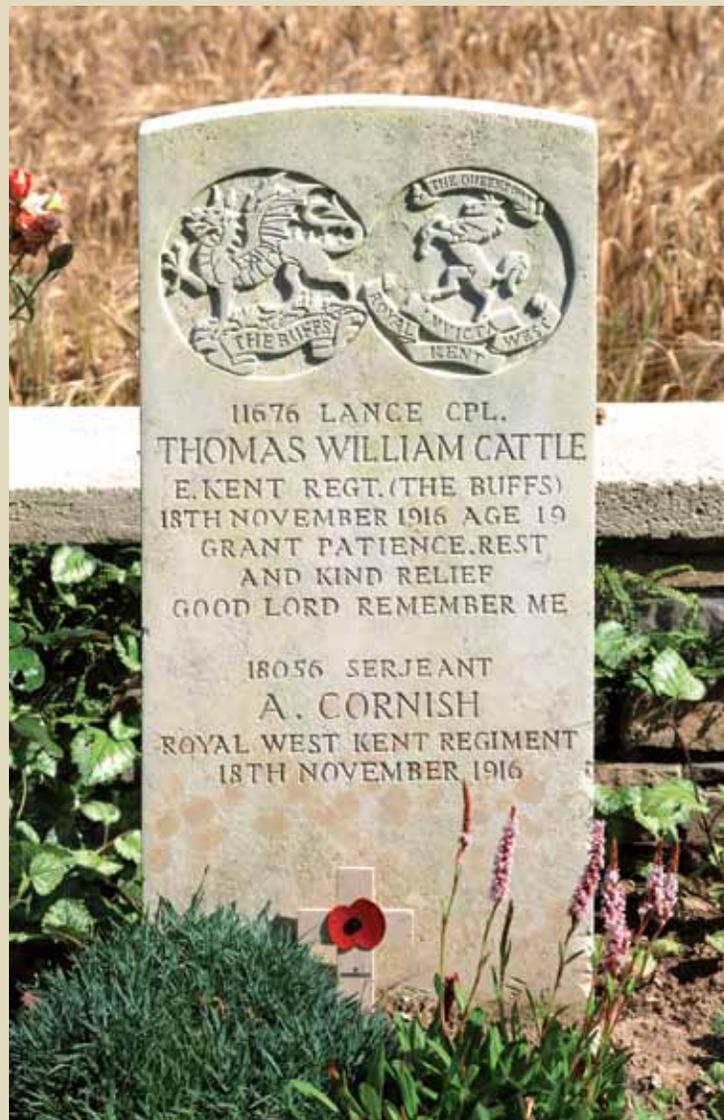




**The Regimental Association
of The Queen's Own Buffs (PWRR)
The Royal Kent Regiment**

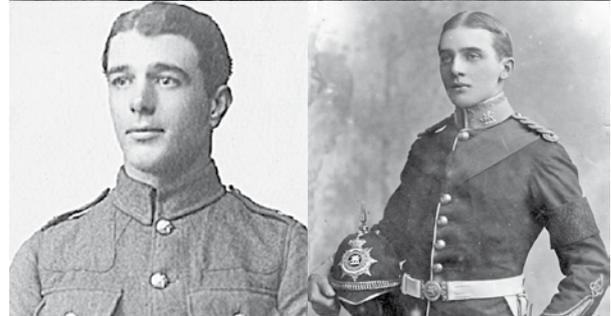
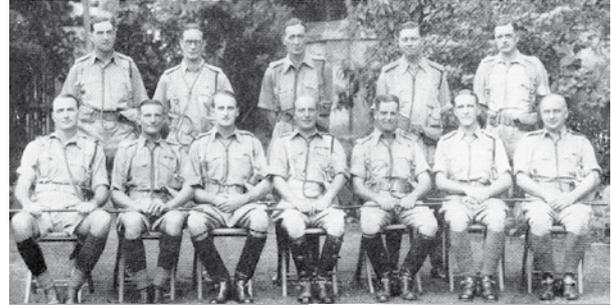


THE JOURNAL



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STUMP ROAD CEMETERY

The photo on the cover is of a grave in Stump Road Cemetery; Grandcourt, Somme; France; The cemetery was started by 7th Buffs in December 1916 after the attack on Desire Trench in November 1917 and is situated at the end of that trench. It was in this attack fought in appalling conditions in which both 7th Buffs and 7th Queen's Own took part that both these men died.

There are 31 Buffs and 21 Queen's Own buried in this cemetery.

Lance Corporal G/11676 Thomas William Cattle
7th Battalion East Kent Regiment

Born: Melton, Derbyshire: Enlisted Wolverhampton. Son of Mr & Mrs Cattle, 131 Bloxwich Road. Walsall. Previously served in 18th Battalion Royal Fusiliers (Pvt P.S/7548). Arrived in theatre 14/11/15 (almost a year to the day before he died)

Sergeant G/18056 Albert Edward Cornish
7th Battalion Queen's Own RWK

Born: Rushbrooke, Suffolk: Enlisted Bury St Edmunds. Previously served in Suffolk Yeomanry and 1st Battalion Queen's Own RWK. Arrived in theatre in 1916.

The photo was taken by John Knight-Silent Picquet, 10 Grand Rue, Martin Puigh, 62450 France. Many thanks John.



Stump Road Cemetery

THE PRESIDENT'S JOTTINGS 2016



Another year – 2016 - which, whilst not emulating the success of 2015, was still a very good year for the Association. Despite the loss of some of our members, inevitable with the aging process, our Branch numbers and attendance at our annual reunions still held good – although we had to dispense with the ‘march’ at Maidstone.

This is due to the excellent efforts of Peter White, Richard Cast and the ad hoc team of helpers along with the support from Branch ‘management’. My sincere thanks to those Members who put themselves in the firing line by standing as Branch Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary – without this volunteer spirit the Association would grind to a halt. A special thank you to Canterbury Branch for ensuring that the Turning of the Page in the Cathedral continues and I hope to

see more Branches helping here if possible. The good news is that the Warriors’ Chapel will be open very shortly – hopefully no later than May - and the Turning of the Page will revert to its original site.

The BREXIT decision is, at the moment, having a positive impact on our invested funds but it could just as easily go the other way and if it does we may have to tighten our belts. Hopefully we will not have to do this but we have no control over the financial markets so we just have to wait and see.

All our re-unions were a success with more than expected attending at Canterbury. London Buffs at the Tower hosted the presentation of a Communion Set from the Association to the Chapel Royal and this was very well received. So much so that the Chapel authorities have now ‘officially’ listed us on their web site – worth a look! Maidstone, despite no ‘march’ went according to plan and the Hotel once again delivered the goods. I hear there is a majority in favour of continuing with Peter White’s non-military ‘cabaret’ act that he finds for Canterbury and Maidstone – so be it. The intention is that the programme of re-unions remain the same for 2017.

Our major venture this year is the trip to the beaches of Normandy. The enemy now is not the Nazis but the exchange rate! However, Peter White will deliver a cost effective approach which I hope will appeal to all of us. With the former Lieutenant Colonel Philip Pearce doing the ‘voice-over’ (he never could stop talking) I am sure it will be a memorable occasion.

Our program of providing suitable and long lasting memorials continues with just the one left on the list – what to do about the Queen’s Own Buffs? After much discussion it is proposed that we enter into ‘partnership’ with the University of Kent at Canterbury and ‘gift’ to them all the collected archives. These archives need to be catalogued - so that researchers can easily cross reference items - and then to be digitalised so that they can go onto the University web site and be available worldwide and everlasting. The University has a large number of history students of which many are studying various aspects of military history. This will cost some £15K but it is money well spent and in return we get two bites at the cherry – a special section where access to the archives is possible and a separate web page (or more) that details the history of the Regiment. A second aspect is the possibility of donating a sum of money to the History Department for them to use to assist students – particularly if they are delivering a ‘paper’ or ‘study’ on one of our family of Regiments.

As to the future – at the meeting of Chairmen, Secretaries and others in November it was decided that we will continue as we are for this year and for 2018 when we can review the situation to see how Branches are holding up in active member terms. With number attending Christmas functions down slightly and venues insisting on a minimum number of attendees we will look to run a ‘central’ lunch – most likely in the West gate Towers in Canterbury with a target date of Sunday 10th December under the direction of Peter White. Outstanding raffle prizes are promised! As part of the festive season Canterbury Branch will be holding their Carol Service on Saturday the 16th December in the Garrison Church this year – details to follow - but I would very much appreciate if all branches would support Canterbury Branch for this.

I wish you all well for this year and thank you for your Membership - without it there would be no Association.

EDITOR'S PAGE



The year 2016 seems to have arrived and disappeared in quick time. Another year full of events, some of course the usual annual gatherings but others included the re interment ceremony in Ypres of a Queen's

Own soldier killed in the first World War, the unveiling of the Cpl William Cotter VC memorial Pavor in Sandgate and our annual Battlefield Tour, this time to the Somme. All of these events are covered by articles and photos within this issue.

If attendance at the annual reunions and events is a gauge of the strength of the Association then we are good for a few years yet. The Canterbury Re-union in August attracted a record number of members and the Maidstone Re-union was also well attended.

The three day two night trip to the Somme proved to be very popular indeed and just short of 100 members and their wives etc enjoyed a great trip. Most of us were of the opinion that future annual tours would not be so well attended, how wrong we were; the proposed trip to the Normandy Beaches in September this year was close to capacity 10 months before the trip and once again we have 100 members and their wives, carers and partners attending.

This year's Association Annual General meeting, which was held on Saturday 25th February, was also very well attended with more than the usual number turning out-well done all of you.

Thank you all so very much for your support, it is much appreciated. To coin a phrase "Age seems not to weary you- never a truer word etc."

This coming year the Canterbury Re-union has been moved forward to 23rd July so please make a note in your diary. We could not, under any circumstances, organise the reunion in Leros Barracks without the hands on support of our friends in 3 PWRR and this year they are away exercising in the USA over the early part of August.

Sadly, as we have grown to accept, the 'Grim Reaper' has been hard at work since the last issue and some famous faces have disappeared from the scene but not from our memories. Despite these losses recruitment goes on apace and we have only suffered a net loss in numbers of 8 since this time last year. So keep on spreading the good word.

Separate articles will cover the following; the Warriors' Chapel will be re-opened this spring, and the Friend's of Canterbury Cathedral are revamping the garden where the Buffs memorial is situated as part of their 90th anniversary celebrations.

From the late 19th century both The Buffs and The Queen's Own have produced monthly regimental magazines and subsequent to amalgamation others such as Invicta and the current Journal have carried on although not on a monthly basis. These magazines are a treasure chest of information, names, historical events, personal accounts etc of life within the regiments and are invaluable when research is necessary. The project has now been started to scan these magazines and upload them onto the Regimental Web Site [www:thequeensownbuffs.com](http://www.thequeensownbuffs.com) in searchable format. It will be a very long process and we cannot hope to get copies of all of the past publications. However already uploaded are all of the current Journals from 2001 to date, some Invictas', the complete set of Queen's Own Gazette covering WW1 and Dragon Magazines of 1911 and 1912. I recommend that you look at some of these publications they are absolutely fascinating and cover in depth regimental events and happenings, quite often in greater detail than can be found in our Regimental histories.

If you do have any past copies of the Queen's Own Gazette and The Dragon, especially the earlier ones, pre and post World War 1 which you would like to contribute then please let me know. In so doing you will help in making sure that the glorious history of our two regiments will be in the public domain, in searchable format, for many years to come and not gathering dust on shelves of a museum or tucked away in long forgotten boxes in the attic.

May I draw your attention to the proposed Association Christmas lunch on 10th December, details of which are included within this issue.

Once again many thanks to all of you for your continued support of the Association. Take care and I look forward to seeing you at the various events and Re-unions this year.

The Editor

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BRANCH NEWS

LONDON (BUFFS) BRANCH

Secretary: Mrs Betty Correa 42 Chestnut Drive Herne Bay Kent CT6 7PR. Telephone number 01227-634663. Email jcorrea@talk21.com

Meeting Place: The Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, London (Opposite Waterloo Station)

Meeting: 3rd Saturday every two months at 2pm

Well folks here we are again the yearly piece for the Association journal how time fly's when one has fun and 2016 was no exception however, 2016 did have its sad time too with the passing of Terry Donovan (Branch member) Terry served with the Royal Engineers and always gave his full support to the London Buffs by attending branch meetings and will be sadly missed.

I am delighted to say that the London Buffs membership numbers are holding up very nicely indeed in 2016 and hopefully 2017 will be the same and have to say the ever support by branch members is VERY much appreciated.

The branch calendar in 2016 started on Sunday 6th March with a church service in St Pauls church in Sandgate to commemorate the receipt of the Victoria Cross to William Cotter followed by the unveiling and dedication of a paver to the memory of Cpl Cotter at the Sandgate war memorial. It was a very emotional and proud day.

On Wednesday 4th May 2016 the London Buffs were invited to turn the page in Canterbury Cathedral. Micky Charman turned the page and Fred Scales laid a wreath on behalf of the London Buffs in memory of fallen comrades.

20th-22nd May 2016 quite a few of the London Buffs really enjoyed the Association trip to the Somme. The Association trips are always well organised and the hard work of the Association Committee is always very much appreciated by the London Buffs.

Wednesday 22nd June 2016 The London Buffs spent the afternoon at Biddenden Vineyards in Ashford Kent. It started with a ploughman's lunch with a choice of a glass of wine (hick up) after lunch we had a tour of the vineyard and then back into the shop to try samples of the wines that Biddenden make and of course we had to purchase didn't we. As most were driving home it was safer to purchase and drink at home to be able to fall into bed ha ha but it was a great day.

Sunday 7th September 2016 The London Buffs Annual Tower Service and luncheon another memorable day it was appreciated that Colonel Peter Bishop inspected the parade and after the inspection the parade was dismissed and all attended the chapel St Peter ad Vincula for the service taken by Rev Roger Hall. During the service Major John Barrell (Branch President) conducted a small presentation of a cruet set to the chapel from the Queen's Own Buffs Association this was gratefully received by Rev Roger Hall for indefinite use in the chapel. After photo's taken the London Buffs Branch members and our guests enjoyed lunch at the Guoman Hotel.

The London Buffs are always very grateful for ever support given from other branches especially Ramsgate Branch and their standard (carried by Allen Buddle) along side the London Buffs Standard (carried by Joe Correa) these standards have been on parade together in the Tower Of London for the last 23 years to my knowledge and before that too.

The Maidstone Reunion on Sunday 18th September 2016 was another enjoyable day also well organised and well attended it was great to see the London Buffs members and standard on parade too.

On 5th October 2016 the London Buffs had a great day on a river cruise on the Kentish Lady on the river Medway from Maidstone to Farleigh Lock. We had a fish and chip lunch whilst cruising and

we were so lucky to have amazing weather too. A really enjoyable day .

Sunday 13th November 2016 a lovely sunny morning four of the London Buffs members were on parade at the Cenotaph in London for the remembrance service and parade. Bob Wood handed the wreath over in memory of fallen comrades from the London Buffs. Prince Charles took the salute as we came back on to horse guards parade for the dismissal.

The London Buffs are really looking forward to the Association trip to Normandy Beaches in September/October 2017 also in meeting up with comrades and friends at the annual reunions in 2017.

Lastly the London Buffs forever appreciate the hard work of the Committee of Management and we are looking forward to another memorable year in 2017 and hopefully a year that will be good to us all.

Till next time STEADY THE BUFFS

BC

THE WEALD OF KENT BRANCH

SECRETARY: Captain Micky Gwilliam, 6 Fownes Street, Battersea, London SW11 2TJ. Tel: 020 7801 0316/ 07786 782041 email: micky.gwilliam@gmail.com

MEETING PLACE: Royal British Legion Club, 26 Priory Road, Tonbridge, Kent

MEETING: At 12 noon on the second Wednesday of every other month starting from May.

In 2016 we had farewell go our Comrades Ray Bamblett, Peter Russell, and Maurice Dewar. They are sadly missed.

In March 2017 Weald Branch listened to an enlightening talk from the Branch Keeper of the Annals of The Queen's Own (Chris Jupp) on the Malayan Emergency, with helpful interjections from the floor including from The Secretary, who had been there (albeit in a non-weapon-bearing capacity), The Chairman thanked Chris Jupp and suggested that he was fast running out of campaigns. Possibly.

In the interest of fairness, The Chairman then précised (from his favourite bedside reading the

Military Magazine) the tale of 4BUFFS at Kut in Iraq in 1916. One might wonder if there was some incentive to increasing the circulation of said Magazine which was available on monthly subscription, or possibly at station bookstalls. Probably NOT on the top shelf at WH Smiths, so look lower down.

The Treasurer suggested that a talk on the History of The Queen's Own Buffs would be of interest to younger members amongst which number, to general laughter, he declared that he counted himself. A suggestion from The Chairman that he was just the sort of chap who should give it was met with all sorts of excuses meaning, of course, never volunteer! And neither would anyone else. It was left in the air. In case anyone would. Volunteer, that is.

In May we welcomed two visitors from Maidstone Branch and No Branch – Ted Saunders and Robbie Gorse. Ted told us that he and Robbie had served in The Queen's Own Buffs and 2 QUEENS in Hong Kong, Borneo, Northern Ireland, Germany and Whathaveyou, a place known only too well to The Secretary who once spent a miserable week there en route to Wherever.

Brian was one of those who helped raise nearly £2000 to erect the memorial stone in Palace Barracks, about which Barry Crocker had kept us informed. Not only did it commemorate the 25 Tours of Duty but also those comrades who we lost there. The Chairman stated, as he has before, that it was a disgrace that it was down to individuals to have had to make this happen. Ted informed us that, due to the area being used by certain Government Offices (nudge nudge wink wink), it will remain there for the foreseeable future.

We discovered that the event is also on YouTube. It was explained to the Chairman that this is a sort of Moving Picture Show for Computers.

At the meeting in July, and therefore officially time to start panicking about Christmas, much discussion revolved about Christmas Lunch, and it was decided that a decision would have to be made at the September meeting and so (and here it got a bit complicated so pay attention):

1. If members would NOT be at the meeting but DID wish to attend the Christmas Lunch at The Grangemoor Hotel; or
2. If Members would NOT be at the meeting but did NOT wish to attend the Christmas Lunch at The Grangemoor Hotel; or

3. If Members would NOT be at the meeting but had another brilliant idea altogether,

then they should contact The Chairman (NOT the Secretary who would be in Greece deciding whether to have another octopus).

Members who would be at the meeting were at liberty to confuse The Chairman face-to-face.

During the meeting in September, at which the Secretary was not present due to him being poisoned in Greece by Col Critchley, with much relief the Branch accepted the revised costings for Christmas Lunch at The Royal British Legion Club (which at around this time became The New Telegraph Club) and settled on Tonbridge as the site of The Weald Branch Christmas Lunch 2016.

At the November meeting, with a World View position being taken on Donald Trump as President and Brexit as, well, Brexit it was agreed that something should be done and so members agreed to reform The Home Guard.

As this was towards the end of the non-financial year, The Chairman noted that the Branch funds stood at a smidgeon short of £2,000. Members noted that a smidgeon is accountancy-speak for £26.69p so the non-accountancy total was £1973.31p. He thanked The Treasurer for keeping the accounts so well and in a format that he and The Secretary understood, and the Branch afforded him a thoroughly deserved smattering of applause. Again, Members noted that a smattering falls towards the upper end of the 'yawn-of-indifference' to 'hysterical-shrieking-like-at-The-Beatles-in-their-heyday' spectrum of acclaim.

At The January 2017 meeting, this being the Annual General Meeting, the doors, windows and the bar shutter were ceremoniously slammed shut and locked as the Committee stood down and the annual benevolent dictatorship of Il Presidente took over the Branch. One year we fear he won't give it back! Rather wistfully he suggested that others members might serve on the Committee. Some hope! Accordingly, by open acclaim the Old Committee became the New Committee, to wit:

Chairman	Ham	Whitty
Secretary	Micky	Gwilliam
Treasurer	Geoff	Graves
Scrutineer	John	Fowler
Committee Member	Doug	Adams

Standard Bearers Barry Crocker, Brian Davison and Hugh Hanson

and the doors were ceremoniously unlocked. The New (Old) Committee (do pay attention) was rewarded by a round of applause. Not beer, just applause.

The President Col Richard Lea, who is invited to that Rank and Position, also agreed to remain as 'Benevolent Dictator-in-Waiting and President for Life', or BDIWAPFL.

That meeting ended with the reminiscences of Hugh Hanson and how he held the Suez Canal before the Yanks pulled the plug, metaphorically. If in actuality what a difference draining the Suez Canal, the Red Sea, the Arabian Sea, the Persian Gulf and The Straits of Hormuz would have made to the First and Second Gulf Wars, and all the other unpleasant shenanigans going on over there ever since. Just a thought for future strategists.

The Secretary reminded Members that if those who had 'been there' didn't write down what had happened then someone who hadn't been there would, and even if it was wrong it would become the accepted truth.

MG

MAIDSTONE BRANCH

CHAIRMAN: Mr Arthur Healey MBE, 10 Target Firs, Temple Ewell, Dover, Kent CT16 3AT – Tel: 01304 823408 - Email: arthur.tosca1@hotmail.com

SECRETARY: Mr Brian Arnold

TREASURER: Mr Malcolm Jones, 91 Wallis Avenue, Maidstone, Kent ME15 9HR – Tel: 01622 758136 – Email: maljo2000@live.co.uk

MEETING PLACE: The Grange Moor Hotel, St Michaels Road, Maidstone, ME16 8BS

MEETINGS FOR 2017

Saturday April 8th 13.30

Saturday 10th June 13.30

Saturday 12th August 13.30

Saturday 14th October 13.30

Saturday 9th December 13.30 to be confirmed

Hello and welcome. For our first 2017 meeting on Saturday 11th February, I am glad to report

that our membership is still holding steady. The attendance was good for the meeting and after the completion of the agenda, we thought what could be better than to ask Graham McDonough to put on a light hearted quiz for us and then to end the proceedings with a good raffle.

BRANCH VISIT

On the 25th June a visit was arranged to go to the Battle of Britain Museum at Hawkinge. Those who joined us on the day out, enjoyed the venture. It is a very fine museum and has been built up over the years and now has hundreds of items on display, both British and German. It is well worth a visit. Sadly we were unable to take a group photo inside the museum as cameras are forbidden. - An interesting point here. The ban is due to stop persons taking pictures of items. At some time previously visitors did this and then returned later to steal them. It takes a good two hours to view all the exhibits so I arranged afterwards to call on my good friends at the Royal Marines Association at Deal to lay on a sumptuous buffet for us. Sue the manageress really did us proud. Afterwards the party had a couple of hours to visit Deal then return home.

The down side to all this was not many of our members supported us and I thank those from the Weald of Kent Branch who came to our rescue.

PRESENTATIONS

At our meeting on the 9th April, Chris Jupp gave us a fine and detailed presentation about The Royal West Kent Regiment in Egypt. I don't know how many times Chris has given this talk before but it was a first for me - very interesting. Thank you Chris.

On the 13th August Colonel Peter Bishop OBE DL was warmly welcomed when he paid us with a visit to give an account in his own ebullient way of the Buffs last battle in the Western Aden Protectorate backed up by a Mr Tolhurst (Sittingbourne Branch) also at the battle who said he was there, just in case Peter lost his memory!.

On Tuesday 8th November, as a former member of the Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment, I was asked if I would attend the funeral of Norman Arthur Martin, 11 platoon D Coy who was one of the last survivors of the Caledonian Estate ambush. The Association Secretary gave the eulogy and at the reception afterwards I introduced myself

and the family were so pleased to see me as a representative of the regiment. The family made me feel very much at home. I left not sad but happy at being able to meet them.

That's all for now and I hope to see many of you at the reunions.

AWH

CANTERBURY BRANCH

SECRETARY: Mr. Robert Cook, 11 Richmond Court, Herne Bay CT6 5LL. Tel: 01227 363932. Email joyce560@btinternet.com

MEETING PLACE: St. Stephens Community Centre, Tenterden Drive, Canterbury CT2 7BN

Meeting: Last Thursday of the month at 13.30hrs
Mr Bob Cook Email:

According to the old adage '*Time waits for no man*'. Well it certainly has not waited for me or anyone else in the Canterbury Branch. Another year has flown and even as I write these notes on a cold, wet day I am aware that Summer is not too far away. How we look forward to those balmy reunion days. With fingers crossed.

Another change to our branch meetings; we now meet on the last Thursday of each month, December excepted, at 13.30hrs finishing at 16.00hrs. Branch members have approved these revised times, especially those who can now drive both ways during daylight hours. Pause here <.....> Have just received a phone call advising me that another of our members has passed way: Tony Lomas a stalwart of the branch for many years. Our thoughts and sympathy go out to Margaret and family. His infectious sense of humour endeared him to the branch.

Looking back at the last year I could not help but wonder at the changing fortunes of the Branch. In March we observed a one minute silence in memory of three of our most respected members Sidney Pullman, Norman Shaw and Mr. K. Geeves. However fortune change and we welcomed 2 new members Ian Warne and Tony Kitchen. We hope they enjoy a long and happy stay with us.

Unfortunately our membership is slowly dwindling, So if you are out there, an ex Buff or West Kent, and leafing through this Journal and thinking of joining

just, pick up the telephone, the number is on the heading. You can be sure of a warm welcome.

Our Social Secretary Stan Cochrane arranged some popular trips including a very colourful Christmas Market in Bruges. Earlier in the year we had enjoyed a day trip to Chartwell.

A three day visit to the Somme was organised by Major Peter White. Many members attended this visit to an area which in few words sums up the utter futility of a conflict which affected so many countries.

The Canterbury Reunion in August was as popular as ever, again the weather God smiled on us, the bar was as busy as ever and a great day was had by all. Thanks to Stan Cochrane, Social Secretary and Mrs Joyce Cook who sold an abundance of Raffle Tickets. Entertainment was provided by a group called Hotsie Tootsie, a group guaranteed to rejuvenate even the oldest soldier. A great day ended with the solemn notes of the Last Post.

In September the London Buffs Tower of London Event attracted many of our members. A chance to chat and revive old memories. An excellent service in the Chapel, always a popular part of this get together. Lusty singing and time for reflection.

So to this year, we have a trip to Normandy planned. two full coaches already. We anticipate an interesting and enlightening visit to the D DAY landing beaches. These trips are always well supported, organised and open to all branches, this constitutes a very convivial atmosphere. Thanks to the Association Secretary for organising this eagerly awaited trip.

Time to close but before I do so a big thank you to Stan Cochrane who is still working on other days out and to Wally Tong who has worked very hard as our welfare officer

From all at Canterbury Branch we wish you a happy and successful 2017.

WUPPERTAL BUFFS.

The morning of November 2nd 2016 dawned with bright sunshine. What a wonderful start to a wonderful day- the day of our Autumn Reunion.

We had a very good attendance with 42 sitting down to lunch at the Victoria. It is quite amazing

how the group has grown over the years and each re union seems to be better than the one before.

Judging from the chat that went on everyone is looking forward to the next one which will on April 21st 2017.

We are so lucky to be able to hold our re unions at the Victoria Hotel, Canterbury, they have a good sized car park, the food is excellent and they allow us to hold a raffle, nothing is too much trouble to them. As a small gesture of our appreciation, Norman Shonk and Fred Scales gave the waiting staff a strip of tickets and they are usually lucky and win something. The proceeds of our raffle goes towards the administrative expenses, invitations, printing, postage etc. We always send 'Get Well Soon' cards or 'In Sympathy' cards when necessary to remind those that are ill, or the families of those who have passed on that they are still in our thoughts.

At this Reunion it was nice to Colonel Peter Bishop and Mrs Bishop, we know he is a very busy man and so his attendance was much appreciated. We also had the pleasure of the company of the Association Secretary and Journal Editor who brought along a Latham memorial Plaque to be raffled. This was raffled separately and the proceeds were sent to the Friends of Canterbury Cathedral. In 2017 the Friends will be celebrating their 90th anniversary year and to celebrate that event they are refurbishing and landscaping the garden in which our Buff statue stands so proudly. Our small contribution will go a small way in helping to offset the costs of the project. The Latham memorial Plaque was won by Christopher Stringer, the Grandson of the late and much lamented Dennis Stringer, one of our members. Dennis would have been so pleased that this special regimental plaque now has a home with his Grandson.

Thank all of you who support and help to make the Wuppertal Buffs reunions so enjoyable and we look forward to our next 'get together' on April 21st this year. Take care of yourselves until we meet again.

Steady The Buffs.

Gillian and David Law

(Editor's note) Wuppertal Buffs do not hold branch meetings but enjoy a get together every so often. If you served with 1 Buffs in Wuppertal then why not join

them. The stalwarts who organise everything are :
Gillian and Dave Law -

Email: davengill@supanet.com

Tel; 01797 363647

Norman Shonk Tel: 01227 371539

Fred Scales: Email fred.scales@virgin.net

Tel: 01892 544425

SITTINGBOURNE BRANCH.

SECRETARY : Major Richard Cast, 55 Longridge
Sittingbourne Kent ME10 4LN

MEETING PLACE: The Ypres Tavern, West Street,
Sittingbourne.

MEETING: 1st Tuesday in the month at 1930 hours.

Greetings to all from the Sittingbourne Branch

Since our last report as a branch we have again been busy and active within the Association, Our standard along with many our members have been present at every event and reunion also including the various events held locally within Sittingbourne and also to show respect to our comrades on their final journey, where we always turnout a Guard of Honour.

The branch remains strong at its monthly meetings and still averages 28 plus in attendance although we have received up to 35 attend and normally get notification on apologises for those that are unable to attend.

During the year we found ourselves in Ypres and the Somme on three occasions. These being the Reinternment of the Royal West Kent WW1 Soldier, the Associations trip to the Somme and our own Trip to Ypres which also saw us take part in the Somme 100 days Service at the Thiepval Memorial run by the Royal British Legion Somme Branch.

In February the Branch for the first time in a number of years took on the role of turning the Page at Canterbury Cathedral. Those who attended really enjoyed this honour and looking forward to attending on our allotted days during June and October.

We were pleased again this year to be the support for the Associations AGM on 25th February at the

UKP Leisure Club and delighted to again be the winner in the Darts Competition although all three teams played a tough game and it was purely down to who was able to score the winning double.

RCC

RAMSGATE BRANCH

SECRETARY: M. F. Milham. 185 Bradstow Way
Broadstairs, Kent. CT10 1AX. Telephone; 01843
867786

MEETING PLACE: The Racing Greyhound Pub,
Hereson Rd, Ramsgate

MEETINGS: First Wednesday of the Month. 1900
hrs for 1930 hrs.

SANDWICH BRANCH

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

MEETING PLACE: The White Mill, Ash Road :
Sandwich : Kent : CT13 9JB.

MEETINGS: 2nd Wednesday of every month
(except August) at 7.30pm.

BROMLEY BRANCH.

CHAIRMAN: Mr. A. Wright. 21 The Underwood,
Eltham, London SE9 3EP.

MEETING PLACE: Sundridge Park W. M. C.,
Burnt Ash Lane, Bromley.

MEETING: Last Monday in the month at 12.30 hrs.

COLCHESTER BRANCH

SECRETARY: Mr. Terry Wilkes Tel: 02085249141.
Email: wilkesterry373@btinternet.com

MEETING PLACE: Clovely, Great Bentley,
Colchester, Essex C17 8PD

MEETING: 3rd Tuesday in the month at 14.00 hrs.

THE 62 CLUB

The 62 Club was formed at the end of the 1939/45 War by former Company Sgt. Major A. R. Worsley DCM with the intention of re-uniting his fellow comrades who had served in 1st Bn The Queen's Own. At this point the club was only open to non commissioned personnel.

Many of the ex-members of the battalion were located through platoon rolls and 'release' addresses which proved to be very successful. Bill Worsley soon acquired a new nick name of either 'The Baron' or Baron Bill'.

There was, of course, at this time an official Queen's Own Regimental Association but Bill's idea was that the new club would have a more personal touch. The club was to be called 'The 62 Club' which was derived from the unit recognition number carried by the vehicles of 1st Bn during the latter part of the war. It was a white disc on a dark green background.

After the initial surge of enthusiasm for the Club interest waned in the early 50's and it was decided to call it a day. However, in 1964 Bill decided to try again and the club was brought back to life. No doubt that the amalgamation of The Buffs and The Queen's Own had some bearing on this decision.

Sufficient members were contacted and a reunion was held that year in 'The Cranbourne' in Leicester Square and subsequent to that reunion members were kept in touch with events through the club's News Sheet - 'The Echo'

The Organising committee, 'O' Group as they were known, was formed and it was decided to keep membership within the reach of all so the annual subscription was kept at 2/6d. By the end of 1965 the club was firmly established with a membership of over 100 and at this stage was opened to cover those who had served in 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 6th Bns, in fact any non commissioned officer who had worn the White Horse of Kent cap badge.

In 1966, it was decided to extend membership to include ex members of any of all The Queen's Own battalions and by 1968 membership had reached in excess of 300, and the reunions were held in The Pavour Arms, Westminster as The Cranbourne was too small to accommodate all of those attending.

During 1971, the Club became affiliated to The Queen's Own Buffs The Royal Kent Regiment's Regimental Association and began to contribute

to 'News from the Branches' of their regimental Journal. Membership continued to grow and there were more opportunities for members to meet throughout the year by 1973 membership had reached over 400. In 1990 several ex Queen's Own officers joined the club.

It has always been the policy of the Club, right from the start that the widow of any past member would be given free life membership of the Club for as long as the lady wanted it, and they are given a copy of the Echo. Some of those on the list, currently 20, have been members almost from the start of the first 62 Club – they are getting on a bit! .

Recently, of course, there has been a reduction of numbers and as we go to press the membership is down to 62 but it is intended that the publication of the twice yearly 'Echo' will continue as long as possible.

All who served in the Queen's Own owe a great debt of gratitude to the Chairman, Reverend Tug Wilson, the Vice Chairman, George Young and Jacky Allen for all of their sterling work over the years.



**Reverend Duncan
(Tug) Wilson,
Chairman 62 Club**



**At left: George
Young, Vice-
Chairman 62 Club**



**The ever youthful
Jacky**

THE REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION
of the
QUEEN'S OWN BUFFS, THE ROYAL KENT REGIMENT (PWRR).
MINUTES OF THE ASSOCIATION'S 48th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT
THE UK PAPER & LEISURE CLUB, SITTINGBOURNE
ON SATURDAY 25th FEBRUARY 2017

The meeting opened at 3pm

1. **Members present:** There were 41 Association members in attendance.
2. **Apologies:** Major Alan Marchant (Chair of East Kent).
3. **Welcome:** The President thanked everyone for attending and welcomed them to the meeting and asked the Regimental Chaplain, Reverend Keith Fazzani, to open the meeting with prayers.
4. **Minutes of the last meeting:** It was unanimously agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting.
5. **Matters arising (Items not included on the current agenda).** There were none to record.
6. **Investment Portfolio:** The President advised that the investments were benefiting from the recent increase of value in the stock market and that currently the investment portfolio was valued at £469,891 at the end of 2016. Since then the stock market had risen further and our investments had also increased.
7. **Association Accounts December 2016:** The Secretary advised the meeting that at the end of the financial year 2016 the net worth of the Association's fund stood at £473,706 having taken into account all liabilities and assets. For the information of members, a copy of the budget for 2017 had been distributed, no comments were made.
8. **Canterbury Reunion 2017:**
 - a. The Secretary advised that all of the arrangements for the Canterbury Reunion, to be held on 23rd July, were now in place except for the provision of the entertainer. This is being progressed.
 - b. The Committee agreed that the cost of lunch should be raised to £10 per head.
9. **Maidstone Reunion 2017:**
 - a. The Secretary advised that all of the arrangements for the Maidstone Reunion, to be held on 10th September, were now in place except for the provision of the entertainer. This is being progressed.
 - b. The cost of lunch to remain at the subsidised rate of £12 per member and guest and £18 for non-members.
10. **Tower of London 2017:**
 - a. The President advised the meeting that this year's parade and Service of Remembrance would be held on Sunday 3rd September and asked for maximum support.
11. **The meeting of Branch Officials on 16th November:**
 - a. The President advised that the meeting held at the Secretary's office had proved to be highly successful and very valuable indeed as it gave attendees the opportunity to raise and discuss a wide range of topics which they may not have been raised at the AGM. It was proposed that this should continue to be an annual event. The date for the meeting in 2017 would be advised in due course.

12. **Memorial Projects:**

a. **Regimental Archives at the University of Kent:** The Secretary advised that there had been a delay in progressing the cataloguing and indexing of the Regimental Archives currently held by the University of Kent. This was due to the continued absence, due to illness, of the Head of Special collections. Contact had now been made with Dr Jacqueline Cooke who was covering that post and a draft Statement of Intent from the University had been agreed at the Committee of Management meeting held earlier. The Secretary to arrange with Dr Cook for a formal statement to be drawn up.

The members agreed with the content of the Statement and the Secretary should now revert back to Dr Cook and arrange for the formal agreement to be drawn up.

The inclusion and content of a regimental section within the University's Web Site would be the subject of a further meeting with the University officials.

b. **The Queen's Own Buffs Legacy:** The President reminded the meeting of the intention that at the end of the life of the Association a sum in the region of £150,000 would be made available for the promotion of Adventure Training type projects for the PWRR Reservist units, 3rd & 4th Battalions PWRR, and Cadets of all type located in the County of Kent.

It was explained to the meeting that an addition PWRR Reserve Unit, 4th Battalion PWRR was being formed and the meeting were given a brief of the proposed restructuring of 3 PWRR and an outline on the organisation of 4th Bn PWRR.

13. **Association Trip to Normandy 29th Sept to 2nd October:** The Secretary advised the meeting that there were only a very few seats still available in the two coaches. In the event of over subscription, a waiting list will be drawn up.

14. **Welfare:** The Secretary told the meeting that the number of Welfare Cases submitted and approved had continued to fall. Up to date details were not available as the Resource Manager at RHQ had been away ill since Christmas.

15. **Association Secretary's Admin Points:**

a. **The Association:** The meeting was advised that the number on the Association's database now stood at 1,037. And despite the passing of many in the past year, recruiting had increased and the nett loss of members over the 12 months had been only eight.

b. **Associate Members:** It was pointed out that the number of non-cap badged members joining as Associate Members continued to grow. It had been agreed at the Committee of Management meeting held earlier that, from now on, new Associate Members would have to be a member of the Association for one year before becoming entitled to any subsidies for trips etc.

c. **Web Site:** A project had just been started to scan and file, in searchable format, on the web site as many of the old Regimental Magazines as was possible, stretching back as far as the late 1800's. It was agreed by the meeting that this was a valuable facility for researchers and of great interest to anyone associated with the forebear regiments. The Secretary advised that the project would take many months to complete.

d. **Association Christmas Lunch:** Individual branches are finding it increasingly difficult to attract sufficient numbers to provide economical Christmas lunch or dinner events for their members. It had been agreed at the meeting of Branch Officials that the provision of a centralised Association Christmas event should be investigated. The Secretary advised of the following:

The Westgate Hall, Canterbury had been booked for Sunday December 10th.
The timings would be 12.30 for 1pm when lunch would be served.

The menu would be of three courses with waiter service.

The Invicta Band and Swingtime Sweethearts had been booked to provide entertainment.

Catering would be provided privately by the catering staff of 3 PWRR led by Staff Harris.

There would be a limited number of high value raffle prizes.

The minimum number required to make the event practical would be 150.

The subsidised cost of tickets would be £20 per Association member and one guest and £27.50 for none members.

16. **Any Other Business:**

- a. The President advised that the Deputy Secretary, Major Richard Cast, had resigned. This was due to his increasing work load as Chair of Royal British Legion Kent. The President sincerely thanked Richard for his past contribution and wished him well.
- b. **Cricket Week: Canterbury Cricket Week 4th – 8th August 2017.** Colonel Peter Cook explained the programme and pointed out that attendance is open to all full Association members. On Tuesday 8 August – which is the 3rd day of the game Kent v West Indies, that there were 10 free tickets available (normal cost £30 -first come first served) for Association members to attend the game. This package includes ground entrance ticket, use of the regimental tent including bar facilities, tea and coffee throughout the day. Play starts at 1100. Parking is available at the Dover Road park and ride; with buses stopping at The St Lawrence Spitfire ground.

Note The normal dress code of jacket and tie applies to all.

The bar will close at approximately 6.30pm for the 3-day game.

- c. **Presentation of Colours 23rd September 2017:** The Secretary advised the meeting that very little detailed information had been released as yet. It was known that the event will commence at 11am but the decision had yet to be taken as to how many tickets would be available to each of the forebear Regimental Associations. The Secretary agreed to obtain specific details re timings, car parking, parade and refreshments as soon as possible and advise accordingly.
- d. **The Queen's Own Buffs Officers' Lunch:** The next lunch would be held at the Union Jack Club on Wednesday 25th October 2017. Details to follow.
- e. **Grand Reunion:** Mr Jimmy Burr, Chairman of Colchester Branch, asked that consideration be given to the Canterbury Reunion to be extended to include the Saturday for an informal 'get together' of comrades. Mr Burr pointed out that little time was available within the current organisation of the Sunday re union to spend sufficient time with past comrades. It was agreed that this be investigated for the 2018 Re Union.

17. **Date of Next meeting:** The next Association Annual General meeting be held on Saturday 17th February 2018 at the same venue.

There being no other items to discuss the meeting closed at 15.50pm

APPROVED as a correct record of proceedings

This the day of 2018.

(Signed) Chair.

BENEATH BELL HARRY



Canterbury Cathedral has for many many decades paid an important part in the life and history of, not only our forebear regiments, but also the current Regimental Association.

It is the home, as we all know, of the Books of Life of The Buffs, The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada,

and the descendant regiments and of course now the home, in the precincts, of the statue to The Buffs.

The support of The Dean, Chapter, the Presenter, Vesturer, Heather Newton (Head of Conservation), Inspector Jim Morley, (Security & Fire Safety Manager) and Emma Clarke (Events Manager) and all of the staff is so much appreciated.

Currently the Warriors' Chapel is in the final stages of cleaning and restoration and will be re-open later this year and the daily Turning of the Page ceremony will revert to the warriors' Chapel. A special mention must be made here of Heather Newton who has undertaken most of the high level cleaning of the Chapel herself to keep within budget. Heather a very big thank you.

This year sees the 90th anniversary of the Friends of Canterbury Cathedral. To mark this event the Friends are renovating and re landscaping the garden at the eastern end of the Precincts in which the bronze statue of a soldier from the Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment) is situated. The garden has been designed by Cathedral Head Gardener Philip Oostenbrink and planting has just begun.



Heather (a hoovering)

A stone plaque of acknowledgement will be carved and positioned in the garden which will read: -

The Friends' Garden Created in 2017 to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of The Friends of Canterbury Cathedral Supported by The Patron's Fund and The Queen's Own Buffs Regimental Association.

Application is being made to the Chapter through Caroline for permission to position 3 or 4 wooden benches in the garden. Friends of The Buffs will pay for one, Canterbury Branch will pay for a second and maybe a third from private donations from their members and another from the Regimental Association.

Friends' Secretary and Administrator Caroline Plaisted said: *"The Friends' Garden will not just benefit Friends but will also become a place of beauty and sanctuary for all visitors and pilgrims who visit the Cathedral throughout the year. It will have shrubs, perennials, grasses, and bulbs offering year-round interest that will be attractive to wildlife and we are delighted that the garden will become one of the many significant and*

historic gardens within the Precincts for decades to come."

The garden will be officially opened at the end of May during the Cathedral's Open Gardens weekend (27 and 28 May 2017).



The image above shows Cathedral Head Gardener Philip Oostenbrink and Friends' Secretary and Administrator Caroline Plaisted checking on the progress of the new planting in the Friends' Garden/

PW

ANYONE FOR CRICKET



The following appears in "The 18th Division in the Great War" by Capt. G.H.F Nichols. The book details the actions of the 18th Division. The Division included the 7th Royal West Kent & 7th East Kents, battalions who together were in the 55th Brigade alongside 7th Queens and 7th East Surrey's.

A Cricket Match on the Battlefield:

Another thing to remember was a cricket match played at Boiry-au-Mont* before the Division left the line.

The match was Divisional Headquarters versus the Sussex Pioneers, and General Lee himself took the field. The ground was not a long way from enemy view, and the only boundary was the 20ft wide remnants of the old Wancourt line. A ten-line telegraph system crossed within thirty yards of the pitch, and an exacting batsman had no opportunity to demand that the white screen should be moved behind the bowler's hand. He had to be careful not TO allow lines of horses going past to water to attract his attention. A huge

wired in manure heap was another feature of the playing piece, and anyone who lifted the ball direct into it had six added to his score. There were odd shell holes in the outfield, and fielders sprinted warily. A strip of canvas, in imitation of coconut matting, had been pegged down to lessen the menace of the most knobby portions of the pitch.

Headquarters began with Lieut.-Colonel C.B.O. Symons, who commanded the Divisional Engineers, and the D.A.A.G Major J.A. Churchill. The opposing eleven put on a fast bowler with a long threatening run, and a heady fellow named Palin, who bowled left-handed over the wicket and possessed a gift for length. The C.R.E shaped like a cricketer, but the loose ones proved too fast for him, and the first straight one shot straight under his bat. The first wicket thus fell for None, combined with the astonishing fact that there had been no byes off the fast bowler, although the wicket keeper was without gloves.

And now, what was on the skyline, to the left of our divisional front – a half mile bank of smoke rolling

towards us and a sustained rumbling boom? An enemy barrage!

The match was delayed exactly three minutes while every player and every spectator turned a professional eye in that direction.

"Quite a good barrage," said the oncoming batsman Colonel Wallace Wright, as he took the bat from the C.R.E. After which he turned a fast ball from off his legs and broke his duck in confident, upstanding fashion.

The only stand of the innings was made by the G.S.O. and a young staff lieutenant, Lieutenant Nicholson, whose stance reminded me of the late A.O. Jones. He presented the full face of the bat to the ball that wanted watching and opened his shoulders most refreshingly to the overpitched ones. When, twice in one over, the ball kicked up and caught him on the left shoulder, that vastly popular brigadier, General Price, whose sayings were always being quoted, called out, *"Another on the same spot and that arm is out of action"*. Colonel Wright played a strong forward game, and had scored twenty-two, mostly by clean-hit off drives, when the 'heady' bowler got him in two minds and he cocked one up to cover-point. Lieutenant Nicholson had reached nineteen when the Church of England Padre ran him out.

The rest was disaster. General Lee, in leggings and rolled up shirt sleeves, slashed out vigorously, but his bat came down a tiny fraction of a second too late for each of the first five balls he received; they just missed his wicket. The sixth didn't. The A.P.M., Percy Cazenove, made one lusty swipe, and the ball skidded off the corner of his bat on to the bails. The Presbyterian padre, Major Fraser, who was acting as scorer, stopped questioning a recent visitor to Albert as to the rumour that the celebrated statue had sunk to a still more hazardous pose, and went out to take his innings. Bowled first ball. The sides full total – fifty-four.

The Pioneers' first pair were a fair-haired captain with a rolling walk and a rare eye for a long hop on the leg side, Captain Kemp, and a compactly built sergeant – Sergeant Caesar**. The captain had run up sixteen before his partner scored. But this sergeant with a classical name played with a certain smooth commanding confidence that betokened more than ordinary knowledge of the game. He never seemed to be trying to make runs, but when he scored odd singles the ball somehow went to where no one was fielding.

Once he hit a six – into the manure heap, and off one bowler he obtained fourteen from one over; but most of the time he appeared to be playing to keep his wicket up. When someone asked who he really was, Colonel Walker of the Pioneers smiled, and said he was on the Surrey ground staff and was grandson or great grandson of a cricketer famous in the days when – according to old prints, at any rate – the players added to the solemnity and intensity of an important match by batting in extremely high top-hats. Sergeant Caesar was not out at the finish, with his score sixty something, and looked as if he would have been exactly the same when he had topped the double century.

The last thing one noted was the Intelligence Officer running out between overs to make a report and show some fresh information to the G.S.O. 1, who was preparing to bowl. *"Is it important?"* asked Colonel Wallace Wright before looking at the papers. He dictated a message, gave swift and fluent instructions, and resumed his cricket. Slightly akin to the invariable delivery of a telegram at the wicket during a Lord's match, and an improvement perhaps, on the Drake-Bowls-and-Beat-the-Spanish-Too incident which no history book allows us to forget.

Notes:

*There is no such place as Boiry-au-Mont a town Boisleux-aux-Mont is situated near several places called Boiry- [something] in the Pas de Calais region and is 9km from Arras. As the Division had been involved in the fighting around Arras in the spring of 1917 I assume that is around this area that is referred to. Such errors in precise naming of places is not uncommon in War Diaries and similar.

**The Pioneers were the 8th Battalion The Royal Sussex Regiment – Caesar is not a common name there is a record of a Sergeant George Caesar MM, MSM 'C' Coy; 8th (Pioneer) Battalion (55th Division) who was killed on the Somme on 8th August 1918. On that date the Division was involved in heavy fighting for the Bray-Corbie ridge on the Somme. This is almost certainly the Sergeant mentioned in the above account. He is buried in Ribemont Communal Cemetery.

KF



THE QUEEN'S OWN BUFFS(PWRR) SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE AND ANNUAL REUNION,

CANTERBURY - SUNDAY 23rd July 2017

The Regimental Association thanks the Dean and Chapter for allowing our Association to hold their Remembrance Service in Canterbury Cathedral. We also thank the Commanding Officer of The 3rd Battalion The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment for allowing us to hold our Reunion in Leros Barracks, Leros TA Centre, Sturry Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 1HR.

The following are the arrangements for the day:

1. **REFRESHMENT:** Tea and light refreshments will be provided from 10.45 hrs until 11.45 hrs in the Parish Centre of St Martin and St Paul Church Street, Canterbury,.
2. **MUSTER.**
 - a. This will be in Burgate (Under the direction of Parade Marshals), at 12.30pm.
 - b. Branch Secretaries are asked to brief their membership not to muster outside of the Weatherspoon's Public House and the Posterne Gate entrance.
 - c. Those members who are not marching are to enter the Cathedral via the Christchurch Gate (main entrance) and are to be seated within the Cathedral by 12.45 hrs. This will be ensured by stewards from the Canterbury Branch of the Association.
 - d. Please Note: There is no car parking in the Cathedral grounds whatsoever, this also applies to Disabled Blue Badge Holders, this rule must be strictly adhered to.
 - e. **PARKING:** Details for car and coach parking are given in a later paragraph.
3. **PARADE DETAILS.**

Parade Commander	- 3 PWRR (TBC)
Parade Marshal	- RSM 3 PWRR (TBC)
Assistant Parade Marshal	- Mr C. Smith
12.25 hrs	- 'Fall In' to be sounded
12.34 hrs	- Welcome by the President
12.36 hrs	- Move Off – route – Burgate- Christchurch Gate, Cathedral
4. **BAND INSTRUCTION.**

The Band will countermarch at the Christchurch Gate, Butter Market and then March into the cathedral at the rear of the parade. This should allow all on parade to hear the bass drum and therefore maintain the step.
5. **COMPLIMENTS.**

Compliments are to be paid as follows:

 - a. Entry into the Cathedral. On the March to the Cathedral 'Eyes Left' to be given at the War memorial in the Butter Market. Standards to be 'Let Fly'.

- b. The Cathedral Precinct. The Regimental Sergeant Major (R.S.M.) is to halt the Parade and to give the order to 'March Off the Standard Bearers'. The President of the Association will 'fall out' the officers and the R.S.M. will then 'fall out' the Parade. (Once fallen out the Standard Bearers are to report to the Canterbury representative at the West Door of the Cathedral).
- c. Parade After the Service. In the precinct a marker will be positioned on either side of the Saluting Base. The command 'Eyes Right' will be given at the first marker and the 'Eyes Front' at the second marker. Standards are to be 'Let Fly' between markers.
- d. The Parade will then March via the West Gate of the Cathedral up Burgate and halt in Burgate, where it will be dismissed. Individuals are then to make their own way to Leros Barracks for the Reunion.

6. SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE.

- a. The Service will be conducted on similar lines to last year. Those attending the Service but not marching are requested to be seated in the Cathedral by 12.45 hrs.
- b. Ushers. To report by 12.30 hrs to Mr Maurice Samson.
- c. Service sheets are to be distributed under the arrangements of Canterbury Branch.

7. DRESS.

- a. Serving Officers on Parade – No. 2 Dress and medals– no swords.
- b. Retired Officers: Lounge suits, bowler hat, umbrella and medals.
- c. Remainder: Berets, Lounge suits or blazers and Regimental ties with medals.

8. STANDARD BEARERS.

- a. All Standard bearers are to report to Mr. Colin Smith at the Cathedral West Door at 11.50 hrs for a full briefing on the Parade Protocol.

9. REUNION. - LEROS BARRACKS, CANTERBURY.

- a. The Invicta Band will play during the lunch period.
- b. There will be a raffle organised by the Canterbury Branch.
- c. Entertainment will be provided during the afternoon.
- d. The Reunion will end at approximately 16.30 hrs with a Beating Retreat and the playing of the evening hymn by The Band of The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment.

10. MEALS.

- a. Lunch will be available at £10.00 per person, and will be provided by the Catering Staff of 3 PWRR.
- b. This year the lunch will be a Carvery (choice of three roasts) with all the usual trimmings. A vegetarian option will be available. Lunch will be served between 14.00-15.00hrs for ticket holders.
- c. Application for lunch tickets should be made using the Proforma enclosed to and sent with the required remittance (along with a stamped addressed envelope) by no later than 1st July 2017 to: -

Secretary, Queen's Own Buffs Regimental Association,
Marlowe Innovation Centre, Marlowe Way, Ramsgate CT12 6FA.

Cheques/PO's should be made payable to "PWRR Benevolent Fund (QOB1)".

- d. Tickets applied for in bulk by Branches will be sent to Branch Secretaries for distribution.
- e. Please Note: No lunch tickets will be available for sale on the day.

11. **BARS.**

- a. Bars will be open from 14.00 hrs until 16.30 hrs approximately.
- b. We are guests of the 3rd Battalion The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment and great care is to be taken to ensure no damage is caused to the furnishings, carpets, etc. There will be no smoking in any building whatsoever. Dress must be appropriate for the day i.e. shirt collar and tie for entrance into the Officers' Mess, Sergeants Mess and Junior Ranks Club. Any persons deemed to be unsuitably dressed will be refused admission.

12. **SECURITY:**

All those attending the reunion at Leros Barracks must carry their Association Membership card or some other form of identity. This will assist those responsible for Barrack security. NO IDENTIFICATION – NO ENTRY.

13. **ENTRY TIMES TO LEROS BARRACKS.**

- a. There will be no admission into Leros Barracks between 11.45 hrs and 13.30 Hrs.

14. **CAR AND COACH PARKING.**

- a. Cars. Branch Secretaries are requested to consolidate bids for their members who will require a free car-parking pass for Longport Public Car Park. Consolidated requests are to be sent to the Regimental Association Secretary,

(Please note: A SAE is required).

- (i) Longport: There are only 50 passes available, which have been kindly allocated free by the Canterbury City Council. Passes, see paragraph above, are available on a first come basis.
- (ii) Leros Barracks: In order to offer a more convenient service to those who are disabled or have impaired mobility and to alleviate the lack of free car parking spaces at Longport, arrangements have been made for cars to be parked in Leros Barracks from 09.30hrs.
- (iii) There will be a regular minibus shuttle service between Leros Barracks, Parish Centre of St Martin and St Paul, Church Street and the Cathedral starting from 10.00hrs. There will be a return shuttle service to Leros from the Cathedral Precincts when the parade has fallen out.
- (i) Longport: There are only 50 passes available, which have been kindly allocated free by the Canterbury City Council. Passes, see paragraph above, are available on a first come basis.
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There will be a return shuttle service to Leros from the Cathedral Precincts when the parade has fallen out.

(iv) Please note that the last minibus shuttle will leave Leros for the Cathedral at 11.45 hrs after which time late comers will have to make their own arrangements to get to the Cathedral.

(v) Should you wish to avail yourself of the Leros car parking facility then you MUST indicate this on the Day Pass/Lunch Ticket/Car Parking application form whether you are lunching or not. A ticket will then be sent to you which will need to be shown to the minibus driver before boarding. No ticket no lift.

b. Coaches. Kingsmead Coach Park. Similar to above please inform the Secretary of Canterbury Branch of your requirements. Stickers to be displayed on the coach windscreens will be sent to those requesting them.

c. Closing date. Bids for the above are required by 1st July 2017.

e. Leros Barracks. The Gate Sentries will direct members to the designated car park. Please ensure these instructions are followed.

15. **CONCLUSION:** All members are asked to support this very special Regimental Day.

THE QUEEN'S OWN BUFFS(PWRR) SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE AND ANNUAL REUNION,

MAIDSTONE - SUNDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER 2017

1. General Outline:

a. The Cafe in the Maidstone Museum, Faith Street, Maidstone will be open from 0830 hrs to 1000 hrs. Tea/Coffee and biscuits will be available to all visitors and also toilet facilities.

b. The Parade is to form up in Brenchley Gardens for a wreath laying Ceremony at the Cenotaph.

c. After the dismissal Association members will make their way to All Saints Church for the Service of Remembrance.

d. After the Service of Remembrance members are to make their way to Oakwood House Hotel, Oakwood Park, Maidstone for the reunion lunch.

2. Timed programme.

08.30 hrs - Tea, Coffee and biscuits will be available in Museum

09.15 hrs - Last shuttle service leaves Oakwood House (See Parking below)

09.45 hrs - The Band arrive.

10.15-10.35hrs- Fall in and Inspection.

10.40 hrs - The Mayoral party and Chaplain arrive.

10.43 hrs - Service at Cenotaph.

11.45 hrs - Service commences in All Saints Church.

3. Parking.

- a. Parking will be available to ticket holders at Kent County Council offices in County Road free of charge to all members of the Association in attendance. This has been kindly authorised by Kent Facilities Management a division of Kent County Council, for which we are very grateful. It is essential that you request a Parking Ticket when you apply for your Reunion lunch ticket.
- b. Parking will also be available from 08.30hrs at Oakwood house Hotel to assist those members who are disabled or have restricted mobility. A shuttle coach service will be available to transport members from Oakwood House to Brenchley Gardens and from there to All Saints Church and then return to Oakwood House. Those wishing to take advantage of this service should apply to the Association Secretary for a parking ticket and ensure that they are at Oakwood House no later than 09.15 as this is the time when the last shuttle will leave.

4. Parade State.

- a. For security purposes Parade States are a vital part of the preparation for the day. Branch Secretaries are requested to forward Parade State to the Regimental Association Secretary, Marlowe Innovation Centre, Marlowe Way, Ramsgate, Kent CT12 6FA – Tel: 01843 598615 by Friday 29th July 2017.

5. The Reunion.

- a. The Reunion will be held at Oakwood House Hotel, Oakwood Park, Maidstone.

6. Transport for Association members who are not driving.

- a. A coach will be provided to transport those Association Members/Guests not travelling by their own means from the Church to the Oakwood House Hotel. Please indicate if you wish to avail yourselves of this service on your Reunion Application form.

7. Reunion Luncheon.

- a. The Reunion Lunch will commence at 1pm, please note that entrance will be by ticket only which can be obtained from the Regimental Association Secretary, Marlowe Innovation Centre, Marlowe Way, Ramsgate, Kent CT12 6FA – Tel: 01843 598615, at a cost of £12 for Association members their wives, partners or carers and £20 for non members.
- b. The closing date for ticket applications is Friday 29th July 2017. Lunch tickets will not be available after this date or at the reunion. Branch Secretaries are requested to consolidate requirements. A medium sized stamped addressed envelope with orders please. Cheques should be made payable to: PWRR Benevolent Fund QOB 1.

PLEASE UNDERSTAND. No food whatsoever, other than that provided by the hotel may be consumed within the hotel. All attending the Reunion must have a Reunion Ticket.

8. Reunion Programme

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 1300 hrs - | 3 Course Carvery Lunch– for those with tickets. Doors and Bars will open at 1230 hrs. There will be no entry prior to this. |
| 1330 – 1445 hrs | Concert by the Band of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment |
| 1500 hrs - | Entertainment. |
| 1530 hrs - | Speeches and Raffle |
| 1630 hrs - | Bars Close |
| 1700 hrs - | Reunion ends. |

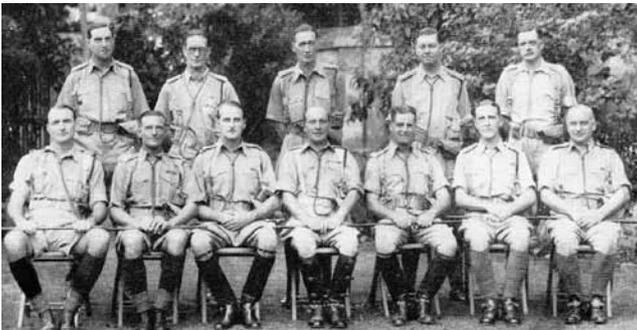
THE SEA WOLVES, OPERATION POSTMASTER OPERATION CREEK & JAMES BOND 007

I am sure you are wondering what is the association between 'The Sea Wolves', Operation Postmaster, Operation Creek, The Buffs and 007? Read on!

Many of you will remember the film 'The Sea Wolves' starring Gregory Peck, Roger Moore, David Niven and Trevor Howard in which a group of veterans from the Calcutta Light Horse were recruited to take part in a clandestine operation called Operation Creek. The film was, in fact, based on two clandestine operations of the Second World War, in particular Operation Postmaster.

The film tells how, during WW2, German submarines were sinking thousands of tons of British merchant shipping. British intelligence based in India believed that information was being passed to the U-Boats by a radio transmitter hidden on board one of three German merchant ships interned in Goa, then a colony of Portugal, which was neutral during the war. These ships could therefore not be attacked by conventional forces.

Those who saw the film will recall that the Goa mission, Operation Creek, relied instead upon the 'under cover' veterans of the Calcutta Light Horse, led by their CO Lt Col Grice, sailing around India from Calcutta in the barge Phoebe. The intention was to attack and sink the German ship Ehrenfels, the prime suspect. After the sinking of the Ehrenfels



***The Calcutta Light Horse 1944
Lt. Col. Grice centre front row***



The Ehrenfels

in March 1943 by this team of highly unlikely, but nonetheless very effective team of British saboteurs, British intelligence dispatched a clear message over the air warning (falsely) that the British intended to invade Goa. The crews of the other two German merchantmen

in the harbour, the Drachenfels and the Braunfels, received that message and scuttled their ships in the belief they were protecting them from capture by the British. Italian ships in the harbour were also scuttled.

It was a good film and drew much of the plot from the earlier, factual, Operation Postmaster where in 1942 the Special Operations executive (SOE) raided shipping in the harbour of Santa Isabel on the island of Fernando Po, a Spanish (and therefore neutral) possession in the Bight of Biafra. This is how it unfolded.

The SOE had maintained a presence in west Africa where it could observe Vichy French, Spanish and Portuguese territories with the intention of identifying and hindering any activities that threatened Britain's colonial possessions. In 1941 the British Admiralty started receiving reports that German submarines were using the rivers in Vichy French parts of Africa as a base for refuelling. A unit was selected to investigate the reports: No 62 Commando, also known as the Small Scale Raiding Force (SSRF).

The SSRF, commanded by Major Gustavus Henry March-Phillips, consisted of a group of 55 commando trained personnel working under the SOE. The force included Major 'Dissy' Dismore (The Buffs) and Pte

Anders Lassen, a Buff attached to the SSRF. Under the operational control of Combined Operations Headquarters, the SSRF objective was to board and seize the Italian and German ships in the harbour and sail them to Lagos. Initially the British authorities in Africa refused to support the raid, which they considered a breach of Spanish neutrality. However, permission for the operation to go ahead eventually came from the Foreign Office in London.



Major March-Phillips

The Maid Honor, a 65 ton Brixham trawler, sailed from Poole harbour on 9 August 1941 bound for west Africa. The five men crew were under the command of Major 'Gus' March-Phillips. The remainder of the SSRF, led by Capt Geoffrey Appleyard, had earlier departed aboard a troop transport ship. On 20 September, after six weeks at sea, the Maid Honor arrived at Freetown, Sierra Leone, the agreed rendezvous for both groups. Appleyard's party had arrived at the end of August.



Anders Lassen

Following Maid Honor's arrival in Freetown the search for German U-Boat bases got underway. The SSRF sailed into many rivers and deltas in the area, but failed to locate any U-Boats – or evidence of a submarine base.

Meanwhile, during his visits to the island of Fernando Po, resident SOE agent Leonard Guise noted the presence of an Italian merchant vessel, the 8,500 ton Duchess d'Aosta, a large German tug Likomba and a diesel powered barge the Bibundi. The Duchess d'Aosta had a working radio with the potential to provide details of Allied naval movements. Her declared cargo included wool, hides and skins, tanning material, copra, asbestos fibre and ingots of electrolytic copper. The captain refused to present to the port authorities the first page of the ship's cargo manifest which led to speculation the ship was also carrying arms or ammunition. Guise kept the ships under observation and in August submitted a plan to seize Likomba and Bibundi, and disable the Duchess d'Aosta. Approval for the military operation in a neutral port was given by the Admiralty on 20 November 1941. It was named Operation Postmaster.



'Dissy' Dismore

To transport the raiders to the island two tugs, Vulcan and Nuneaton, were provided by the Governor of Nigeria, Sir Bernard Bourdillon. The raiding force would consist of 32 men: 4 SOE agents, 11 commandos from the SSRF, and 17 men recruited from the local population to crew the two tugs. The mission suffered a blow when the GOC West Africa Command, General Sir George Giffard, refused to support the mission and to release the 17 local men required. He claimed the proposed raid would compromise some (unnamed) plans he had in mind and the act of piracy – for such it would be – would compromise those plans.



Geoffrey Appleyard

Responding to the GOC, West Africa, the Admiralty suspended the operation. The Foreign Office was not in favour, neither was the British Embassy in Madrid which was concerned about the possible reaction of the Spanish government. Nonetheless the go-ahead, finally supported by the Foreign Office, was given in January 1942 on the grounds that suspicion of British involvement in the raid would be inevitable; what really mattered was the avoidance of any tangible proof. As a further safeguard the Admiralty dispatched the corvette HMS Violet to intercept the vessels on the high seas after they had been seized. This would provide the cover story they had been intercepted whilst attempting to make their way home to Europe.

During this planning a further SOE agent, Richard Lippett, obtained employment with the shipping company John Holt and Co from Liverpool which had an office on Fernando Po. On taking up the post he started to make preparations for the raid. He became aware that the crew of the Duchess d'Aosta were in the habit of accepting invitations to parties ashore. They also held an on-board party of their own and Lippett, under the guise of a party goer, managed to gain vital information about the ship's readiness for sea, crew numbers, and the watch arrangements.



Duchessa d'Aosta

The raiding party left Lagos in their two tugs on the morning of 11 January 1942 and en route for Fernando Po, supervised by Capt Graham Hayes, practised lowering Folboats (ie canoes) and boarding ships at sea. They approached Santa Isabel harbour and by nightfall on 14 January both tugs were in position 180 metres outside the harbour entrance. To coincide with the tugs' arrival Lippett had arranged for the officers from the Duchess d'Aosta to be invited to a dinner party. Two German and twelve Italian officers from the Likomba also attended.

On 14 January (as depicted in the film 'The Sea Wolves') the boarding parties assembled on deck as the two tugs entered the harbour. The Vulcan, with March-Phillipps and his 2i/c Appleyard on board, headed for the Duchess d'Aosta. As they approached a few men could be seen on the deck of the merchant vessel, but they ignored the tug, other than to briefly shine a torch in its direction. At the same time Folboats, under the command of Hayes from Nuneaton, were being paddled towards the Likomba and Burundi which were moored together. Challenged by a watchman on Burundi, they persuaded him it was the ship's captain returning on board. The men from the canoes boarded Burundi and the two men watch promptly jumped overboard. After planting explosive charges on the anchor chain, the commandos guided Nuneaton alongside the Likomba to take her and the Burundi in tow.



HMS Violet

The charges were blown and Nuneaton started to tow the Likomba out of the harbour. Meanwhile eleven raiders from the Vulcan had managed to get aboard the Duchess d'Aosta. One group planted explosives on her anchor chains whilst another searched below decks collecting prisoners. After blowing the anchor chains the Vulcan started to tow the Duchess d'Aosta out to sea.



Graham Hayes

The explosions had alerted the town's population, who started to gather on the pier, but no attempt was made to prevent the ships from leaving harbour. Several anti-aircraft emplacements opened fire at imaginary targets, believing the explosions to have been caused by an aerial attack, but the six-inch guns protecting the harbour remained silent. Just thirty minutes had elapsed from the raiders entering the harbour to leaving with the captured ships under tow. The raiding party incurred no losses.

Out at sea March-Phillipps established a routine of watches and placed guards on the 29 prisoners taken during the raid. At the end of the first day at sea trouble developed with the tugs' engines as well as the tow ropes to the two captured vessels. However, the next day the Vulcan reached the rendezvous and was, as planned, 'captured' at sea by HMS Violet. The Nuneaton, suffering from engine trouble, failed to reach the rendezvous but managed to contact a passing Nigerian collier, the Llorin, which in turn contacted Lagos. From there a ship was dispatched to tow her into port. The details of the raid were kept secret even from the British Chiefs of Staff who were only informed on 18 January that the Duchess d'Aosta had been intercepted and was being escorted to Lagos.

With the successful completion of the Postmaster mission the SOE had demonstrated its ability to undertake operations, regardless of the political consequences. After informing Prime Minister Winston Churchill of the outcome Hugh Dalton, the government minister responsible for SOE, went on to say... *"other neutral governments would be impressed that Britain would, if needed, disregard the legal formalities of war in their efforts to succeed"*. The senior SOE agent Africa station submitted his report to the head of SOE, Colin Gubbins, suggesting that... *"perhaps next time it will not be necessary for prolonged negotiations before undertaking a thirty minute operation!"*.

The Spanish government was furious over the raid which was regarded as a breach of the country's neutrality. Foreign minister Serrano Suner described the operation as an... *"intolerable attack on our sovereignty. No Spaniard can fail to be roused by this act of piracy committed in defiance of every right and within water under our jurisdiction. Do not be surprised if we return the answer which the case demands – that of arms"*.

In Germany radio stations reported that a... *"British destroyer had entered the harbour and dropped depth charges to blow up the anchor cables and the ship's crew were shot"* whilst the 21 January edition of the Volkischer Beobachter published an article with the headline... *"British Denials – Admiralty Lies on Act of Piracy"*.

British Naval Intelligence, following advice from Commander Ian Fleming, issued its own communique. *"In view of the German allegations that Allied naval forces have executed a cutting-out operation against Axis ships in the Spanish port of Santa Isabel, Fernando Po, the British Admiralty considers it necessary to state that no British or Allied ship was in the vicinity. As a result of the German broadcast the British C in C dispatched reconnaissance patrols to cover the area. A report has now been received that the Italian cargo liner, the Duchess d'Aosta, has been sighted and British naval vessels are proceeding to the spot to make investigations!"*.

Meanwhile on Fernando Po SOE agent Richard Lippett, who had remained on the island, was taken in for questioning by the Spanish authorities three days after the raid. He managed to persuade them he had had nothing to do with the departure of the ships; nor had he spent any money on hosting the party for the ships officers. He was released from custody on 27 January, ten days after his arrest, but refused permission to leave the island. He finally left secretly by canoe, arriving in British territory on 1 March 1942.

In the aftermath of the operation the Maid Honor was left in Lagos and eventually sold to the Sierra Leone government as a converted trawler. Duchess d'Aosta was eventually sailed to Greenock to be managed by Canadian Pacific, as the Empire Yukon, for Ministry of War transport. The Limkomba was subsequently managed by the Elder Dempster Line who renamed it Malakel and sold it to Liberia in 1948.

As for the main characters on the operation March-Phillips was awarded the DSO, Hayes the MC and Appleyard a Bar to his MC. Lippett and Guise were each appointed to MBE. For conspicuous efficiency in getting the ship underway another commando, the only professional sailor on the raid, Pte Anders Lassen – the first man to board Duchess d'Aosta – was granted a field commission and awarded the MC.

March-Phillips was subsequently killed during Operation Aquatint in September 1942. On the same mission Hayes, a canoe expert and diver, evaded capture and crossed the Spanish border only to be handed to the Germans who kept him in solitary confinement for nine months. He was eventually betrayed as one of the brains behind Operation Postmaster and executed by firing squad on 13 July 1943. Appleyard later joined the SAS and, on the same day Hayes was executed, was reported missing when his plane failed to return from another mission. Lassen would also join the SAS. He was later awarded two Bars to his MC and promoted to Major before receiving a posthumous VC in Italy in 1945.

One of the commandos involved in Postmaster was Major Leonard 'Dissy' Dismore, the news editor of the Kentish Gazette from 1932 until being called up in 1939. When he joined the war the 32 year old was a TA officer in The Buffs, but later joined SOE after being evacuated from Dunkirk. He was teaching survival skills to African agents when in 1941 he was chosen to join the commando group planning Postmaster. Dismore was never honoured for his gallantry by his own country although he was recognised and decorated by the French and US governments. Lt Col Dismore died of a heart attack while on leave at his home near Canterbury in June 1956. He was 49.

Brian Lett, the author of Operation Postmaster, claims the elite team formed the basis for the character James Bond. He said... *"When I started my researches into Operation Postmaster, I had no idea that I would stumble across Ian Fleming, the real M and the inspiration for James Bond"*. The Naval liaison officer for the operation was Ian Fleming.



Brigadier Sir Colin Gubbins (M)



Lt. Commander Ian Fleming

There is little doubt the four – March-Phillips, Hayes, Appleyard and Lassen – were given permission (a licence?) by SOE boss Brigadier Sir Colin Gubbins (code named M) to kill if necessary. Failure was not an option. If the men had been caught the government would deny all knowledge of the raid.

Subsequently Fleming thought it safe to borrow the structure and code names of the SOE, even though they were covered by the Official Secrets Act, and before his death Fleming admitted that 90% of his plots came from his personal experience.

Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden denied all knowledge of operation Postmaster and it was blamed on the Free French.

PW



LT COL WILLIAM ROBERT DAWSON (The Boy Colonel)

Six weeks before the Armistice in a garden near Nivelles France, the Commanding Officer of the 6th Battalion Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment) stopped to pick wild celery he had spied to supplement the evening's meal for the mess. Suddenly and without warning a stray German shell landed almost on top of him. A corrective War Office Casualty List was published stating "*Previously reported wounded, now reported died of wounds on 3 December 1918*", this officer became yet another WW1 statistic.



Virtually unknown to this day, there are much more interesting statistics about William Robert Aufrère "Bob" Dawson and his exploits certainly deserve a wider audience. He rose from 2nd Lieutenant to Lieutenant-Colonel in just 26 months, was mentioned in Despatches four times, boasted seven wound stripes, was awarded three bars to his DSO, commanded a battalion at 25 and turned down the offer of a Brigade to stay with his men. He was certainly a hero of his time.

Dawson was born on the 23rd June 1891, in Bickley a suburb of Bromley Kent, the son of William and Ethel Dawson. His father was a lawyer and his brother, Colin Aufrère Dawson, served as a Lieutenant in the Army Service Corps during the war. His unusual middle name derives from an 18th century ancestor, Rev. Israel Antoine Aufrère, Minister of the French Congregation at St. James, whereby his granddaughter, Sarah Regis, married William Dawson, a London

Merchant who was born in 1723.

Whilst at Oxford in 1912 he joined the Royal Field Artillery as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Special Reserve, transferring to a regular commission into The Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment) in June 1914 after his graduation, thus Dawson was the most junior officer in his Regiment when war was declared.

In August 1914, bitterly disappointed not to be sent to France with his battalion, he became part of the nucleus of the 6th (Service) Battalion, a New Army unit formed in Maidstone on 14 August 1914. At Colchester he was promoted Lieutenant and his battalion became a component of the 37th Brigade of the 12th (Eastern) Division, where drill and route marching commenced at once, but only with improvised wooden rifles; however by the spring of 1915 the 12th was one of five divisions concentrated at Aldershot for final training, where Dawson was made a Temporary Captain. The 6th Queen's Own landed in Boulogne on June 1st 1915 with 30 officers and 950 other ranks.

Dawson experienced his first baptism of fire commanding 'C' Company, when his battalion attacked and occupied the enemy held Gun Trench and later during fighting at the Quarries near Vermelles between 8 and 14 October 1915, costing over 300 casualties, including 14 officers. The idolisation of Dawson by the men serving under his command took root by the end of 1915 due to his reputation for frequently leading attacks from the front.

An early example of consideration for his men took place on the night of 13/14 October when without permission, he evacuated 50 yards of the captured enemy communication trench and had it filled in, justifying his decision in a report saying that it offered no advantage and the men were enfiladed from a higher position allowing the enemy to shoot right into the trench, thus the battalion sustained fewer casualties after this decision was taken.

On the 8th March 1916 Dawson received his first two wounds (classed as severe) the first from an enemy trench mortar shell; that day 'C' Company in the crater trenches was being persistently bombarded by trench mortars. His Company were standing in thick mud, defending poorly maintained positions in the Craters, opposite the German Hohenzollern Redoubt near Vermelles. The state of the British trenches were recorded as in an "indescribable state with thick mud and fallen in", plus the weather "bitterly cold, NE wind and snow in places". Evacuated to England and not reporting back until 26 June, Dawson received the DSO for his actions at the Crater's, the citation reading as follows...

"Though severely wounded, Captain Dawson rejoined his company as soon as his wounds had been dressed, remained at his post till an attack had been repulsed and was again wounded later. His example of courage, endurance and devotion to duty was one of a very high order."

Dawson's commanding officer was Lt. Colonel C. S. Owen (from the Royal Welsh Fusiliers) a formidable battalion commander nicknamed "*The Fire Eater*". During the 6th Queen's Own assault on the enemy trenches at Ovillers-la-Boisselle on 3 July 1916, 375 men out of 617 were killed, wounded or missing. Two weeks later Dawson leads a trench bombing attack on 18 July, but whilst he comes through unscathed, the 6th Queen's continue to suffer casualties, particularly in officers. Consequently on 12 August 1916, with so many vacancies, Dawson was appointed Second-in-Command of his battalion in the acting rank of Major.

The last Somme engagement for Dawson was at Guedicourt on 7 October, when the 6th Queen's Own managed to take the German held 'Sunken Road', but were only able to hold on until nightfall, when the position was abandoned, taking their wounded with them. This time the battalion suffered another high casualty rate of 11 officers and 297 other ranks.

At the end of the Somme fighting, when Owen was given a Brigade, Dawson's C.O. arguably performed his greatest duty by recommending Dawson to be given command of the 6th Queen's Own over the heads of many others on the seniority list; in fact, Dawson was still only a substantive Lieutenant at the time! Dawson became an Acting Lt. Colonel on the 16 November 1916, later upgraded on 5 January 1917 to Temporary Lt. Colonel, with seniority from 5th December 1916, whilst also gaining substantive promotion to Captain. He was 25 years old.

"Good battalion commanders are very hard to get", said Brig-Gen W. H. E. Seagrave of 152 Brigade in September 1918. He also said *"Commanding a battalion is four times more difficult and ten times more interesting than commanding a Brigade"*.

Captain Alan Thomas viewed Dawson as a natural commanding officer, saying he understood the power of 'hands-on' leadership, often remarking that he would stroll calmly along the parapet, in front of his men and in full view of the Germans, taking his pipe out of his mouth now and then to say a word of encouragement to his men or crack a joke. The pipe, Thomas felt, was a stroke of genius, adding that *"men would follow him to Hell"*.

Thomas viewed Dawson as a natural commanding officer, describing his personality as *"a man of moods and uncertain temper. Firstly, his referent power was seemingly immense: his personality overpowered me. Secondly, he understood the power of 'hands on' leadership"*. As for his courage Thomas remarked *"A Colonel*

has no business to go out on patrol in no-man's land, he was often reckless and foolhardy. He expected as much (courage) as he gave, which was everything".

The other side of Dawson was twofold; his temper and his total disregard for incompetence from higher levels of authority. Witnesses attest to him flying off the handle if the wrong thing was said, or heap abuse upon an officer on parade in front of the troops if he fell below Dawson's high standards. Staff officers with red tabs who came across as jumped-up 'know-nothing's' devoid of experience, without knowing what can or can't be practically achieved were, in Dawson's language, "*velvet arsed buggers*". The soldier's under his command felt safe that their C.O. would stand up to brass hats if their plans were faulty or might cause unnecessary casualties for little gain.

Leading from the front is best summed up with Dawson's decision on the 9 August 1918 during the final advances on how to instil calmness and confidence to the many new drafts of young men who had recently joined. Ready for the next big push he nonchalantly started the advance on horseback!

For the 1917 Arras offensives the 6th Queen's Own was given the job of holding the line at Monchy near Arras on 3rd May. Being far to the front as usual Dawson received another wound, which put him out until 27 August, but his leadership in the defence secured his first bar to his DSO. The citation in part read...



When the situation was somewhat critical he displayed conspicuous gallantry in organising the defence. Although his troops were exhausted from prolonged exposure, he completely reorganised the line under heavy shell fire. His total disregard for personal danger was most marked.

The Battle of Cambrai opened on 20 November 1917, at which time the 6th Queen's Own took and held the German positions in Lateau Wood supported by tanks. Remaining in and around the wood they were still not relieved when the German counter attack followed a whole ten days later. The men, already tired and fatigued having had

no rest since the 20th, suffered a 45 minute preliminary bombardment protected only by hastily dug defences. Dawson immediately sensed the seriousness of the strong German attack and left his Battalion Headquarters to command his men from the front. Taken down by a bullet that penetrated through both cheeks, his life was saved by his Batman who carried and dragged him from the field. Dawson's leadership that day earned him a mention in Despatches; however, despite a tenacious defence, the 6th found themselves enveloped and cut off from their supporting flanks, the outcome inevitable when the hard-won Lateau Wood was regained by the enemy. When the battalion was eventually pulled out to the rear its strength was depleted to just six officers and 175 other ranks.

Hospitalisation kept Dawson incapacitated until 13 February 1918, but for a long time it had become common practice to no longer refer to the unit verbally by its number and regimental name, but instead it was only referred to by higher headquarters, as well as the men, as "Dawson's Battalion".

The German surprise spring offensive opened on 21 March 1918, the 'last throw of the dice' for Germany before the American's could complete concentration and deploy up to one million fresh troops. This pushed the British Fifth Army back 40 miles and took more British prisoners in three weeks than had been captured during the previous 3½ years.

Chaos reigned and Dawson's Battalion was put in charge of the rearguard of 47th Division whilst it withdrew, which he halted at Martinsart Wood, thus allowing many other units to avoid capture or annihilation. Dawson was evacuated with yet another wound during some close quarter fighting (which resulted in 112 battalion

casualties) for which he received another mention in Despatches and a second bar to his DSO. The citation partly read...

“He led the personnel of his headquarters as a fighting formation and with the counter attacking battalion captured two machine guns and some prisoners. On the following day he organised and led a counter attack and repulsed the enemy and re-established the line. By his capable leadership, promptness of action and courageous example, he was largely responsible for the position held by his battalion being maintained intact.”

In recognition of his leadership and having refused various offers to transfer to the staff and even the hint of Brigade command, Dawson was gazetted Brevet Major, announced in the Kings Birthday Awards on 3rd June 1918, whilst still a substantive Captain and Temporary Lt. Colonel. “Brevet Rank” was defined as a warrant giving a commissioned officer a higher rank title as a reward for gallantry, but without receiving the authority or pay of real rank.

The German spring offensive was brought to a halt by 5 April 1918 and it became apparent that the war was now entering its final stage. Blowing his whistle for attention after being severely wounded by the stray shell that fell near him on the 23 October, Dawson was taken to 20th General Hospital at Camiers, during which time he was visited by his parents. With little feeling below his neck and unable to help himself, he hung on for a further five weeks before his body gave up on 3rd December 1918. Dawson was buried in a CWGC grave at Etaples Military Cemetery. A posthumous fourth mention in Despatches, plus a third bar to his DSO, was gazetted to Dawson for events prior to his death; the DSO citation, referring to him as *“Captain and Brevet Major (Temporary Lieutenant Colonel) William Robert Aufrere Dawson”* stated in part...

18th to 29th September 1918, near Epéhy and Vendhuile, he was continually in the front line. The success of his battalion on these occasions was largely due to his fine leadership and personal example.

Dawson’s divisional commander from April 1918 was Major-General Harold W. Higginson CB DSO, who was GOC 12th (Eastern) Division. Part of the letter he wrote to Bob Dawson’s parents stated...

“He was one of the most gallant officers I have ever known, and was a universal favourite with all ranks in the Division. I was so pleased he was granted a third bar to his DSO. It is almost a unique honour. I only know of two others in the Army and you will be extremely proud of it.”

Forgotten except by the regiment’s successor, The Queen’s Own Buffs Regimental Association, Bob Dawson’s portrait hangs opposite to the entrance to the Queen’s Own Royal West Kent Regiment Gallery inside Maidstone Museum, where his medals are prominently displayed.

Editors note: The above article is drawn from the original article by Graham Caldwell that appeared in the Armourer and I am grateful for his kind permission to publish it.

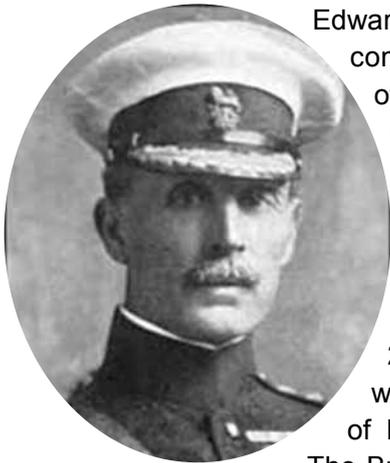
Thanks are due to Jonathan Saunders of the Queen’s Own Buffs Regimental Association who provided additional information for this article and the illustrations.



MAJOR-GENERAL EDWARD CHARLES INGOUVILLE-WILLIAMS, C.B., D.S.O.

(Inky Bill)

Edward Charles Ingouville-Williams was born 13th December 1861 at Purbrook, Hampshire, son of General Sir John William Collman Williams, K.C.B., J.P., (Royal Marine Artillery) and of Georgiana Isabella, daughter of George Ingouville a landed proprietor and Albina Ingouville, of La Fregonniere, Jersey.



Edward Charles was commissioned as an officer to the 3rd Foot Regiment (East Kent Regt. known as 'The Buffs'), as Second Lieutenant, from the Militia on the 23rd April 1881. He was promoted to rank of Lieutenant with the The Buffs, on the 1st July 1881. He served in the Sudan Expedition, 1884-85 (Nile), as Special Officer for Boats (Staff Captain), and received the Medal with clasp, and Khedive's Star.

He was promoted to rank of Captain on the 1st November 1892. He was Adjutant of The Buffs from 20th May 1894 to 21st January 1898. From 22nd January 1898 to 10th April 1899, he was specially employed with the Egyptian Army, as Special Service Officer, and served in the Nile Expedition of 1898, taking part in the battles of Atbara and Khartoum, where he was in charge of Transport arrangements, and in command of the Army Transport Corps with the British Division during the Khartoum operations. He was mentioned in Despatches [London Gazette, 24th May and 30th September 1898]; was given the Brevet of Major on the 16th November 1898; received the Medal and the Egyptian Medal with two clasps. In the Nile Expedition of 1898 he was Brigade Major with Colonel Kitchener's Brigade and served as DAAG (Deputy Assistant Adjutant General) to the Kordofan Field Force, and received a clasp to the Egyptian Medal.

He served in the South African War from 1899 to 1902, on Sir Charles Warren's Staff; as Assistant Provost-Marshal, November 1899 to 19th May

1900; Brigade Major from May to 31st December 1900; Commanding Mounted Infantry Corps, and Commanding a Mobile Column from the 1st January 1901 to 25th September 1902.

He was present at the Relief of Ladysmith, including operations of 17th to 24th January 1900; action at Spion Kop; operations of 5th to 7th January 1900, and action at Vaal Kranz; operations on Tugela Heights 14th to 27th February 1900, and action at Pieter's Hill. Operations in Natal, March to June 1900, including actions at Laing's Nek (6th to 9th June). Operations in Orange Free State and Transvaal. Operations in Orange River Colony, January to May 1901. Operations in the Transvaal, May 1901 to 31st May 1902. He was mentioned in Despatches [London Gazette 8th February 1900 (Sir R H Buller); 30th March, 17th June, and 9th November 1900 and London Gazette, 9th July to 11th October 1901]; was given the Brevet of Lieutenant Colonel on the 12th October 1901; received the Queen's Medal with six clasps; King's Medal with two clasps, and was created a Companion of the Distinguished Service Order [London Gazette, 19th April, 1901]: "Edward Charles Ingouville-Williams, Major (now Local Lieutenant Colonel), The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). In recognition of services during the recent operations in South Africa". The Insignia were presented in South Africa.

His elder brother Major George Albanus Williams was killed in action during the South African War, at Tweefontein on the 25th December 1901 (aged 41) whilst serving with the 1st Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment.

In 1902 it was reported in the Times (30th October 1902) that he changed his name by Deed Poll (in September 1902) from "Williams" to "Ingouville-Williams" it is believed in memory of his mother who's maiden name was Ingouville. His mother Georgiana Isabella Williams (nee Ingouville) had died at Portsea Island, Hampshire in 1867 (aged 29).

He was transferred to the Worcestershire Regiment on the 4th April 1903 and was given command of the 2nd Battalion Worcestershire Regiment at Bloomfontein on the 3rd March 1904, and becoming Lieutenant Colonel on the 10th March 1904. On

the 22nd October 1904 he embarked with the 2nd Battalion from Durban and sailed to Colombo, Ceylon, arriving there on the 5th November 1904. The 2nd Battalion Worcestershire Regiment remained in Ceylon throughout 1905/1906. In December 1906 the 2nd Battalion moved by sea to Bombay, India on route to Ahmednagar where on the 10th October 1907 the 2nd Battalion was given new colours by the Viceroy, The Earl of Minto. In January 1908 the 2nd Battalion moved to Poona. In March 1908 Edward Charles Ingouville-Williams completed his command of the 2nd Battalion Worcestershire Regiment and handed over command to Lieut.-Col. H. de. B. Hovell DSO.

He was created a CB in 1910; was Commandant, School of Mounted Infantry, Longmoor Camp from the 1st March 1910 to 17th June 1912; was given the rank of Brevet Colonel on the 25th December 1905; became Colonel on the 10th March 1908.

He became a Temporary Brigadier- General from the 18th June 1912 to 2nd June 1915 and was Commanded the 16th Infantry Brigade, Irish Command, from the 16th June 1912 to 4th August 1914.

On the outbreak of the First World War with Germany he took his Brigade to France, commanding it until he was promoted to Major- General, in June 1915, for distinguished service in the field, and given command of the newly formed 34th Division, which he trained and took to the front in January 1916, being in the front line till 4th July when the Division was withdrawn to refit, but was again put into the line, with two fresh brigades to replace the 102nd and the 103rd, which had lost heavily. The Division was in the fighting line till the 19th July when it was again withdrawn to rest and to refit.

After the great Battle of the Somme in July 1916, Major- General Ingouville-Williams paid the following tribute to his men: " My men did glorious deeds. Never have I seen men go through such a hell of a barrage of artillery. They advanced as on parade, and never flinched. I can't speak too highly of them. They earned a great record. But, alas ! at a great cost. I am very sad at losing all my brave fellows, but so glad that their grand work is appreciated by the Corps Commander, Army Commander and Sir Douglas Haig. My brave men had to face a long advance to reach their objective. They were swept by that awful barrage double barrage. Some got through, but could not

remain so far off without support. They did their duty nobly. Never shall I cease singing the praises of my men, and I shall never have the same grand men to deal with again. I think they have done their part well, and their attack made all the subsequent success possible."

Although he was renowned as a stern disciplinarian, he was affectionately known by his men with the nickname 'Inky Bill'.

On the 22nd July Major- General Ingouville-Williams went with his ADC to the Bois-de-Mametz to make a personal reconnaissance of the ground where he was to take his Division into action the following week; on the bank at Queen's Nullah, south-west of Mametz Wood, (a "Nullah" is the Indian name for a dried up watercourse or river bed. 'Queens Nullah' was named after the 2nd Battalion Queens Regiment occupied this position on 1st July 1916). After having walked back from Contalmaison round the south side of the wood to meet his car which was at Montauban, he was caught in a barrage of fire and was hit by a piece of shell which killed him instantly. He was 54 years of age when he was killed. He had been mentioned in Despatches four times for his services in the Great War.

His grave is at Warloy-Baillon Communal Cemetery extension (a village about 21 kilometres north-east of Amiens), France. Grave number III. D. 13. and his name is inscribed on the base of the First World War Memorial Cross and Monument in the grounds of St Andrews Church, Farlington, Portsmouth, in total the memorial is inscribed the names of 84 men who died in WW1.

Editor's note: Major R. T. P. (Tom) Williams is the great nephew of Major- General Ingouville-Williams and nephew of Lt Col. J.R.P. Williams MBE - Lt Col. Williams commanded 2nd Bn The Buffs immediately before the battle of El Alamein but was severely wounded on a reconnaissance when his Bren Gun Carrier was blown up by a mine. Another uncle of Major Williams was Colonel H.P. Williams OBE, a Buff who later commanded the 13th King's African Rifles in the 11th East African Division during the Burma campaign.

During the recent Association trip to the Somme 'Queen's Nullah, where General Ingouville-Williams was killed, was pointed out to the group.

THE BUFFS' LINKS WITH THE TOWER AND THE CITY OF LONDON

In the Beginning.....

Deeply woven into the DNA of every former Buff is the knowledge that the regiment traces its origin to the Trained Bands of London. But very little is known of the story surrounding the three thousand volunteers who paraded at Greenwich in 1572. If any records were kept at the time, which is doubtful, they have long been lost or destroyed. All we have today is an account of the event recorded in Stows Annals of London, published in 1598.

What we do know with certainty is that the parade took place against a backcloth of deepening international tension involving the Netherlands and Spain. An extract from 'Historical Record of The Third Regiment of Foot, or The Buffs – prepared by the Adjutant General in 1838, tells us that "... the errors of the Church of Rome had brought on the Reformation, and the Protestant religion had extended itself to the Netherlands". Philip II of Spain, in conjunction with the Pope, "...undertook to extirpate this new heresy...and sent to the Netherlands an inquisition of bishops, whose cruel and sanguinary persecutions excited the Fleming to revolt, particularly in Antwerp".

Deeply concerned at the Spanish influence so close to her own shore, and dismayed over the cruel treatment of her fellow Protestants, Queen Elizabeth I decided to intervene. She let her views be known to influential people in the City of London who, in their turn, selected from the livery companies three thousand men to be trained to go to the aid of the beleaguered Dutch. Stow explains what happened next.

"The five and twenty and six and twenty of March, by the Commandment of the Queenes Majesty her counsel the citizens of London assembling at their severall hals, the maisters chose out



the most likely and active persons of every their companies to the number of three thousand, whom they appointed to be pikemen and shot..... To these were appointed divers valliant captaines, who to train them up in warlike feates mustered them thrise every weeke, sometimes at the Miles end, and in Saint Georges field, teaching them to skirmish. In the which skirmish on the Miles end, the tenth day of Aprill, one of the gunners of the Goldsmiths companye, was shot in the side with a piece of a scouring sticke left in one of the calivers, whereof he died, and was buried the twelveth day of Aprill in Saint Pauls churchyard, al the gunners marching from the Miles end, in battle ray shot off their calivers at his grave.

"On May Day 1572 they mustered at Greenwich before the queens majesty, when they shewed many warlike feates, but were hindred by the wether, which was showering, they returned that night to London and were discharged on the next morrow."

One of those on parade that day was Captain Thomas Morgan, commanding a company of three hundred men. He was sympathetic to the Flemish cause and, unlike the remaining companies, his immediately set sail for Flushing. This company was the nucleus of a succession of English troops stationed in the Netherlands which, after the peace of Munster in 1648, was reduced to a single regiment. Recalled to England in 1665 the regiment



became, firstly, the Holland Regiment and in 1672 received the Freedom of the City of London. After a brief spell known as The Prince of Denmark's Regiment the regiment was then designated The Buffs. The rest, as they say, is history.

JB

ASSOCIATION TRIP TO THE SOMME

20th - 22nd May 2016

Once again the stalwart travellers of our Association set off for fields afar on the annual battlefield tour. It was of course appropriate that this year, the 100th anniversary, we would visit The Somme where battalions of The Buffs and battalions of the Queen's Own played a significant part. After the usual round of 'pick up' points our two coaches set sail from Dover, and a considerable number of 'Full English' breakfasts were consumed, all part of the holiday, and after a smooth crossing we were back on foreign soil.

The party were accommodated in the Campanile Hotel in Amiens, a very comfortable hotel close to local amenities and restaurants on the river. So the scene was set for what proved to be, from all reports, a very successful and memorable trip, the success of the trip was due mainly to our guides, Revd. Keith Fazzani, Professor Mark Connelly and Mick Mills, many thanks to all three of you for your support and for giving us such a fascinating insight into that terrible battle.

As a picture is better than a thousand words it is best left to the pictures to take up the story from now on.







CANTERBURY REUNION





Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment
'The Tigers'





MAIDSTONE REUNION 2016







TOWER OF LONDON PARADE 2016





TURNING THE PAGE

11th NOVEMBER 2016.

WEALD BRANCH, 15th March 2017.



LONDON BUFFS, 4th May 2016



SITTINGBOURNE BRANCH, 30th March 2017



Hugh Tolhurst, who Turned the Page and Arthur Creed (Ex Royal Navy) who rang the bell of HMS Canterbury. And pictured below Arthur signing the book for ringing the bell for the first time.

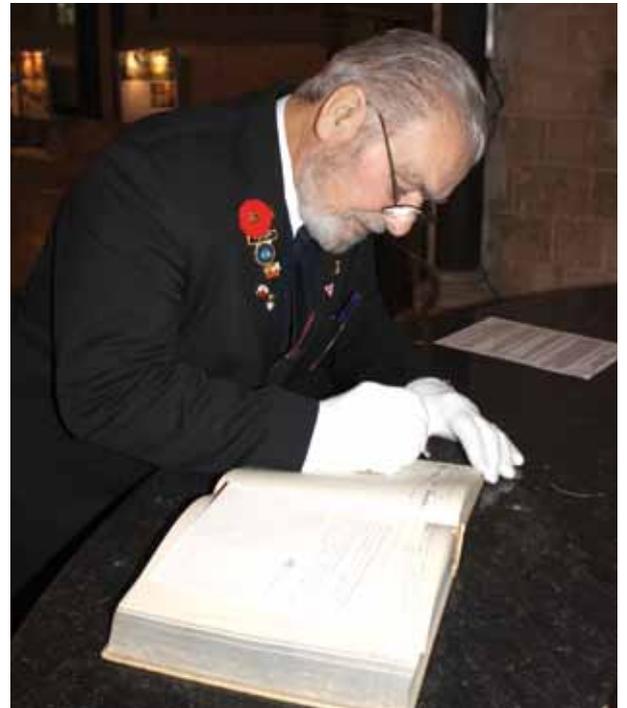
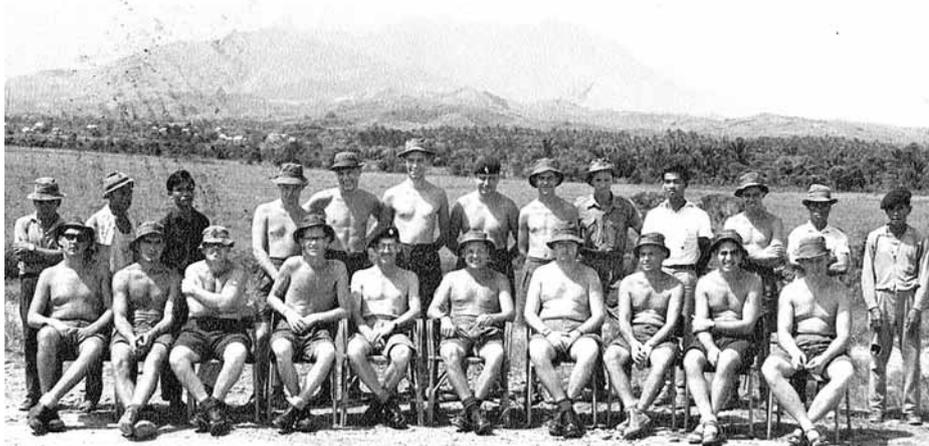


PHOTO GALLERY



QM's Department, 1 Queen's Own Buffs, Sabah, Borneo 1964.



Whilst on a visit to Ypres the Association President, laid a wreath, at the request of the family, on the grave of Captain S Barham.



Colour Sgt. Garry Sage of 3 PWRR Turning the Page 26th January 2017



Recruiting Team of The Queens Own Buffs about July 1961, From Left: Cpl Parsons, Pte Baron, Pte Rickey Priest, and Pte George Young.



No, honestly, I thought it was a microphone!!!!



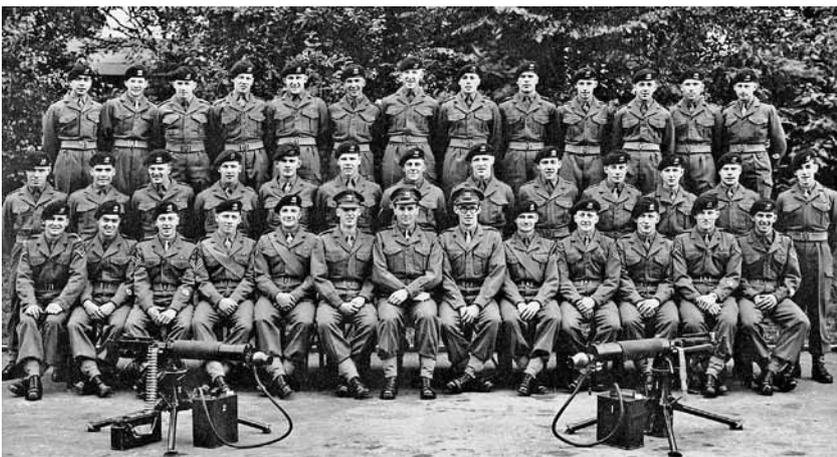
Sandwich Branch leading the Canterbury Re Union parade, August 1991



***Nijmegen Marches 1951.
The Queen's Own contingent led by Lt. John Langhorne
(ashore for once) with the unmistakable tall and smiling
Geordie Rickwood waving to his many fans.***



***Jacky Mace driving a coach on the
recent Somme trip, No, I don't think
so.***



1 Buffs, Machine Gun Platoon- Wuppertal



***Mounted Officer, "Aw - Are you the West Riding"
Voice from the ranks, "No! We're the blooming Buffs Walking!"***



1 Queen's Own Machine Gun platoon



Wuppertaler Schwebebahn.
A suspension railway in Wuppertal,
This one is just for the 'Wuppertal Buffs'



President & Secretary inspecting the
Cathedral ceiling- quite a climb too.



Inter Branch Darts Competition 2017:

Above left: The winners (again) Sittingbourne Branch.

Above right: Runners up (again) The Committee of Management Team (with helpers).

At left: Canterbury Branch who came third.
Well done all and a special thanks (again) to Paul Fleming for his excellent organisation.



On 1st July 2016, in Brenchley Gardens Maidstone, a Service of Commemoration was held to remember those who gave their lives on the first day of the Battle of The Somme. In particular the men of 7th Bn Royal West Kents, who were the only West Kent battalion to see action on that day, were remembered. At right is a photograph of a 7th Bn Bugle that was sounded on that day. The bugle is part of Nigel Bristow's comprehensive collection of West Kent memorabilia.





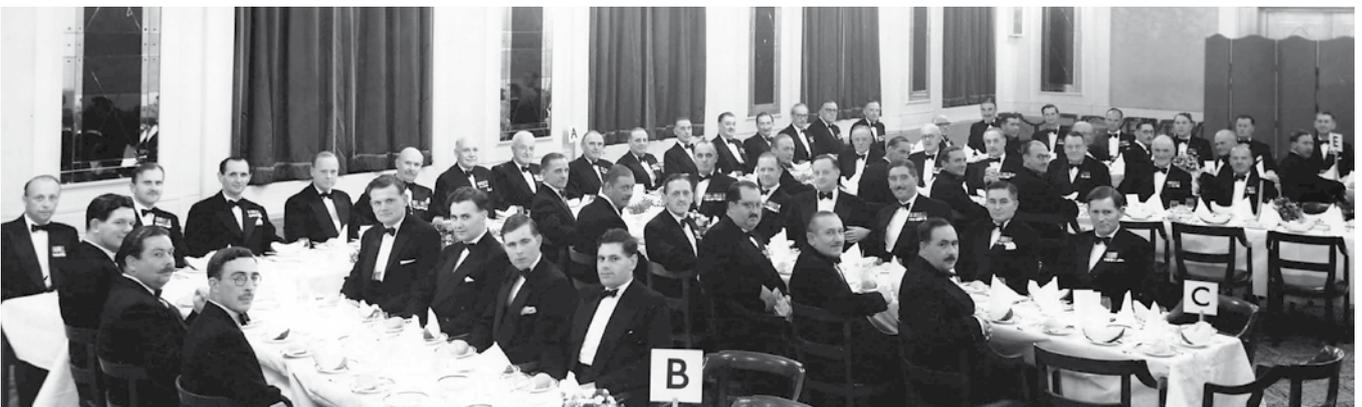
The Secretary receiving a cheque of £500 for the Association from Jonathan Neame, MD of Shepherd Neame to mark the re opening of The East Kent. The publican is holding a Buffs shield which was presented to the pub. The pub sign, above centre, is based on a helmet badge from a late Victorian era Colonel's uniform for The Buffs, East Kent Regiment.



Members of Canterbury Branch who set up at Ieros for the Re Union in 2016. many thanks to you all-I owe you a beer by the way, you can collect this year!!!!



Jacky Allen, seen here with Col. Peter Bishop having been presented with a well deserved Meritorious Award for her fantastic service to the Association and the 62 Club. Jacky is holding a bouquet and gifts to mark her 90th birthday.



Dragon Club lunch 1955



In 2008, the only surviving company commander of the 4th Royal West Kents at the battle of Kohima, ninety-year-old Colonel Donald Easten MC, visited Kohima along with members of his family in the second week of March 2008. As commander of D Company of the Royal West Kents during the siege, Colonel Easten wrote the citation for Lance Corporal John Harman's posthumous Victoria Cross.

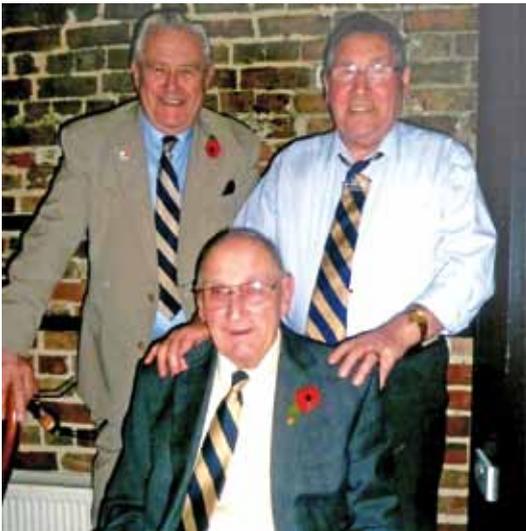
The 31st Assam Rifles, successors to the Assam Regiment which also participated in the siege, were the hosts of Colonel Easten and his party.

After laying a wreath at the war memorial, Colonel Easten stood for a minute or two in remembrance. He paid tribute also at the Royal West Kents memorial, the 2 Div memorial and John Harman's grave.

The mess where Colonel Easten and his party were staying was on DIS Ridge. Nearby, he was able to pinpoint where his battalion headquarters, the dressing station and the rifle companies had been located during the battle.

Colonel Easten says that he *"never expected to be visiting Kohima in my ninetieth year and it was a truly wonderful experience. Most of all I am left with the memory of the hospitality and kindness I received from the Indian Army and the Naga officials and people"*.

(Editors note: the above article was taken from the Kohima Education Trust Newsletter of April 2008)



Geordie Rickwood with Tony Burr, Eddie Close and Jock Lieper enjoying a cold one.

Pictured upper left: The Editor, Frankie Hills and Peter Johns at Peter J's 90th birthday party. Happy Birthday Peter from us all.



Pictured left: Lt Col John White with Jenny and Alan from the Cathedral staff, getting the Colours in the Warriors Chapel in the right order.

PRESENTATION OF AN INSCRIBED CRUET SET to The Chapel Royal of St. Peter ad Vincula The parish church of the Tower of London

All regiments value their association with landmarks within the regimental area. It has also become the practise, before they pass into history, to mark these treasured locations with memorials to ensure the regiment will be forever remembered.

The Buffs, the Queen's Own and the Queen's Own Buffs have been no exception. Indeed the Queen's Own Buffs were particularly well endowed in this regard with the regimental connection to the iconic Canterbury Cathedral and HM Tower of London. With statues of The Buffs and the Queen's Own recently established in Canterbury and Maidstone, the Committee of Management of the Queen's Own Buffs regimental association agreed that something of equal significance should be presented to the Chapel of St Peter ad Vincula, the parish church of the Tower of London.

Accordingly a magnificent inscribed silver communion cruet set was commissioned and presented by the President, Colonel Peter Bishop, during the London (Buffs) branch annual service in September last. To the acclaim of all present, including particularly the Chapel 'regulars', Canon Roger Hall gratefully accepted the gift for use in the Chapel of St Peter and St John's chapel in the nearby White Tower. The President of London (Buffs) then related a brief history of regimental links with the City of London from 1572.

The cruet set sitting alongside the 'Punniar Colours' of The Buffs and the hymn board donated by London (Buffs) in 2015, will continue to serve as a constant reminder to future generations of the regimental connection with the chapel and the City of London.



Above left: The inscribed Cruet Set

Above: Colonel Peter Bishop OBE DL, President of the Queen's Own Buffs regimental association is seen presenting the cruet set to Canon Roger Hall MBE Chaplain to Her Majesty The Queen and the Tower of London, accompanied by Major John Barrell OBE TD, President of the London Buffs branch.

RE INTERMENT OF A SOLDIER OF THE ROYAL WEST KENT'S

In November of 2015 we were advised by the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC) of the MOD that the remains of a soldier of the Royal West Kent Regt, (identified by his brass regimental shoulder flashes) had been discovered in a field in Kleine Poezelstraat, 8900 Ypres during excavations. Three other remains were found at the same time those of soldiers of the KOSB's and Rifle Brigade.



The brass shoulder titles that identified the soldier as being a West Kent

Despite extensive research the MOD had found it impossible to pin a specific Battalion to this area and due to the large number of casualties sustained with no known graves during the Ypres fighting, it has been impossible to identify the individual.

With due regard to where the remains were found it was established, beyond any reasonable doubt, that the soldier was a member of the 1st Bn The Queen's Own.

In 1915, The Queen's Own were part of 13th Brigade, which included the KOSB's and close to our soldier were found the remains of a soldier of the KOSB's. Following the German gas attack of 23rd April, 13th Brigade were rapidly deployed in support of the Canadian Division to close the gap left in the line by the routed French Colonial Divisions which had exposed the left flank of the Canadian Division.

During the action, the Queen's Own lost 105 men and, according to the 1st Bn. Queen's Own War Diaries, it was not until the 29th April that a working party went out to recover bodies. It is specifically mentioned that Sgt Bradman found the body of 2nd Lt Daubeny and others "of which there were a very large numbers lying about". Not all of the bodies were recovered and the coordinates of the spot where the remains were found corresponds with Fusilier Farm, so it was fairly safe to say, with a reasonable degree of certainty, that the remains were of a soldier serving with 1st Bn Queen's Own.

The funeral - re interment service of these soldiers took place at New Irish Farm Cemetery, Ypres on Tuesday 5th Apr 2016 with the British Ambassador to Belgium, Military Attachés and local dignitaries present.

We had been asked to provide a regimental representative, but we went slightly better than just one representative and a coach of some 45 members, from Canterbury, Ramsgate, Weald, London Buffs, Maidstone and Sittingbourne branches together with Colonel Peter Bishop, the Association Secretary and Major Richard Cast were there to say a final farewell.



There were 12 standards on parade, Captain Micky Gwilliam said the Queen's Own collect and Arthur Healey gave the Exhortation. Corporal Carol Illman of the Band of PWRR was on parade and the sounding of the Last Post and the playing of Flowers of the Forest by a Piper that followed has seldom sounded so poignant.

We can be satisfied that our unknown soldier, and his unknown colleagues, had been laid to rest with all due ceremony after 100 years.

At the end of the ceremony the Association Secretary was presented with the brass regimental shoulder titles that had identified our soldier. A very moving and emotional moment.

(Editor's note The shoulder titles will be passed to the Queen's Own Museum, Maidstone in due course.)





KEELING COPSE

MAY 1917 - 6TH BATTALION THE BUFFS

The First Battle of the Scarpe took place between 9th and 14th April 1917, at the same time The Battle of Vimy took place. The Canadians successfully taking Vimy Ridge. These are collectively known as the Arras Offensive or the Battle of Arras.

The 6th Battalion Buffs were involved in the initial attacks of the First Battle of the Scarpe on 9th April 1917, the objective being the dominant and heavily fortified village of Monchy le Preaux.

Despite it being spring the weather was atrocious and it snowed, snow which was to continue into May.

The 6th Buffs were successful in their aims and objectives on 9th April. *"The whole attack made on this day was entirely successful, even more so than was expected. Great numbers of prisoners, machine guns, field guns and materiel fell to the Buffs. All objectives were seized and consolidated and advanced parties were sent forward"*

That night, after their success during the day, the battalion found itself following the cavalry into the village of Monchy le Preux. The losses during this fighting were 25 officers and men Killed, 154 officers and men wounded and 18 men missing. By the measure of the times this was regarded as slight. However the battalion was left very short of officers.

The battalion was removed from the front on 11th April, and after a short time in reserve, eventually withdrew to the caves in Arras. They were then removed from the line entirely but only for the short period of 14 days. At the end of April, they found themselves back in the front near Monchy. By that point the battalions officer strength had been so reduced that all four companies were under the command of subalterns.

On 3rd May, 6th Battalion The Buffs took part in the Third Battle of the Scarpe. The attack was on a line Rouex, Monchy le Preux, the battle included a contemporaneous attack by Fifth Army against

the Hindenberg Line near Bullecourt. The heaviest fighting was to take place for Rouex to the north, the Buffs were in the south of the line.

Sadly, on this occasion the 6th Buffs did not enjoy the successes of the 9th April, finding themselves in great difficulty shortly after leaving their trenches. Losses were so heavy and with a total lack of communications it is difficult to piece together exactly what happened. No clear evidence exists of all that happened on that fateful day.

The battalion arrived in the line shortly before the attack with no time at all to reconnoitre the ground over which they were to attack. Combined with this, the attack was to start at 3:45 am in the dark. This meant that the lack of knowledge of the topography or landmarks, such as they were, was to prove fatal for many. The battalion was also tired as prior to the attack as the whole battalion were inadequately sheltered in shell holes overnight with little chance for sleep. Not a good way to go forward into attack.

At zero hour 3:45 am, a creeping barrage opened at the rate of 100 yards per three minutes, meaning that the men were expected to cover 100 yards in three minutes over ground they did not know and which they could not see, *"our men went off into the darkness, too many of them never to see the sun rise again"*

The British barrage which in the sector involving the 6th Buffs was accurate, allowed them to go forward. However, the German artillery was also very accurate. The Germans had only been forced from the area a short time before and had all targets carefully ranged. A heavy barrage was swiftly put down this prevented the 7th Queen's who were in support leaving their trenches. The Buffs were on their own, in the dark and undoubtedly confused by the unknown terrain.

Early attempts were made to establish communications. The signal officer, 2nd Lieutenant Macaulay went forward with two signallers and four orderlies to establish an Advanced

Battalion headquarters in Devil's Trench. They returned an hour or so later, unable to establish communications. Two prisoners were sent down and from this it was misguidedly believed, that the battalion had got forward. But no one actually knew what was happening as in the darkness it was impossible to ascertain anything definite.

When daylight finally came things were no better, as owing to active snipers and machine gun fire no information could be gathered as to what was happening to the battalion. Again the German's knew the ground and were able to ensure that any access was limited. At dusk, it became apparent that the Buffs had suffered heavy losses and that the line had not moved forward at all.

Losses were so heavy that two 2nd Lieutenants were sent forward from the details camp and arrived about 10pm. These officers were immediately sent forward to attempt to reorganize what might remain of the Battalion.

However, in the midst of this terrible day for the battalion, there is one act of gallantry, itself costly, which brought some light to a very dark day. Somehow the leading wave of the attack had managed to reach its objective, presumably owing to initial confusion amongst the Germans during the early attack and before they had regrouped.

This objective was named Keeling Copse. Whilst the attack on the flanks proved unsuccessful somehow and no one quite knows how, two officers, both second lieutenants, with about 40 men had worked forward in the dark and had established themselves in a position north east of the objective Keeling Copse with a Lewis Gun. During the period they remained in position they were able to account for a "considerable number" of Germans. The officers concerned were Lieutenants Cochrane and Gunter.

After dark, having expended every cartridge and bomb they possessed, they made their way back with great difficulty through three lines of manned German trenches. The two officers with only 13 men returned finally to Battalion HQ.

Cochrane and Gunter both received the MC for their gallant conduct on this occasion. Gunter was killed shortly afterwards within half a mile of Keeling Copse gallantly defending a trench the Germans were attacking. Cochrane lived to do "good and gallant" work later in the Royal Flying Corps.

The casualties in this terrible action were 8 Officers killed; 2 wounded; 3 missing & 25 other ranks killed, 128 wounded and 207 missing.

The Battalion was relieved on the 4th May. On returning to billets there were only enough men left to form 2 companies. The battalion had suffered a 50% casualties. Despite this after only 48 hours rest the remnant was sent back to the trenches where they remained for a further 21 days before being relieved

The war memorials of Kent contain the names of many men of the Buffs who lost their lives in WW1, hundreds alone on that day. For the most part they remain faceless names. However, there are a few for whom we have photographs. One of these killed in this action was G/115, Corporal Willie MOORE son of Mrs. Jane Moore, Victoria Cottage, The Heath, Appledore, Kent. We also have a photograph of his parents. Willie's body was not found and he is commemorated on the Arras Memorial and on the Appledore War Memorial. We can only imagine the pain and loss the 3rd May 1917 brought to this elderly couple and to so many throughout the towns and villages of East Kent.



Corporal William Moore



William's parents

Photographs courtesy of Brian Knight & Appledore Local History Society

LAST POST

WO1 'GEORDIE' RICKWOOD:



Those who served in the Queen's Own, Queen's Own Buffs and 2nd Queen's will remember 'Geordie' who passed away last year, with great affection. A soldier through and through and a great character, with a unique sense of humour, brave, fair, approachable and always popular with his soldiers.

Major John Norton writes : *When we formed Support Company in 1 RWK in late 1950 in preparation for active service in Malaya, Geordie Rickwood was in the Machine Gun Platoon under Jack Fletcher's command. In Malayan jungles MMGs were not in great demand, so his platoon was mostly used in the same way as ordinary infantry platoons, but in that role too Geordie proved to be exceptionally good value. He was a strong swimmer; Jack Fletcher wasn't. Jack was swept away trying to cross a river. Geordie saved his life and in due course received due recognition from the Royal Humane Society. He was a great character and in later years it was sad to see him at Maidstone Reunions in a wheel chair, though he remained strong in spirit and his memory will be respected by all who served with him.*

Major (ret'd) Bill Marshall writes: *Both Geordie and Ray Batchelor were two stalwarts who gave great service to the Regiments they loved.*

Geordie will be remembered by all of us who knew him with great respect.

RONALD (RON) RICHARD BARTON:



Ron was born on 31st October 1931 in Stratford, East London and at the age of 17 he went to Stratford Recruiting Office to enlist. He found that he needed to be 17½ to join up and on the advice of the recruiting Sergeant went round the corner, had a cup of tea and then 20 minutes later returned to the Recruiting Office when he was 17½ (*Amazing what a cup of tea can do!*). Ron served with the Queen's Own through Dunkirk,

North Africa, Italy, Greece, Malaya and Cyprus and finally joined the Long Service list and stayed at the Recruiting Office in Finchley until leaving the Army in 1967 after 30 years of service. He always supported the 62 Club and the Association and was there at every Maidstone Re Union- He will be much missed.

ETHEL "JUNE" FAULKNER:



June, the widow of Major George Faulkner, passed away on September 17th 2016 aged 97.

COLONEL DONALD FRISELL EASTEN MC:



Colonel Donald Eastern MC, the last surviving Queen's Own Officer of the Siege of Kohima died today at the age of 96. Donald was awarded the Military Cross for his outstanding bravery during the Siege.

LES WORTHY:



Les, who passed away on 21st February 2017, was one of the very last survivors of those brave men of 141 Regt RAC The Buffs.

Les was awarded the American Bronze Star for his bravery in the taking of the port of Brest.

PAULINE CAST:



Pauline passed away on 26th March 2016. The daughter of a WW2 Buff, George A May, who served in the 5th Battalion in Italy.

Pauline married Richard in 1972 and they had one daughter, Sammie, who was born 4 years later.

Pauline was a passionate supporter of the Royal British Legion and of our Regimental Association, especially Sittingbourne Branch.

Pauline herself became an honorary Buff when the Branch allowed the Ladies to join and she later became a committee member.

Our condolences go to Richard and Sammie in their sad loss.

Nothing was ever too much trouble for Pauline and she would do anything to help anyone. We in the Association will miss her very much indeed.

MAJOR (RETD) CHARLES MAURICE CHURCHILL DEWAR:



Maurice passed away towards the end of July. After Sandhurst, Maurice was commissioned into The Buffs in late 1955 and joined the 1st Battalion in Wuppertal, Germany in January 1956. Thereafter he

served with the regiment in Aden and Dortmund. In 1961, after amalgamation with the Queen's Own and subsequently with 2 Queen's, Maurice served in Kenya and Northern Ireland and attended Staff College in 1967. Prior to his retirement in April 1974 he served as G2 Intelligence HQ 4 Div BAOR and finally as GS02 Staff Duties in HQ BAOR. A keen golfer and all round sportsman Maurice represented his battalion in nearly all sports and for BAOR in Tennis and Squash becoming BAOR Tennis Champion in 1969.

He was very proud of being a 2nd generation Buffs Officer and was very helpful latterly in keeping the Dragon Club and Buffs aspects going.

NORMAN ARTHUR MARTIN:

Norman passed away after a long illness on 22nd October 2016.

Like other young men of his age, Norman Martin was called up for compulsory military service. After completing his basic training, he was sent to Malaya to combat the communist terrorists who were conducting a ruthless campaign to overthrow the government. His experiences there in 1951 as a member of D Company, the 1st Battalion of the

Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, changed his life for ever.

Following a short course on how to live and patrol in the dense and steamy jungles and through large rubber plantations, using weapons and carrying heavy loads up mountains and through swamps, Norman was posted to 11 Platoon in D Company, which was located in a remote and primitive camp from which he and his platoon would be sent out to different areas where enemy activity had been reported or was suspected. It was a tough and dangerous life requiring great powers of strength, endurance and courage. Norman showed all those qualities.

He was an excellent soldier, completely loyal and selfless, and popular with the other members of his platoon. On 22nd October 1951 an event occurred that shattered all their lives. By a quirk of fate Norman could not be with them that day but was on duty in the Company base. The rest of platoon had just completed an exhausting 48-hour jungle patrol and they were in vehicles heading back to their company base along a mountainous, winding track through a rubber plantation, when they suddenly came under withering fire from a well-concealed and heavily armed terrorist ambush group.

Norman's company commander and four others were killed in the first moment and his platoon commander and others were severely wounded. There ensued a desperate battle with the terrorists who charged repeatedly to try to seize weapons. But time and again what was left of 11 Platoon drove them off empty-handed, leaving behind six of their own dead, though our own grievous losses totalled 16 killed and many wounded. None of the survivors, and none of the stand-by platoons sent swiftly to the scene immediately after news of the event reached the battalion, will ever forget the scene of that dreadful incident. Nor could Norman. He lost so many of his close comrades there, including his best friend.

No one felt their loss more deeply than Norman and no one could have done more than he did to keep their memory alive. He was present when a statue together with a memorial listing their names was unveiled outside Maidstone Museum. The Regiment owe him a debt of gratitude for his major part in ensuring they were honoured.

We must also acknowledge his wife Mary for caring for him so devotedly over so many years in sickness and in health. We admire and respect her tireless attention; it enabled Norman to continue coming to

Regimental Reunions and other events. Thanks to her, even after he became wheelchair-bound he maintained a cheerful demeanour and a positive attitude – a personal demonstration of the motto of our county that is inscribed on the regimental badge: INVICTA – UNCONQUERED.

BRIAN WILFRED JENNER:

Brian was born in Sunderland and lived in Fulwell. From a very early age he was interested in sport. At 18 he signed on for five years with the Royal Army Pay Corps but, after training, he was posted to 1 RQWK in Malaya and joined 'D' Company just after their fateful day of the ambush. When the battalion returned to UK Brian joined the SAS and remained in Malaya. He left the army just before the Suez crisis, he was recalled but did not take part in the operation. After leaving the army he qualified as a teacher and became Deputy Head of St Anne's Primary School where he stayed until retirement.

MAJOR DENNIS CAMPBELL:

Dennis Campbell was born in 1926 in Quetta, close to what was then the Afghan-Indian border, where his father was an officer in the Ghurka Rifles. After attending Wellington College he joined the Grenadier Guards shortly before D Day in 1944. After the war he transferred to 1st Bn QORWK Regiment and saw active service with them in Malaya and received a mention in Despatches for personally killing several Communist Terrorists. After the amalgamation he served as Ground Liaison Officer for 2 Sqn RAF. His final period of duty was with the Queen's Own Buffs in Guyana. In 1964 he resigned from the Army and obtained a teaching degree from Exeter University.

STANLEY JEWEL:

Stan was born in 1936 in East Dulwich. He was a lifelong supporter of Charlton Athletic and in later life a referee for the Orpington and Bromley Sunday League. During his National Service with the Queen's Own he served in Cyprus. On his return to civilian life he became initially a postman and later a Black Cab Taxi driver in Bromley until he retired.

PETER RUSSELL:

Peter was born on April 10th 1936 in High Broom. Prior to his National Service with the 1 Queen's Own in Germany he worked for British Rail and on discharge returned and enjoyed a long and distinguished career with them. He married Rita in May 1957 and their daughter, Karen, was born in 1961 and later a son, Simon, in 1964. An ASLEF union representative for many years he was also a member of the British Rail Pensions Board. Peter was widowed in 2006 and while on his own took in a three legged dog and two rescued Jack Russells to keep him company.

BRYAN GLIDDON:

Bryan passed away on 23d June. He served initially with the Queen's Own in Cyprus and later with the Queen's Own Buffs in Hong Kong, Kenya and British Guyana.

BRIGADIER PICKARD QGM:

Brigadier Clive Pickard has died at the age of 79. Born in Hull on May 22nd 1937 he was called up for National Service and completed his basic training with The Buffs after which he was commissioned and in 1961 was granted a Regular Commission. After a short period of time with The Buffs he transferred to The Royal Army Ordnance Corps. March 1974 he assumed command of 321 EOD in Northern Ireland. In May of that year he with an ATO were called to deal with a hijacked van parked on the forecourt of a garage on top of tanks storing over 2,000 gallons of petrol. A call was received to say that there was a bomb in the van which was timed to explode in 2 hours. It took 2 hours to cover the van with foam to limit any damage should the bomb explode and then taking it in turns they neutralised the bomb by removing over 1,000 lbs of highly sensitive and unstable home-made explosive from the back of the van. They also found 10 home made mortar bombs in a dangerous state and a quantity of loose commercial explosive which was old and 'weeping'. The whole operation took 11 hours. Subsequently Clive was awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal for his bravery and leadership.

After retirement he settled in Yorkshire and enjoyed jazz, photography, painting and writing. For many years he was an Army Class 1 Association Football referee.

RT HON Sir CLIVE BOSSOM Bt:

Sir Clive Bossom, 2nd Bt, who has died on March 8th 2017 aged 99, was a Conservative MP and keen motor sportsman who for three years was chairman of the Royal Automobile Club.

Clive Bossom was born on February 4 1918, the second son of Alfred Bossom and his first wife, the former Emily Bayne; Bossom senior was made a baronet in 1953 and a life peer in 1960. Clive's elder brother died young, and he succeeded to the baronetcy on his father's death in 1965. Educated at Eton, he joined the reserve in 1937 and when war broke out received a regular commission with The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment) and served in France, Germany, China, Java and Malaya, leaving in 1948 as a Major.

He became a Lloyd's underwriter and entered politics in Kent, where his father wielded considerable influence. In 1949 he was elected to the county council, joining its Fire Brigade Committee. He later became president of the Fire Protection Association.

Bossom's first election speech, for his father in 1950, ended in a stampede by 3,000 women. He found them queueing for the sale at a Maidstone department store; no sooner had he finished than they surged forward, breaking a plate glass window and leaving three women and a policeman in hospital.

In 1951 he contested the adjoining Labour marginal of Faversham – once canvassing his father's constituents by mistake. He reduced Percy Wells's majority from 2,239 to 562, and four years later was expected to take the seat; indeed, the BBC declared him elected by 11 votes. But two recounts confirmed Wells had held the seat by 59.

Elected for Leominster in 1959, he spoke mainly on agriculture. In 1960 he became PPS to the pensions ministers Pat Hornsby-Smith and Bernard Braine, replaced the next autumn by Mrs Thatcher and Richard Sharples. Sir Hugh Fraser took him to the Air Ministry in 1962, then to the newly formed MoD. He was at various times president of International Social Service, chairman of the Anglo-Eastern Bank, a council member of the Royal Society of Arts and the Royal Geographical Society and a trustee of Brooklands Museum. He was a liveryman of the Paviers' and Needlemakers'

Companies as well as the Grocers and President of The Dragon Club.

MAJOR (retd) ALAN MARCHANT:

Alan passed away in the Pilgrim's Hospice on Thursday 30th March and his funeral was held at Barham Crematorium on 19th April. A full obituary will be published in the next issue. Until then, suffice to say Alan paid a central role in the affairs of our Association as Chair of East Kent and member of the Committee of Management and as treasurer of Canterbury Branch. The messages received from our members on hearing of his passing speak volumes of the respect and affection in which he was held.

WOII COLIN MCGOWAN:

It was on the 15th September 1931 at the Canada House Nursing Home in Gillingham that Thomas and Eliza McGowan welcomed their son, Colin, into the world.

Having attended Byron Road infants and junior schools, Colin passed his 11+ and moved to Gillingham County Grammar School.

When he left school he found employment as a junior clerk at Wood, McLellan & Williams, a firm of solicitors in Chatham.

But when he was 16 Colin enlisted into the regular army and was posted to the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment on 29th July 1948. Apparently he wanted to join the Army Physical Training Corps but in the end he became a member of the Regimental Band and on 30th September 1949 when he was 18 Colin was selected for training at the Royal Military School of Music at Twickenham where he trained on the B-flat Cornet and learned instrumentation and basic harmony.

When that was completed he returned to his regiment in time for their move to Singapore and Malaya on 2nd February 1951.

And so Colin's career in the services saw him become a Band Clerk with promotion to Lance Corporal in October 1952, then by 1954 he attained the rank of full corporal on his return to the UK. He was then responsible for training Junior Band boys and was posted to the British Army of the Rhine –

BAOR – in Luneburg which was the large training area in Germany.

Colin returned to the UK in May 1956 before being posted to Cyprus at the end of October 1957 where he was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in June 1958.

It was during one of his times back at home that his life was to change forever when he met a pretty teenager, Teresa Kiernan.

It was in 1957 that the band of the Royal West Kent Regiment were playing at a dance and 22221317 Corporal Colin McGowan was playing a pretty mean trumpet which certainly meant that Teresa noticed him. Well he had noticed Teresa too and in one of the breaks between playing he bought a drink for Teresa, and nearly four years later they married on April 1st 1961 in St Francis' Catholic Church in Maidstone.

From then on their lives had to fit in around Colin's postings and in April 1963 he was transferred to the Regimental Band of the Middlesex Regiment as a Band Sergeant and then in August 1963 he was posted to Gibraltar.

Their first child Nigel was born on 6th August 1962, Fiona came along in Gibraltar on 30th November 1963 with Elaine filling the final family place back in Maidstone on 12th August 1965.

1968 saw a posting to Northern Ireland and Colin's promotion to Warrant Officer and then it was back to Kent to help with the Territorial Band in Canterbury before being demobbed on 14th September 1971 the day before his 40th birthday.

Well they say "Life begins at 40" and certainly a whole new life started for Colin when he became a peripatetic Brass teacher for East Northamptonshire.

In 1985 he formed a music school in Wellingborough with the express purpose of preparing students for entry to the Central Music School in Northampton.

In 1993 Colin found his role made redundant and he took the opportunity to retire from full time employment. He secured a part time job with Avon Cosmetics and later worked with the MOD as a volunteer support visitor which involved visiting war widows and members suffering with illness. He found this to be a very satisfying role that he continued for many years.

Colin was a member of the Probus Club in Wellingborough for over twenty years and he and Teresa enjoyed an active social life with the club and made many lasting friendships over the years.

MR EDWARD SEED: Ex Buffs and a member of Sandwich Branch

KENNETH JAMES SPILLET: Ken passed away in April 2016 and his funeral was held on 28th April 2016 at Weston Mill crematorium, Plymouth.

FRED KIMBER: Fred a member of the 62 Club since 1980 died peacefully in his sleep on 22 Dec 2016.

ASHER ROSE: An ex Buff and long standing member of Ramsgate Branch, Asher passed away on 12th February.

EDWARD (TED) SIMMS: Ted, who served in the bands of The Buffs and Queen's Own Buffs, passed away on 29th March 2017. He is survived by his wife , Germaine and two children.

WO11 ALAN KNIGHT: Alan passed away on 13th January. He served in the Queen's Own Buffs, 2nd Queen's and later as a WO11 with 1 Queen's.

WO11 RAY BATCHELOR: Ray saw service with in The Buffs in Aden, where he was slightly wounded, the Queen's Own Buffs and later with 3 Queen's where he was CSM of 'A' Company in Cyprus and Northern Ireland. He lived in Watford, where, after leaving the Army he became a taxi driver. Ray was always a passionate supporter of Watford FC. Evidently he passed away on the way home from a Watford home game.

DAVE CURRY:

CAPTAIN STANLEY JAMES VENN:

TONY LOMAS:



55th INFANTRY BRIGADE

by

Reverend Keith Fazzani



After the 1st World War a large number of Divisional and Regimental Histories were produced and occasionally a Brigade History is to be found. There was no central organisation to their production and many units never produced histories. The fact that, unlike The Official History, or War Diaries, they were not produced under any central authority, these individually produced volumes have no axe to grind and thus can provide an interesting and sometimes quirky account of events.

Some years ago, and I forget now where or how I found it, I purchased a small volume, more a booklet entitled "A Short History of the 55th Infantry Brigade in the War of 1914 – 18". It is marked "Confidential and For Private Circulation Only". The copy I have in my possession is inscribed with the following name and details of the original owner: 29234 L/Cpl W Sharples MM, Battalion Runner, 8th Battalion East Surreys, France.

The book is short, only 52 pages, it is well thumbed with a number of pencilled in comments and highlights, it has been folded, obviously to fit neatly in a pocket. I wonder whether it was taken to Regimental Association meetings by L/Cpl Sharples its original owner and discussed over a beer or two?

Our particular interest in the 55th Brigade is that it contained two Kent Battalions, the 7th Queen's Own Royal West Kent and the 7th East Kent (Buffs). The other two battalions in the Brigade were the 7th Queens and the 8th East Surrey.

As this Journal is being published in 2017 I thought it fitting to reproduce below part of the short chapter on the 55th Brigade entitled "Seven Months in the Ypres Salient". This portion covers the Brigade's activities during the 3rd Battle of Ypres in late 1917, commonly referred to as the Battle of Passchendaele.

The notes at the end give further information on the events mentioned in the History and are gleaned from other histories and in particular Battalion War Diaries.

A Short History of the 55th Infantry Brigade :
"Seven Months on the Ypres Salient"

The Brigade went into line at once July 5th (1917) in the Zillebeke sector and held the line until July 31st. This was perhaps one of the most unpleasant experiences that the Brigade had ever had. Although no actual attack took place on either side, preparations for the great attack were being made by us, while the enemy did his best to make these impossible. The shelling in all areas was very heavy at all hours of the day and night, and gas bombardments took place nightly on both sides. The Brigade was withdrawn for the attack of 31st July: the 7th Queens were meant to take part in the final stages of the battle, but owing to its partial success did not.

On August 3rd, the Brigade (7th Buffs and 8th East Surrey Regt.) took over the newly gained line, and on August 10th the 7th Queens made a small and partially successful attack on Inverness Copse . Very heavy casualties had been incurred by this time, and in consequence the Brigade had to be withdrawn to rest at Eringham near Wormhout. After six weeks a move was made to St Jan Ter Biezen west of Poperinghe; it was here that a very large bombing raid was made on the camp, in which 120 men were killed and wounded, mostly from the 7th Buffs.

On October 10th (1917) the Brigade went into the line at Poelcapelle for the attack on that village. The attack was made over ground under almost impossible weather conditions; as far as gain of ground was concerned, it cannot be claimed as a success, but at the same time it was of great assistance to troops on the flanks who had their task made far easier as a consequence. Very heavy casualties were again suffered and one Battalion was bombed while embussing on relief (7th R. W. Kent Regt.)

One month's work in the Boesinghe area by the Infantry Battalions followed. The Trench Mortar Battery, however, left behind in the line, with the 53rd Brigade took part in the capture of Meunier

House, near Poelcapelle, one of the most brilliant minor operations carried out in the war.

Early in November Brigadier-General G D Price was transferred to a command at home, and Brigadier General E A Wood, DSO, took over command of the Brigade.

The next sector was Houlthurst (sic) Forest, which the Brigade took over on November 10th. This was a somewhat quieter sector, although ground and weather conditions were very bad. It was impossible to dig trenches owing to the waterlogged conditions of the ground, and all approach was by duck board of which the enemy had the exact range. The Brigade lived in this line, with a break of ten days at Christmas (which was spent at Nordusques, Nr St Omer) until 1st February. Nothing of great importance occurred during this period, although one or two raids were attempted on either side.

The 7th Bn Queens launched an attack on Inverness Copse, which had been postponed owing to heavy rain, at 4.35am on 10th August supported by 8th East Surreys. Casualties were heavy from very heavy shell fire and one officer and thirty-eight other ranks were killed.

From 7th Buffs War Diary: The 23rd September : The Buffs moved by train to St Jan Ter Biezen, where five days afterwards, hostile aircraft dropped bombs into the camp, doing a very great deal of damage. The men were in huts and tents and the area a very congested one, which fact probably tempted the enemy to his enterprise. It was dark when the aeroplane flew over and it dropped six bombs (two of which were blind) right into the camp, resulting in the death of 2nd Lt R E C Mead and twenty-six others. and the wounding of Lt and Quartermaster Rye, 2nd Lts Malton and Tyler and sixty-three others. This misfortune had the effect of disorganizing the arrangement of platoons and sections just at a time when the regiment was being braced up and perfected in the new method of attack called 'Leap Frog'.

The 7th Battalion RWK War Diary makes no reference to the bombing on relief. However, there is attached to the Diary an extensive typed account of the actual attack referred to in The History which makes the account there appear rather an understatement of what was in effect a disastrous attack.

One example from the War Diary's appendix: *The heavy losses which occurred among officers and NCO's were due to efforts to gain ground by fire and movement after the barrage had been lost. The mud and water were so bad that to move rapidly from shell hole to shell hole was out of the question. Rifles also got covered with mud and even after they had been cleaned it was difficult to keep them in action for more than a few rounds without cleaning the breech again, since the men's hands were plastered with mud and each time a fresh clip was put in some mud inevitably went with it.*

The total casualties sustained by the Brigade in this attack are given in the Brigade War Diary as follows:

	Officers	NCO's	Rank & File
7th Queens	6	30	165
7th Buffs	11	62	317
8th East Surrey	10	45	222
7th R.W Kent	14	57	240
7th R.W Kent incurred on embussing			
	3	-	35
35th Machine Gun Company			
	2	15	36
TOTAL	48	209	1013

Note: The correct spelling is Houthulst Forest

Christmas 1917

From 7th Buffs War Diary: XMAS DAY:

All the companies had special dinners midday in their billets extras being provided out of PRI funds. The Commanding Officer visited everyone at Dinners also the Sergt's Mess at 3:30pm. The GOC 55th Inf. Bde. Visited the Battalion and saw Hqr's Details at Dinner he was unable to visit any other Mess.

7th RWK Diary: Christmas Day.

Battalion Dinner at 1:00pm

One section of The History covers specific acts of gallantry by men of the Brigade a few of which are given below again where possible additional pertinent facts are given at the end of the account.

Readers may recollect that in the last edition of the Journal the action at Desire Trench on the Somme was described. One of the features of this action was the loss of several runners who set off to find out what was happening at the front which caused much confusion. However, the war diary does not mention that there was a telephone line kept open to the rear during much of the attack. The War Diaries and other official documents rarely mention Other Ranks by name, I was therefore fascinated to read the following account in this tiny volume:

8th East Surrey Regiment - Desire Trench – 18th Nov 1916

No 5113 Lance-Corporal A Walker was a signaller and, with the assistance of two other men as linesmen, was responsible for maintaining telephonic communication with the front line by means of a wire running along Death Valley. The valley was very heavily shelled all day by the enemy and both of the men who were with him were killed early in the day. But he continued alone at his work for eight hours, repairing incessant breaks in the wire occasioned by heavy enemy fire. This line gave the only means of communication with the front line, and its maintenance was of the utmost importance, and depended on the cool courage displayed by this NCO. He was awarded the Military Medal.

Again, the article in the 2016 edition of the Journal gives details of the successful attack on the Schwaben Redoubt in September 1916. The official accounts lack the names of any of those involved, once again this little book has an account of this action with more detailed information on the conditions and one of personnel involved:

7th Buffs – Schwaben Redoubt – September 1916

The operations in the Schwaben Redoubt in September 1916, were carried out in trenches a foot deep in slippery mud, persistent rain, almost continual shelling and generally under most nerve trying conditions. Owing to its commanding position the redoubt was continually being attacked by the enemy. In these circumstances Second Lieutenant A S Hayfield displayed conspicuous gallantry during frequent bombing attacks. In one of these, the enemy, by a heavy bombardment and use of flammenwerfer (flamethrower) , succeeded in taking 200 yards of trench in the North-East face of the redoubt. This officer personally led a bombing party, and with the aid of Stokes Mortars

and Lewis guns succeeded in regaining the lost trench and in addition captured 100 yards more. He also led a party that pushed forward in the trench on the Western face. Under heavy shell fire he moved about in the coolest manner possible, encouraging his men and displayed the utmost energy until wounded on the 4th October. Owing to conditions he was unable to be moved until the following day. The enemy again attacked on the 5th. Though suffering intense pain his only thoughts were for his brother, who was in action at the time. This most gallant officer died of wounds on 6th October.

Subsequent investigations show that 2nd Lieutenant Allan Sydney Hayfield is buried at Puchevillers British Cemetery. He was 29 years old, a temporary Second Lieutenant and came from Southborough, his parents were George Henry and Mary Ann Hayfield, 21 Prospect Road, Southborough.

From the Courier, 13th October 1916: *“Second Lieutenant AS Hayfield has died from wounds in Hospital in France. His mother, Mrs Hayfield of Prospect Road last received a letter from her son dated September 30th, and has since received a letter from the nursing sister stating that he was admitted to the hospital with very serious injuries, and that everything was done for him. Mrs Hayfield has two other sons serving, including another one in the same regiment”.*

It would appear that the other two sons survived the war.

Again, in the Journal of 2016 an account is given of various actions in Trones Wood on the Somme the following is an account of one specific action by the 7th Buffs, early in the battle, July 13th 1916.

7th Buffs – Trones Wood – July 1916

Near Trones Wood on 13th July 1916, Sergeant C J Crame led his section in the attack on a German strong point. In the first attack he was wounded in the foot. He had his wound dressed and returned to his section, which he again led to the attack. He was again wounded, but after having the wound dressed again went to his command. This happened a third time. Though three times wounded, he remained with his section until it was relieved, and even then refused to leave it, until ordered to do so by his platoon officer. For this action he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal and Russian Order of St George, 3rd Class.

Sergeant C J Crame was once again wounded in the Battle of Passchendaele but on this occasion, he succumbed to his wounds dying on 13th October 1917, and he is buried in Dozinghem Military Cemetery near Poperinghe, Belgium.

The Short History of the 55th Brigade is a fascinating insight into the 1st World War. Written within a couple of years of the end of the war with events fresh in the minds of those who fought and lived. No doubt it was written as a memorial to those of their mates who fought and died.

Perhaps this final extract may serve as a memorial to them all:

“Among those who were wounded and later died of their wounds was Major J Wightman DSO; MC; of the 8th E Surrey Regt. This officer, during the whole of the fighting from 21st March (1918) not only afforded the highest example of consistent gallantry and devotion to duty, but by his invariable coolness and cheerful confidence encouraged and inspired all with whom he came in contact.

(Major James Wightman who died on 9/04/1918 is buried at Picquigny British Cemetery which is situated between Amiens and Abbeville”



2/LT ROBERT FFRENCH BLAKE

2ND BN THE BUFFS, SOUTH AFRICA

(Editor's background notes: On December 22nd 1899, 2nd Battalion The Buffs embarked on the SS Gaika bound for South Africa. The strength of the battalion was 17 Officers and 860 non-commissioned officers and men, in addition 4 Officers and 140 non-commissioned officers, that formed the Mounted Infantry Company of the battalion, embarked a fortnight later. SS Gaika arrived at Cape Town on 13th January 1900. From Cape Town the battalion entrained for Naauwpoort reaching there on 16th January. Over the next 2 years, 2nd Buffs fought with great distinction. Over the two years of operations the battalion received drafts totalling 599 non-commissioned officers and a few officers. One of those officers was a young recently commissioned 2nd Lt. Robert ffrench Blake.

The losses the battalion suffered over their service in South Africa were:-

Killed in Action or died 128

Invalided home due to wounds/illness 433

Service time expired 139

Prisoners 18

Other causes 18



A total of 736 in addition a further 40 to 50 men who were hospitalised in Cape Town on 1st January 1902.

One of officers that died was a 2nd Lt. Robert ffrench Blake who was accidentally killed in a shooting accident on 19th May 1902.

Colonel Robert ffrench Blake, a nephew of 2nd. Lt ffrench Blake now takes up the story.

I had often wondered about my Uncle and namesake 2Lt Robert French Blake ('Robbie') who was tragically killed in a shooting accident.

He was out hunting with some local friends who he had met when guarding a section of the railway line and bridges over The Crocodile River between Alkmaar and Nelspruit in the then, East Transvaal, on 19th May 1902. No one in my family knew where he had been buried although his body was examined by a Civil Surgeon in Nelspruit, so we assumed that he had probably been buried in a local cemetery or graveyard.

My wife and I reckoned from the scanty information available and unmarked photographs, that his body/ remains had been moved at least once.

In November last year our near neighbour who was South African sadly died of a heart attack. His brother, Matthew Lotter, who lives in South Africa came over to sort out his affairs and we became good friends. During the time he was here we discovered he was deeply interested in Military History and The Boer War so we hatched a plan to visit South Africa post Christmas, to, if possible, locate and visit my Uncle's grave .

It took over a month to finally discover that his remains were buried in The Garden of Remembrance, Barberton. Matthew had worked tirelessly in South Africa with approaches to The South African War Graves Commission, the local museum and historic society and The Memorable Order of Tin Hats (MOTH) which is an Association of Ex Service Personnel who have seen active Service in theatres of Armed Services operations. The Order was founded in 1927.

At home, Major Peter White, the Association Secretary, has been an enormous help and we found The Forces War Records very useful too. Our search was made more difficult as my Uncle was listed as 2/Lt RCSF Blake!

We visited The Garden on Friday 24th February to be greeted by members of the local Press and some very enthusiastic and supportive members of MOTH! The Garden is inspirational and it was quite an emotional experience to find my Uncle's remains in such wonderful surroundings and where I was able to lay a wreath so generously provided by the Regimental Association. A plaque at the entrance stated The Garden was erected in memory of The Soldiers and Auxiliaries of The British Field Force who died during The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902 originally buried in cemeteries at Barberton, Nelspruit, Komatipoort, Rectorspruit, Kaapmuden and Alkmaar. It was unveiled by The British Ambassador, Sir David Scott on 9th July 1977. We left totally elated by the whole experience with reassurance from The MOTH members that not only would they get the engraving on the grave amended to read "2/Lt RCS French Blake The Buffs (East Kent Regt)" but they would also take care of the wreath and lay it every Remembrance Sunday.

What more could we or indeed my Uncle Robbie have possibly asked for.



Colonel Robert French Blake laying a wreath on the grave of his uncle



WRITE TO REPLY



Dear Editor

The Friends of Canterbury Cathedral would like to thank all the branches of The Queen's Own Buffs' Association who have so generously contributed towards the new Friends' Garden. This is very much appreciated.

The Friends' Garden is an important part of our celebrations of our 90th Anniversary and will be opened during Cathedral Open Gardens in May 2017. The Garden has been designed by the Cathedral Head Gardener, Philip Oostenbrink and we are humbled to be sharing the Garden with the statue of The Buff which stands as an important focal point in the centre.

We have recently been delighted and honoured to learn that we have also been awarded a grant from The Patron's Fund to help us create the Garden which will be used by all visitors to the Cathedral and Precincts including, of course, your Association members and Friends when they visit. With your support, we will make sure the Garden is a beautiful and contemplative space to inspire its millions of visitors.

Thank you once again for the kind generosity of your members. We look forward to seeing many of them in the Garden when they are next here.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline Plaisted
Friends' Secretary

I am so grateful for the bouquet and gifts to celebrate my 90th and for the thoughts behind them and to then hear the Regimental March of the Queen's Own was just the icing on the cake.

Thank you all for making another lovely memory for me to hold on to.

Love to you all

Jacky

41 Priors Road

Tadley, Hants

Dear Editor

It is a little while now since my father's, Sidney Pullman, funeral and high time I dropped you a line to express the family's grateful thanks for the help and support the Association gave Father in his last years. Dad was always up for 'an event' and I'm sure the constant flow of activity provided by the Association helped to keep him going for as long as he did. It was only in his final few months that things became too much for him.

We were also highly appreciative for the magnificent funeral service held at Canterbury Cathedral facilitated by the Association. It has certainly impressed on me a very special and lasting memory to hold close and I know Barry is of the same mind.

Perhaps through your office you could be so kind as to pass on our thanks and appreciation to the members of the Association and we wish you all well in the future.

With kindest regards

Shawn Pullman

Jacky Allen

3 Sermon Drive, Swanley

Dear All,

I must write to thank all of you for the lovely day you gave me at this year's Maidstone Reunion. I have never felt so special in all of my life, honestly.

Captain Micky Gwilliam
6 Fownes Street
Battersea SW11 2TJ
Tel: 07786 782041
email: micky.gwilliam@gmail.com

Dear All

About ten days ago the Vatican announced that the Pope had appointed Father (Major Retd) John MacWilliam (Johnny Mac), since retirement a member of the Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers), to be Bishop of Laghouat in the Algerian Sahara, the biggest Catholic diocese in the world after Siberia, apparently, with very few Christians but quite a lot of camels. A bit of a shock for Johnny who is more of a 'sandals in the sand' sort of bloke than mitres and roman-collar! Anyway, he accepted (as one does) and so things have to move ahead fast.

Johnny will be consecrated bishop at Worth Abbey on Saturday 20th May at 2.00 pm. Of course, he would love to have some of his old chums there on the day. Johnny has asked that I coordinate names of those coming so that we can try to ensure that the wine doesn't run out afterwards (Cana, 'water-into-wine' only happened once!).

In his letter to me Johnny said "I never made promotion to Colonel, but it seems I'm climbing another ladder in my old age! Normally we have to retire as bishops at 75, so I've got about 7 years in the job before hopefully getting another 'missionary position' somewhere (yes, I can still joke!). I suspect I am the first former member of the 'Lazy Saints' (10 pl. C Coy, 2 Queen's) to become a bish! Peter Bishop was one already!

With best wishes

Micky Gwilliam



NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following who have now joined the Regimental Association.

Mr N E Williams	RA	58-60
Mr E Bassant	RAF	55-58
Mr R C Heath	RWK/2 Qns	60-69
Lt Col. P Denham	RACT	68-75
Mr D J Wakeling	QOB/2Qns	63-76
Mr D J Shew	Middlsx	64-72
Mr L C Larkins	QORWK	58-64
Mrs B J Roberts	QARANC	70-72
Major J C Cassidy	R Sigs	78-06

REGIMENTAL REUNIONS 2017 **CANTERBURY REUNION** **23rd July 2017**

MAIDSTONE REUNION **10th September 2017**

A copy of the Administrative Orders with timings are published within this Journal and application forms for Lunch Tickets for both reunions are also enclosed.

Please support these two very important Association events if you possibly can, we can only keep these Re Unions going if sufficient support is forthcoming,

CANTERBURY BRANCH ANNUAL CAROL SERVICE

The annual carol concert will be held on Sunday 16th December at 2 pm. in the All Saints Church (the old garrison church), Military Rd, Canterbury.

All Association members are welcome.

THE BUFFS, QUEEN'S OWN, QUEEN'S OWN BUFFS and 2nd QUEEN'S ANNUAL OFFICERS LUNCH.

The lunch will be held in the Gascoigne Room at the Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, Waterloo on Wednesday 25th October at 12 noon for 1 pm.

(Details of the menu not yet available and will follow)

The cost of the lunch, will be £40 per person and tickets can be obtained by completing the enclosed form.

LONDON BUFFS BRANCH SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE TOWER OF LONDON Sunday 3rd September 2017

This parade and annual Service of Remembrance, organised by the London (Buffs) Branch of the Regimental Association will be held on Sunday 3rd September 2017. The parade will assemble at the East Gate of Tower of London at 10.15am.

Should you wish to attend the service then please contact the secretary of London Branch, Mrs. Betty Correa, 42 Chestnut Drive, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 7PR: Telephone number 01227-634663

bettycorrea53@icloud.com

ASSOCIATION TRIP TO THE NORMANDY BEACHES Sept 29th to Oct 2nd

The above trip is now fully booked. However there will possibly be a few cancellations so, if you wish

to go, please contact the Association Secretary and you will be placed onto the Waiting List..

Those attending will be advised of the local Pick up Points timings when the final Admin Order and Itinerary are sent out.

REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION CHRISTMAS LUNCH 10th December 2017.

Individual branches are finding it increasingly difficult to attract sufficient numbers to provide economical Christmas lunch or dinner events for their members. It was agreed at the meeting in November of Branch Officials that the provision of a centralised Association Christmas event should be arranged. Consequently the following arrangements have been made.

The Westgate Hall, Canterbury had been booked for Sunday December 10th 2017.

The timings would be 12.30 for 1pm when lunch would be served.

The menu would be of three courses with waiter service.

The Invicta Band and Swingtime Sweethearts have been booked to provide entertainment.

There would be a limited number of high value raffle prizes.

STAR PRIZE: 42" + Smart Ultra LED TV Galaxy Tab E9 6" Tablet, Bosch Coffee Maker Digital Camera & Memory Card Portable Speaker System Clock Radio Digital Photo Frame and 6 Luxury Xmas Hampers and other prizes

Raffle tickets will be on sale through this office and branches as from the end of April. The cost will £5 per book of 5.

The minimum number required to make the event practical would be 150. The subsidised cost of

tickets would be £20 per Association member and one guest and £27.50 for non members and additional guests. Limited place available so book early to avoid disappointment. Booking form enclosed.

**THE QUEEN'S OWN BUFFS /
PWRR
REGIMENTAL CRICKET TENT
CANTERBURY CRICKET WEEK
4 - 8 AUGUST 2017**

The Buffs / PWRR Regimental Cricket Tent will once again operate for Canterbury Cricket Week from 4 – 8 August 2017. Attendance is open to all full Association members. Full details can be obtained from Colonel (retd) Peter Cook (details below).

On Tuesday 8 August – which is the 3rd day of the game Kent v West Indies, Association members can attend the game for free. This package includes ground entrance ticket, use of the regimental tent including bar facilities, tea and coffee throughout the day. Play starts at 1100.

There are 10 such tickets available (normal cost £30). First come first served. If you are interested please contact Colonel Peter Cook, contact details below.

Parking is available at the Dover Road park and ride; with buses stopping at The St Lawrence Spitfire ground.

The normal dress code of jacket and tie applies to all. The bar will close at approximately 6.30pm for the 3 day game.

Colonel (retd) Peter Cook

Chairman The Regimental Cricket Tent

peteranddeirdrecook@hotmail.co.uk Tel no: 01622 832370 / 07891 2209

PRESENTATION OF COLOURS

On 23rd September 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the PWRR will be presented with new colours by Her Majesty Queen Margrethe of Denmark at the Kent County Cricket Club Ground, Canterbury

Association members are invited to apply for tickets to attend and a form is enclosed. Your application must be submitted by 15th June as applications close just after.

There will be no parking at the KCCC Ground but arrangements will be made for those who are of limited mobility to be picked up by coach/mini bus from designated parking areas. Coaches will be permitted to deliver and collect at the KCCC Ground but will then have to move to the designated car parks.

There will be food concessions arranged by KCCC where personnel can buy refreshments. There will be a number of marquees where our members can arrange to meet each other. The PWRR are keen that following the parade that the reunion is to be a reunion of the whole of the regimental family and so there will not be individual marquees set up for specific elements of the regimental family. Those attending are welcome and indeed encouraged to bring a picnic.

It is not certain if the Forebear Regiment Associations will be taking part in the march past but should this be the case numbers will be limited so, if you wish to march please indicate that on the Application Form.

Final Admin instructions will be issued and distributed with tickets.

Forms should be completed with full details of those in your party. The form should then be sent with a SAE to the Association Secretary.

**WARRIORS' CHAPEL
CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL.**

From Monday 24th April 2017, the Bell Ceremony -(Turning of the Page) will return to its traditional home of St Michael's Chapel (The Warriors' Chapel)

To mark the re opening, there will be a special 'Turning of the Page' ceremony on 24th led by the Dean of Canterbury.

FROM THE WEB SITE: www.thequeensownbuffs.com



From: Clive Good

Lt G H Woods 4th Bn Buffs HMS Eclipse Oct 1943

I wonder if anyone can help please, filling in some detail on the death of Lt George Henry Woods and 120+ other Buffs when HMS Eclipse was sunk by a mine on 23rd Oct 1943. He was my Mother's first husband and she never really knew what happened to him and what he was doing at the time. Was he a platoon/company officer or HQ section? Any information would gratefully received.

Reply from: Matthew Fortune

Hi Clive,

I have sent you a personal email. My grandfather Arthur William Fortune was a Buff also killed that night. This year I visited the wreck site with my 3 children. I will gladly send you all the info I have. We must endeavour to keep the memory of these remarkable men alive. Send your address to me and it will be a pleasure to send info as wonderful people on this site have been so kind to me in the past.

Reply from: Bob Fry

My wife's uncle was also lost on HMS Eclipse on the 23/24 October 1943. Private J.J. Shephard 4398196 his body was not recovered but he is remembered on the Athens Memorial, Face 5, at Phaleron War Cemetery a few kilometres south-east of Athens, Eclipse was in company with HMS

Petard She broke in two and sank within five minutes with the loss of 119 of the ship's company and 134 soldiers from A Company, 4th Battalion, Buffs

From: Clive Good

George Woods had been told that he was being commissioned and the unit were going abroad "for some considerable time", so he and my Mother decided to marry quickly before he left. They were duly married and he left the next day for the Middle east - never to return. She was told almost nothing. I feel I owe it to both of them to learn as much as I can. After the war, as a young widow, she met my father who had returned to Folkestone from the Indian Army, and they had 37 happy years until her sudden death. Both their ashes are interred at St Martin's, Shorncliffe.

From: Matthew Fortune

A similar story in many ways to my grandfather Arthur William Fortune, although he had been a regular soldier with the Ox and Bucks since 1930. He ended up a Buff I assume after post Dunkirk reorganisations. I will taking a look at the Warriors' Chapel at Canterbury Cathedral this summer where all these mens name re recorded in the "Books of Life." I have visited the Commonwealth War grave in Athens and indeed parascended the wreck site of Eclipse last year dropping flowers with two of my three children. We remembered all on the Eclipse as well as other lost in that tiny stretch of water. I have lots of info around the events of that night that I am more than happy to share.

All the best,

Matthew Fortune.

Tony Palmer

Feb 15, 2017 - 3:38AM

Quote Reply Buffs in India 1937/38

Hi everyone,

I'm pursuing my research into my father's (Bernard Thomas Palmer) military career with the Buffs

(1934-1956). With the help of his service records from MOD I've put together a lot of the pieces and am going to the National Archives in a couple of weeks to get more info. However I'm stuck on the early days, and particularly his posting to India with the 1st Battalion from 23/1/37 to 9/10/38. Military records for the India Office for this period are held by the British Library and are much less easily accessible than those in the National Archives.

His service record shows that he was promoted to Lance Corporal on 20/7/37 under authority of 'HQ 6th Inf. Bde'. From information relating to the outbreak of WWII it would appear that 6th Infantry Brigade was then part of the 2nd Infantry Division which was itself attached to Southern Command (India) based in Pune. However, I can find nothing showing that 1 Battalion the Buffs formed part of that Brigade. Can anybody point me in the right direction so that I can try to find out where he was stationed for this period and what he might have been involved in please.

One other small question. His service record shows his promotion authorities as VICE and a name (Whaley, Punnett, Tolhurst) i.e. "Promoted VICE. Tolhurst". Can anybody please enlighten me what the VICE. signifies. I've hunted high and low on the net and can't seem to find anything relevant.

Many thanks for any help you can give me.

Reply from Mick Mills

Tony

I'm away at the moment and when I get back I'll see what I can dig out of the Regimental History and the journal.

Vice means replacing ie the position has been vacated by the other named person (perhaps by a promotion)

Tony Palmer

Thanks for this Mick. Of course, I should have looked in a dictionary for vice - never come across this usage before.

I think I've found the answer on India too. I've 'discovered' The Dragon on line on the Regiment's web site - a veritable mine of information. It seems that the 1st Battalion were stationed in Lucknow at the time my father was in India, and I've come

across a L/Cpl 'Pedlar' Palmer in N°6 Platoon "B" Company who helped the platoon do well in an Athletics Competition. No idea about the 'Pedlar', but might have been dad, although I guess there could have been more than one L/Cpl Palmer out of the more than 100 or so in the Battalion.

In any case I'll be reading the issues of Dragon which have been scanned before asking any more silly questions.

Thanks again for your help and keep up the good work.

Kind regards

Tony

From Diane Lambert

William John Cockerell (Cockerill)

Died 15 Sep 1916

I have been researching my family tree and discovered that my great uncle William John Cockerell died at the Somme on 15 Sep 1916. He was serving with the 1st Buffs (East Kent) Regiment and was acting Corporal. His service record indicates initially he was a driver and I wonder in what context.

I purchased the book 'Historical Records of the Buffs East Kent Regiment 1914-1919' by Col RSH Moody but have not been able to find any details of my great uncle who is named at the Thiepval memorial.

I happened across this website with a host of very useful information and forum and ask if anyone can shed any further information or place for research.

Thank you in anticipation.

Reply from: Mick Mills

Diane

I will answer your query in detail during the next few days as I'm almost certain to have some info on your relative. The attack in which he died is still remembered by the Regimental Association and last year we visited the site to pay our respects to the men who fought on that day

Mick Mills

Diane

As I'm sure you're aware William was a regular soldier. He joined The Buffs in mid June 1912 and was sent to the 1st Battalion who were stationed in Ireland.

On the outbreak of war, the Battalion came home and went to the Western Front on 7/9/1914. William's service record has not survived so we cannot say for certain whether he remained in the theatre of war or if he was sent home with wounds or sickness between then and when he died. Assuming he stayed with the Battalion you can read what they got up to in your copy of the Regimental History.

On the day that he died the Battalion were attacking a strongpoint called the Quadrilateral. They were due to advance with three tanks. One of the tanks did not reach the start line and the other two were of little assistance. As a result, the attack was a failure and the casualties were heavy. Many of those that died have no known grave and the bodies that are in marked graves were found during the battlefield clearances after the war. A lot of these bodies could not be identified and lie in graves marked 'Unknown soldier' at cemeteries such as Guillemont and Serre Road Number 2.

It would appear that some of the names of those that died were due to appear on a memorial cross in No2 Guards' Cemetery. William's was one of them. I have tried to find out more about this cross but it appears to have never been erected.

The Regimental Journal of November 1916 has a small obituary for him. It states "Mr and Mrs J Cockerell, of Gillingham, have received news of the death, in France, of their elder son, Corporal William John Cockerell, of The Buffs. The deceased young fellow was only 23 years of age. He was killed in action on September 15th"

Soldiers Died In The Great War states that he was born in Bexleyheath.

There is no evidence of the strongpoint on the ground today although an aerial photograph in the 16th Brigade Diary shows how formidable it must have been. The area is very accessible by car and when you stand there you can see how difficult it

must have been to approach it up the slope from their starting point.

As I stated in my earlier post, two coaches from the Regimental Association visited the Quadrilateral last year and I was proud to stand on the spot and tell them how the men bravely attacked.

I hope this helps

Mick Mills

Diane Lambert

Mick I am so grateful for the information and thank you for taking the time to reply.

I am looking forward to visiting the battlefields in the next couple of years. The Quadrilateral and Thiepval Memorial are top of my list to visit.

Kind Regards
Diane

From Edward Bourke

Bufs in Fermoy 1919

Does anyone know about Buffs service in Fermoy Co Cork, Ireland in 1919.

An intelligence officer based at Carraigtwohill near Fermoy was uncovered, shot and buried secretly and may have been a Buff. There was an intelligence officer missing from Carraigtwohill in 1919 listed among missing soldiers described in a list of missing after the Truce in July 1921. He was not named but may have a Buff.

Paul Hicks

Corporal Arthur Cecil Brookman 6734127

My Great Uncle Arthur was in the Buffs 2nd Battalion and died in France between 19-21st May 1940. A relative had previously traced some details but sadly these were lost with him so I'm starting again and would appreciate any advice on how to find out more details of Corporal Brookman's service. I am about to request his war records from M.o.D. but understand these will take some time to forward.

From Peter Vale

Death of C/Sgt Michael Vale

My brother Michael Vale has passed away losing a battle against cancer. He served firstly in the Royal West Kents/ Queen's Own Buffs/2 Queens seeing service in Malaya Kenya Cyprus Suez Northern Ireland. He was a support company stalwart he will be sadly missed .AD UNUM OMNES.

Susan K Phyll nee Wright

Re: Edward H.G. Wright

I am trying to find out more about My father (Edward Henry George Wright, born in Stoke Newington, Hackney on Feb 14 1915) he was in the "Buffs" in 1933 and was originally based in Canterbury, he lived in Westerham, Kent then. He was sent to the Middle East for some years. He did tell me when I was small that he used to either turn the page in the Canterbury Cathedral either every morning or just once a week, for which he was very proud as he was of his service to the King and later Queen and Country. Whilst in the Middle East he said he was in Lucknow, Palestine & India and Burma, Egypt & Cairo. He didn't say very much about what happened to him in the Middle East but my mother told me that in the dessert in 1939 he was manning a Bren Gun on a truck and the truck/jeep was blown up for which he received life changing and almost fatal injuries.

The officer in charge had apparently taken the same route as they had before and my Dad was aware that you don't take the same route twice

and got told off for mentioning it. My Dad was also in the Corp of Drums and often sounded the Last Post. My Dad also took me to the Museum near the Cathedral at Canterbury as he wanted to show me the displays there and some of his equipment that had been on show, for example one of the Boots he had been wearing from the accident but when we got there his 'stuff' had been archived and they didn't know where it was which we haven't been able to locate. I have searched and searched and I cannot find his name mentioned anywhere or and his army records or indeed any affirmation that his unit was even in the Middle East. Does anyone know where I can find out more, please.

Reply from Association Secretary:

Dear Susan,

The service records of those who served in WW2 are not yet in the public domain. However as a next of kin you can apply for a copy of the service records from

Army Personnel Centre
Kentigern House
65 Brown Street
Glasgow G2 8EX
T: 0141 248 7890

It may be an idea to ring them first, you will find them very helpful.

Best regards

Peter



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HAIL AND FAREWELL

The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment
Ave Atque Vale
(Hail and Farewell)

Upon the ancient Shorncliffe Plain, high on the channel coast,
Where years ago our great John Moore prepared his battle host,
A famous British regiment of full two hundred years,
Stands on parade, and well deserves the nation's thanks and cheers.

It is the gallant Royal West Kents, the fiftieth of the Line,
And soon its honoured status will be ordered to resign,
For union with the East Kents, full equal in their fame;
The Queen's Own with the good old Buffs will share the County name.

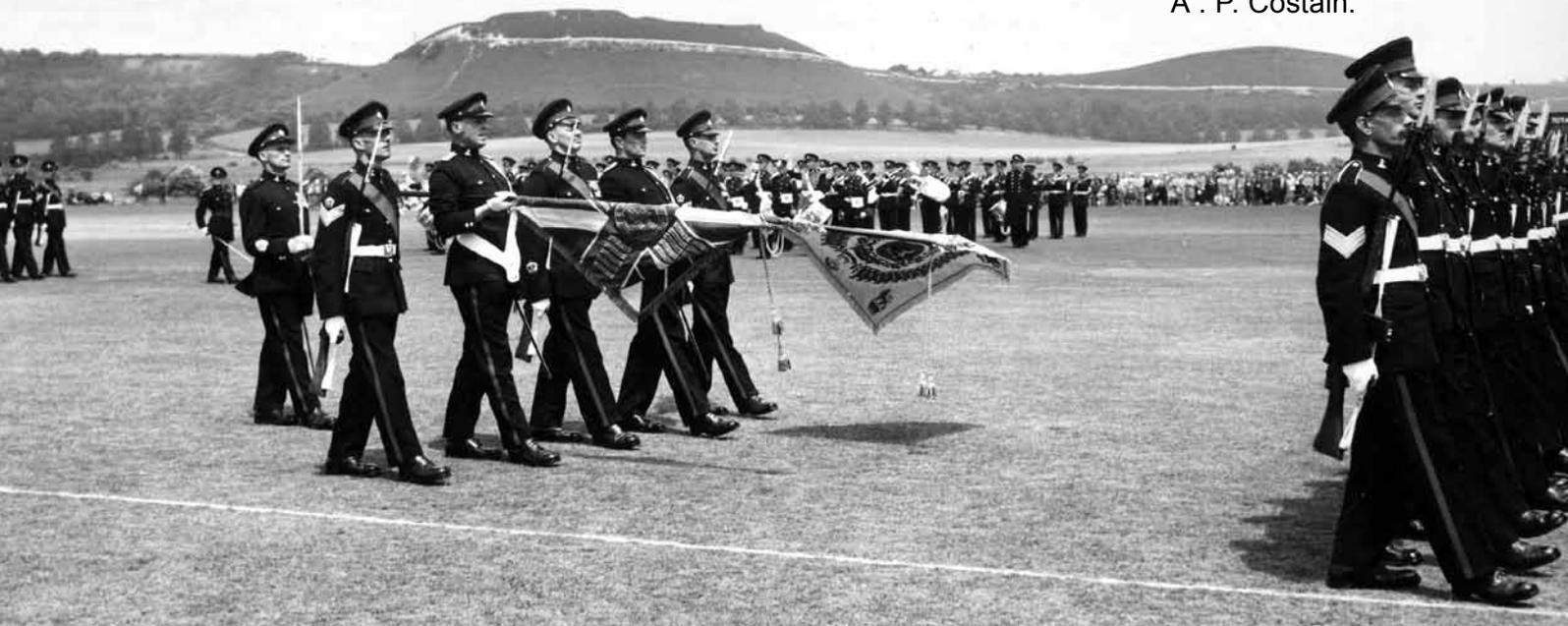
There's a sadness when tradition and a name must disappear
Though modern needs demand the change for reasons that are clear,
Still the spirit and the courage of two gallant regiments
Will build a great successor to the history of the Kents.

Before their own Princess of Kent, this lovely day of June,
The West Kent Colours proudly pass to stirring martial tune,
The multi battle honours inscribed upon each fold
Are the record of devotion and gallantry of old.

Their names call up the mighty stretch of lands across the earth,
Where Sons of Kent, named and un-named, have proved their sterling worth,
The path of duty, stern and tough, the highway of their glory,
Endurance, courage, selflessness, the essence of their story.

And so upon this glittering scene of regimental pride,
Where spirits of two centuries are with you at this tide,
This cordial valedictory marks your zenith and your knell.
West Kents, Time will remember you, "All Hail and sad farewell"

A . P. Costain.



FINAL WORD

A few days ago I was talking with one of our members, who had always been a great supporter of the Association. He had been widowed for some years. He remarked *"When I lost my wife I do not know what I would have done if I had not been a member of the Association. The support, comradeship and a sense of belonging have meant so much to me."* That is a sentiment that I hear, maybe not in as many words, on a regular basis, from both widowers and regimental widows. That is one of the prime reasons we have for keeping the Association going for as long as we possibly can. That can only be achieved with your continuing support for our event, trips, reunions and branch affairs. Where branches have difficulty in getting sufficient numbers together for trips, lunches etc we will look at organising things centrally wherever possible. For that reason we are holding an Association Christmas event. Christmas has always been a special time to get together to celebrate our comradeship and have some fun. I do hope that as many of you that can support the Christmas function on 10th December-it will be a great day with some outstanding and high value raffle prizes. I look forward to seeing you there.

We now look forward to another action packed (well almost) year. Apart from our usual reunions and the London Buffs Tower Service we have the parade on 23rd September at which Queen Margrethe of Denmark will present new colours to 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the PWRR. It is hoped that Association members will also be on parade to pay our respects to Her Majesty when we march past. However our participation in the march past has still to be confirmed. As already mentioned in the 'Notice Board' entry is by numbered ticket only so get your application in ASAP as we have to submit numbers by 30th June to RHQ.

Literally as we go to press the very sad news of the passing of Major Alan Marchant has been received. Alan had been ill for quite some time but he still carried on his duties to our Association, as Chair of East Kent, a member of the Committee of Management, treasurer of Canterbury Branch and of the PWRR Association (East Kent). An obituary will be published in the next issue of the Journal.

Alan will be sorely missed and our condolences go to the members of Alan's family and his many friends.

Well that seems to be it for this issue, don't forget if you have any back copies of the Queen's Own Gazette's or The Dragon magazine which you would like to contribute to the project to get as many as possible uploaded onto our Regimental Web Site in searchable format-please give me a ring.

Finally I have to thank Major John Barrell for proof reading some of the articles, Barry Duffield for his fantastic photographs, Keith Fazzani for his articles and, together with Jonathan Saunders and Mick Mills, for the numerous research projects that they undertake on our behalf. Sammy Supple, who undertakes the co ordination of the daily 'Page Turners' in Canterbury Cathedral also deserves our gratitude. To which must be added the 'Page Turners' themselves, well done and thanks to each and every one of you.

I must also include Jim Reynolds of RHQ for all of the support he gives in keeping the accounts and us in order. Jim has been unwell of late and we wish him a continued and rapid recovery.

For all of those of you who are on sick parade, recovering from treatment, or just under the weather get well soon.

I look forward very much indeed to seeing you at the forthcoming events. Don't forget if you have any photos or items that will be of interest to our readers then please let me have them. Photos can be scanned and sent straight back to you so please include a SAE.

Regimental Association Secretary
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Marlowe Way, Ramsgate, CT12 6FA
Tel: 01843 598615
Email: secretary@thequeensownbuffs.com
Mobile: 07522 914562

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2017-2018

13th May	Colchester Branch Albuhera Dinner (1)
16th May	Albuhera Day
23rd July	Regimental Association Canterbury Re Union (2)
4th -8th August	Kent County Cricket Week (3)
3rd September	London Buffs Tower of London Service and Parade (4)
8th September	Sevastopol Day
10th September	Regimental Association Maidstone Re Union (2)
23rd September	Presentation of Colours to 1st, 2nd and 3rd Bns PWRR (2)
29th Sept - 2nd October	Regimental Association Battlefield Tour Normandy (2)
25th October	Queen's Own Buffs Officers' Lunch (2)
9th November	Field of Remembrance Westminster Abbey (2)
11th November	Remembrance Day Turning of the Page (2)
12th November	Remembrance Sunday
10th December	Regimental Association Christmas Party (2)
16th December	Canterbury Branch Carol Concert (5)
17th February 2018	Regimental Association AGM (2)

For further details of the above please contact as indicated below

(1)	Colchester Branch Chairman, Jimmy Burr	james@eternalknight.co.uk
(2)	Regimental Association Secretary	secretary@thequeensownbuffs.com
(3)	Colonel Peter Cook DL	col.peter.cook@gmail.com
(4)	London Buffs Secretary, Betty Correa	bettycorrea@icloud.com
(5)	Canterbury Branch Secretary, Bob Cook	joyce560@btinternet.com

*Rear Cover photo: Association members on the Somme
(Photo courtesy of Barry Duffield)*



Branch Standard Bearers, Barry Crocker (Weald Branch) and Nigel Bristow (Maidstone Branch) at the graveside of our Unknown Royal West Kent soldier. New Irish Farm Cemetery, Ypres 2016.

