, Chairman S.R.P.S.

Email: chrishaw@shorncliffereadoubt.com

Sir John Moore's Redoubt.

I need your help. I, my fellow riflemen and the good people of Sandgate are trying to save and restore Sir John Moores Redoubt by Shorncliffe Camp, Sandgate, Kent.

I am just asking for your support to save this crucial military site from neglect and development.

Please visit our web site

www.shorncliffereadoubt.com for more information.

From: Barry Winsper

Email: winspb@aol.com

Grandfathers M.I.D.

My Grandad, Eric Thomas Winsper, served with the Royal West Kents in North Africa and the Italian Campaign as a despatch rider. He was awarded a Mentioned in Despatches but has lost the citation, is there any way of getting a duplicate or finding out the details? Please email me if you can help.

From: Eric Clark

Email: EricTRW@aol.com

The Buffs 1948 - 1967

I am trying to obtain a copy of the above book. If anyone has a copy for sale please contact me on the above email or by telephone on 0208 668 0328.

From:: M Hofman

Email: margietrubrit@aol.com

THOMAS RICHARD LAWSON

Does anyone remember Tom Lawson who served with the Buffs in the sixties. He has recently died and was from Canterbury. Information is wanted for his family.

From: Frank Hills

Email: pamela.hills2@btinternet.com

Pat Jackson

I am looking for Pat Jackson, nickname Jacko, came from Ramsgate and might have emigrated to Canada. He served with me in Aden and Wuppertal in 1 Buffs between 1955-59. If anybody knows of him or his whereabouts or are in contact with him can you please pass on my contact information to him. My telephone number is 01227-740628.

Frank Hills

From: Keith Kendall

Email: keith.kendall999@ntlworld.com

Cpl Howard Kendall

My great uncle, Howard Kendall, served with 1st Bn The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regt) and was killed in action on 13.4.1945. Can anyone help with any information about him.

I would like to know when he joined the 1st Bn if possible which Coy and Platoon and what actions they were involved in particularly on the day he was killed.

Any information would be more than I have at the moment and would be gratefully received.

Reply from Mick Mills

The Battalion were involved in an amphibious assault on the shore of Lake Commanchio on 13 April 1945. They were deployed in 38 Buffaloes which were tracked amphibious vehicles capable of carrying men and vehicles. Their objectives were a bridge over the Fossa Marina, 6 miles NW of Menate and a second bridge to the south of it and 1000 yards inland.

The Regimental History has a description of the action but you would need to know which Company to determine your Gt Uncle's movements. Unfortunately I cannot help you with that.

The Buffaloes were cut up badly during the landing and subsequent actions. The chaplain had a difficult task when he later had to identify the casualties and arrange for their burial.

The Buffs Roll of Honour for WW2 also lists Albert Kendall who died with the 2nd Battalion in the Far East in 1945. Any connection ?

From: Frances Nash, Head Teacher

Email: headteacher@woodchurch.kent.sch.uk

Woodchurch village war memorial

Our top class are researching the 30 names on the village war memorial, 22 of whom were men of the Buffs.

Is there anyone out there who would be interested in our findings or could offer help when we get stuck.

Reply from Mick Mills

I would be happy to help you find information or point you in the right direction. I will contact you on your email address

Reply from The Editor

Dear Mrs Nash,

Can you possibly let me have the names of the 22 names of the men who served in the Buffs that are inscribed on the Woodchurch War Memorial.

We will be delighted to help in anyway we can. Please use my email address to respond.

Oct 13th 1915

Remembering the 190 Buffs of the 6th Battalion who lost their lives on this day 90 years ago at Loos.

They were the first New Army Battalion raised by the Regiment on the outbreak of war. As they emerged from the trenches for their first major attack since arriving in France, they discovered that the artillery

barrage had been insufficient to suppress the enemy in front of them. It was a disaster.

Of the 190 brave men who died on 13th October 1915, only 8 of them have marked graves. The rest lie together in the fields near Loos or in unmarked graves. They are remembered on the memorial to the missing at Dud Corner.

We Will Remember Them

Mick Mills

From: r.jordan26@ntlworld.com

Private K. S. Cresswell

I placed a message sometime back about my grandfather Pte K S Cresswell who served with the Buffs from 1925 - until his final discharge in 1944 asking if anyone had any photos of that period.



My grandfather was 6282937 Pte Kenneth Snow Cresswell he enlisted on the 18th of August 1925. He served in Gibraltar from 3rd September 1926 - 6th February 1927, in India from the 7th of February 1927 - 8th November 1930, in Burma from 9th of November 1930 - 27th of April 1932, the Andamen

Isles from 28th April 1932 - 18th October 1932. From there it was back too Burma from 19th of October 1932 - 29th November 1932. From 1932 until 1939 he was placed on the army reserve. On the 16th of September 1939 he was serving with the BEF until his evacuation from Dunkirk.

I enclose a photograph of my grandfather, standing, with another soldier, seated, who I know absolutely nothing about. Can anyone recognise the other soldier, It is a long shot but it must be worth a try. Can anyone tell me what the white stripe is on my grandfather's left sleeve?

(The stripe on your grandfather's left sleeve is a Good Conduct stripe. The Editor)

From: ronandnitaelliott@ns.sympatico.ca

Albert William Elliott

My brother, Albert William Elliott, served with the above-named battalion when he was captured carrying out a rearguard action during the evacuation of Dunkirk and was a POW for 5 years in Stalag XXA and XXB until his release in 1945.

As far as I know Albert joined up in Dartford (I was a young lad of 10 at the time and I remember seeing him off on the troop train in Dartford) as he was heading to his point of embarkation to France. While he was alive I did not get to many facts of where and when his battalion was operating and battles that he was involved in prior to his capture in the spring or summer of 1940, and now I am playing a game of catch-up to find out as much as I can for my family journal.

Albert was never a well man after his POW time, his last 17 years (he passed away in 1984) in a veteran's hospital in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

My family had travelled to England in 1936 (my father and mother were born in Kent and left for Canada in 1914) and were returning home, so to speak, of course when the war started in 1939 we could not return to Canada and so remained until after the war.

I had a sister who was in the WAAF's (Abingdon air base) and 2 brothers in the Royal Navy with Albert in the army we were probably the only Canadian family in England who represented the 3 services, for which I feel quite honoured to say the least.

I have dragged on long enough so if there is anything that you can do for me I would appreciate very much,

Best regards,

Ronald E. Elliott CD. RCN (Ret'd)

WRITE TO REPLY

9 Cotton Spinney, Cubbington
Leamington Spa, Warwicks
CV32 7XH
Tel: 01926 428777

Dear Editor,

Does anyone know the whereabouts of Peter Newman, we lost contact in 1957 whilst he was serving as a CQMS with 1st Buffs in Germany.

Kind regards

Michael Bednell (Ex. Sgt. 1 Buffs)

30 Bluebell Avenue
Lowman Park,
Tiverton, Devon, EX16 6SX

Dear Editor,

Can anyone tell me where I can get copies of photographs of Napier Barracks, Somerset Barracks, Shorncliffe, Cavalry Barracks Canterbury, Invicta Lines Maidstone and Hothfield Camp Ashford all between 1946 and 1948. I am writing my memoirs and, unfortunately, all of my photos have gone AWOL.

Yours faithfully

R. M. Denyer

90 New Street
Ash, Nr. Canterbury, CT3 2BN
Tel: 01304 814454

Dear Editor,

As a boy soldier I joined the Buffs and started my service in 1 Junior Leaders Battalion, at Plummer Barracks, Plymouth. When I arrived I found on my bed a book 'A Short History of The Buffs', by Brigadier E. Foster Hall MC, a regimental tie and a blazer badge.

The colour of the badge was a green dragon with gold markings. I note that there seems to be many variations of colours, including the Buffs badge on the front page of the Journal (red and white markings), the green dragon with red markings in the PWRR and Queen's Regt badges. A new blazer badge being sold at

the Buffs Regt. Museum in Canterbury is a gold dragon with red markings.

Can anyone please tell me which colours are correct.

Yours sincerely

Alan Moss

Groom Cottage, Harveys Lane
Ringmer, East Sussex BN8 5AG
Tel: 01273 812647

Dear Editor,

I am interested in contacting any ex national service men who may have seen duty with 2nd Bn. Royal West Kent Regiment in Harzberge or Goslar, Germany, 1945-46 under Major Steel, OC during the 'Wood Pecker' Operation.

Yours faithfully

John Booker

Maggie Woodroffe
33 Giles Rd, Willunga
South Australia 5172
Email: demew33@internode.on.net

Dear Editor,

I came across your name on a web site looking for information on Buffs history and found your reply to an enquiry about Sgt James Laker. I believe my father knew him and I have also answered that query. However, I thought I would be cheeky enough to ask if you would be able to include something for me in your Regimental Magazine.

I have obtained my father's military records from MOD, reports from International Red Cross and had some luck with one "old Mate" who worked with him in 1939 at Portland Docks - now I don't know where else to try. He was captured at Dunkirk, interrogated at Luckenwald. and held at Thorn in Poland (Stalag XXA) and then transferred to Oerbke (357) near Falingbostel until liberation. I have also got recent information from there re- the gates which have been created as a memorial and the dedication that was held on April 16th this year. I am going to see it next year.

I am now trying to piece together what happened to him and where he went between April 16th and Sept when his military records show him at, what I believe to be, the code number for Shorncliffe barracks. I believe that he was in hospital for some of that time as I can recall him saying that he weighed about 6 or 7 stone when he returned and he was over six feet tall. Would that hospital have been the naval one in Chatham or would it have Shorncliffe? Is it likely that there is anyone who could tell me anything which would help to fill that gap?

His name was Walter Robert Sherman. he was also known as Lofty. He was a sergeant and had been sent to Rouen in early 1940. He passed away in 1996 in Buckland Hospital.

Many thanks

Maggie Woodroffe

John McLoughlin
Calle Chantada 48, 3-c
Madrid 28039, Spain
Tel: 0034 913730539

Dear Editor

I am trying to contact a Cyril Harding who was a friend of my family during the war. The family are organising an 81st birthday for my mother and it would mean so much to her if she could get in touch with Cyril. He served in the Royal West Kents and went abroad in 1942, North Africa I believe, and was captured. I would be so grateful if anyone can help me. Should they wish to telephone me I would ring them straight back so that they do not incur telephone expenses.

Yours sincerely

John McLoughlin

Pax Tecum
33 Spanton Crescent
Hythe, Kent, CT21 4SF
7th July 2005

Dear Editor

May I ask you to publish this letter of thanks to the Association President, Colonel Champion, and all members of the Regimental Association for their kind donation of £100 towards my World Challenge Expedition.

May I say how much I enjoyed being allowed to play with the Kohima Band at the Band Concert, an enormous honour and a great experience.

Once the expedition is over I will write a resume and let you know how I got on climbing Mount Kilimanjaro. I will do my best to get the Queen's Own Buffs flag, which you gave me at the Band Concert, to the top and fly it there.

Many thanks again to everyone.

Yours sincerely

James Bradley.

58 Finginhoe Road
Old Heath, Colchester
CO2 8EB

Dear Editor

I wonder if any of the readers of The Journal can help. I am trying to obtain information about my father and brother who both served in 1st Bn. RWK's. My father was taken prisoner early in the war, his name was George (Nobby) White and he retired in the rank of RSM. My brother, Ronald Kenneth White, was commissioned and I know that he served as a Major in Bermuda in the fifties. I am certain that they both served with Major Gwilliam's father.

If anyone can help I will be very grateful.

Yours sincerely

Barry White

Dear Editor

Greetings to all Buffs - Regret that I am unable to be with you all at the Canterbury Reunion, but I will be with you in spirit. I wish everyone a pleasant and successful Reunion with the best of weather to add to your enjoyment.

Best wishes . God bless and in the local patois ,
Kom gut Heim! (Safe journey home).

George Joyce

(George celebrated his 92nd birthday on 30th September, Happy Birthday from all of us George. The Editor).

Walwen House
Ffordd Walwen
Lixwm, Nr. Holywell
Flintshire. CH8 8LW
Tel: 01352 780420

Dear Editor

I have been collecting medals of Buffs since my National Service days with the 1st Bn. in Canterbury, Dover and Aden, and try to find as much as I can about the 'Men behind the Medals'.

I need information on several medal groups that I have. The first two belonged to CSM Lennard and Sgt D. H. Day both of 2nd Bn. The Buffs. Colonel Edlmann has been very helpful and has provided quite a lot of information but I would like to contact any veterans who knew these two men personally.

The third group belonged to Captain M. I. Hart who was OC 'B' Company and was captured at La Herliere, near Doullens on 20th May 1940. Did any of your readers know him, I really would like some background information on him.

The other groups include Cpl W B Murphy, 4th/5th Bn. The Buffs, C. Besley 2nd Bn, G. W. Jones 1st Bn in Kenya, C. B. Small, 1 Q.O. Buffs, Borneo, L. Whitehall South Arabia possibly 4th or 5th Buffs TAVR.

I will be very grateful if any reader can help. My email address is alan@medals1.fslife.co.uk.

Yours sincerely
Alan Cathery

14 Devonshire Gardens
Cliftonville
CT9 3AF

Dear Editor

Freedom of Ramsgate Parade

In the Spring 2005 edition of The Journal there was a photograph and a short caption regarding the above parade, however there was an inaccuracy. The Ensign carrying the

Regimental Colour did not faint on parade, but left the parade due to a 'dodgy' Chinese meal consumed the previous evening.

The account is correct in stating that RSM Bob Sharman took the Colour, this possibility had been discussed prior to the parade as no reserve Ensign was available. The Ensign returned to the parade prior to stepping off for the march past and parade through the streets of Ramsgate. The Ensign was eternally grateful to make the conclusion of the parade without further mishap.

It cost the Ensign a bottle of Port and 60 bottles of beer for the officers and men on parade purchased from the bar of 'A' Coy. 5 Buffs, Willson's Road DrIII Hall.

I know this to be true account of the parade. I was the Ensign.

G Dineley

Lt Col. (Retd.)

(We stand corrected. The Editor)

Mrs. M. J. Scott
Reed Cottage, Bridge End
Newport, Saffron Walden
Essex CB11 3TH

Dear Editor

Earlier this year I sent you a photograph of my late father, Captain Kenneth Cole of 2nd Bn. The Buffs. You published in the Journal and I was thrilled with the result. The initial question, which I hoped would be answered was:- when was the picture taken?. This was not answered but I received 2 fantastic letters with photographs of my father, a theatre programme, a magazine and so much information which I had not had before. I was loved to tears on more than one occasion. Firstly, ex Lieutenant Fred Holliday from Birmingham contacted me with more than 6 pages A4 of hand written account of his experiences involving my Dad. (This document is so incredible I feel that it should be preserved somewhere for future generations).

Then just 2 weeks ago, I had a letter from Geoffrey How in Wellington, New Zealand with lots more information.

I cannot thank you enough for publishing the picture and therefor giving me, and our son who has just completed 23 years in the Army, such pleasure.

As an ex service person myself (Q.A.R.A.N.C.) I march at the Cenotaph each year on Remembrance Sunday and this year my thoughts will be with all surviving members of 'The Buffs' and I will try to hold my head higher than ever before.

Thank you all

Yours sincerely
Jo. Scott

c/o White Horses
Meadway, East Looe
Cornwall PL13 1JT

Dear Editor,

I am one of three daughters of veterans of the Battle of Monte Cassino who are establishing the Monte Cassino Society, its aim is to continue and further the interest in the experiences of those who took part in the battle. At a time when many of the WWII battle associations are closing, we feel strongly that the experiences of the veterans of Cassino, and of the entire Italian Campaign, should not be forgotten. We hope to achieve our aim through interested sons, daughters and relatives of the veterans.

We would be very grateful if you could pass along our message to your membership.

We would like to hear from veterans who were at Cassino or elsewhere in Italy and we would very much like to hear from relatives of the veterans who share our desire to further an interest in the veterans' experiences.

I am attaching a very short leaflet/ad for your information.

Sincerely

Rosalind Galloway.

(If you are intending to contact the society please write to Judith Coote at the above address. The Editor)

Joseph Balkoski,
Historian, US Army
Fifth Regiment Armory,
29th Division Street,
Baltimore,, Maryland 21201, USA

Dear Editor,

7th Buffs (141st Regt RAC)

I am interested in obtaining a copy of Capt. Harry Bailey's book, "Playboys: A History of 'B' Squadron, 141st Regt., Royal Armoured Corps."

The 141st RAC (formerly 7th Buffs) served with the US Army's 29th Infantry Division in August and September 1944 and played a vital role in the liberation of Brest.

We maintain an official library of 29th Division history here in Baltimore USA, and would like to obtain a copy of Capt. Bailey's book if possible.

Veterans of the 29th Division still speak in glowing terms of the 7th Buffs' contributions at Brest. "29th, Let's Go!"

Yours sincerely

Joseph Balkoski

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed our annual subscription. We always enjoy the Journal and the photographs, especially those of the Band of 1st Bn Buffs.

My late husband, Band Corporal Mike Houghton served with the regiment from 1943-54. My present husband, a naval veteran of the last war, and I always look forward to the reunions where we are always made so welcome.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Wright

FINAL WORD

Well we are now entering the Association's 'quiet time' leading up to Christmas and then the Annual General Meeting next April. This has been an extremely busy year for everyone so maybe a bit of a rest is in order. Normally this 'Final Word' is about a page long, not so this time as most of the points have been covered already.

However, just to remind you that there are still some of this year's Christmas cards available, if you would like to order some then use the enclosed order form.

Do make a special note in your diary of the date for the next year's Regimental Association Annual General Meeting - Saturday 22nd April 2006 at the usual venue in Sittingbourne. If you can attend please do so, this is your chance to air your views and influence Association affairs.

Over the past few months we have been preparing Certificates of Wartime Service for Regimental Association members who are veterans of the last war.

These certificates, each signed by Mr. Allan Willett CMG, Lord Lieutenant of the County of Kent and Colonel Champion our Association President, have been presented personally at various Association events or sent by post to the veteran. We are now coming to the end of that project but if there are any veterans who served in either the Buffs or The Queen's Own during the period 1939-1945 that have yet to receive a certificate then please let me know and one will be prepared for you.

Many thanks to all who subscribe to The Journal and to those who submit articles, photos etc. Editing The Journal is great fun and very rewarding - together we will keep it going as long as we possibly can.

If you know of any of our members who might be on their own this Christmas, if you can give them a ring and have a chat.

Take care.

Peter

EMAIL ADDRESSES.

If you have an email address please register it with the Editor by sending an email to thejournal@peter-white.go-plus.net. Your address may already be listed but an update is now necessary. This will help considerably with communicating items of news between issues of The Journal etc.

Rest assured that address will **NOT** be passed onto any third party without your permission.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2005

DECEMBER	3rd	Colchester Branch Christmas Dinner
	3rd	Ramsgate Branch Christmas Party
	8th	Folkestone & Hythe Branch Christmas Supper
	11th	Canterbury Branch Annual Carol Service
	14th	Sittingbourne Branch Christmas Party
	17th	Canterbury Branch Christmas Party

2006

FEBRUARY	17th	Canterbury Branch visit to the Mountbatten Festival of Music. Royal Albert Hall, London
	23rd	Canterbury Branch Annual General Meeting
	23rd	Sittingbourne Branch Annual General Meeting
APRIL	7th	London Branch QORWK Business Meeting
	DTBC.	Danish Branch Luncheon Meeting Keoge
	21st	Ramsgate Branch AGM
	22nd	Association AGM, Darts Competition, Buffet Dance at Sittingbourne
MAY	6th	Ramsgate Branch Albuhera Buffet and Dance
	13th	Canterbury Branch Annual Dinner
	16th	Albuhera Day
JUNE	16th	London Branch QORWK Summer Social
JULY	DTBC	Canterbury Branch Annual visit to Ypres, Belgium
AUGUST	6th	Canterbury Reunion
	DTBC	Danish Branch Summer Meeting - North Zealand
SEPTEMBER	3rd	London Branch QOB's Tower of London Service
	17th	Maidstone Reunion
NOVEMBER	9th	Festival of Remembrance in the Garden of Westminster Abbey
	12th	Remembrance Sunday
	12th	Canterbury Branch Armistice Luncheon
	18th	Ramsgate Branch Annual Dinner and Dance
	18th	London Branch QORWK Christmas Social
DECEMBER	2nd	Ramsgate Branch Christmas Social
	2nd	Sittingbourne Branch Christmas Party
	DTBC	Canterbury Branch Christmas Dinner and Social
	DTBC	Canterbury Branch Carol Service.

Some of the above dates may be subject to alteration. You are advised to contact the relevant sponsors to confirm prior to making any arrangements.

