

THE COVENANTER



THE REGIMENTAL JOURNAL OF
THE CAMERONIANS (SCOTTISH RIFLES)

2002

The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) (26 and 90)

The Sphinx, superscribed Egypt. The Dragon superscribed China.

Blenheim, Ramilies, Oudenarde, Malplaquet, Mandora, Corunna, Martinique 1809, Guadaloupe 1810, South Africa 1846-47, Sevastopol, Lucknow, Abyssinia, South Africa 1877-8-9, Relief of Ladysmith, South Africa 1899-1902.

*The Great War - 27 Battalions - Mons, Le Cateau, Retreat from Mons, Marne 1914, 18, Aisne 1914, La Basseé 1914, Armentières 1914, Neuve Chapelle, Aubers, Loos, Somme 1916, 18, Albert 1916, Bazentin, Pozières, Flers-Courcelette, Le Transloy, Ancre Heights, Arras 1917, 18, Scarpe 1917, 18, Arleux, Ypres 1917,18, Pilckem, Langemarck 1917, Menin Road, Polygon Wood, Passchendaele, St Quentin, Roslères, Avre, Lys, Hazebrouck, Ballieul, Kemmel, Scherpenberg, Soissonnais-Ourcq, Drocourt-Quéant, **Hindenburg Line**, Epéhy, Canal du Nord, St Quentin Canal, Cambrai 1918, Courtrai, Selle, Sambre, France and Flanders 1914-18, Doiran 1917, 18, **Macedonia 1915-18, Gallipoli 1915-16**, Rumania, Egypt 1916-17, **Gaza, El Mughar, Nobi Samwil, Jaffa, Palestine 1917-18.***

*The Second World War - Ypres-Comines Canal, **Odon**, Cheux, Caen, Mont Pincon, Estruy, Nederrijn, Best, **Scheldt**, South Beveland, Walcheron Causeway, Asten, Roer, **Rhineland**, Reichswald, Moyland, **Rhine**, Dreirwalde, Bremen, Artlenburg, **North-West Europe 1940, 44-45**, Landing in Sicily, Simeto Bridgehead, **Sicily 1943**, Garigliano Crossing, **Anzio**, Advance to Tiber, **Italy 1943-44**. Pogu 1942, Paungde, Yenagyaung 1942, **Chindits 1944, Burma 1942, 44.***

Alliances

New Zealand Army

The Otago and Southland Regiment

Ghana Military Forces

2nd Battalion Ghana Regiment of Infantry

Affiliated Regiment

7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles

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NOTICES

"THE COVENANTER"

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The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Officers Club

Chairman:

Hon. Secretary/Treasurer

Major J.G. Maxwell TD (0141) 204 4441

Regimental Club

The Cameronian Memorial Club -
9 Holyrood Crescent, Glasgow.

Museum:

Low Parks Museum
129 Muir Street, Hamilton ML3 6BJ
Tel: 01698 452 165

Location List - Subscribers only.

2003 DIARY OF REGIMENTAL EVENTS 2003

MARCH

Friday 7th March -

Cameronian Officers Dinner Club -

The Western Club, Glasgow at 7 for 7.30p.m.
Dinner will be preceded by the AGM at 6 p.m.
Those wishing to attend should contact Major J.G. Maxwell TD.
Tel: (0141) 204 4441. (O).

MAY

Sunday 11th May -

Cameronian Sunday -

St Brides Church, Douglas at 10.00a.m. and
Cameronian Family Members (SR) at 2p.m.

Friday 23rd May -

Officers Luncheon -

The Army and Navy Club, St James Square,
London. Contact is Col. J.N.D. Lucas.
Tel: (01722) 716 463 (H).

Sunday 18th May -

Aitken Trophy -

Lanark at 2p.m. Contact Col D'Inverno.
Tel: (0131) 226 4081 (O).

OCTOBER

Saturday 11th October -

Officers' Luncheon -

Officers Mess Craigiehall, Edinburgh
Contact is Lt Col I.K. McBain.
Tel: (0131) 445 2953 (H).



Cameronian Pin Brooch

4 x 3 cms

These hand made brooches Hall Marked (silver) can be supplied to order from A&R Murray, 20 Thistle Street, Edinburgh EH2 1EN enclosing payment in the sum of £27.

Last Friday of the Month Meeting (Not December)

Following the closure of the Covenanter Bar in the High Street the meeting place has been re-located to The White Horse Inn on the Royal Mile by Jeffrey Street.

Any Cameronian who finds himself in Edinburgh on the last Friday of any month (except December) should meet from 12 noon onwards. Why not come along?

Museum report

The Covenanter 2002

'The Real Tartan Army' TV Documentary

The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) will be featured in this film to be screened in 2003. During 2002, Regimental Trustees, ex Cameronians and museum staff have been helping the film Production Company to research the film. Look out for this in your TV listings in 2003!

EXHIBITIONS

Cameronians in Camera

Cameronians in Camera opened in February 2002.

The photographs in this exhibition are drawn from the collection of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and most have never been seen by the general public.

These images provide a glimpse into the overseas service of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) from the Armistice in 1918 to the Disbandment of the Regiment - the final fifty years.

The exhibition covers a period in which Britain was continually reassessing its world role from the end of the 'War to end Wars' in 1918 to its abandonment of a role 'east of Suez' in the late 1960s.

The decision to make its NATO role in Europe the cornerstone of British defence policy from 1967 led directly to the Disbandment of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). Ironically, the only times British infantry have fought a large-scale ground war since then have been far from Europe - the Falklands, the Gulf and Afghanistan.

The Regimental collection is weak in photographs from 1939 and this exhibition was an ideal opportunity to make an appeal for photographs to fill this gap. The response was cautious at first, but lately a gold mine of photographs of life in the Regiment in the UK and Germany from the late 1950s till 1968, and invaluable comments and captions have been offered by ex-Sergeant Eddie Wallace. Our thanks to everyone who has contributed to answering our appeal. For the full list of contributors, please see the New Acquisitions part of this report.

Medals Exhibition - by popular demand!

The next exhibition on the Mezzanine gallery will be of the Cameronians medal collection, and will run from May 2003 for about a year.

As many visitors have asked about the collection the aim is twofold - firstly to create a new way of safely and compactly displaying the collection, and secondly to unravel and explain what medals are about.

The first will be done by the commissioning of new secure units with glass topped drawers, in which the collection can be laid out chronologically. Visitors will be able to open the drawers - one at a time for safety! - and view specific campaigns and awards, or locate medals awarded to relatives and friends.

A selection will be displayed with explanations of what the different parts of a medal mean, what they represent, and the history of the campaign or award.

It is hoped that much of this can also be produced in I.T. form to add to the information already available - and growing - from the "Cameronians in Camera" exhibition.

This twin approach means that even after the temporary exhibition closes in 2004, the medal collection in its secure units can remain on display, and the background information will be available in the "Cameronians Corner" on PC.

Digital Collections Gallery

(Formerly known as OPAC - On Line Public Access Catalogue)

The Digital Collections Gallery is now operating on the Mezzanine Floor in the Riding School at Low Parks Museum. This new facility offers the public over 180 photographs under the banner of 'Cameronians in Camera'. The images include all the photographs from the exhibition of the same name, with many additional ones on the same themes within the exhibition - The League and the UN; Policing and Empire; World War 2; Cold War; Fire Brigade.

Visitors to the Digital gallery can order copy prints at Low Parks Museum Reception for only £3.60 each, including UK postage.

Storyboards

'Storyboards' is an exciting new development planned for early 2003 at Low Parks Museum. The concept is simple - tell a story on the computer screen with photos and maps about a Cameronian campaign. Where appropriate, the stories will be written by those who took part in the operations featured and illustrated by their own photographs. The first of these - 'Oman 1957' by Major Colin Lindsay - is almost complete. Many more planned on subjects ranging from the Crimean War 1854-5 to Aden 1966, visiting key operations in World War I and II and elsewhere along the way.

This is a first for any military collection in Scotland and probably the UK. You read it here!

New Acquisitions to The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Collection in 2002

Medals and badges

Group of medals and photos of Pte Wilson 11th Bn WW1 (Salonika). Donor Mr McGillvray 2002.253 Shooting medal awarded to 2/Lt H Land 7 Bn. Donor Mr R Land

Uniforms, accessories and equipment

E350: World War I rifle round. Donor Mr D Lundie

E823: 16 items of Cameronian uniform. Donor Mr Taylor.

E760: Officers uniforms including greatcoat and photographs. Donor Mr T B Wilson. 2002.22 to 2002.29 Cameronian uniform and archives. Donor Mrs F Woodcock.

Photographs

E765 100 photographs of 1 Bn in Germany and UK 1959-66. Donor Mr Eddie Wallace. Group of photographs of Oman 1957. Col H Mackay. 2002.40 to 2002.50 Photographs of Germany in 1960s. Donor Mr S P Telfer.

Archive

E769 Letter of thanks to 1 Bn Burma Second World War 1939-45 from Lt Gen. W J Slim. Hand-written on XIVth Army letterhead: '... battered exhausted and hungry ... they never lost their fighting spirit or their indomitable cheerfulness' Exchanged item. Order of Service of Annual Church parade of 90th Rgt. 1880. Donor Brig H L B Salmon

2002.53 to 2002.60 Group of items relating to 2 Bn in Boer War 1899-1902. Donor Mrs Duncan

2002.66 'Beating Order' or Royal Warrant for the raising of the 90th Regiment by Thomas Graham. Purchased at auction.

Enquires

The public enquiry service continues to attract interest from around the globe. Over the last nine months, 55% of all research enquires received by museum staff at Cadzow Street, Hamilton, were about The Cameronians. Queries reached us from USA, Canada, Hong Kong, Australia, Eire, South Africa and France together with all parts of the U.K. Among our many customers have been the South African Defence Forces, the US Marine Corps and the British Army Chaplain - General's Department.

A Star - the most asked about Cameronian in 300 years eclipsed Generals, Field Marshals and VC winners a star of stage, TV, radio, comics and newspapers

Who is he? - Jimmy the Donkey!

War Diaries Transcription - Work in Progress

'Increasing public access to the collections without increasing the staff workload'

2002 saw the completion of the transcribing of the War Diary of the Seventh Battalion in the First World War 1914-18. Volunteers of the Lanarkshire Family History Society have been working since February 2001 on the massive task of transcribing more than 110,000 words or faded hand-written daily War Diary into Word for Windows.

With a few clicks of the computer mouse staff can find if there is any mention of any known person, place, ship, weapon etc. Previously, due to its sheer size, researchers who could visit Hamilton could only access the 7th Bn War Diary.

In addition, the Lanarkshire Family History Society volunteers built up a database of the names of over 4,000 Officers and Other Ranks who served in 7th Bn in World War I. In the New Year, the paper file of the War Diary will be available for visitors to read at Low Parks Museum

Readers of The Covenanter will need no reminding that in the First World War 1914-18 7th Bn served in Gallipoli, Palestine and France and Flanders.

Work is almost finished on transcribing the War Diary of the 11th Battalion (in Salonika) in the Great War.

The project is the result of a group visit to Low Parks Museum by the Lanarkshire Family History Society in the summer of 2000, when the Society members asked if they could help us with our documentation work.

We are very grateful to the volunteers for their hard work and enthusiasm which has resulted in a new major asset for the public at Low Parks Museum and world-wide through our public enquires service.

The Lanarkshire Family History Society volunteers are:

David Stewart, Alan Colthart, Morag Welsh, Margaret McKenzie, Irene Garry, Marie Cullen, Ian Wilson, Pat Cox and Allan Johnstone (Lanarkshire Family History Society Co-ordinator)

Terry F Mackenzie acts as the South Lanarkshire Council Co-ordinator for the project.

You can find out more about the Lanarkshire Family History at their Website.

www.lanarkshirefhs.org.uk

Activities

During Museums Month in May 2002, Museum staff led several public demonstrations of the Digital Collections Gallery at Low Parks Museum. The results were encouraging and it is planned to repeat the sessions in May 2003, and including the new Storyboard feature.

As part of the same programme the Lanarkshire Family History Society had two War Diaries - Work in Progress sessions where they worked on their valuable transcriptions of the War Diaries, but in the public galleries at Low Parks Museum where visitors could ask questions and see the story of the officers and men of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in Palestine in World War I emerging from the original record. It is planned to repeat the sessions in May 2003.

Report Aitken Trophy

19th May 2002

The 55th Aitken Trophy, a two balled foursome, was played over the moor at Lanark between members of the Regimental, and now wider Army Team and members of Lanark on the afternoon of Sunday 19th May 2002. The list of Army players is shown below.

On what was a convivial and clement afternoon the trophy was won by Major J.G. Maxwell and J. Watt (former Captain) with a combined score of 73¹/₂. In second place Lieutenant Colonel Ian Lewis and W.R. Hutton with a combined score of 75 and hard on their heels in third place Major Sproul and W.M. Darroch with a combined score of 75¹/₂.

Following the match the Army Team was hosted to an excellent supper by the Club at which the 'Third Lanark' Sergeants' Mess trophy shield, presented by the 6/7th Battalion Trustees to the Club on the Occasion of 150th Anniversary, was on display.

The next match is scheduled to be played at Lanark on the afternoon of Sunday 18th May 2003. Tee-off is at 2p.m. I will circulate the normal pro forma nearer the time but if you did not receive the circular in relation to last year's match and would wish to play then please write to me at Grange Park House, Dick Place, The Grange, Edinburgh EH9 2JB with full name, postal address, current handicap and contact telephone number. Everyone gets a match and the nature of the competition is such that you need not be concerned about the standard of your golf, particularly as I myself will be playing! The emphasis is very much upon a convivial afternoon and evening which has the very proper purpose of maintaining vigorous the long established connections between Lanark and the Regiment.

List of Army Players

Aitken Trophy - 19 May 2002

Mr James S. Brown, Col. J. G. d'Inverno
Major P.W. Eydes, Major I. Farquharson
Major J. Kerr, Lt. Col. I Lewis
Dr. G Maxwell, Major J.G. Maxwell
Lt. Col. I.K. McBain, Major G.D. Pearson
Major W.A.L. Rodger, Major A Sproul
Sgt. A.S. Watson, Mr Sam Wyllie
J.G d'Inverno, T.D., W.S., Colonel

LETTER FROM SYDNEY SCROGGIE

Roseangle Cottage
 Rosemill Road
 Bridgefoot
 Strathmartin
 Dundee DD3 0RW

Tuesday 12th Nov, 2002

Fellow Cameronians,

"Jerry's finished", said the driver of a 3 ton Bedford grinding its way up a zigzag road in the Appenines, the sky blue, the sun hot. He's got the 8th Army ribbon on his bush shirt, the touch of swagger that went with it, and his K.D. shorts were rolled right up, revealing a magnificent scar all the way from the knee to the groin. He'd got a bit too close to the Africa Korps, he told me, lost on his motorbike, and someone got him with a spandau. Now he was taking a strategic view of things, and, "Yes", he said, "Jerry's finished. He hasn't got a plane in the sky". It was July 1944, the Lovat Scouts were making their way up to the line, Vesuvius behind them with its puff of pink vapour, the antique, rutted streets of Pompeii, and a 92nd British General Hospital where I was to finish up 10 months later, the Regiment's last casualty. The 7th Cameronians remembered when Jerry still had a plane or two in the sky, and well I personally remember that Aberdeen evening, seated on the top deck of a tramcar, when I awoke to the knowledge that three easily identifiable Heinkel III's were flying at rooftop level straight towards me, their machine-gun raking Great Northern Road. This was in striking contrast to what I'd just been doing, practising figure skating under the tutelage of a nice Aberdeen lassie, and at the same time I've no doubt some of the boys would have been in the dance hall on the other side of Spring Gardens from the ice rink, one so dithyrambic and wild that they called it the Battle School. The tram stopped, and I was just abandoning it, one hand on the stanchion, one foot on the cassie stanes, when I heard a whistling sound. In an

instant I was under the tram, there was an explosion, and when I got out from under the tram nothing was left of a tenement building beside it but a ruckle of stones. Head for Hayton, I thought, where the unit was in huts; something will be getting organised there; and I set forth walking in that direction. There was broken glass underfoot, tangled wires knocked out tramcars, and always a fresh clutch of incendiaries spluttering on pavement and road darkness was falling, and the whole of the town was enveloped in a red glow. Things began to get a bit wild, so I took refuge in a close, shutting its door behind me. I found an old wifie sitting on the floor, unable to do anything but tremble. I took her hand and was comforting her when there was a huge explosion, the door of the close blew in, and in the light of incendiaries I saw a man staggering across the road towards me. "What we need is men," I heard him say, so I got up and crossed the road to see what was what. It wasn't nice, the bomb had blown off the end of an air raid shelter, and there were mangled bodies everywhere. One lad was buried up to his chest, and was only just conscious enough to make vague plucking movements with his arms. There wasn't really anything I could do, no obvious help to be offered, and what happened after that I have no recollection. Am I right in saying that one or two of the boys got killed, this in the neighbourhood of the Fountain, and certainly Davy Arnot was all too close to things when bullets punctured the Nissen hut which was his weapon training store. However, my Bedford 3 tonner, somewhere north of Arezzo, had dumped me at the end of its journey, the moon shone, guns grumbled and next night 12 Troop, D Squadron, the Lovat Scouts, got a jolly good mortaring from the Teds. Thanks to a still vigorous Luftwaffe, however, in the purlieu of Dee and Don, I'd already had my baptism of fire. Was it some remnant of the spirit of Wallace and Bruce in me, or arrant stupidity. most likely the latter, but I hadn't been frightened at all.

Sydney Scroggie

**The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)
Lunch
at the Army and Navy Club London
on Friday 17th May 2002**

The annual London Luncheon was held at the Army & Navy Club, St James's Square on Friday 17th May 2002. Although attendance was lower than in recent years it was good to see many present who had travelled considerable distances including four from Scotland, one from Northumberland, two from Central Wales and two from Brussels. The following attended:

Lt Col Sir John and Lady Baynes; Capt I.M. Lindsay-Smith; Colonel R.D. Buchanan Dunlop, CBE; Maj C. Lindsay; Lt Col A. Campbell, Col and Mrs J.N.D. Lucas; Mr and Mrs N.S.I. Daglish; Lt Col and Mrs F.C. Matthews; Capt G. Ferguson; Mr J.D. Muir; Maj P.R. Grant; Maj I.C. Park-Weir; Mr J. Hawtrey-Woore; Mrs A. Richter-Pentney; Maj L. Pattison, MBE, TD; Mr J. Jeffrey; Capt and Mrs J.A.C. Weir;

*Letter of appreciation from Kenn Robinson
Military Band 1956 - 1963.*

To: **The Rev. Jim Strachan**

Sir,

Having just returned home to Birmingham from our regimental Armistice Day Remembrance Services at Kelvingrove on Sunday then Central Railway Stn. on Monday, remembering all that had taken place and how much (in spite of the occasion) I had taken from the two parades, namely a renewal of friendships and a sense of belonging and comradeship with other members of our own regiment The Cameronians (SR) and others of the Army, Navy and Air Force personnel past and present throughout the world, I was proud to stand shoulder on with the other lads and look forward to doing so again in the future.

This led me on to think of the amount of work and effort that must go into the up front planning/organizing required throughout the year, to make these parades a success helping also to keep the memory and essence of our regiment alive in the public eye. It must be said that this is mainly down to yourself and those others on the committee with you, the rest of us

attend when we can and it is easy to say I would be more active if I did not live so far away, but I do and therefore have to depend on you and your team to continue giving your best for me and the others of us that care for our regiment but for good reason are unable to help share the load.

What was it Winston Churchill said? Never have so few . . .

CONGRATULATIONS! And well done, please keep doing what you are already doing so well, it is appreciated not only by myself but by other lads that attend when they can, and those I am sure all over the world that only read articles now and then about their regiment The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)

Yours etc,
Mr K. J. Robinson
14 Shelly Close
Fordbridge
Birmingham
B37 5ER
England

Sir,

As chairman of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and Family Members Association it gave all railway personnel and myself a thrill to see the colours of our regiment paraded at Central Station on the 11/11/2002. The Minister of Transport, MSP Iain Gray who also took part along with the managing director of Scotrail, attended this service. Also in attendance were members of Virgin Trains, Scotrail and British Transport Police. The British Legion also sent along a dozen standard bearers who added colour as well as dignity to this special day.

Our own bugler John Farrel played the last post and the piper played the lament. Wreaths were then laid by the various companies and George Stewart the oldest Cameronian done the honors for our organisation.

This Service came the day after Remembrance Sunday when we as an organisation gathered at Kelvingrove to pay our personal respects to those of our Regiment who gave their lives in the past wars. Both these services were very solemn occasions where many reflected on friends and family who never returned. Those who paid the ultimate price for our freedom.

I cannot put into words how grateful and proud I was when we marched off at Central Station and some 400 people began to clap. Yes, many a lump came in the throat and many a silent tear was shed. I thank my God that I myself was privileged to conduct both these services of remembrance. I have enclosed some photos of the service at Central Station for your use.

Yours etc

J. Strachan

Rev. J. Strachan L.Th. Dip. Th.
50 Glenbervie Dr, Kilwinning, Ayrshire,
KA13 6QH

Cameronian Sunday 12th May 2002

At 10.15hrs our Bn flag was raised for the Fourth time since our Disbandment on 14th May 1968. The Secretary Mr J Ballantyne was assisted by Mr 'Andy Anderson who Raised Our Flag, And by our Bugler Mr John Farrel. The morning Service was held at 10.30 hrs. The Flag was Lowered at 17.30 hrs Both Ceremonies were quite moving as all the Memories came flooding back of all those Many years ago, it made you proud to be Cameronian.

Our Commemorative Service was held at St.Bride's Parish Church, at 1400 hrs and was conducted by Rev, B Kerr and Rev. J Strachan Mr E Clark carried the Bible to the pulpit, Our Stranded Bearer was Received by Rev J Strachan from our Standard Bearer Mr E Wallace assisted by our standard Bearers Mr R Gracie and Mr W Gough whose Drill did the Regiment proud once again. We were supported by The Royal British Legion Standard Bearers throughout both ceremonies by Kind permission of The Secretary Mrs Peat R.B.L.S. Glasgow. We were supported by The Coalburn Brass Band who's Music was superb and hopefully they will support our Organisation in the future. Thanks also to the Lanarkshire Police for their presence at Douglas on such a memorable day.

Col: H Mackay O.B.E. Read the Scripture's From 1 John 5: 1-13

Major B AS Leishman M.B.E. - Psalm 51
An excellent Reading form Both Col: Mackay O.B.E. and Maj: Leishman M.B.E.

The Treasurer Made A Presentation To Mr E Clark for his efforts in looking after the Cameronian plot at Westminster.

He also Presented Flowers to Mrs E. Maxwell for the work that she did for him

Mrs J McColl was presented with flowers by Col: H Mackay

Our sincere thanks to 'Irvine Royal Academy Burns Club' with an excellent display of music and their Oration of 'The Regiment' These superb readings from the Pupils were very moving indeed.

May we thank Mr R Fowler for compiling the 'Order of Service' and all the hard work that he did to make our Commemorative Sunday Service a most memorable one for every one present.

Also The British Red Cross and Mr Redpath and his Colleagues who Volunteered again this and Hopefully next Year Our thanks also to the Bowling Club for allowing us to fly our flag and holding our Buffet and Social there and to the Community Centre for the use of their facilities and the catering that was laid on for us. And to Douglas Village for the very warm welcome that we received from them.

Mr T Balloch M.B.E Was Parade Commander at the Cairn assisted by our Standards and the R.B.L.S

A Short Service was held at the Cameronian Cairn Conducted By Rev J Strachan

Hymn. 1: Jesus Christ is our Saviour and Our Lord: Hymn 2: The Lords my Shepherd Col; H Mackay Read the Scriptures Joshua 4: 1-13 He also said the Address:

Col: H Mackay presented Mrs J McColl with a framed photograph of the Cairn

The Dedication of the Cairn was given by Rev J Strachan

He also held a Remembrance Service for Mr J Wilson who passed away in April 2002

His Ashes were scattered by his Sons and his Widow, they also laid A Cameronian Wreath It was very moving indeed for many of his old Army mates

Mr G Stewart Laid a Wreath For all our Fallen Comrades on Behalf of 'The Cameronians (S.R.) and Family Members'

The Member's that spoke to me said that they enjoyed the whole events of the day. There will be photographs for sale which can be ordered Direct From the photographer Mr L Addison, 2 South Lodge, Douglas ML11 0RH Tel. 01555-851750 Hoping to see everyone Next Year 2003 for Our Special Annual Commemorative Services

Cameronian Sunday, 2002

Irvine Royal Academy was once again privileged to receive an invitation from The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and Family Members Association to join them at St. Bride's Church, Douglas, for the annual Cameronian Sunday Commemoration of the formation of the Regiment.

The Rev. James Strachan, L. Th., Dip. Th., preached an excellent sermon reminding us that we are all accountable to God, who is the secret listener in every conversation. This year, the Burns Club's presentation posed the question 'What makes a Hero?' and looked at Cameronian characters, showing how their qualities helped to mould others in the Cameronian Spirit. The also focussed in particular on Henry May, V.C., the first Glasgow man to be awarded the Victoria Cross in the First World War.

After the service, many Cameronians and Friends of the Regiment went to the Regimental Cairn at Castle Dangerous. The Cairn had been refurbished by the Regimental Trustees and The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and Family Members Association and was re-dedicated by the Rev. James Strachan, L. Th., Dip. Th., assisted by the Rev. Bryan Kerr, M.A., Minister of Douglas St. Bride's. The family of the late Mr. L. Grassie has now set up a Trust Fund, income from which is to be used for the maintenance of the Cairn in perpetuity.

A very moving part of the Service at the Cairn was the scattering of the ashes of Sgt. Wilson by his sons, while a lament was played by piper Jim Butler (formerly 4/5 RSF and Honorary Piper to Irvine Royal Academy Burns Club).

At the conclusion of the service, the company returned to the Victoria Bowling Club in Douglas for the lowering of the Standard. The Club had very kindly allowed the Association to fly the

Regimental Standard from its flagpole for the day. After the Standard had been lowered, the company adjourned to the Club House for a most enjoyable buffet supper and dance.

R.F.

Remembrance, 2002

The autumn leaves were falling -
Bright orange, red and gold -
As we stood up at Kelvingrove
And thought of men of old.
Brave men, who bought our freedom
And paid a dreadful price:
They gave their very selves for us,
A living sacrifice.

We thought of Cameronians
Who first fought at Dunkeld,
And men who laughed, and joked - and
died -
On fields like Neuve Chapelle.
These men, of humble backgrounds,
Were flesh, like you and me,
But they won highest honour,
Like Henry May, V.C.

We thought of men committed
And men who would not yield,
And then of what they gained for us
On many a foreign field.
Men who gave their to-morrow,
That we might live to-day.
Great men, whom we should honour
In all we do and say.

I thought of those not with us
As we paid tribute then.:
I thought of hearts uncaring
Unknowing of these men
Who fought and died in battle
Against the tyrant's power:
And, oh, I longed to ask each one,
'Could you not watch one hour?'

R. Fowler, November 11, 2002

The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) And Family Members Association.

The Association continues to meet regularly, in February, May, June, September and November. Meetings this year have been well attended and have been held in the Olde Club at Tannochside; The

At the Annual General Meeting in February, 2002, Mr. Jack Gibson resigned as Chairman. His resignation was reluctantly accepted by the Association and the Rev. James Strachan, L. Th., Dip. Th., was elected in his place. Mr Gibson continued as Treasurer but finally resigned from the post in September. The Association would like to record its thanks to Jack for his stewardship of its funds since its inception and to wish him well in the years ahead. There is currently a vacancy for a Treasurer for the Association, although the duties are being overseen by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Minute Secretary, with a complete reorganisation of the system being undertaken by the Secretary, Jim Ballantine.

Jim is to be congratulated for the amount of work he so painstakingly does. This year, in addition to his normal duties, he also arranged for Cameronian contingents to march with the King's Own Scottish Borderers, who currently hold the Recruiting Area of the County of Lanark in trust for The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). He also arranged for a substantial Cameronian contingent to be present at the Memorial Service held in South Queensferry for R.S.M. Ronnie Andrews, the last R.S.M. of the 1st Battalion. Meanwhile, a contingent from the Association joined the Rev. James Strachan when he conducted the funeral of Sgt. Wilson at Calne.

The Association has had diaries made up. These give details of the current Office-bearers of the Association. They bear the Regimental Badge in gold on a rifle green background, with gold corner mounts on the front cover, and are excellent value at £2.50 each. They are available from the Secretary.

The Association is also holding a Burns Supper in the Olde Club, Tannochside, on Sunday, February 2, 2002 at 6 for 6.30 p.m. There are still a few tickets left at the time of writing and these are available from the Secretary.

It is a great tribute to the spirit of the Regiment that so many Cameronians and Family Members have joined the Association and are working to keep the name, the memory and the achievements of the Regiment alive. If YOU have not yet joined, please do so. Membership costs only £5 a year and the 'crack' at meetings when old comrades meet up is always enjoyable and worth hearing.

The Real Tartan Army

Readers may have seen on BBC2 Television in May and June of 2002, entitled 'The Real Tartan Army'. This dealt with six famous Scottish Regiments. It was an excellent series, with (in the writer's opinion) only one flaw: The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) were relegated to a one-line mention in the passing in the HLI broadcast!

A letter to the Producer was duly fired off. How could makers of the series possibly ignore Scotland's only Rifle Regiment? How could they pass over the history and traditions of an unique body of men whose story was so closely entwined, not only with that of the Scottish Nation, but also with that of the Scottish Church? How could they ignore the bravery of men like Henry May and John Erskine? And who could possibly pass over the story of Rifleman Khan?

Meetings followed. Thereafter, authorities on the Regiment were contacted, including Colonel Hugh Mackay; Lieutenant-Colonel Sir John Baynes, Bart., Major Leishman; the Rev. Jim Strachan, et al. Interviews were recorded; material was researched; scenes were shot on location. The result will be seen in early Spring of 2003.

Look out for a fitting and worthwhile tribute to the finest Rifle Regiment in the Scottish Division!

Quotable Quotes

From an RHF man at the RHF RHQ, 518, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow:

'D'ye ken why the Cameronians were disbanded? They were too intelligent for the British Government, that's why!'

From Sergeant Johnston at the Cameronians (SR) and Family Members Association, after an address by Major Leishman:

'This is terrible. It's a disgrace to the Regiment! When a Cameronian Officer speaks, you don't applaud: you jump - it's just a question of how high!'

From a KOSB Sergeant at Hamilton:

'We don't usually march at this pace. We're only doing this for the sake of the old Cameronians.'

And the reply:

'Don't you worry about the Cams. We've

slowed down so that you can keep up with us!'

From a lady spectator at Douglas on May 12 to a former Scots Guardsman:

'Do you never wish you'd joined a decent Regiment?'

I understand that the Scots Guardsman still speaks to the lady in question. His response was, 'Well, we always had to send for the Cameronians to clear up the mess we started!'

From an old Seaforth Highlander explaining the difference between Cameronians and Cameron Highlanders:

'The Cameronians were intelligent fighters. The Cameron Highlanders were neither.'

Someone 'who should have known better' suggested that Ross Tollerton, V.C., was a Cameronian. The Seaforth Highlander, who was a close personal friend of Ross Tollerton, may have been prejudiced following on the enforced amalgamation of his Regiment with the Camerons in 1961. His thoughts on the later amalgamation with the Gordons in 1994 are not printable

Random Jottings.

Old Cameronian Douglas Stewart is alive and well and living in Monymusk Road, Aberdeen. Douglas, who served with the Regiment in 1955-57, spends much of his time as a guide at the Museum of the Gordon Highlanders in Aberdeen. When asked about his service with the Gordons, he said that he was really there under false pretences as he had never served with the Gordons. He went on to say, 'I've something here I'll show you. Nobody else gets to see it, but I keep it with me under my jacket lapel all the time.'

Back went a reply straight from the pages of 'Three Hundred Years of Service' I said, 'Any man should be proud to say, I served with The Cameronians!'

I went to look round the Museum and when I returned I noted with pleasure that the Cameronian Badge had been transferred to the face of his lapel!

Incidentally, the Cameronians are a family regiment but they would seem to be outclassed in that respect by the Gordons - in a painting of a charge in their museum, each of the Gordons has the same facial features!

Piper Ian McDowall, who was Acting Pipe Sergeant at Douglas in 1968, is Honorary Piper to Kilwinning Burns Club. He provided a Cameronian Medley at the interval at this year's Kilwinning Burns Supper and has agreed to be Piper at The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and Family members Association Burns Supper at Tannochside on February 2.

In August, 2002, I went up to Dunkeld to see the grave of Lieutenant-Colonel William Cleland, the first Commanding Officer of the Regiment. I was unable to see the grave as it was covered over to protect it against falling masonry while the stonework in that part of the Cathedral is being restored. However, Dunkeld is well worth a visit as it is very easy to visualise the battle of 1689 in the town to-day. The Cathedral contains a fine memorial tablet to Col. Cleland, erected by 'an old Cameronian' as well as a memorial tablet honouring those from the district who died on active service with the Regiment in the First World War.

Also worth a visit is the Regiment Memorial on the North Inch in nearby Perth: this is a fine obelisk commemorating the 90th Perthshire Light Infantry. It is not to be confused with the wrought iron memorial to the 51st Highland Division, which stands nearby. Both memorials are breathtakingly simple and awesomely beautiful.

The Cameronians (S.R.) & Family Members Associations. These are some of the Remembrance Services that we attended in November 2002

Garden of Remembrance Hamilton

The Joint Ex-Servicemen's Committee Invited us to the Service that was held on Saturday 2nd November 2002 in Hamilton Beginning outside Crichtons Shoe Shop where tea and biscuits were served, in Quarry Street at the Bottom Cross at 10.30hrs the Standard was carried by Mr W Gough to the garden of remembrance the Service was conducted by Monsignor Rev Devany was laid by Mr J Kane, he was supported by several members of the organisation then to the Garden of Remembrance and thereafter to the Hamilton Council Offices in Almada Street For Refreshments.

Festival of Remembrance East Kilbride

On Sunday 3rd November 2002 at 'John Wright Sports Centre' at East Kilbride it started at 1830hrs All Members who attended this Function enjoyed the Festival Kelvingrove Art Galleries The War Memorial Of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)

The Cameronian (S.R.) Memorial Club and The Ex-Cameronians (S.R.) and Family Members

Held our Remembrance Service on Sunday 10th November 2002 at 10.15 hrs which was Conducted by Rev J Strachan, Mr R Fowler gave Sermon on the History of the Regiment, Mr J Bain and Mr G Stewart, both laid wreaths, During the Service the Caledonian Film Company took footage of the Members for the tartan army, it will be screened in February 2003. After the service refreshments were served at The Cameronian (S.R.) Memorial Club and a warm welcome was given to all Members there was a large turnout a very moving experience

Tradeston Ex-Servicemans Club

The Standard was Paraded at the Monument by Mr E Wallace and our Escorts at Tradeston Ex-Servicemans Club and we were supplied with refreshments afterwards.

Remembrance Service Motherwell

The Parade did assemble at the 'United Services Club' Mable Street at 1430 hrs thereafter to the Remembrance Service 'Sunday' 10th November 2002 at 'Hamilton of Duchess Park' at 1515hrs, Mr A Muir laid the Wreath for us. After the service they returned later to the United Services Club for Refreshments.

Glasgow Central Station

We had been invited by RailTrack to take part in their Remembrance Service on Monday 11th November 2002 at 1015hrs at Glasgow Central Station

Rev J Strachan Conducted the Service. Mr G Stewart Laid the Wreath. There was several V.I.P's in attendance. Refreshments were served afterwards.

Westminster Abbey London

Mr E Clark arranged the Cameronian Plot again this year, and represented the Organisation at opening of the field remembrance at Westminster Abbey. The

Queen Carried out a Tour of Inspection of the Regimental Plots. On coming to our plot H.M. Stopped and I then reported to her that I was Representing the 'Cameronian Scottish Rifles' she then asked me if I was responsible for the Plot, and doing the layout whereupon I answered in the affirmative after a few moments after looking at our plot, she then remarked "very nice" and moved on. I was delighted when some Ex-Cameronians came on Parade. Mr A Halliday, Major Grant, Major Sixsmith, Mr W Kennedy, Mr T Gore, Mr E Clark

Hamilton Covenanters Society Commemorative Conventical Sunday 21 July 2002 Memorial Service

A Conventical, organised by Hamilton Covenanters Society, which was held at the Muirkirk Grave and Memorial of a Prominent Covenanter on 21 July 2002.

The Organisation was invited to take part in a short ceremony held at Aird Moss nr Cumnock to remember the Life of Rev Richard Cameron the Lion who's Grave is Situated on the Hillside and the Monument dedicated to him for the freedom to preach the Gospel Members of the society and Ex-Cameronians (S.R.) & Family Members Led by the Secretary and several members attended the service at the Airds Moss grave of Richard Cameron, who died there in 1680 following a skirmish between Royalists and Covenanters. The former Cameronian Regiment was named after Rev. Cameron. 70 People attended the Service which was conducted by Rev Frazer Turner of Hamilton Quarter Church The Cameronians provided the Pickets and Colour Party of Both organisations laid their respective Wreaths

Queen's Jubilee Festival Cavalcade 4th August 2002

The Organisation was invited at short notice to take part in the Parade through Princes Street to King Stables Road ending in The Grassmarket many remembered our Regiment some shouted out the 'Oh!! The Cameronians' if there are any Ex-Cam's out there please get in touch. We have had some enquires regarding joining our Growing Organisation from all these Events. It makes everything worthwhile, thanks to all members who were able to take Part.

Events we were Invited to in July 1 / K.O.S.B. Hamilton 15 July 2002

On Monday 15/7/02 The Organisation was Invited to take part in the Parade through the Streets of Hamilton the Standard bearer lead us supported by the Secretary and Several members of the Organisation who turned up at short notice. We marched behind a Detachment of the Regiment led by Major Toby Ingram fortunately they did not do 140 Paces to the minute and our Troops nearly overtook them Lt. Col: Jim Castle thanked the Organisation for being able to keep up with his troops considering our Age group 21 plus VAT: 'A Lot of VAT!!!!'

The Secretary was Invited on behalf of the Organisation to Beating of Retreat & a Cocktail Party being held in the evening at Chatelherault the entertainment was superb this may become an annual event.

1 / K.O.S.B. Motherwell 16 July 2002

On Tuesday 16 July 2002 the Organisation took part in a march through the Shopping Precinct led by Our Chairman, supported by the Secretary, Standard Bearer and several members of the Organisation. At both events we received a standing ovation from the general Public and there were a few proud 'Cameronians' on both occasions.

The K.O.S.B. Colour Party was attendance on both days, they were certainly educational.



The Cairn - Douglas



Service of Commemoration, The Cairn - Douglas



Remembrance Service - Glasgow Central Station 2002



The Hearse Revisited

A True Story by R.J. Coleman

It was July 2nd 1945, the war in Europe was over and my Battalion had vacated Stendal, East Germany to allow the Russians to secure their border line and we were enroute to taking up a new position within the British Zone of West Germany. No more fighting to be done, we were now part of the Occupation Forces after six long years of war. Everyone was jubilant with the exception of the German population. We finally arrived at our destination, a lovely town called Bad Gandersheim (the prefix 'Bad' meaning Spa) which was untouched by the ravages of war. The Battalion of six Company's was quickly dispersed in and around the town with each Company having its own area to police. Our immediate task was to maintain law and order among the civilian population in accordance with the Military Government that had been established. Little did I realise at that time that events over the ensuing months would be responsible for changing the course of my life.

Within a few days of our arrival in Gandersheim, all personnel were given two small booklets issued by Divisional H.Q. and drafted by General Montgomery (Monty) G.O.C. One booklet detailed Germany's background, its people, their habits and possible attitudes and reactions to an Occupation Force. The other booklet was an English/ German phrase book detailing the do's and don'ts of dealing with civilians. These booklets together with their strict instructions gave birth to non-fraternisation with the Germans Whilst this was considered by the top brass to be in our best interests, it only led to and caused a frustration amongst the troops who had been starved of any close female companionship for a number of years. It was inevitable that the restrictions imposed would only lead to a game of hide and seek as members of the Forces sought female companionship.

My first and only encounter with a German fraulein came by chance on July 12th 1945. I was on a normal afternoon patrol with a member of my platoon when we came across two young German girls who were stealing apples in a nearby orchard. As always we carried small weapons, this not only presented a show of force but also gave us an air of authority.

Needless to say the girls looked apprehensive as we approached, thinking perhaps that they may be arrested or worse but we had no such intentions. They were both very attractive and dressed in the traditional Dirndl skirt.

Although forbidden, we were keen to converse and learn from one another. We sat down under a large apple tree but of course the problem was the language barrier which we solved with facial expressions, hand gestures and the turned to the phrase books. We quickly established that the girls had returned from Hamburg after visiting friends and they had made a stop-over in Gandershiem before returning to the Eastern Zone and their families. The girls were cousins, Waltraut was 19 years old and single, whilst Ilse was 23 years old and married. Suddenly Waltraut took a book from the pocket of her blouse, looked at me and said with an accent but in perfect English:

'Tell me something', followed by: 'The cat sat on the mat'

I was amazed and laughed and she told me she had been taking English lessons from a local teacher. I was very impressed and knew straight away that I liked this girl and wanted to see her again so we arranged to meet the next day in the same spot.

There was a Lager (building) on the edge of town housing some 300 to 500 Polish Displaced Persons, men, women and children awaiting rehabilitation. It was off limits to all troops except when on Military Duties. However, these people had free access to the town without any fraternising restrictions being imposed upon them apart from a 10p.m. curfew which applied to troops and civilians alike. Of course, the curfew did not deter those who wished to pursue a relationship but it did make it more difficult as Military Police were constantly on patrol. As time went by animosity and jealousy broke out between the Polish and German girls who were prepared to, or were fraternising.

The German girls were more sought after but they had no privileges whereas the Polish girls were given free reign to attend local dances and even marry. It was a situation that would persist for quite a while, weeks seemed like months as Waltraut and I waited for an easing of the bans.

It was becoming extremely difficult to find a place of seclusion in order to meet and have any sort of a relationship with

your new found partner. However, by this time Waltraut and I had a serious understanding. I had already proposed to her and we made our promises to one another in the hope that one day all would finally fall into place and come to fruition.

Demobilisation had started and each month a numbered group would leave the Forces. The rapid dwindling of personnel meant that changes had to be made to cope with the control of West Germany. The Military Control Commission handed back administrative affairs and power to the German people allowing them to form local and State councils, policing etc. to control themselves and get back to some form of normality in their lives. This took much of the pressure off the Military. Soon after this, the Gandersheim Council issued the following orders:

'All Displaced Persons, Germans, Poles and otherwise must find permanent accommodation and work or vacate the town'.

Fortunately Waltraut had found a place to stay, as she and her cousin had previously decided not to return to the Eastern Zone on advice (by letter) from their parents, who themselves were waiting for permission to evacuate to the West. Shortly after this Waltraut found herself work (with no pay) in a local restaurant but was given meals. This allowed her to stay in Gandersheim and meant we could still be together until I was demobilised.

As the Fraternisation ban forbade us to enter civilian houses, Waltraut and I still had to find and use doorways or alley-ways in order to meet one another. One night I was waiting in the shadows of a house for Waltraut to arrive.

It was bitterly cold and when she arrived we were desperate to find a place to get out of the cold. We found a building which looked like a stable with large doors which fortunately were not locked. It was very dark and I opened one of the doors and struck some matches to see what was inside. Yes, it was a stable and I found an oil lamp hanging on the wall which I lit to see better our surroundings. To our shock and amazement we saw an elaborate horse drawn hearse. An eerie feeling came over us as we felt it was not the place to be but being young, carefree and very much in love helped to diminish our initial fears. We decided that surely this was a safe haven, after all who would like to think or dare to search such a place as a hearse. It became our favourite rendezvous and

whenever we met we would sit in the hearse and smoke a cigarette. We would talk about our family backgrounds, religious faith, future plans and our star signs. We found we were very compatible with Waltraut being a Virgo and I a Pisces.

Everything seemed to be going along nicely until one fateful night. During the day I had donated 1 pint of blood to our Casualty Clearing Station and had arranged to meet Waltraut that evening. I felt unwell after donating blood but didn't want to disappoint Waltraut and we met at our secret rendezvous. I was shivering and not feeling well and we took a large black horse rug from the wall and covered ourselves to keep warm. I fell asleep when suddenly Waltraut warned me that someone was approaching from outside. The footsteps became louder and we quickly realised that there were two German policemen about to enter our hideout. There was no escape and we quickly covered ourselves over with the horse rug, lying flat in the hearse, scarcely daring to breathe and praying that we wouldn't be detected. Alas, one policeman shone his torch into the hearse and lifted the horse rug. His first reaction was a scream of surprise followed in a very loud voice:

'Mein Gott was ist hier los' - meaning - My God, what have we here!

They had no authority over me but could report the matter to my Commanding Officer if they wished but Waltraut was instructed to report to the office of the Burgermeister at 10a.m. the following day. We both feared the worse, that Waltraut would have to leave Gandersheim. I went with her to offer my support when she went to see the Burgermeister who spoke some English. I explained my intentions and sincerity and gave him a packet of cigarettes. Finally Waltraut was allowed to leave but with a severe reprimand. There is no doubt that we both learnt from this experience that there is only one time to be in a hearse

Another few weeks passed without incident and there were strong rumours that the Fraternisation bans were about to be lifted. We soldiers were delighted at the prospect and anxiously waited for this to happen. At the same time the British Press were printing daily reports of our plight. Some articles were sympathetic whilst others were not. This continued on for some time and the finally the Press were fighting for our right to fraternise and

marry if we so wished. Statistics showed that one in every three soldiers wanted to marry their German sweethearts. The strength of this together with a strong Press sympathy brought about the lifting of the Fraternisation Ban.

At long last we were allowed to openly speak, walk arm in arm, enter houses and attend dances but the marriage ban remained in place. Having had a serious courtship with Waltraut for several months I was one of the first in my Company to parade down the town centre with my fraulein sweetheart in broad daylight. Needless to say we ran the gauntlet of jibes, jeers and even spitting by some German 'die-hards' and German Prisoners of War. I felt badly for Waltraut who bore the brunt of this abuse and I tried to assure her that it would fade and disappear in time. The weeks that followed saw us almost inseparable. Finally the time came for me to be demobilised. I was devastated at the thought of leaving Waltraut behind in Germany and worried that she would be vulnerable to those keen to take advantage of a young girl without my protection.

On May 16th, 1946 I was demobbed but I made a solemn promise to Waltraut that I would do all in my power to have her join me in England. Back in the U.K. I wrote to Waltraut every day. Not long after my return a notice in the Press read: Vicar gives advice on how to marry a German girl and promises 'I will help you' - a certain Rev. G.W. Hargrave-Thomas, Vicar of Needham

Market near Ipswich. I very quickly wrote to him and he replied and sent me details of how and where to apply. This resulted in me writing to the Home Office (Aliens Department) London who in turn sent me the necessary paperwork to complete and to send to Waltraut in Germany. She completed her part and took all the



Sgt RJ Coleman, 2nd battalion Bad Gandersheim, Germany 1945



Support Company Senior Ranks, 2nd Battalion Viennenburg, Germany 1944

documents to the British Military Control Office where they would issue a passport for Waltraut's entry to England.

I kept up my correspondence daily to Waltraut, waiting and wondering what was happening" would she be allowed to come? " had she changed her mind? Weeks and months passed and it was a traumatic time for me.

Then late in February 1947, some nine months after I had left Germany, a letter arrived from Germany advising me that my betrothed would arrive on March 3rd, 1947 at London's Tilbury Docks on the ship 'Empress Hallidale'. Waltraut was issued with a two month visa during which time she must marry or return to Germany. We were finally married on April 30th, 1947.

Life was difficult at first because both our families showed resentment to our union and of course the Brits who were still smarting from the effects of the war. It became worse when the three children came along and at school they were scorned and neighbours called them 'little Nazi's'. It was a trying time but we survived it all.

Later when we had saved enough money we went back to Germany to meet Waltraut's parents who were now safely settled in West Germany. Over the next few years we made many friends in England and had mutual like and respect for one another. Seeking to go further in life, as a family unit we decided to migrate to Australia and new surroundings and have never looked back.

We went back to Europe several times and over the years we promised each other that one day we would revisit what we fondly called, 'our Gandersheim'.

After 30 years of marriage we finally went back on July 12th, 1977, the same day that we had first met in 1945. We booked into a hotel which during the Occupation had been the Battalion Entertainment Centre. We visited all the places we once knew during our courtship days so it was obvious we would look for a stabled hearse. We walked down Barfusser Kloster (Barefoot Close) and came across the old buildings which were all looking immaculate. We found the stable and the doors were open. As we looked in there was a man carefully polishing a very long, black, Mercedes-Benz hearse. We paused for a while and the man looked at us and smiled and nodded. We then looked at one

another and said, we've done it, and arm in arm, still smiling walked away to continue our tour.

Authors note:

Now in our twilight years with 3 children and their partners, 8 grandchildren and I great grandchildren on the way, we often talk of the past and the hazards and difficulties of our courtship days during the non-fraternisation period. Living today in a modern but more promiscuous society I feel a sadness for the younger generation for as hard and difficult as it was for us at the end of the war, it was an exciting time and I look upon our experience after 54 years together as a fairy-tale romance come true. True love does not answer to the dictates of society, race, colour or creed. It is a law unto itself and I feel that Waltraut and I have proved it.

Ex-Sgt R.J. Coleman 909994
2nd Bn Cameronian Scottish Rifles
(now disbanded)

Will Glahe - Played for the Cams

*A True Story
By R.J. Coleman*

Much has been said and written about Will Glahe before and after World War 2 but I would like to share with you a short story of how I came to meet and know this man.

He was a man of music, born on February 12th, 1902 in Wuppertal, Elberfeld, Germany. He studied piano in Cologne and was often called upon to accompany such great singers as Richard Tauber, Gitta Alpar and Joseph Schmitt in concert. He was an accomplished accordionist and composer. He loved Bohemian Polka music, which later was to make him famous. During the 1930's he went to the USA and it was there that he formed a band called Dajos Bela, touring the States, Europe and Japan. During this period he was crowned the 'King' of Polka in the world of music and later he was ranked with such great bands as Glen Miller, Tommy Dorsey, Jack Payne and Billy Cotton. During 1939 Will had been playing at the Hotel Dreecen in Bad Godesburg which later was to become the site for a last meeting between the English Prime Minister, Lord Chamberlain (better known as the 'Umbrella Man') and Adolf Hitler after which time war broke out.

Will won numerous awards and produced many Gold Albums during his career and information about him is available on the Internet. He truly was a great musician of his time.

At the end of the war, my battalion, the 2nd Cameronian Scottish Rifles had left Lubeck, N.E. Germany in May 1945 to take up another position en-route to Bad Gandersheim, which was our final destination. We arrived at the large town of Stendal, which gives birth to my story.

As is the case in occupational procedures, when a move is made an advance party is sent ahead to reconnoitre and gather as much information as possible to determine population, attitudes, accommodation and other facilities. The Intelligence Officer of our party quickly established that Will Glahe, who was held in high esteem by the Germans was in Stendal Hospital recovering from war wounds that he had sustained as a soldier of the Wehrmacht.

The morale in the hospital was very low and P.O.W.'s, doctors and nurses lived in fear of their lives knowing full well that when we left the Russians would take over. From information gathered, it was well known that the Russians were still destroying, pillaging, raping and shooting those people that did not comply to their demands, even though the war was over. The Russian policy was clear: 'the war may be over, but for us (Russians), it's pay back time'.

Understandably, most Germans wished and hoped to escape to the West. On hearing this, our Commanding Officer, Lt. Col. J. Alexander, OBE, in his wisdom decided to evacuate the entire hospital staff and P.O.W.'s in reply to their begging requests.

Within 14 days we moved out of Stendal and the German's fears were visually confirmed as they saw the Russians arriving, knocking down doors, smashing windows, forcing entry into houses and dragging out the women and girls. Unfortunately we were unable to intervene as the Russians were our allies but the atmosphere was tense and uncertain.

We finally arrived at Bad Gandersheim with our evacuees and the hospital staff were transferred to the Casualty Clearing Station and the ex German P.O.W.'s were given the option to work for the Battalion or to make their own way in the West.

Will Glahe was found accommodation

and treated with respect even though the fraternisation ban was in full force at this time. Our Commanding Officer considered him to be a great musician for whom he had plans and in a very short time musical instruments were found and Will was asked to form a band from local musicians to entertain the troops. This he did and started with five instrumentalists.

Dances were held every week, mainly in a large hall in Gandersheim which was named 'The Bay Horse' in honour of our C.O. who had commandeered a bay horse whilst in Stendal and always rode it onto the battalion parade ground. The dances were for O.R.'s, CPL's, SGT's and Officers and as a senior NCO I was able to attend them with my wife to be Waltraut. Dances were successfully arranged but Will soon realised the his polka music was currently 'out' as the troops favoured quick-step, foxtrot and waltzes to which they could



Will Glahe - Inscribed " " In Remembrance of Bad Gandersheim

dance and so Will mainly played Glen Miller and Tommy Dorsey music much to the delight and satisfaction of the troops. Once the fraternisation ban was totally lifted, Waltraut and I never missed a dance and it was here that we became very close as a couple on the dance floor. Months passed by and I was demobilised and returned to the U.K. Waltraut and I were married in 1947 and from that time on we were totally locked together, having children and making a life for ourselves but we never forgot Will Glahe and his music and the pleasure he gave us during our courtship.

Meanwhile the Cameronians returned to their duties in the U.K. and this found Will Glahe somewhat in limbo as he was still searching for the whereabouts of his wife, Josephine who was caught up and displaced by the Russian advance. Will left Germany for Switzerland, hoping to continue his profession, which he did successfully. Firstly in writing and composing music at his home and then he formed a large orchestra and soon regained his former status, playing in Zurich. During this time he was able to locate his wife and bring her out of East Germany and they were able to be together once again.

In 1973 my wife and I, who were now living in Australia with our family decided to tour Europe with friends and one of the things we wanted to do was to see if we could contact Will Glahe. I learned through an agency that he resided in Switzerland and after contacting the police in Zurich, who were very helpful, they gave us his address as Unterengstringen, a suburb of Zurich.

It was early afternoon when we arrived at the home of Will Glahe only to find that he was not at home but a neighbour told us he would return with his wife at 5 p.m. from Zurich where he had been performing. As an introduction to our visit, in his letter box I left a 'cutting' from an old program in 1945 when Will had performed with others in concert and this turned out to be our entry passport home. Soon after 5 p.m. we returned and were welcomed at the door by this maestro of music and his charming wife, Josephine and we sat down to talk and were served with cognac and pretzels.

Will Glahe was pleased to know that we had come all the way from Australia to seek him out after so many years had passed. He was also surprised that we had located him

as he now lived a quiet life and by then was aged 71 years old. We talked a lot and reminisced about the days in Bad Gandersheim and the Cameronians.

I felt very privileged to be in his company for this was the first time I had ever spoken to him personally as during the period in Bad Gandersheim his time was spent with the Officer's of the Cameronians. He was possibly surprised at the impact he had made on my wife and I during our courtship days and the fact that I had continued to show an interest in him and his career since that time. He had also had some contact with Captain Little O.B.E. of Glasgow Scotland who was retired and they had corresponded from time to time.

During our visit, Will donned his accordion and played us extracts from his latest album which was called 'Das Goldene Akkordeon' (The Golden Accordion) which was a jubilee recording to commemorate his 25 year contract with Decca Records. Before we left his residence, he presented me with an autographed copy of his album and he wrote: In remembrance of you, Mr. Coleman and the Cameronians. I still have this album today and treasure it.

On my return to Australia, I corresponded regularly with him over a period of 10 years and he wrote that during 1978 his wife Josephine had undergone a serious operation from which she never fully recovered. Will also had an operation in 1979 and with his wife and himself in ailing health he retired from his profession and played only for her.

He wrote to me that his wife had passed away in 1984 and that he had moved back to his homeland of Rhein-Breitbach where he had bought a property. He lived out the rest of his life there and died on 21st November, 1989 aged 87 years. He is buried, along with his wife in Rhondorf in the same cemetery as Chancellor Ardeneur. In closing, I pay tribute to Lt. Col. J. Alexander O.B.E. and the Cameronians in which I was an N.C.O., for their effort and foresight in saving this man of music from the Russians and possible imprisonment which enable him to continue his illustrious career world wide.

'I treasure his memory'

R.J. Coleman

Ex Sgt. 2nd Battalion Cameronians S.R.

Brigadier - General F.A. Maxwell VC, CSI, DSO, and the 9th Scottish Rifles.

On 23rd October 1916 Brigadier-General Maxwell arrived to take over 27 Infantry Brigade in the 9th Scottish Division, and found the men of his new command resting in the area of Albert, following a bad spell on the Somme front holding Snag Trench, near High Wood, in appallingly wet conditions under heavy shelling. Among the battalions in the brigade was the 9th Scottish Rifles, one of the two battalions of the regiment raised as part of Kitchener's New Army in 1914.

Maxwell's own regiment was the 18th King George's Own Bengal Lancers, but like many other cavalry officers in the Great War he had applied to serve with the infantry because the mounted arm had been so little used once trench warfare had settled in. When he came to France in 1916 he had already seen much action. Early in his career he had fought in campaigns in North-West Frontier of India, gaining his first DSO and being recommended for the Victoria Cross. This great honour he won later in South Africa during the Boer War when saving the guns of an RHA battery at Sanna's Post near Bloemfontein. He was ADC to Lord Kitchener 1900 to 1904, and Military Secretary to the Viceroy of India 1910 to 1916, when he volunteered to go to France. On his first arrival in May 1916 he was posted to command the 12th Battalion The Middlesex Regiment in Major-General Maxse's 18th Division. It was his superb handling of his battalion at the battle of Trones Wood, 16th July, and Thiepval, 27 September, which led to his promotion and appointment to command 27 Infantry Brigade.

The Brigade was moved from the Somme area soon after Maxwell's arrival, going into action next during two phases of the battle of Arras from 9 to 13 April 1917 and again from 3 to 4 May. A further move to another sector brought the brigade north on 29 July 1917 to become involved in the Third battle of Ypres, often known as Passchendaele. On 21 September 1917 Maxwell was killed by a snipers bullet as he stood up to examine enemy positions near Zonnebeke from a forward trench manned by a company of the 9th Scottish Rifles.

Every day Maxwell found time, even if crouched in a trench with a pad on his

knee, to write a letter to his wife. After the war she edited a book which was published by John Murray in 1921 with the title Frank Maxwell, VC: A Memoir and some letters. For this article of The Covenanter quotations follow which have been selected from the book, chosen to give some impression of this great man.

Maxwell was always to be found as far forward as possible when a battle was in progress. As a battalion commander he was on several occasions censured by his superiors for this, but took little notice of their disapproval and continued to do what he thought was right. As will be seen in the following letter he had to change his habit a little when he became a brigade commander but the urge to get right up to the front never left him.

France, October, 1916, To September, 1917

27th (Infantry) Brigade, 9th Division, October 23rd, 1916

The frost of yesterday and day before gave way to a dense fog, and south wind to-day has ended in rain, which heartbreaking for every reason, not the least being the poor soldier-men wallowing in mud and foot-deep slime again, and undergoing pitiless shelling in their rotten, broken-down German trenches recently taken, and pounded to pieces, first by our artillery when the G's. had them, and then by the Germans now we have them. I don't suppose the German Fritz enjoys life much better than T.A. does under such conditions, but, at any rate, it is useful for his cause - if he has one. And if his artillery strafes us, as it is strafing my particular sector, with great violence, ours, I fancy, is much worse on theirs, and goes on night and day without pause. How our gunners stick it, I don't know. They live in comparative luxury, most of them, of course, but the continual firing of their noisy pieces must be hard on them. One of the Divisional Gunners told me that nearly all his men were deaf, some half blind, and all dead beat, for they had only been out of the line a fortnight since June 24th, when the Somme bombardment began, and then were marching or training round the country. A soldier's life in this modern type of business is a thin one, and I'm glad indeed now that I have been right through the mill with an infantry battalion and know just how bad it is. The experience should, if I can use it properly, be good for

my Brigade, for it is only such personal experience that enables a commander to realise what his army suffers, what its limitations, and therefore how to help it through its business with the least discomfort possible"

November 12th, 1916

I find my Brigade a very untidy one at present, and had a shock yesterday at an inspection of one unit. In fact, I only got as far as seeing a few men, and then declined to go on. However, it is the case of a new broom, and I shall get things done my way in time, and don't mean to hustle them too much at first, but give them plenty of time to assimilate my views - and carry them out. I find I have to begin at my very door, with the hundred odd men forming Brigade H.Q., who, most of them, look like street waifs, so badly are they turned out. It does not appear to have been rubbed into the new army officers of the Brigade that personal smartness is the foundation of discipline and fighting. But they've jolly well got to learn that it is - or, at any rate, that I think so"

November 18th, 1916

I have just had a curious interview with a man. Downed by his C.O. for some trivial offense some time ago, he considered himself unjustly dealt with, and refused to carry out the punishment. - Result C. Martial. C.M. gave him three months "field imprisonment," which means he carried on with his regiment, and had his spare hours filled in with all sorts of punishments, etc. Still feeling aggrieved, he declined to carry out the sentence - i.e sat down and refused to undergo the penalties it was his lot to endure for three months. 'Remanded' therefore by his C.O. for another C.M., which was what he was after, poor chap, thinking at the next one he got he would be able to say all he wanted about the unfairness of his original treatment, etc., and so get the whole thing, including the last sentence by C.M., cancelled. Fortunately, the C.O., knowing now my dislike to C.M. told me of the case; on which I asked him to see the man like a father, and put him on the right lines. He did so, but failing to persuade him, told him that I had promised to see him if he failed. So in he came and we sat down and talked things out, and in a quarter of an hour we had it all square, and with very watery eyes he promised to play up and not

let me down. (I put it that way.) He is a lawyer by profession - or, I suppose, a lawyer's clerk (41 years old), and so fancied he knew all about law and all that sort of thing, besides being full of a sense of the injustice of things in general. I know jolly well I should never have boiled him for the stupid little error he originally committed; but then, of course, C.O.s differ in their opinions and methods.

However, it is satisfactory that a man who, at his age, gives up his profession, left his wife and children to enlist a year ago, is saved from himself, instead of going to goal for two years, which would have been his inevitable fate had he persisted. So he left me with a cigarette in his mouth, a good deal of 'pani' (water) in his eyes, and every intention in his mind of not playing the ass in future. And I pray that he may find it possible to keep square.

November 28th, 1916

I haven't been so proud and happy for many a long day, for to-day's Times announces the two V.C's. for my regiment (12th Middlesex). Isn't it splendid? The story of their deeds isn't so well told as I told it, or rather doesn't bring out their real salient points of gallantry. But that doesn't so much matter; the chief and great point is that they have both got it. And if the 12th Middlesex haven't made a record for practically one day and night's fighting, I'd be glad to be told who beats it. Two V.C's., four Military Crosses, three D.C.M.'s and thirty-four Military Medals (plus my old D.S.O. bar). If only my fifth M.C. had not been omitted I should have no fly in my very sweet ointment"

*Note: These awards refer to the capture of the German stronghold at Thiépvál, now the site of the great Somme war Memorial, on 27th September 1916, when Maxwell's battalion played a major part under his personal leadership.

December 12th, 1916

Such a sweet thing in days. Snow, rain, snow, and pretty bitter cold on top. I went up to the trenches waded about, slush up to my shins in the front trench, which made me very sorry for the poor men in it. Everything so absolutely beastly-trenches already knocked about by fire, falling in continually from the weather; no drainage at the bottom, so melted snow deep in it. No dug-outs, as these have (quite right) been forbidden to be used in the front line,

and only wretched shelters of corrugated iron, under which those not on the parapet sit freezing with cold. No blankets allowed - for the Division beat me about them (and I ought incidentally to have been under arrest as well for gross disobedience of orders). But I haven't done with them yet.

Anyway, I have got time by the forelock, and am fairly well on the way with comfortable and warm shelters for men. Poor chaps, they are so cold they can't sleep at night, and as they have to slop about in the mud trying to work by day, their rest is nil. How they stick it I don't know - got to, I suppose. And it makes me most mutinous and insubordinate to have to deny blankets to them, because certain fatuous idiots going to bed in a bed, with probably half a dozen blankets on them and a snug room outside all that, ordain that Jock in the trenches will go too fast asleep if he has one blanket, so mustn't have it! It's not only beastly cruel, but most dangerous, for a man must sleep or doze some time, and if he can't get it properly, he will sleep or doze, or be perfectly inalert when on sentry-go; and then he either has a court martial for other people's wise orders, or he lets the enemy in and gets scuppered along with a number of other half-frozen creatures.

As I told you, I strafed our Divisional Commander, and sent him away to see the Corps Commander again, but both were decided against the blanket, and when he came to tell me the result yesterday morning, I could have eaten him - and he jolly well could see it too. Anyway, I told him I wasn't going to leave it at that, and that if he and the Corps General cared to give orders which, in my considered opinion, directly led to dangerous risk, I should protect myself by making the strongest protest I could on paper, and sending it to him officially, so that he could enjoy all the responsibility, which I absolutely declined to accept, of any mishap. I expect I shall get fired out of this job before long. I find that I see differently to too many people on too many things to be able to conform to the ordinary military ethics of sitting down and obeying them, as most certainly I should if I were a proper soldier man. But then I'm not, and never shall be now, for at my age it's too late to change my skin.

So far I have always managed to disobey rotten orders, or been able to square their non-compliance; but I can't always expect such luck, especially as one gets up the ladder.

February 15th, 1917

I have just had two boys of the Scottish Rifles dining with me - one a lively little Scotsman, of about twenty years, and the other more dour and a little older, both bubbling over with their experiences and stories of yesterday, and both happy in having murdered Huns. The lively youth despatched three all of a heap with his rifle first, and then with heavy bombs. So he's all right, and knows who's top dog when next he goes over. 'I was so pleased,' he said, 'that after that I didn't mind a wee bit if I had deed!'

March 4th, 1917

In between their work I make battalions play 'physical games,' invented by some one blessed with real common sense. Instead of the dreary physical drill, these games are games of all sorts and kinds, most of them really amusing, and it does one's heart good riding about the area to hear the roars of cheery laughter bursting out from whenever parties are at the games. In one of them to-day I made one of my Staff the victim. Two rows of men stand facing each other, with hands clasped; the victim then has to jump face downwards on to the arms at one end, when he is shied into the air and sort of jerked forward at the same time; caught a foot or so further on as he falls (flat on his tummy) he is jerked up again, and so goes on till he arrives at the other end. Some big fellows 'at the other end' kept him tossing up in the air three or four times, before they let him out.

April 9th, 1917

5.35 a.m. - The battle of Arras has just begun, and my lads are over the parapet. Such a magnificent and wonderful sight, the opening of this fearful barrage of ours; it is roaring overhead now like drums, and covering our men as they advance slowly behind it. It was an anxious five minutes before 5.30, for the Bosch seemed windy and inclined to throw up S.O.S. rockets - did, indeed, but his guns evidently thought there was nothing in it. To have the enemy's barrage coming down on us, with trenches packed full of men waiting to go over, is the most dreadful thing. So I kept my eye very anxiously on my watch, and was relieved indeed when, true to time, came our thunder, when I came down here to this horrid hole to be on the telephone. And here I must wait patiently till the 'first objective' is taken at 6.10, when orders have to be issued and things done. If all goes well, I hope to move forward in a couple of hours or so. At the moment I am about 800 yards behind our front line.

Fancy me being down in a dug-out, instead of enjoying life on the top with the battalion as heretofore. However, there'll be plenty of shell-dodging later, when I go forward, and that's always interesting, as it is rather like choosing your line of country hunting. I had a great sleep, in spite of the dungeon, and am as fit as can be and full of fight. And so, I think, are the men.

I shall probably keep this in my pocket to finish later; but if anybody is going back, I may give it to him to post (on the chance of his doing so). My thoughts are all of you, darling, and the babies. Bless you all. And God keep you.

April 10th, 1917

9.45 a.m. - My battle letter had perforce to stop yesterday; too much business, and I moved forward at a few minutes after the 9.15 entry. Everything went well till then, when there was to be a pause for four hours, to get ready for the next attack, so far as we were concerned with the battle. I went right forward to my people, and found them in good heart; issued orders, and started them off later for the last effort, of which I had much anxiety. But we were in luck, and the enemy made no resistance, so that we had a procession, greatly to every one's surprise and relief, for with troops that had already made two attacks, a third is a great trial of endurance. By about 1 o'clock we had got everything, and with wonderfully little loss, considering. I don't know what the number of prisoners amounts to, but our Division took about 2000, and this Brigade fourteen machine-guns and a gun; so I suppose the other brigade did proportionately well in that line. What the total bag is all along the line we haven't heard, but it ought to be biggish. I can't write any more now, as these German dug-outs kill me and make my head burst, so I will finish later. In the meantime we are waiting for orders, men nearly all lying about as they did last night, in the snow, poor chaps"

August 5th, 1917

A poor sort of Sabbath Day, in so far as its being a day of rest. I began early by riding to my new H.Q. and taking over the sector. Then from 9.30 till 5 was out in the trenches, and trying to solve a knotty problem or two. One part of my line is separated by a dry canal, anything from seventy to a hundred feet deep; we on one side, Fritz on the other, the distance from

edge to edge being about eighty yards. The banks are so steep, and the cutting so deep, that we can't see down to the bottom, nor even half-way down, without craning over the edge, which is risky, as a sniper over the way might plug a hole in you. Happily, he didn't seem to be there to do so, as I found it necessary to do a good deal of leaning over. It's a rotten line, and doesn't lend itself to bloodshed anywhere that I can see.

My headquarters are behind, and right against an enormous slag heap dug out to make the canal. A curious sort of spot, and much too hugged up to this mountain to please me"

If one doesn't take the Bosch as one finds him, life is rotten and business difficult; he is so tame nowadays - compared to up to last June year - that one can take advantage of it to do things now that wouldn't have been dreamed of then. For myself, I simply can't see anything worth seeing with a periscope, and when the German is tame I soon find I can't see half enough looking over the parapet of a trench, and so get upon top when I find it's quite safe to do so. Often as not, too, if you do something the Bosch never thinks you will do, you can count on doing it with impunity, because he will not have any one there to make it otherwise.

These all-day jaunts are most interesting; but they take time, and now it's nearly 1 a.m., with nothing done yet that ought to be done. I came in at about 5 p.m., and till 8.30 was interviewed by people. After dinner my own Staff have their innings, so my own work gets left.

September 20th, 1917

My Dearest Beloved

I like this sort of day! A battle all morning, and a letter in the evening. I had the same at Trones Wood and Thiepval.

The sweat and grind and great anxiety of the last nearly three weeks came to a head at dawn this morning, when we went for the Bosch and took a 1000 or 1200 yards of France out of him, besides killing a goodish number - probably a very much larger number than we see, owing to our artillery work a long way behind our objective.

I think my Brigade took well over 300 prisoners too many - probably more - and did their job very completely and well.

That was their share; mine was to make the plans, and then they are through, to see that they are not lost by the perfectly incredible ignorance of our jolly New Army. I learnt wisdom as a battalion commander - there goes out the lamp with a shell burst - and know what to do immediately after the objective is taken, i.e.

go up to it without loss of time. And, my goodness, it was necessary this morning, for I never saw such chaos; no one doing anything, except enjoying the situation and being tied up into knots. No idea of what position to hold, and how to hold it; most of them doing absolutely nothing. Yet the Bosch supposed to be going to counter-attack at any moment. Ground quite chaotic and churned into quagmire much of it, so it was not an idle four to five hours I spent, I can assure you, my Sweet.

The men (and officers) were pretty well done after an all-night march into position and the long stretch on their nerves afterwards till they go over. They face what music there is, and very nasty it is in the attack; but afterwards, when it is over, and, like children, they think the game is finished, shells perturb them, and the new officer, as a whole, has no sort of control or hold over them; often not of himself. But, of course, all this is not curious; it is absolutely inevitable, for you can't learn these things in months; they become instinct only by years of business experience and learning. The only surprising thing is the tosh that is written about our magnificently trained Army, when one knows its training is surface deep at best, and not always that. Gallant fellows they are, and give them a straightforward task and they will do it to the best of their power. But ask them more, and they fail you, unless you have learnt by experience never to believe that anything you have taught them will, or can, stay with them in any real emergency, and so take steps to remedy the limitation.

It is unpopular with higher authority, of course, this streaking forward, because I am not in position to send them pretty messages of victory all the time. But that I don't mind one little bit, because I like to hold on to anything I have got and not lose it as in probably seventy percent of cases it is, when there is no one to guide the ignorant at the crucial time, so that Bosch walks up and deprives them of their hardly earned gains. He did not, however, attempt to dispute our gains while I was down there, and glad I was, as I wanted to be through with the chaos before that. He is said to be counter-attacking part of my line, but from my perch I can only see our artillery slating where he would have to come over, but no sign of a Bosch, and I don't believe he's there. Wish he were, now we should be ready for him. Further to right, however, he is supposed to be attacking the Australians, my neighbours, who I dare say will give him all he wants.

Now for a fairly beastly night - about seven or eight of us in a nine by six hole! and all could do with a little sleep.

Watson is up with a clean pair of boots (as I was bogged and wading much of the morning) and rations, waiting for this to go back with him, so I'll sleep now and tell you more tomorrow, and answer your very welcome letter.

Zonnebeke Redout and Ypres-Roulers Railway is the address of my people tonight in case their whereabouts interest you. Heaps of love, Dearest Beloved, to you and the Babies.

This was the last letter which Maxwell wrote. On the next day he was killed, when out reconnoitring in No Man's Land. The following letter from his orderly tells the sad story.

27th Brigade, October 5th, 1917

Dear Madam

I was very glad to hear from you. I will try and tell you about the fateful 21st, when I lost my beloved General. There was Major Ross and myself along with him. We went up to the front line to see if everything was all right, and carried on down the line of our brigade front. We went out into 'No Man's Land,' as the General wanted to have a good look round. We were from eighty to one hundred yards in front of our front line. A captain of the Scottish Rifles came along with us to this 'out-post.' The General wanted to have a machine-gun posted at this particular part. I was about five yards in front watching for any movement in shell-holes. I was lying flat with my rifle ready to shoot. The first bullet that was fired by the Huns went right into the ground below my left elbow. I shouted to the General to get down, as he was standing up at the time, and he did so. He sat for about two minutes, then he got up again to show what he was saying to this captain, and he was just opening his mouth to speak when he got shot. I caught him as he was falling, and jumped into a shell-hole with him. I held his head against my breast till all was over. Madam, I cried till my heart was liking to burst. If I could only see you I could tell you something about the General. He was a king among men and loved by everyone; in fact, Madam, next to yourself, I miss him more than any one, for I would have done anything for him.

Perhaps I speak better than any one of his personal bravery, for I was his personal orderly in all fighting the brigade did.

I can say no more just now, but if God spares me, I will come and see you some day.

I am,
Your faithful servant,
(Signed) A. Laird, L/Corporal.

My Cameronian Days

By an Ex London Scot
Part 11

Our annual camp at Dallachy, Spey Bay, was to be my last with the 6/7th Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) for several years as increased domestic and business commitments made me apply to my C.O. Lt Col Ronald Clydesmuir to transfer to the T.A. Reserve of Officers. He persuaded me, however, to remain in the T.A. with a less arduous role and arranged for me to be attached to HQ 52 Div H.Q. the following year, 1956, at Barry Camp as a junior staff officer although I was able to retain my rank of Major.

In 1957 the old 156 Brigade was resuscitated with their H.Q. in Lanark and comprising the Royal Scots and K.O.S.B. The Brigade Commander was Brigadier A.E.C. Bredin DSO MC whose two battalions involved him in travelling the breadth of Scotland from Edinburgh to Stranraer and vice versa. His nickname of Speedy was deservedly earned in the early hours of the Normandy invasion in June 1944 when he galvanised his Dorset battalion into overdrive and thus made secure an otherwise dodgy part of the beachhead.

I was posted to the newly formed 156 Brigade as a Staff Officer with the most imposing title of Deputy Assistant Adjutant and Quartermaster General, otherwise known as D.A.Q.M.G or D.Q. The Brigade Major dealt with the G. (Ops) side while I was responsible for A and Q matters. I soon found that my commander - whilst speedy on active service - was rather the opposite in peacetime. When he started out from Lanark to visit his far-flung battalions he tended to leave late and far from making up time en route he fell even further behind. I should know, because I would get calls from irate C.O.s, particularly those at the end of the programme, who had effectively had their troops standing to for several hours. Despite his foibles he was a great character and we all thought the world of him. I was devastated when Brigadier Speedy died in 1991 after a short spell in hospital suffering from Motor Neurone Disease and a stroke. Luckily for him it was of short duration as he was still very energetic and would have been miserable as an invalid.

For our 1957 camp I was back to Barry, but this time as a staff officer and not as a

dogsbody at Div H.Q. We had a very small H.Q. and while we fed with the K.O.S.B. we had a small room set aside as an anteroom. My first job in the morning as D.Q. was to get a bucket of hot water from the KOSB cookhouse next door and wash and dry our glasses from the previous day's libations.

In 1958 the Brigade went to Garelochhead but I had to miss out as I could not get away from my civilian job.

In 1959 we went to Stanford P.T.A. (Primary Training Area) at Thetford on the A 11 to the north of Bury St. Edmunds. The training area was large enough for accommodation and training on a brigade group basis. This was most enjoyable and I for one learnt a lot from the many exercises we took part in. By this time we were a full strength brigade as my old battalion the 6/7th Cameronians joined us.

In 1960 we came down to earth with a bump as this was our year for civil defence training which none of us liked, and went to Millom, an industrial town in Cumberland to the north of Barrow-in-Furness. Only a few miles away lay some of the most beautiful Lake District country but Millom itself was a tough place with a lot of tough characters.

The local police chief was delighted when the T.A. camping season came along since he was able to lay the blame for any misdemeanours - and there were plenty - on the Military. Complaints came in to Brigade HQ daily and it was my job to investigate and apportion blame. Occasionally they were justified since our troops weren't exactly saints, but usually, despite provocation from some of the local bad boys they behaved well and the police chief wasn't a happy man when I had to reject his complaint. The area could well be described as 'Where every prospect pleases and only man is vile'. Shortly before the end of Millom camp Brigadier Speedy moved on, being replaced by Brigadier Freddy Noble, HLI. I had done three years in the job and Brig Noble decided that I should make way for a younger man. He offered to get me the job of D.A.P.M (Deputy Assistant Provost Marshal) another imposing title for a military police staff at brigade level. That was definitely not my idea of fun, so having been sacked for the second time in my army life I went on the Reserve and for the next year devoted my spare time activities to a house with a much neglected garden which we had just acquired. I still can't make up my mind

whether it is more humiliating to be sacked before the sacker knows you or afterwards? Early in 1962 the situation in the 6/7th Bn was not very good as Lt Col Ian Keith was having personal problems and had gone off on an extended visit to South America.

Major Walter Hunt was the 2¹/_c but his civilian employers had posted him to New Zealand where, as far as I know, he still is! Consequently Major Bob Dobson, as the senior company commander, was left to keep the battalion ticking over, a near impossible task which Bob did most successfully with considerable help from Peter McGhie, the O.R.Q.M.S. (Orderly Room Quartermaster Sergeant).

Although I didn't know it till then, I had been recommended for command by Ronald Clydesmuir and Brig Speedy. Col Eric Southward who had succeeded the Duke of Hamilton as Honorary Colonel of the 6/7th approached me about returning to the battalion as commanding officer. This was not an easy decision to take because:

It was quite the wrong time of year to take over. Normally the outgoing C.O. handed over after annual camp leaving his successor a full year in which to dig himself in. I had four months.

The Scottish Daily Express 'Poison Dwarfs' campaign against the 1st Bn in Minden was unlikely to be confined to the regular battalion.

The injury to my hearing which was caused by the gun of one of our supporting tanks being fired over my head during the attack on Dreirwalde in April 1945 came back to haunt me 17 years later and I was now completely deaf in one ear.

My wife Peggy, however, although realising that it would mean 2¹/₂ years 'hard labour' for both of us was very keen that I should accept so I agreed to do my best to try and restore the battalions fortunes. Peggy was marvellous and at all times gave me her unqualified support both then and subsequently.

Despite the drawbacks I was heartened to get support from various sources. For long I had been convinced that the best way to train for war was to get out onto the hills, irrespective of the weather which was usually foul. Previous training programmes had largely been confined to practising TOETs (Tests of Elementary Training), important as they were, in unexciting drill halls, later to be more correctly named Training Centres. In this I was incredibly

lucky to find that our Lowland Divisional commander, Maj Gen John Frost had the same vision about training. If he had different views on training from me I would undoubtedly have been finished there and then. General John of Arnhem fame was a paratrooper but had started off as a Cameronian. I was also supported by the Colonel of the Regiment, Lt Gen Sir Horatius 'Nap' Murray and Major Lennox Paterson, another former Cameronian (6th Battalion) who was Chairman of the Lanarkshire T.A. Association. Last but not least my brigade commander, Brigadier Jack Montieth, Black Watch was a most cheery and helpful officer who went out of his way to smooth the path of the new boy.

My first and most urgent task was to have a meeting with the battalion officers and senior NCOs in order to explain how my much tougher training schedule and life in general would affect them. I asked for their support in the exciting proposal to help restore the battalion to its former glories. However, I gave them the opportunity, without rancour, to call it a day now and not to vote with their feet later on, thus perpetuating an already unrealistic paper strength. In the event only one person stood down but he was already finding that his business and TA commitments clashed and would probably have departed anyway. Needless to say I was a very relieved man and greatly encouraged by their display of support and solidarity.

My first days in office were not very auspicious. First to come out of my overloaded pending tray was an authority for me to sign giving the bands a day's pay. From memory one was only entitled to a day's pay if you were on continuous duty for about 7 hours. For anything less, TEA (Training Expense Allowance), which was much less remunerative, applied. On discovering that the bands had been on parade for about 3 hours at most I declined to authorise a day's pay whereupon I was told that the bands would walk out. I was not prepared to be blackmailed like that and said, 'Let them go.' I promptly told our Honorary Colonel, Eric Southward that when he came to visit us at Bellerby Camp near Richmond in July there could well be no pipe or military bands to welcome him. He agreed with the stand I had taken and in the event a few of the military band departed for other units but they were not good soldiers and the band was over strength anyway.

The next item out of Pandora's box was a complaint from another Lanarkshire unit that a cup for .22 rifle shooting which the 6/7th had recently won was invalid because we had cheated. Seemingly our rifle range which had presumably been constructed by the T.A. Association was about 2' short. I promptly arranged for the cup to be handed over to this unit without more ado as I had much more important tasks to tackle before we departed for Bellerby. If it takes two to tango it certainly takes two to engage in feuding. Since we were not one of them the matter stopped there and we were able to get on with our task. I think the offended unit was rather disappointed at not being able to complain to higher authority and get us put on the carpet thus making a name for themselves.

During the three months before we went to Bellerby I had to work hard to brush up on my battle procedures and re-learn the art of moving troops from A to B, by the best route, at the right time and in the right order, only this time having to deal with greatly increased numbers.

We had a number of exercises organised by Brig Monteith to get us on our starting blocks for the more sophisticated exercise(s) at camp. All this time I was more than conscious of the Poison Dwarf cloud hanging over my head. By the time we arrived at Bellerby Camp in Yorkshire it was clear that the media campaigners were going to extract the last ounce of flesh from any misdemeanour the battalion might be perceived to have committed. In fact I still recall having nightmares with newspaper headlines proclaiming 'Scottish T.A. soldiers terrorise peaceful Yorkshire countryside', simply because one of us tripped coming out of a pub with a reporter lurking in the background ready to pounce.

Accordingly on our first morning at camp I decided to speak to the battalion. RSM Murray had them paraded in serried ranks, just like the troops of Titipu and was appalled when I took a leaf out of FM Montgomery's book and told them to gather round and sit on the ground. Luckily the ground was somewhat drier than our usual habitat. I made it clear that our behaviour had to be exemplary and that unless I was satisfied that any accusation brought by the media was totally unjustified, the soldier concerned including officers and my son who was present would be back on the next train to the west of Scotland in disgrace. It would

be a long journey and the miscreant would have plenty of time to explain why he was coming back from camp so soon to his parents, girlfriend or wife - 40 years ago 'partner' did not have the same connotation it has now. In the event everyone behaved themselves and we got through camp without any trouble from that quarter.

The following year our big exercise was to be cordon and search in the Glencoe mountains, a terrain not appealing to our bloodhounds who soon found easier quarry to pursue.

Reverting to Camp 1962, I have already referred to Bellerby which is a few miles from Richmond and is part of the Catterick Training Area but is not easy to find on most maps. In some ways this is a pity because Bellerby is famous for its mist. The famous Bellerby mist ensures that every article of clothing is very damp at all times of the day and night so our tents were hardly luxurious and the wearing of mess kit with its stiff shirts became a nightmare.

General John and Brigadier Jack put us through our paces with testing exercises one of which had to be aborted because of the mist. It was so thick that one, myself included, could get lost moving from one company position to another. Major John Craig ensured that his company did not get cold because he got a blazing fire going knowing that it could not be seen from more than a few yards away.

Although we tried to get maximum numbers out onto the high ground of the training area I soon discovered that there were more soldiers in the company areas than on the training area. This was soon stopped and only those who were essential for the maintenance of the company areas were excused. After the rest of us had marched out onto the training area our training officer Major Alan Campbell (later Lieutenant Colonel) inspected the company areas to ensure there were no dodgers.

On passing the pipe band which was officially practising for beating retreat in local holiday resorts he paused to listen. The pipers were practising on their chanter while the drummers were doing their taps but all the time they kept up a continuous conversation with the F word predominating. Alan held up his hand at which they stopped and he said, "Do you realise that if a certain word was banned from the English language you would all be F . . . speechless!" This was much more

effective than telling them to mind their language.

Despite the weather we did have our lighter moments.

At the end of annual camp it is necessary to take stock to give an honest assessment of whether you had actually achieved what you had set out to do. If it was thought that camp had been successful there would always be room for improvement next time round but if honest enough to give it just pass marks - or worse - then it would be back to the drawing board. I hoped that, on the whole, things had gone quite well and that our troops would go home with a spring in their step. Historically a bad or even mediocre camp had resulted in attendances plummeting during the winter. One abiding memory for me is John Craig's fire which was not only practical but a stroke of genius. News of this conflagration spread to the rest of the battalion and would doubtless be told with suitable embellishment in the pubs around Hamilton and Eglinton Street.

Quite the best recruiting propaganda.

So, farewell to Bellerby and its mist and to a very eventful fortnight.

C.E.M.

Back to Buxtehude

Major Donald C.B. Cameron

It is said that when policemen seem young to you, you know that you are growing old. I find nowadays that even brigadiers are beginning to look remarkably young - not that I meet many of them in Berwickshire. Once a year I meet the odd one or two at RAEC veterans' gatherings - not exactly "The Boys of the Old Brigade", but companionable. My 95 year old mother has much clearer memories of her childhood than of the events of the day before; it's a common phenomenon. I found recently that I could sit down and draw a very reasonable plan of Spey Barracks, Buxtehude, which I left forty six years ago, with only two photographs to boost my memory. I should be getting worried.

I dare say that this map would bring back memories to Cameronians who served there between July 1954 and September 1956. Hopefully some will be happy ones. In 1982 I was able to arrange an official visit to the German commander. I wrote an article for the Covenanter at that time, so need add little now.

During the Battalion's stay the Occupation of West Germany ended. This meant that a lot of the perks which we

enjoyed at first suddenly disappeared. Rail travel at ridiculous concessionary prices suddenly ended. Clubs and other leisure facilities in Hamburg disappeared, as their premises were returned to their German owners. The number of German civilian workers in the Barracks was greatly reduced when the German government's massive contribution to their costs was cut by a huge percentage. There were still many privileges, however, including a generous local overseas allowance and a variety of Volkswagen and Opel cars for our convenience.

The MSO, a labour organisation of East European refugees, did most of the camp administrative tasks, thus giving soldiers more time to indulge in pleasurable soldierly activities such as route marches and exercises. Those of us who lived or worked in the headquarters block regularly heard the strains of "The Black Bear", as one company or other returned to camp. I seem to remember Captain Nick Carter's "D" Company to have been among the more enthusiastic route marchers.

One other notable perk, for those who had tried digging trenches in the Catterick area during the Barnard Castle era, was the extraordinary ease with which one could dig down through layers of compacted sand to six feet or deeper. I remember once in the harbour area at the start of Ex "Battle Royal" digging interconnecting tunnels for the sheer fun of it. However when I was a section commander even that pleasure was denied me. My L/Cpl was Tam Norton, a former British Mineworkers' Middleweight Boxing Champion and a fighter of some note. Give Tam a pick and shovel, and before you had time to spread a tin of compo cheese on a couple of hard tack biscuits, lo and behold, you had a trench which any sapper would have been proud of!

I could go on for hours, but our revered Editor informs me that he has already collected a mass of material, so I will not add to his burden. In closing, I must add what a pleasure it was to meet up again recently with Jim Harkness. Jim was one of those National Service Corporals who survived comfortably by keeping his head down. He was in Bahrain and Nairobi and was my best man in 1959. He had a good degree in Classics, but found that there was remarkably little call for Latin and Greek at his tough Dennistoun school, so retrained as a Maths teacher. His wife, Sallie, in retirement has become a globe-trotting lecturer on education.

'Been there got the T-Shirt'

Editors Note - In the light of current debate the Regiments involvement in what is known as Iraq this extract from the Covenanter September 1923 makes interesting reading.

A Spring Jaunt in Kurdistan From Mosul to Baghdad, via Rownaduz March 18th - May 16th

The 2nd Bn., by March well accustomed to interminable travel, was not surprised at being ordered to join a column leaving Mosul on the 18th March for an expedition into Kurdistan. Sheik Mahmoud, who had given considerable trouble during the 1920 rebellion in and around Sulaimania, was once more making mischief, despite his promises to us when he was reinstated. The ostensible object of the expedition was to march into Mahmoud's country and put a definite end to any trouble from him. The column commander, Colonel-Commandant Vincent, C.B., C.M.G., in a speech made to the officers and senior N.C.O.'s of the Battalion when he inspected it, said we should be under active service conditions, but whether we should actually see any fighting he was unable to say. He foretold a certain amount of hardship, and expressed his belief that any men who were not yet pretty well hardened would certainly be so when the column returned.

After a few days of hurried preparation on the part of the Battalion, which had not had very much time in which to take over from the 2nd Norfolks nor to make up deficiencies, the column left Mosul on the 18th of March. The force, briefly described as 'Koicol,' consisted of the 2nd West Yorkshires, 2/11th Sikhs (old 15th), 120th Pack Battery, 40th C.F.A., a Company of Sappers and Miners, a Signal Section, and ourselves. There were other fragments, too, not the least of which were the canteen contractors. Transport of every sort was used, and was therefore somewhat nondescript: almost the only transport animal that was not seen was the elephant. The actual Battalion transport was done by mules, except for four G.S. wagons for blankets and tents.

The first day's march was a short one, the object being to assemble the force as a whole in camp across the Tigris. The actual site of the camp was interesting, being

under the now grass-covered walls of Nineveh. These were plainly discernible in rectangular form.

During the night the camp was flooded by torrents of rain, which came down so heavily that the column was unable to move the next day owing to the state of the roads. The march was continued, however, on the day following, though the going was pretty heavy for the first few miles. We marched eighteen that day, and covered fourteen on the next, bringing us opposite Quvair, on the Greater Zhab river. This had to be crossed by about 20 barges, and made a very lengthy business. Each barge could take about 25 men or 4 mules and 8 men, and took ten minutes to cross and forty to return. The length of the whole process can, therefore, be imagined. Words are powerless to describe the scene involved when mules embarked - never of their own volition! The West Yorks, who were leading, had most of their Battalion across the same evening, and we started to cross early next morning.

By six o'clock the whole of the Battalion and transport was across. The column therefore, took some days to get all its impedimenta across, and had to wait till it was assured of its supplies before moving, which it did on March 29th. The march that day was one of nineteen miles, followed by one of fourteen on the next day which brought us to Erbil. This is a picturesque, if evil-smelling, old town, surmounted by a Turkish fort, built in circular fashion on an enormous mound, below which houses straggle, indiscriminately mixed with graveyards, after the indolent and unsanitary habitat so common to the towns of Northern Mesopotamia. Eight miles more on the following day brought us to camp on high ground above a stream of the purest mountain water, in which one was able to enjoy a delightful bathe. Here we halted for Easter Day.

The next three days initiated everyone into the real meaning of a mountain track, as we now started marching to a large extent in single file over difficult and stony ground, and were constantly confronted with the stereotyped situation in the blood-curdling Eastern novel, where one meets with towering rock on the one side and staring precipice on the other. The pace was necessarily very slow, and not more than 10 or 12 miles could be covered each day.

From Erbil onwards we had to forego all wheeled transport: henceforward all tents and blankets were carried on that prince of rapidity, the camel, who sometimes did not arrive in camp until nearly dusk. On the 4th April the march, which was tiring enough, was rendered more trying by steady downpours of rain. We finally reached Koi Sanjak about three in the afternoon. There was then a wait of nearly an hour while the Brigade-Major allotted billets, which were inevitable, owing to the impossibility of pitching camp under the conditions prevailing. Battalion H.Q. and H.Q. Wing went into the Fort; the other Companies were spread about the town. The Sikhs were all accommodated in the Khan, the West Yorks in the School, Column H.Q. the Hospital, Supplies and Signals were established in the Fort.

Substitute sun for rain, eradicate the glamour of the East—that is, the Oriental tolerance of disease and filth - and Koi would be as pleasant a spot as any to be found in Kurdistan. Trees and green fields abound, and there is plenty of water. Hidden in the valley and overlooked by the Turkish fort, built as usual on a mound, the town itself is a maze of unrepared and tortuously-winding alleys, never more than a couple of yards broad. There is a big bazaar, in which one was able to obtain all that is usually to be found in these towns.

It had been intended to camp out as soon as possible when weather conditions improved, but this was found to be impossible. On the 16th B.H.Q. and H.Q. Wing moved out of the Fort into the School, which had been vacated by the West Yorks, who had decided, rashly as it turned out, to move under canvas. Within two days their camp was a sea of mud. We spent five days in Koi altogether, the Companies having singsongs to pass the time. As the days passed the inhabitants began to show their faces with more temerity; at first one had hardly seen a sign of life in the place as they were obviously extremely nervous. The billets occupied were all vacated with considerable speed on the approach of the troops, and the owners completely disappeared. Colonel Lee arrived on the afternoon of the 9th to take over command, having flown from Baghdad to Koi in three hours. The same afternoon the Battalion moved out into camp prior to marching on the following day. About one o'clock that night a few enterprising spirits opened fire from some

housetops into the West York's camp. This fire was responded to *con amore*, and Lewis Guns barked for an hour or so. The total casualties on the West York's side were a sentry's waterbottle with a hole in it and a tent with four rents! Some thirty empty cases were found next day on one house-top in the town, but the raiders themselves got away.

The column left Koi Sanjah at seven next morning, marching to Serkhuma, some thirteen miles distant, which it was intended to use as a base for operations, owing to it being the junction of five tracks. From here one could see the snow-topped mountains of Persia, which looked comparatively near. The track to Serkhuma led over a range of steep mountains, which alone took 2½ hours to surmount, and at the top of which half a company of Sikhs was left as a permanent piquet. We had not been long in camp at Serkhuma before definite information was to be had regarding the adventures of the night before. They consisted of a party of 30 Turks, who had beaten a hasty retreat to Rania, a village ten miles away, noteworthy as a hot-bed of Turco-Kurdish intrigue, and to Serkabhan, an adjacent village five miles north of Rania.

It was decided to execute a night march in two columns and to attack both villages at dawn. The Sikhs were to compose the northern column and the West Yorks were to march against Rania; both Battalions were to leave camp at midnight. The remainder of the force was to march in support of the West Yorks, leaving camp at 4.30 a.m. Unfortunately, we had to leave 'C' Company behind to look after the camp, the tents of which were to be left standing as though the column were still there. In order to follow the track Rania it was necessary to ford a swiftly-flowing river some twenty yards broad. In the darkness the West Yorks had considerable difficulty in crossing the river, and were delayed five hours. The effect of surprise was thereby lost, as the West Yorks did not arrive at Rania before 9.30am., the remainder of the force close at heel. On the march a herd of wild pig careered madly along the column, and then broke through the Battalion and made off. The General, seizing the lance carried by his Sowar, galloped after them, and tried to enjoy some pig-sticking, but was unable to catch up with them. Meanwhile the Sikhs had carried out their task with success, and by the time the West

Yorks had reached Rania the smoke from a burning village was to be seen, and intermitted firing was heard. Few Kurds escaped the vengeance of the Indian soldiers; eleven of their number that day walked in Paradise. The Sikh casualties were three wounded.

Rania, by far the more important objective, was naturally found empty of any persons of importance when the column arrived. The village was therefore entrusted to the energies of the Sappers and Miners, who proceeded to dig for hidden treasure beneath and above the houses. These had all been left, as was obvious to a cursory glance, in the greatest disorder. The inhabitants had apparently taken their barest necessities with them, and their floors were scattered with boxes, clothes, food, and the peculiarities of Kurdish indoor life. A certain amount of grain was found, and was procured for the animals, who were on short rations throughout the expedition. Chickens were also to be had, provided that one used intelligence with speed! All that could be done to 'strafe' the fleeing enemy was for the Pack Battery to come into action against him on the reverse slope of the hills behind Rania.

Meanwhile 'B' Company had received orders to burn a village some two miles south of Rania. Under Major Ferrers the Company went off and considerably surprised the villagers, who were standing on their housetops complacently watching their neighbours burn. No resistance was offered, and the village was set alight. The Company now received fresh orders to proceed to another village two miles further on and to burn it too. This they did although the day was exceedingly hot, and the men had had nothing to eat since four in the morning. They were subjected to some little sniping from a few of the enemy about a thousand yards distant. About forty prisoners were eventually brought into camp when the Company returned at five o'clock, as well as three Arab ponies and quite a number of chickens, which could have had no better ending to their lives than to be eaten by a Company which had done such good work. That night the camp was like a sparkling jewel from the fires which glimmered in the darkness, and over each fire a mess-tin or other dish reposed full to the brim with some hard-earned morsel. Several flocks of sheep and a herd of cows were captured that day as well.

Meanwhile the Sappers and Miners had done some good work in locating a Pack Battery gun - minus a breech-block - which had been lost during the previous autumn, under the floor of the chief sinner's house, as well as seven saddles, three of which belonged to the Sikhs, the remainder to the Pack Battery. In the evening the village was set alight. The column en-camped nearby, returning to Serkhuma on the following day. All the ponies which had been captured by different units, amounting to about two dozen, were turned out into the Blue that night by the veterinary section owing to nearly all of them being diseased.

On the night of our return to Serkhuma news was received through Column Headquarters - obviously the only channel for information of such importance - of the birth of a son and heir to Lieut. Douglas.

We remained at Serkhuma till the 17th, during which time the elements of earth and water did what they could towards transforming a smiling countryside into a sea of mud. The best, thickest, and most enduring mud was to be found within the perimeter. Tents were swamped out, and many men spent nights of misery standing up under canvas which had long since given up the unequal struggle, and through which the eternal drip, drip, drip never ceased to fall. Under these conditions the men remained remarkably cheerful, through inevitably the sick list increased. Rations were poor; canteen prices were very high; what beer there was could only be obtained in bottles - this remained the case throughout our period of active service - and cigarettes were very scarce. Clothes and boots began to exhibit signs of senile decay. A certain amount of supplies were dropped by aeroplanes, but not nearly enough for the column.

On the 15th 'C' Company and the Machine Guns went out to meet an incoming convoy. Their march passed off without incident.

On the day following, the Battalion was assembled and informed that the Levies, who had been operating further north with three Battalions and Pack Battery, and had intended to push on and capture Rowanduz, a notorious Turkish centre, had been brought to a stand-still owing to defection in their hire transport. It was therefore necessary for Koicol to take the reduction of Rowanduz in hand.

The same evening the Field Cashier put in a very welcome appearance, being

escorted into camp, like some Roman emperor, by a strong body of mounted and armed officers and men, who had ridden out some distance to ensure his safe arrival.

The march up the valley from Serkhuma was begun next day, the Battalion acting as advance guard to the column. We had not covered many miles before we were sniped at from the hills on the left, and piquets were put out. The pace necessarily became slow, and it was possible to see Kurds with rifles in their hands running along the tops of the hills. The Pack Battery and our Machine Guns came into action at different points, and soon made things rather sticky for the enemy, who effected a hasty disappearance; later it was reported that their casualties that day were five killed and thirteen wounded. It was decided eventually to pitch camp short of the original point intended; the site necessitated 'D' Company less one Platoon and one Platoon of 'A' Company being out on piquet during the night. To reach their position 'D' Company had to climb a hill so steep that it was found impossible to get all the mules up. In consequence many men had to spend the night without greatcoats, and the greater part of their rations were lost on the way up. Next morning the Battalion had to do rearguard to the column. The day was uninteresting; after a delay of three hours we left camp at 11 o'clock, and had to proceed at a snail's pace while withdrawing piquets en route. We heard firing going on ahead of us, but knew nothing till we arrived in camp about five o'clock and saw a village burning a quarter of a mile away. During the day an aeroplane with engine trouble had to make a forced landing, which it did in front of 'B' Company. Unfortunately it crashed, and the pilot, who was uninjured, had no alternative but to set fire to it.

In view of increasing opposition, and the information received of the enemy's strength, it was decided that an early start was to be made on the following day. Reveille, therefore, was at 4.a.m., and the column moved off at six, a Company of West Yorks in front of us doing advance guard. Everything went smoothly till about 10.30. By then 'C' Company and 'D' Company, less one Platoon, had been used up as piquets. The column had now reached a gorge where it was overlooked on both sides by hills just too far away to be piquetted. It was an ideal place for a complete ambush. The advance guard of

West York's had passed beyond a saddle in the track, overlooked by a hill in front as well as on the flanks, when a machine gun and the snipers opened fire on the Battalion from the front and right flank. The platoon of 'D' Company leading, and two machine guns, accompanied by the Colonel, immediately occupied a ridge on the right and replied to the firing from the flank. Meanwhile the column closed up in the valley and took cover in ditches and nullahs among the trees. The Pack Battery came into action from a position on the right some 400 yards in rear of 'D' Company. Aeroplanes came up promptly, and proceeded to bomb and fire at the enemy. Meanwhile bullets began to fly rather dangerously near the 1st Line Transport of the Battalion and over 'B' Company, which was taking cover in readiness to move on. Pipe-Major Gordon was wounded by a bullet which shattered his left forearm and entered his side, and a mule received a bullet in the shoulder. Another mule in the Pack Battery was killed about the same time. Shortly afterwards the fire slackened, and the enemy appeared to be retiring up the hill. 'A' Company and the Sikhs had gone forward on the right on to high ground, burning a village en route. The Colonel decided to go forward with 'A' and 'B' Companies and capture the hill in front. Major Ferrers then collected the remainder of the Battalion on the right of the road. They had not been there for twenty minutes when an enemy machine gun opened fire from the hills on the left. This gun, we learned later, had been meant to synchronise its attack with the other, but had been prevented from doing so by our early start, which did not allow them sufficient time to get into position. The battery immediately opened fire on them at 1300 yards, and, together with air co-operation, they managed to silence the enemy after about half-an-hour. To make things worse for the troops waiting to move in the valley, a heavy thunderstorm broke, and hail dashed down for a considerable time. Eventually we were able to move on into camp at Banawi, which was on the summit of a stony hill some two miles further on. The total casualties in the column that day were six wounded.

Next day, in searching a village prior to burning it, thirty-six rounds of ammunition for a Turkish field gun were found, as well as a good deal of rifle

ammunition. It was estimated that about 200 Turks and Kurds had been engaged against us on the previous day.

The 20th and 21st April were spent in camp at Banawi, which is distant about sixteen miles from Rowanduz. It rained almost the whole time. Meanwhile the Levies, inspired by the advance of Koicol, had overcome their transport difficulties, and were rapidly approaching Rowanduz from the west. It was decided to join forces with them on the 22nd, and together attack the Bejan Pass, the key to Rowanduz. We had to leave two Companies, and the West Yorks two piquets, to hold the camp. Accordingly, the Battalion, less 'B' and 'C' Companies, marched out of camp at 8 a.m. The Pack Battery had taken up a position on the crest of a mountain on the right of the camp, from which to shell the Pass, and aeroplane co-operation was timed to be carried out at 10.30. The Pass, it was hoped, would be captured by mid-day. There was no disguising the fact that it was a naturally strong position and could be a distinctly nasty undertaking. The Turks had been known to declare it was impregnable. The event, however, showed that they had reconsidered their words, for by mid-day the Sikhs had established a piquet on the top of the mountain without opposition. The West Yorks being used up entirely in piquets we went through them. The Pass proved to be a piece de resistance even for the most hardened of mountaineers. In some places, on the reverse slope of the mountain, the rocks overshadowed and encompassed the track so much that it was even found necessary to unload the mules and pass their loads through by hand. The laboriousness of the advance under these conditions can only be vaguely imagined. Added to this there were intermittent showers, which made the track extremely slippery. Mountain streams swelled into torrents constantly and recrossed the track, and we waded up to the thighs to get through. Eventually, however we reached level ground and a fair track through cultivated fields, arriving in camp at Rowanduz about four in the afternoon. Owing to political motives no one was allowed into the town, in order that the inhabitants, who had one and all fled, should regard us as friends rather than enemies, and return to their homes. This appeared to be a magnanimous attitude from our point of view, for it was known that some seventy of the enemy who had

engaged us at Banawi came from Rowanduz, and, when the town came to be searched, not only was the missing breech-block of the gun retaken in Rania found, but not a house was without its rifle of bayonet or ammunition. The Turks had completely disappeared with their machine guns, and it was assumed that the advance of two columns on Rowanduz and their junction at the Bejan Pass had been rather more than they were prepared to meet.

Meanwhile the 2nd Line Transport, which was making its uneasy way through the Pass under great difficulties, received orders to halt in it during the night, as there was insufficient time to allow of its arrival in camp before darkness. The Battalion accordingly evolved itself into an expedition for wood, of which there was much to be found close at hand, as the night was bound to be very cold. The hours of darkness were spent, therefore, sitting round the camp-fires; for it proved to be too cold even to sleep by them. In the morning, owing to the rations being with the 2nd Line, breakfast consisted solely of some sugarless tea; but what did anyone care when he remembered that he was one of the first body of British troops to have marched to Rowanduz!

The 23rd was spent in camp, when the first really warm day was experienced, and most of the men then managed to make up for the lack of sleep on the preceding night. On the following day the march back was begun by way of the gorge. The scenery here was more than magnificent, it was stupendous. Everything seemed to have been carved by a giant hand. There was a gigantic waterfall, issuing from sheer rock about two hundred feet up the mountain, which crashed and rolled its way down with thundering roar into the river below. The gorge itself wound through heights about a quarter of a mile apart, the path (two yards broad) running along the side of the mountain, which was sheer on the one side while on the other was a drop of some hundreds of feet to where the torrent rushed impetuously below. The return march to Banawi was an exhausting one of 22 miles in considerable heat, and all were glad to get into camp that evening. Here we found that aeroplanes had dropped rations and a welcome mail, and also heard that on the 23rd three dead Kurds had been found on the hillside with the food they had hurriedly managed to bring from their

houses. On the same day some old men had come into the camp stating that they were starving and had lost all their possessions. They were interviewed by the General, who allowed them to be given food.

Next morning Koicol started on the return journey. 'C' Company were piqueting troops and were sniped at quite considerably, until our machine guns opened fire on to the Khud, when the sniping hastily ceased. On their arrival in camp, one platoon of 'C' brought in a most reluctant prisoner, who must have thought he was going to be burned alive at the very least!

The following day we marched on the Balassan, a collection of villages, where some good work was done by the Sikhs, who came across an Ali Baba's treasure cave whilst chasing the stout-hearted villagers. This cave contained the local dark-eyed beauties, a few carpets, some rations, and other articles regarded in Balassan as valuable. That evening, when darkness had fallen, the Pack Battery opened fire from the camp on to the cave and behind the villages, in the hope of catching some optimistic Kurd returning to see what was left of the family possessions.

Next day a long march was made, bringing the column within six miles of Serkuma, or 'Mud Camp,' as the troops preferred to call it.

For some days past there had been considerable sickness in the Battalion, and increasing numbers of men were suffering from dysentery and diarrhoea. Several Vernon aeroplanes landed at this camp and evacuated large numbers of men. One Vernon unfortunately crashes and, as the column was marching the next morning, it was decided to leave the Battalion where it was a guard to the aeroplane until the latter should have been dismantled. We therefore halted till the 30th, by which date we were able to march on to Serkhuma. Here we found our khaki drill awaiting us, much to everyone's relief, as it had been getting very warm. The discarded serge clothing was collected and burned.

On May 1st the column marched to Koi Sanjak. Here we found boots, shirts, socks, and puttees in more respectable quantities than heretofore. All the old articles were burned.

On May 1st the column marched to Koi Sanjak. Here we found boots, socks, and puttees in more respectable quantities than

heretofore. All the old articles were burned.

We had now to march to Altun Kupri where, it had been decided, the composition of Koicol would be changed. The 2/11th Sikhs had to go straight on to Baghdad and return to India immediately. Afterwards the 2nd West Yorks and ourselves were to march to Baiji independently, and there entrain for Baghdad. Meanwhile the Indian regiments at Mosul and Baghdad were ordered to assemble at Altun Kupri, whence Colonel Vincent intended to continue the march to Sulaimania. The reasons for the change were several, one being that it was becoming too hot for British troops to take part in operations; another that Colonel Vincent wished as many units as possible in the country to have a chance of seeing service. As for the Sikhs they were overjoyed at the prospect of making their long-overdue return to India. One is very happy to think that the comradeship-in-arms between their fine Battalion and ourselves was such that our rank and file, on their own suggestion, are making a presentation of a cup to the rank and file of the 2/11th Sikhs to commemorate it.

After four hot days' marching along the Lesser Zhab River we arrived at Altun Kupri on May 5th. The great advantage of these marches were being able to bathe in the river after arrival in camp. Reveille was usually about 3.30a.m., and the day's march would be over by 10.30 at the latest. We had more than a suspicion, though, that the chroniclers of the Old Testament were prone to exaggerate their evils. For instance, Pharaoh himself could hardly have suffered more than we did from the flies which earned an honest living on our food and faces; from the locusts which ate up the land we passed through; from the frogs which croaked so incessantly, insistently, and noisily at night that one could hardly hear oneself snore; and from all the minor plagues and discomforts we encountered in the Garden of the World.

We left Altun Kupri, which is an old and strongly-built village, on the 8th May, and marched for the next five days along the Lesser Zhab. Except for annoyance from Arab rifle thieves, who are extremely cunning and well versed in the art, those marches passed off without incident. On the 13th we had a 16-mile march from the Zhab to Saltah, on the Tigris, the scene of some of the last fighting with the Turks in 1918. This march took us over a desert,

covered with locusts, for some eleven miles. On the way many men saw a mirage for the first time, there being a large illusory sheet of blue water with oases in it apparently only a few miles away. On arrival at Fattah we proceeded to cross the river at once by means of a large raft attached to a tug. It did not take very long before the whole of the Battalion and Transport was across.

On the following day we marched on seven miles, thereby bringing us within two miles of Baiji. Here we entrained on the evening of May 15th, and arrived at Bagdad at 5.30 on the following morning, thus completing exactly three months of travel from the day we left Quetta. Nor can anyone say that we have not had many Arabian night's entertainment!

R.G.T.

Extract from first draft of display text for Cameronians in Camera temporary exhibition 2002-3.

"A sacred trust of civilisation"

League of Nations Covenant Article 22

Iraq 1923, Palestine 1936, Trieste 1949.

After the carnage of the Great War, an organisation was formed to prevent war - the League of Nations. The League granted mandates for advanced nations to lead to independence former colonies of defeated countries. Following the Second World War the United Nations was formed with the power to send troops into disputed areas.

"A spring jaunt in Kurdistan" - Iraq 1923

In 1920 Britain was given the mandate for the newly created state of Iraq. Bitter disappointment by Iraqi political leaders at withheld independence provoked a serious rising in Kurdistan, in the north of Iraq. A combined RAF and Army operation resulted in a gruelling march for the 2nd Battalion as they pursued an elusive enemy.

Some Introductory notes on Kurdistan campaign 1923

History Repeating Itself? - War in Iraq 1923

The story of the founding of the modern Iraqi State was a fascinating drama involving the League of Nations, the UK and the Iraqi people as the major players. A crucial role was played by the RAF and The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in the events, the outcome of which was, amongst other things, the independence of both the RAF and Iraq.

Iraq was a product of the First World War 1914-18. Following the dis-memberment of the Ottoman, or Turkish Empire. After Turkey's defeat in the Great War, Iraq was formed from the three former Turkish provinces of Basra, Baghdad and Mosul.

One of the tasks of the post-war League of Nations was to appoint advanced democracies among the wartime victors to a role of leading to independence the former colonies of defeated nations. This role was enshrined in the League's founding Covenant as "a sacred trust of civilisation". Britain accepted the mandate for the new state of Iraq.

By 1923, Iraqi political leaders had become impatient to achieve independence, and a serious rising broke out among the Kurdish people in the north. The force sent to quell the revolt was the first British joint operation. A senior RAF officer led the RAF and Army units.

At the end of the campaign, the RAF commander's report to the British Government gave the impression that the victory was achieved by air power alone. There were two lessons drawn from this campaign: firstly the RAF continued as an independent arm instead of reverting to Army control as happened in the US. Secondly, the RAF's long-term strategy concentrated on developing bomber aircraft.

The victory paved the way for Iraq's independence in 1932 - the first of the League's mandated states world wide to reach self-government.

Sources: Encyclopedia Britannica (1947), XII, 589

New Encyclopedia Britannica (1981) 11, 995

Atlas of World War One

A J P Taylor England 1914-1945, 229

Prepared by TF Mackenzie MA (Hons)
Museum Collections Officer

The Regiment's Links with Oman

The article in the last issue of The Covenanter contained much of interest and adds much to the historical record. The author, Lt Col Jim Orr, is to be congratulated on it. Our thanks are due also to Major General John Graham (a former Commander of the Sultan's Armed Forces) for his inspiration in marking the Sultan of Oman's recent birthday and the 30th National/Renaissance Day with the presentation of the splendidly illuminated scroll from The Cameronians.

All readers will have been particularly interested to read of the link between General Graham and his illustrious forebear - Thomas Graham of Balgowan (see below) - who raised the 90th, later to form the 2nd Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles).

It might interest readers if I add to Jim Orr's article by filling in some of the detail regarding service in the Regiment by the present Sultan, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said.

I first met the Sultan on 7 September 1960. On that day we both became Officer Cadets at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in Intake 29. I had travelled alone (of course) on the overnight train from my home in Edinburgh. He arrived by chauffeur-driven limousine and was accompanied by someone described at the time as his tutor/guardian. Rumour had it that the limousine was a Rolls Royce (all I recall was that it was large and black) and that the doors were locked. Rumour also had it that the security precautions were not to prevent someone from getting into the car!

We were greeted by our Company Commander, Major Mike Tingey RA, and by the Company Sergeant Major, WOII Graham, Scots Guards. They ran Marne Company in New College. Our immediate hierarchy were Captain Mike Barclay (then Royal Leicesters, later Brigadier and a highly-placed advisor to the ruler of Dubai) and Sergeant Hayes, Irish Guards, whose voice we got to know well. Known then as Mr Bin Said he took his place with the rest of us on parade.

We were embarking on what was then a two year course together. The first and last terms (which ran roughly as academic terms) were principally military training. The other four were more academic - for those inclined towards that sort of thing.

The first six weeks were said to be like basic training. We were chased from parade ground (there were two to choose from) to gymnasium, to the rifle ranges, to the training areas, back to parade ground - but in a different uniform - and back to the gym. Much of this was done 'at the double' and much at a marching pace which made the riflemen's 140 paces to the minute look like a pleasant stroll.

Mr Bin Said's reaction to this introduction to military life was wide-eyed. Never more so than when we were first introduced to communal showers after sessions in the gym!

The term marched on. By Christmas we had taken part in our first Sovereign's Parade and by January we were no longer in the Junior intake: another lot were being shouted at. We had also endured our first round of training exercises. One, a Defence Exercise, was in weather I still recall with a shudder. It was bad enough for someone like me who had cut his teeth on CCF Adventure Training exercises in Perthshire. What it was like for the overseas cadets and for Mr Bin Said in particular can only be imagined.

Come 3 August 1962 and it was our turn at last to be marching up the steps of the Grand Entrance. Representing the Sovereign was that great old soldier and leader Field Marshal Viscount Slim. Sitting in the audience was Sultan Said, Mr Bin Said's father.

There were four overseas cadets in our platoon of 21 in Marne Company. The others were a Ghanain, a Kenyan and an Iraqi. The British cadets were a fairly good mix being commissioned into almost every branch of the army from Coldstream Guards to Ordinance Corps. We were a not unsuccessful lot. Of the 17 British we mustered one four star (an Adjutant General) one two star (RE), two one stars (one RE and one infantry) and a commander SAS with a DSO. And of course one Sultan.

But long before he became that Mr Bin Said and I had our service together with 1 Cameronians in Minden. After leave Michael Sixsmith (Intake 29 in Old College) and I reported to the Depot at Lanark for our first initiation to the Regiment. Commanding the Depot were Major (later Lt Col Sir) John Baynes and to welcome us to the mess were Alan Campbell, David Christie, Peter Gordon Smith and George Stephen. We waited about a week until the next draft of recruits was ready to leave for the 1st Battalion and went with them.

The last issue of The Covenanter had an article by Ed Boyle who wrote vividly and amusingly of his experience (a recruit at Lanark then posted to Minden) which had taken place just a few weeks before us. (Incidentally I can help him with the original name of the place we knew as Elizabeth Barracks, it was Gneisenau Kaserne, named after the Prussian field marshal who fought along side the British against Napoleon.)

In Minden we met up again with (by now) 2nd Lieutenant Bin Said complete, as we were of course, in Cameronian uniform. I was posted to A Company (Major - later Lt Col - Dick Walton) and he joined Mike Sixsmith in B Company (Major Sandy Lindsay). When I began writing this item I spoke to Mike Sixsmith. He said, 'But I thought he was in A Company! Just shows he managed what we never did - the subaltern's dream - everyone thought he was in someone else's Company!' Then, as at Sandhurst, he received no special favours or treatment, whichever company he was in.

Soon we were all thrown into the thick of the exercise season the high-light of which was a Corps exercise called Autumn Double. It was the height (depth?) of the Cold War and we were practising orderly fighting withdrawal over the river lines of the north German Plain.

I think it must have been that year that I received from him the unusual but welcome greeting of a Christmas card. I still have it.

The last I recall of our service together in 1 Cameronians was on Exercise Snow Queen in early 1963. It was ostensibly about winter warfare training but was actually an opportunity to get everyone (and especially the Jocks) out of the barracks and to teach them the rudiments of skiing. It would be fair to say that 2nd Lieutenant Bin Said was not a natural.

The 'training' was based at Walkensee near Murnau in Bavaria. Much of the basic instruction took place in the nearby resorts of Garmish-Partenkirchen, Mittenwald and Oberammergau (of Passion Play fame). The winter of 1962/63 was a fierce one and it was bitterly cold. We had record amounts of snow and low temperatures but some fine weather too. It is a spectacularly lovely part of the world and even if not everyone appreciated the compulsory skiing the scenery was there for all to enjoy. There were those of us who enjoyed it all immensely. For Michael Sixsmith and for

me, both first-timers, it was enormous fun. It was the only Exercise that I was sent on for two weeks and for which I volunteered to stay on four more.

That was not quite the last time I saw the Sultan. During his State Visit to Britain in the early '80's I was fortunate to be invited to the State Banquet given for him by the City of London in Guildhall. (Colonel Reggie Kettles, who commanded the 1st Battalion in Minden, was invited to the State Banquet at Buckingham Palace the previous evening.) It was a spectacular occasion.

Intake 29 held a reunion as Sandhurst in early August 2002 to mark the 40th anniversary of our commissioning. (It was organised, incidentally, by the Chef de Protocol RMAS, that redoubtable old Cameronian, Major Ian Park-Weir. I was pleased to be able to offer him a glass of champagne.) About 80 of us tottered round (including Mike Sixsmith and me). Some months earlier I had put out feelers to see if the Sultan might have been able to attend, but sadly he was not to be in the country. Ah, well: perhaps in 10 years for our 50th.

PRG

Thomas Graham of Balgowan

As I was writing the above article I came across and was able to buy a copy of the *History of the United Service Club* by Maj Gen Sir Louis Jackson and published by the Club in 1937. Readers may not know that this, the oldest (and grandest) of the military clubs of its kind was started by Thomas Graham. I quote [and comment]:

"On the afternoon of the 31st May, 1815, while Wellington at Brussels was awaiting the onset of Napoleon, eighty senior officers of the Army assembled at the Thatched House Tavern in St James's Street. They had come at the request of Lord Lyndoch (recently raised to the peerage, but better known as Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Graham, victor of Barrosa); and he, being called to the chair, read the following memorandum:-

"The want of a General Military Club, permanently established in London, and possessed of a suitable house, appropriated solely for its use, has been generally felt by officers of all ranks of the army; (etc).

"Lord Lyndoch, who was the actual originator of the Club, was a remarkable man. A country gentleman, sportsman and traveller of cultivated tastes, it was not till middle life that he entered the Army through the medium of a volunteer regiment which he raised largely at his own expense. In the twenty years that

followed he achieved a military reputation second only to that of Wellington himself. Returning to England in the spring of 1814 after the abortive expedition to Holland, there was no further prospect of service; and being a man of social habits (and a widower), he no doubt tried to get in touch with some of his many friends in the Army."

And then later in the history there follows this charming pen-picture:

"In 1843 Lord Lyndoch died. He was ninety-five and had been able to hunt and shoot and travel abroad almost to the last. [It is recorded that at the age of 72 he rode 24 miles to a hunt meet.] When he was eighty-five he was offered the command of Queen Maria Christina's army in Portugal. I cannot bid farewell to our Founder without some further notice of this remarkable man, who seems to be so little remembered now. Thomas Graham was a Perthshire laird of considerable means and wide interests. All his early life was spent in developing his estates at home and managing county affairs, hunting in winter with the Pytchley [in Northamptonshire: they wintered in the south: the weather there was better suited to his wife's health], travelling extensively on the Continent, and spending an occasional [social] season in London, where he knew everyone. In 1793, when he was forty-four and trying to distract his mind after the loss of his adored wife, he found himself at Gibraltar just as Lord Hood's Mediterranean expedition was passing through for Toulon. He accompanied it, joined in the fighting on shore, distinguished himself, was wounded, and discovered that he was a soldier.

"He went home, raised mainly at his own expense a regiment (the Perthshire Volunteers, later the 90th and now [1937] the 2nd Battalion Cameronians), trained it and took it to Quiberon Bay [Brittany]. After that he was appointed British Commissioner with the headquarters of the Austrian Army in Italy; in 1798 joined with his regiment in the capture of Minorca; then as a Brigadier, had charge of the siege of Malta.

"All this time he was trying to get a regular commission, but this recognition was constantly refused by the Duke of York and the King, although by this time he had made a considerable reputation and his cause was taken up by many of the influential people. He hung on to his regiment, but could get no further employment on active service till 1808, when he went with Sir John Moore to Spain. Then at last, in response to Moore's dying request, he was made a Major-General on the active list. He was given the command at

Cadiz, and found opportunity to fight and win brilliantly the battle of Barrosa. Then he joined Wellington, became his second-in-command and if Wellington had been incapacitated would have succeeded him. In 1814, against his own inclination, he was given a peerage.

"This is only a brief sketch of a most romantic career. [What this history - nor indeed Volume 1 of the history of The Regiment - does not say is that, amongst other things, he took part in the first cricket match played in Scotland, he introduced both Cleveland horses and Devon cattle to Scotland, and he was the Member of Parliament for Perthshire for 13 years. Surely he is long overdue a good new biography.]

"What he did for the Club, besides being its actual founder, is evident from the minutes. In the early years his was always the guiding hand. But apart from that, the only personal trace I can find is that until recent years a saddle of mutton was carved differently at the Senior [traditional nick-name for the club] from elsewhere - namely crosswise instead of along the backbone; and the reason always assigned for this was that Lord Lyndoch had said that it was the proper way to carve a saddle. In spite of universal custom, I believe he was right.

"In May 1843, Lyndoch presented to the Club some turtle, venison and special champagne for the dinner on the [32nd] anniversary of the battle of Barrosa. When he died in December the window blinds were lowered and his portrait draped with [black] crape".

In 1828 the club had moved to an impressive new clubhouse designed by Nash (who also designed Regent Street and much of Regent's Park). It still stands in Pall Mall, close to the site of Carlton House. Sadly the club was, like others, a victim of the mid-1970's recession: too few members (and many of them too old) and insufficient funds. It closed its doors as a club and is now the home of the Institute of Directors.

There is in existence, but no longer in print, a handsome coffee-table book with chapters on, and illustrations of, all of the London gentlemen's clubs founded in the 18th, 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries. All the great ones are there: White's Boodle's, Brook's etc. The publishers chose for its cover a photograph of the main drawing room of the Senior, lit by shafts of afternoon sun, and showing members at their ease after lunch. Thomas Graham of Balgowan would have been pleased.

2nd Bn Cameronians in Sicily Return to the River Simeto

I had always known that my father's wounds had been sustained by a German mortar bomb in a wadi close to the River Simeto in Sicily, cutting short his military career. On 19th July 1943, at the age of 23 years, CSM(WO2) C. (Lofty) Allardyce of B Coy 2nd Bn Cameronians started for home, to join his wife and son in Crieff. The years passed and in due course I was commissioned into the Royal Engineers, much to the delight of my father. He often spoke of his time in the Battalion and in particular of the battle in Sicily, before his death in 1974.

With my retirement looming, I wondered if my wife and I could fit in a tour of the battlefield in Sicily? What did I have and what did I need to navigate my way around the area?

As a starting point I had a copy of *The History of the Cameronians (SR) Vol 3 1933-46* which gives a good description of the ground and the relative positions of the Rifle Coys. The left bank of the Simeto at this point was about twenty feet high and composed of sand, on which dense bushes and reeds clustered. Beyond this a sunken track, shielded from the front by a smaller, similar bank, ran for two or three hundred yards parallel to the river. B Coy were disposed as follows: No 12 Platoon, commanded by Lt F.D. Bull, were forward among the roots, Nos 10 and 11 Platoons along the sunken track, and Coy HQ was in a round dried up water hole on the river's edge. Could I pinpoint the exact spot on the ground?

Are there any surviving officers or soldiers who could assist me in my research I asked myself? With an ageing population, asking someone to recall features on the ground some sixty years ago was a daunting task.

So my next port of call was The Public Records Office in London, and an exciting source of information it proved to be. The Bn War Diary of the summer of 1943 was neatly typed containing dates, times, names of personnel and places and most importantly Grid References. Contrast this with those of May 1940, the Dunkirk phases, which contained much less information, were written in longhand and no doubt in haste!

Finding GRs at first appeared a bonus, but I needed to relate them to a map. Shopping around, the best I could find was

1:150,000 road map of Italy. Trying my former Corps, The School of Military Survey forwarded my request to Historic Maps, who kindly sent a 1:50,000 map of the area (1941 issue) in black and white - now I could start relating the map to the ground. More importantly the GRs in use today are the same as those used in 1943.

The Regimental history goes on to record that "a shell pitched in B Coy HQ killing a rifleman and a German prisoner, severely wounding Capt H.J. McDonald and CSM Allardyce. Major Paul and his orderly were blown clear". My father related that when the cry went up for stretcher bearers, Major Paul, who had landed in the river and had broken both his legs shouted "get the Sergeant Major first." It would be then reasonable to deduce, that the dried up water hole was possibly a maximum of 20 metres from the actual river.

Hotel accommodation was booked in Taormina, a town some 30 miles north of Catania and the River Simeto. Travel arrangements were not so simple. Every mode of transport was used apart from donkey but we eventually arrived via London, Naples and Messina. Using a hired car proved challenging. Wrong side of the road, wrong side of the car, and driving in Italy, need I say more! By a stroke of luck the owner of the car hire garage proved to be a another find. Guido was a local historian with a keen interest in Sicily's part in WW2, whose help was greatly appreciated.

Our first visit was to the War Graves close to Catania airport. Although frequent signposts were observed, the final piece of the jigsaw which would lead us to the cemetery was always missing! More by luck, we eventually found our way there. The plaque at the entrance speaks of the heavy fighting in the battle for the Simeto river bridgehead in which the Bn were involved. A stroll amongst the headstones proved very moving, as the Bn graves were identified. The Italian staff keep the cemetery immaculately and kept a watchful eye on our car - the word "criminals" was often mentioned. As we were leaving a small group of children entered the cemetery. One could only wonder what it meant to them. Did they know what these officers and soldiers had done for them?

The Plain of Catania is flat and covered with citrus trees. Through it meanders the Simeto river crossed by a few bridges and fords. Where no doubt during the War the groves were open plan, now high wire fences and locked gates barr the way to discourage the "criminals". Even enlisting

the help of the local farmers we only got to within 500 metres of the Bn operational area. Yet there was still something not quite right about the course of the river. Defeated and puzzled, we left the area wondering when we had gone wrong in our researches.

Returning the car to Guido, I discussed the day with him. Because of the lack of water flowing, the river during the summer was reduced to a swamp, which in turn encouraged mosquitoes to breed. Straightening the river produced a faster flow, thus denying them a breeding ground. This realignment accounted for my difficulty in relating ground to map. What of future plans? If this expedition was "Son of" the next will be "Grandson of". The stores list will include better maps, a Global Positioning Satellite and a Metal Detector. With these I am certain I can find that dried up waterhole on the river's edge where my father was wounded.

Major C.G.M. Allardyce RE (Retd)
Bridge of Allan, Scotland
28th October, 2002

'MacSchnabel' - an Austrian Cameronian

As the Second World War progressed, the personnel of infantry regiments, especially those of Scotland, began to comprise increasing numbers of men having no direct connection with the relevant local recruitment area.

This situation arose from several causes, including casualties, the need for specialist replacements, and promotions to fill vacancies for which there was no suitable available soldier in the particular unit. Probably one of the strangest and most interesting "recruits" (if that is the correct term), fairly could be said to have come from outside these categories: one Peter Schnabel, who later became known as 'MacSchnabel'. How he achieved entry to the Regimental ranks, remains something of a mystery, about which more later. Schnabel was an Austrian of Jewish extraction. He had fled to this country after the Anschluss with Germany, but how, and under what circumstances remains unclear. He had volunteered for military service in the British Army soon after the outbreak of hostilities. As with many of his compatriots with Jewish blood, and others of a similar position to that in which Schnabel found himself, the War Office posted him to a non-combat unit presumably because of the risk of severe ill treatment at the hands of the Nazis in the event of capture. It is

probably also, that Peter Schnabel lied about his age - thirty eight years in 1939.

A special company (Number 77) of the Pioneer Corps was formed, to which many expatriots of this category were posted. After initial training at the Pioneer Corps Training centre at Ilfracombe, Schnabel was quickly promoted to Sergeant. It appears that at that time he carried not simply the normal issue kit bag, but nothing less than an ostentatious leather case emblazoned in conspicuous white lettering with the title 'Major P.J. Schnabel'. He claimed pre-War to have been a Major in the Heimwehr (Austrian Army), but passed this off as a matter of little moment. This contradiction in terms for a man of a sergeant's rank, conferred upon him an air of mystery that seemed too obviously to be an invitation for enquiry, concerning which he was delighted to give the explanation to his fellow Pioneers. His battledress was no ordinary ill-fitting Army issue, but obviously had been specially tailored, and was worn with a panache appropriate to the pre-War lifestyle to which he laid claim amongst the Austrian aristocracy.

Peter Schnabel remained in the ranks for a relatively short time, being commissioned to the Pioneer Corps, followed by a posting as a second lieutenant to 77 Company of that Corps. His patrician air excluded self-confidence and cared little for normal conventions - or indeed, the affect which his conduct might have on others - tempered by a slightly tongue-in-cheek reservation. Despite his apparently superior manner, Schnabel was well liked. He made no attempt to conceal his former life in Austria, and became a popular and humorous storyteller about it. It was clear that such a linguistically talented group, despite being of the Pioneer Corps, could not long remain unused as interpreters and in the intelligence field. Many were transferred to other arms of the services for that purpose. Peter Schnabel took a different route.

In 1942, the 52nd (Lowland) Division, which included the 6th and 7th Battalions of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), had been assigned to a new role to train as a Mountain Division in the Scottish mountains. This involved the weeding out of those physically unable to cope with the arduous training proposed. The provision of expert skiing instructors and mountaineers was an urgent requirement. A natural source was to be found in expatriot men from the more mountainous

districts of enemy occupied countries, volunteers already serving in U.K., either as members of H.M. Forces or the Free Forces of their native countries. These included several Norwegians who had managed to leave before the German invasion of their country, or who had made daring escapes by sailing to the United Kingdom in small fishing boats. Some of their number remained to fight with the units they had trained. There was no better source of recruitment than 77 Company that contained Austrian nationals, many of whom were likely to command the requisite mountaineering experience. It was thus that 6th Battalion, stationed near Braemar at the time, suddenly found in its midst a Pioneer Corps Officer, seconded as chief ski-instructor - Lieutenant Peter Schnabel. He was accompanied by several Sergeants from that Corps, all of them of Austrian origin.

What followed also is shrouded in mystery. He arrived sporting an ancient electric fire as part of his surprisingly bulky baggage, equally surprised and not a little put out to find out that the Battalion was under canvas. This caused considerable mirth, as the accommodation consisted of 'double tents' - one bell tent erected over another, with the gap between them stuffed with straw for insulation. He wasted no time in settling into his strange surroundings, seeming to relish the fact that he had become a co-opted Jock. While never anxious to talk about his former life, he never attempted to conceal his past, although some of it seemed to have been a little far-fetched. At least one of his colleagues recalls Schnabel claiming to have been a Cadet in the Austrian/ Hungarian Navy! Never a boring conversationalist, he soon became a popular member of the Officers' Mess.

A miraculous transformation soon occurred. Legend has it that Peter Schnabel stayed at the Army and Navy Club whilst on leave in London. It appears that there he met General Riddell-Webster (then Adjutant General of H.M. Forces, a Cameronian and later Colonel of the Regiment). being not one whit abashed by such exalted company, and by the exercise of his considerable personal charm, he introduced himself to the General and prevailed upon him to use his influence to secure a transfer from the Pioneer Corps to the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). Suffice to say that when Schnabel returned to Scotland, he sported all the trappings of an officer of the Regiment! That certainly is the recollection of Colonel (then Captain) Charles Michie and Major (then

Lieutenant) Malcolm McNeil of 6th Battalion. Apart from his duties as a ski instructor, he seemed to have no clearly defined position, yet he had acquired the knack of the experienced old campaigner of always appearing to be fully occupied.

Nevertheless, he became a popular member of the Mess and something of a 'character' to boot. Soon he was renamed 'MacSchnabel', the most Cameronian of the Cameronians. He had an urbane and stylish presence about him that attracted the female sex. Whenever the Battalion was within striking distance of a local hostelry, MacSchnabel could be found propping up the bar, either holding forth to all and sundry or exercising his easy charm upon a select group of the local females, plus the ability to appear comfortable in any company, never seemingly socially ill at ease whatever the circumstances.

MacSchnabel remained with the 6th until the completion of its Mountain Role in early 1944. As surprising as was his arrival, his disappearance from the Cameronian scene was equally sudden and mysterious. Despite his transfer to the Regiment, no doubt his age (then over forty), lack of infantry training and the risk of the consequences of capture precluded his retention in a fighting role. All trace of his subsequent activities seemed to have been lost, until the writer (who never had the privilege of meeting him, but had heard from colleagues of this ebullient almost legendary character) stumbled upon reference to him in a book written by one of MacSchnabel's countrymen and a former member of 77 Company The Pioneer Corps - George Clare. (*Berlin Days 1946-1947* - MacMillan London 1989).

George Clare had been transferred to the Royal Artillery as an interpreter, attached to Military Intelligence. Soon after V-E Day he was stationed in Berlin. His speciality was denazification, particularly relating to well-known artists, musicians and members of the theatrical world. He 'engineered' an emotional return mission to his native country to investigate the position about these groups in Austria. At the end of Clare's briefing before setting out from Berlin, he was ordered to report to the British Theatre and Music Officer for Vienna, an officer whom Clare was informed, already was known to him as having served in 77 Company - none other than one Major Schnabel. Clare refers to him as 'MacShnabel'!

Clare made contact, and requested permission to meet him at the Major's office. The suggestion was received with horror by Schnabel as an affront to good

taste. "Not at the office dear boy,, surely. You ought to know. It's the sort of thing you do in Prussia, but not in Vienna! There's only one place in this town where gentlemen meet for coffee, don't you know. At Demel's of course". Clare duly arrived at the appointed time, and absorbed the ambience of this select coffee house that, clientele apart, seemed to have changed little from pre-War days. Clare had forgotten the Austrian convention that punctuality did not require prompt arrival, but in reality meant fifteen to twenty minutes after the stated time. He recounts the incident with relish.. "I had forgotten (this custom), but ci-devant Heimwher Major, ex-Pioneer Corps Sergeant and now Major in the Cameron (sic) Highlanders - obviously had not. But to be there before him was the best thing I could have done, not for all the coffee and the cakes at Demel's today (in 1947 there was not much choice) would I have missed his entrée. As he came through the door the waitresses curtsied and welcomed him with a chorused "Griss Gott, Herr Major". He in, Glengarry, black buttoned khaki doublet, silver buckled Sam Browne and Douglas tartan trews, graciously raised his silver topped swagger cane in response. Slowly, with many a 'Kuss-die-Hand' to the ladies and many a drawled 'Ja, Servus' to the gentlemen, he progressed through the room, proving with his every gesture that his native Highlands were the Vienna Woods and Hofmannsthal his Rabbie Burns. Had the Cameronians worn the kilt instead of trews, this performance would have been even more wondrous."

While George Clare made the common error of confusion between the Highland and Lowland Regiments and the Cameronians and the Camerons, this in no way detracts from his perceptive description of the essential MacSchnabel. Even while a private soldier 'he had the air of the Viennese dandy about him'. He was 'the perfect raconteur, I could have listened to him for hours'. MacSchnabel remained in Vienna, but his pride at having served in the British Army, and the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) clearly never left him. True to character to the last, his obituary notice in the Viennese newspapers read: 'Died in Vienna on 17 February 1983, Peter Joseph Schnabel, aged 82, Royal (sic) British Major ret.' - certainly one of the most extra-ordinary Cameronians of the Second World War.

C.S.P. October 2002

The writer is indebted to Macmillan, Pan Macmillan, publishers London, for permission to quote from 'Berlin Days 1946-1947 - George Clare - MacMillan London, 1989, and also to Colonel Charles Michie, OBE, TD and Major M.T. MacNeil TD for supplying personal reminiscences.

Robert Owen and New Lanark

In 1948, as I walked from Winston Barracks past the racecourse and the loch to Lanark, I became aware that below the town was another community called New Lanark which had been built on a picturesque area near the Clyde. Although I knew there was a mill there, I did not know its connection with Robert Owen, one of the most important reformers in the nineteenth century. Friedrich Engels said: 'every real advance in England on behalf of working men links itself to the name of Robert Owen'. His influence became so important that his view of society was eventually called Owenism and those who supported him were known as Owenites. Robert Owen has left his mark on society in the same way as the Covenanters or Cameronians influenced the outcome of the Scottish Reformation.

In Lanark there were no street names, statues or displays in the library or even words from the local folk to inform me that Robert Owen had been an inhabitant of New Lanark., The years went by until I found myself a student in the late fifties. I had been given a reading list for my Education paper and was attracted by the title 'A New View of Society to the County of Lanark (1821)' by Robert Owen. I satisfied my curiosity immediately by reading the book and knew for the first time that New Lanark had had for almost thirty years an outstanding historical figure in their midst. Just before a visit to friends in 1965, I wrote to the New Lanark Mill to request a visit.

I arrived at the Mill (it closed in 1968) on a chilly autumn afternoon and found myself being treated as a very important visitor. I was shown both the records and the buildings where Owen carried out his social experiments, given tea, signed the visitors' book and departed with the feeling that seeing his community based village had enhanced the reading I had done over many years.

A few years later in 1971, I attended a conference whose dual purpose was to acknowledge the bicentenary of Robert Owen's birth and to celebrate his contribution to the welfare of his fellow men. The largest number of delegates came from Japan whose terms of employment are everything Robert Owen would have wished. After I told the conference my story, there was mild amusement and disbelief that Owen was among the unknown of Lanark!



Robert Owen (from a Portrait by Mary Ann Knight c1800)

Robert Owen, a Welshman, dying at the age of eighty-seven in 1858, had the time to do and say more than most of his contemporaries. He is admired and remembered by many but has been called a 'Utopian Crackpot' by his critics. Owen, son of a saddler, was largely self-educated and self-made. Having worked since the age of ten, he eventually gained enough skill and experience to become a manager of a Manchester cotton mill at the age of twenty at the very high salary, for the times of £300 per annum. He realised that the squalor, the jerry built future slum housing, with the ever-increasing urban population, would create industrial strife and threaten the stability of society. He correctly forecast that unless 'man's inhumanity to man' was halted an Age of Revolutions would occur in the nineteenth century and beyond. He began to try out his ideas in Manchester.

The New Lanark Mill was built by David Dale and Richard Arkwright to use the waters of the Clyde to drive the new spinning-jennies for the mass production of cotton. Owen came to New Lanark on business, met and married Dale's daughter, Caroline, and took over the running of the Mill in 1800. Owen was not a democrat, for he believed that an educated elite should rule and saw himself as a paternalist. At New Lanark, he changed the appearance of the village by building better houses for the workers, paved streets, made deductions from their wages for sickness and old age and replaced the exploited private shopkeeper with a co-operative store selling goods at cost price. In his policy one can see the blueprint for the welfare state and the image of the Israeli Kibbutz.

Robert Owen was also a good businessman, for he calculated that a contented workforce would improve efficiency and give greater profits. He could be accused of doing the right thing for the wrong reason? Nonetheless, today we recognise the effects of nature and nurture and the desirability of a sound mind in healthy body. Owen stressed the importance of the effect of the environment on the formation of character. He advocated the state founding of education but failed to recognise that it would create a desire for social mobility and change the way Owen saw society. If you educate the peasant, he will want to leave his plough.

Owen is best remembered for what he did for the children of New Lanark. He is seen as one of the pioneers of infant and primary education. In his Report of 1821, he described how children, as young as six years old, were working thirteen hours a day in the Mill with disastrous results. Owen described many of them 'as dwarfs

in body and mind. Some of them were deformed'.

Although others, such as Rousseau, in his *Emile*, had provided the educational theories, it was Owen who made such ideas a reality. Three hundred children were removed from the Mill up to the age of ten to be educated in what became an Institute of the Formation of Character. The curriculum was not confined to the 3Rs because Owen, believing in developing the artistic talents of children, had them taught dancing and singing. The achievements of New Lanark became known at home and abroad. Included among the many visitors were the Tsar of Russia, Duke Maximilian, foreign ambassadors, the so-called great and good of Britain and others. All the visitors were entertained by the children, dressed in Highland and Roman style costumes, performing as couples the dances of Europe, followed by a choir of a 150 singing old Scottish songs in Harmony. Owen's aim was to educate children to take their places as rational human beings in self-supporting, happy, model communities of 2000 inhabitants. As the Jesuits said: 'Give me a child until he is seven and he is mine for life'.

Today if we drive along the M74, and other roads, to and from Glasgow, there are many signs to invite us to visit New Lanark. There we will find a thriving community, conservation of the buildings and due tribute paid to both David Dale and Robert Owen. New Lanark did not, as predicted, turn into another Manchester and looks almost as it did in the early nineteenth century. It is rightly called an historical site.

Bill Coughlan

'Within a Mile of Edinburgh Toon'

At the end of every concert we played off with The Garb of Auld Gaul, the Cameronian Rant, Within a Mile of Edinburgh Toon and the National Anthem. To relieve the boredom of the frequent playing of such items I automatically memorised them and played them without being conscious of what I was doing. I used to look at my actual or potential girlfriends in the audience.

A few years ago I heard the melody of Within a Mile of Edinburgh Toon being played at a very slow tempo on BBC Radio 3. The pianist played the tune followed by two variations and a drone like sound in the last movement. I had thought of Within a Mile of Edinburgh as another irritating Scottish snap tune but, having heard it in this slow adagio tempo, I realise it was a lovely tune: it would make a good hymn or could be arranged as a slow march. Just as the last note faded away, the announcer gave the name of the work as

the No. 1 Piano Concerto by John Field. The name of this Irish composer was no stranger to me, for I had played the John Field Suite under the baton of Laurie Dunn. Field composed his No. 1 Piano Concerto in 1799 and had decided to use a Scottish tune, as was the custom at the time, in the slow movement.

Although *Within a Mile of Edinburgh Toon* appears in collections of Scottish airs, it is not Scottish, for it is a mock-Scottish tune composed by an Englishman called James Hook (1746-1827). This can easily be done with any national music or tune once the sound; the rhythm and the chords have been studied. I recall in the 1960s that the music of The Beatles was arranged to sound like W.A. Mozart while the Irish Guards played the same tunes as marches.

James Hook, a composer, an arranger, organist and pianist, lead a very active musical life as the musical director of the Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens in London for fifty years. He had to be a prolific composer in all forms of music to satisfy the variety of visitors to the Gardens. He composed over 2000 songs: two of which were *'Within a Mile of Edinburgh Town'* and *'The Lass of Richmond Hill'*. While in the British Library doing other work, and purely on a whim, I decided to look up *Edinburgh Town*, the future quick march of the Cameronians. The popularity of the song surprised me, for it had been arranged as song, as a choral work and for instruments in dozens of arrangements. The original song, I believe, is intended to be sung in the jolly tempo of *Allegretto*. To attempt to sing the words at Cameronian pace would land the singer in the Accident and Emergency. However, the words are by an Englishman who does not fully understand Scots. I could imagine a Cameronian *'sticking it on'* James Hook for such poor lyrics. He composed the music and then busked the Scots. Hook wrongly used *Edinburgh Town*: uses down and not doon, cannot instead of cannae, will not do and not winna dae and lassy and not lassie. The first verse of the song is as follows:

*'Twas within a Mile of Edinburgh Town,
In the rosy time of the year,
Sweet Lavrocks bloom'd and the grass was down,
And each shepherd woo' his dear.
Bonny Jockey blith and gay,
Kiss'd sweet Jenny making hay,
The lassy blushed and frowning cry'd no, no it will
not do,
I cannot cannot wotnot wotnot munot buckle too.
Drink until you are half-fou and try to sing
the words at Cameronian pace.*

I do not know why, how and when, *'Within a Mile of Edinburgh Toon'* became the Regimental March of the Cameronians. One explanation that stated it was chosen because the Cameronians defeated the Jacobites is clearly untrue because James Hook was not born until 1746. However, both *'The Garb of Auld Gaul'* and *'Kenmure's on and awa'* are Jacobite tunes whose use by Cameronians can be heard as battle trophies. The use of *'Within a Mile of Edinburgh Toon'* as our quick march can be traced probably to the regiment becoming the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in 1881. Although it is an odd choice, there must be an official document shelved somewhere with the story. I am awaiting a reply from the Regimental Museum. If they do not know, perhaps Kneller Hall will be able to give the answer?

The origins of regimental marches, like their nicknames, are not always obvious. Folk tunes play a big part but it is confusing when English regiments use Scottish tunes as their marches. On one occasion, the 14/20th Hussars were unable to carry out their duties through some misdemeanour and the Royal Sussex Regiment were called upon to replace them. As a punishment the 14/20th now plays *The Royal Sussex*, a tune of French origin, as their regimental march. Before the foundation of the Royal Military School of Music in 1857, the army employed many German civilian bandmasters who arranged operatic and German folk tunes as regimental marches. Things always take a long time to evolve and change. In this report, the position of the bandmaster in the army was not always clear. In the Cameronians, the bandmaster was sometimes called a civilian, probably because of the previous status of a BM and the fact he was addressed as Mr. In the end, I might discover that the choice of the Regimental March of the Cameronians might either have been a well considered choice or just the need to choose a Scottish sounding time.

Bill Coughlan

Kenya - Mau Mau 1952-2002

It's fifty years since the start of the Mau Mau Emergency in Kenya. For most of the years since then I have held happy memories of my time in that wonderful exciting country, as must many fellow

Cameronians from their spell with the 1st Battalion in the years 1958-1960.

Until this year my reverie was undisturbed. But it was severely disturbed by the showing of a programme on BBC TV. The programme, in "The Correspondent" series on the 17th November 2002, was called "White Terror" and purported to reveal "new evidence" which had been "unearthed alleging British atrocities, on such a scale that it will require the re-writing of British imperial history".

The tone of such exposés is usually to take an uncompromising line with one end in view, to present all its evidence as incontrovertible fact, to include one or two interviews with people who are led by provocative questioning to produce the answers required, and a transcript of this documentary shows that it was well up to scratch.

It was presented by one John McGhie (status unknown) and featured the comments of Professor Caroline Elkins, assistant Professor of History at Harvard University. Putting aside any reservations one may have about the idea of an America academic setting out to rewrite British imperial history, the serious nature of the allegations presented which included "major human rights abuses, rape, torture, indiscriminate killing and theft of property" would startle anyone, particularly people who were there at the time. Since, fifty years on, the allegations cover a period through the mid-to late fifties and leading up to Independence in 1963, they include my own tour of duty as well as that of 1 Cameronians.

In 1954/55 the campaign was being conducted against bands of terrorists who would strike at targets by day or night and retreat to hide in the forest. The security forces job was to deny terrorists food and supplies, to protect actual and potential targets from attack, and to pursue and apprehend bands of terrorists whenever and wherever encountered.

It wasn't a particularly gentlemanly business; warfare never is, and I can recall, when newly arrived, asking my experienced company commander, with the moral superiority that goes with complete ignorance, if he did not have qualms about pursuing and perhaps eliminating opponents who were less well organised and less well-armed than his men.

"Absolutely none" he said, and described being first on the scene at a family farm where the farmer's baby, then his wife and then he himself had been done to death in ways too barbaric to describe here, having been lured from their secure farmhouse by tales from a trusted Kikuyu farm foreman about a sick horse. "It sustains me to think I may be after the people who did that". Later on I had a chance to read an account of a Mau Mau oath-taking ceremony, which young officers operating in the bush were not supposed to see. To learn that your adversaries in an armed conflict seek to strengthen the resolve of their fighters by administering oaths which involve the use of body parts taken without their owners consent or co-operation from, ideally, people such as yourself can concentrate the mind acutely and make you eager not to come second in any confrontation which may take place. Each section of the oath would end "or this oath will kill me". However incredible such language might seem in a modern context the fact that those taking the oaths believed they might, or would, die if they broke the oath, made them formidable and ruthless.

By late 1955 the tide had turned. Gangs being "bumped" in the forest were smaller, numbers being captured or surrendering were increasing and all of them, after the screening were offered a "cleansing oath" which would remove the death threat of the Mau Mau oath.

That same year, on several forest operations we used Kikuyu porters, up to forty at a time, who were ex-terrorists who had taken a cleansing oath. I don't speak Kikuyu but my Swahili, and theirs, was enough for them to assure me that they were content, relieved, warm and comfortable as well as being better clothed and better fed than they had been for several years.

This contrasts starkly with the televised report of screening of hard-core terrorists which stated "people were always badly beaten when they were being screened. Some would be hardened by the beatings, so no matter how long they went on, they wouldn't confess. They'd say; "just kill us"."

The programme included the information that official statistics for the emergency showed fatalities as around 2,000 African and just over 100 Europeans

with 11,000 terrorists, although this was expressed as "in the whole emergency Mau Mau killed less than 100 Whites and 2,000 loyalists. But there were tens of thousands of Mau Mau fighters and civilians killed by the British and their loyalists supporters". It neglected to point out that virtually all of the terrorists victims were innocent, unarmed civilians who were attacked in their homes or villages and put to death as acts of terror.

As the "active warfare" period of the emergency drew to a close many of the surviving hard-line terrorists, now referred to on the programme as "veterans", remained to be screened, sentenced or released. This took place after my spell in the country, so I have no first-hand knowledge of that time and could not refute any claims in the programme about 'atrocities' being committed by the authorities, nor would I wish to. If any of them, upon investigation, prove to be true then, even at this late date, the perpetrators should be pursued.

The coverage of Professor Elkin's research now moved to the aftermath of the Emergency and into a new dimension, declaring that in the next few years "many thousands" of people were held in detainee camps under brutal conditions, subjected to indiscriminate beatings, kept underfed and put to work in slave labour conditions under which many were to die. Her female interviewees told, on screen, of being beaten and raped *"by white soldiers" and of mal-treatment of them and their children by "loyalist, police and British soldiers. Hit worse were the wives of forest fighters"* (another euphemism for terrorists).

Professor Elkins disputed the historical record of around eleven thousand dead saying, *"conservatively I would put that figure somewhere around fifty thousand. That's conservative"*. She then went on to destroy further the credibility of her research by saying *"it could have been a hundred thousand, could it have been three times as much, four times as much. Certainly"*.

People interviewed told of working parties from the camps going out each morning, fifty strong, to work on such projects as Nairobi International Airport run-way digging, and routinely returning with five, six or eight dead, day after day.

The appalling situation, if Professor Elkins and her interviewees are to be believed, continued from the late fifties into 1960, centred upon camps situated

within central province. So her high and low estimates equate to a system of oppression causing prisoner-deaths of between fifty and two hundred people - a day - over a three year period.

Now, according to the Regimental History (Lt Col John Baynes's excellent book) the 1st Bn disembarked in Mombasa on 17th May 1958 and moved to locations in Nairobi, Gilgil and Naivasha. Apart from a foray into Jordan, the Battalion history tells of training in the NFD, of winning the East African Command rugby championship and the Kenya Seven-a-Sides tournament, of route lining for the Queen Mother's visit and of trips out to game parks and to climb Kilimanjaro.

yet all this time, if we were to believe Professor Elkins and BBC2, ex-Mau Mau detainees were, in Central Province being subjected to a regime of brutality, often by *"white soldiers"* which was causing them to die in their hundreds every week.

The 1st Bn took over duties from 1st Bn King's Own Regiment and handed over at the end of 1959 to 2nd Bn Coldstream Guards. It is unthinkable that any of these fine regiments, or indeed any British Army Regiments, could have been party to the kind of horrific conduct described by Professor Elkins and her interviewees, yet the programmes *"evidence"* was completely vague citing only *"white British soldiers"*. For an investigative programme which claimed to be able to quote from secret communications between the Attorney General and the Governor General of the day not to have bothered to check which *"white British soldiers"* were serving in Kenya in the relevant years seems reprehensible and weakens the credibility of the investigation irredeemably.

Before and since Independence in 1963 Kenya had continued to prosper. The world has drunk its coffee, bought its fruit and vegetables flown into our supermarkets, and sent its tourists to visit the country's many attractions. Kenya distance runners are heroes in world athletics. The country has a high profile and a considerable reputation yet in all that time no one has sought to bring world attention to tales of the sort told by that programme.

Could it be possible that, since the Sixties we have all been living a lie or perhaps, on that one evening, we were watching one?

G.F.

Major-General Joseph Henry Laye, CB, CVO

1849 - 1938

*Colonel of The Regiment The Cameronians
(Scottish Rifles) 1910-1918*

My father, Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas Graham Moncrief, MC, served throughout the First and Second World Wars in The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). He often told me that it was the influence of Major-General Laye which made him choose The Cameronians as his regiment. How did this, at first sight, strange connection come about? Read on!

Major-General Joseph Henry Laye was born in Auckland, New Zealand on 4 February 1849. He was the son of Major-General Joseph Henry Laye, CB. His mother, before their marriage on 23 May 1848, was Emelia Maria Pitt, the second of the five daughters of Major-General George Dean Pitt, KH (Knight of the Order of the Guelphs of Hannover). At that time General Pitt was the Lieutenant Governor of New Ulster, which was then the name for the northern half of the North Island of New Zealand. In addition his grandfather was Lieutenant-General Francis Laye, (1752-1828), Royal Artillery. Clearly the young Joseph Henry had a very distinguished military pedigree. He had a younger sister Rose, who was born in Auckland on 3 January 1851.

Joseph Henry Laye was educated privately and subsequently entered the Royal Military College at Sandhurst. After his training there he was commissioned on 20 July 1867 as an Ensign in the 90th Foot (Light Division). On 27 October 1871, Ensign J.H. Laye was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. In the Army List for January 1875, which recorded the 90th Foot as being stationed at Dover, Lieutenant Joseph Henry Laye is listed as Adjutant. He served in this appointment from 24 April 1872 to 22 January 1878. On examining the lists of other infantry regiments, I noted that almost all Adjutants at that time held the rank of Lieutenant. On relinquishing the appointment of Adjutant, he was promoted to Captain on 23 January 1878 and served throughout the Kaffir War of 1877-78 and the Zulu War of 1879 with the 90th Foot. In these wars he was mentioned in dispatches on two occasions, on 1 April 1878 and on 30 March 1879. He then saw service in India from 19 October 1879 to 22 April 1880, also with the 90th Foot.

On 29 November 1879 Captain Laye was promoted to Brevet Major and on 1 July 1881 to the substantive rank of Major in the Scottish Rifles - this is the first time the new designation for the 90th Foot is recorded on his record of service sheets. In 1881, Hugh Childers, the Secretary of State for War, completed the process of linking infantry battalions which had been initiated by Edward Cardwell, one of his predecessors. Under these reforms the 90th Foot became the 2nd Battalion The Cameronians in 1881.

He had a further period of service in India from 6 January 1887 to 9 July 1889. On 10 October 1889 Major Laye was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and took over command of 1st Battalion Scottish Rifles who were then stationed in the Curragh. In 1890 the Battalion moved from Cork to Aldershot and in October 1893 it moved to Portsmouth, whereupon he relinquished command and was put on half pay. However he became a Brevet Colonel on 6 January 1894 with



*Major General Joseph Henry Laye CB CVO, Deputy
Adjutant General 1901*

subsequent promotion to substantive Colonel on 8 November 1898.

His career and further promotion was mainly on the Staff of the Adjutant's General's Branch, as AAG Southern District from 8 November 1895 to 8 October 1899 and then AAG Army Headquarters from 9 October 1899 to 23 February 1900. He was promoted to the rank of temporary Major-General on 24 February 1900 on becoming Deputy Adjutant General to the Forces. On 7 June 1905 he became GOC of the Infantry Brigade in Gibraltar. He held this appointment until he was placed on the retired list on 23 March 1908.

On 28 May 1901 he was awarded the CVO and on 26 June 1902 the CB. His father, who was also called Joseph Henry Laye and reached the same rank, had been awarded the CB twenty-one years earlier in 1881. On many of the documents concerning Major-General Laye, his awards are placed in the order in which he received them, i.e. CVO, CB. This is incorrect, The CB should take precedence since it is the older Order.

On 12 September 1889, as a Major at the age of 41, he married at St Mary's Church in the Parish of Low Harrogate in North Yorkshire, as her second husband, Anna Maria, the elder daughter of John Leishman, WS. She had previously been married to Dr O.B. Shore, from whom she had obtained a divorce. John Leishman was the eldest of the seven children born to my great-great-grandfather, The Reverend Robert Leishman, who was a Minister of the United Presbyterian Church in Kinross from 1804 until his death in 1865. Major Laye, as he then was, therefore married my first cousin twice removed. He did not have any children of his own, but by marrying Anna Maria Shore (née Leishman) he became the stepfather of Brigadier-General O.B.S.F. Shore, CB, CIE, DSO and the step-uncle of Brigadier-General C.J. Hobkirk, CMG, DSO.

After his retirement he and his wife, Anna Maria, set up home in Dawlish, Devon. It was at Dawlish where each of them died, Anna Maria on 16 January 1912 and he on 26 June 1938. They were buried alongside each other in his own vault in the Highland Road Cemetery in Southsea. Nearby in this cemetery are the graves of his father, Major-General J.H. Laye, CB, his mother, and at least three other members of his family with the name of Laye.

Major-General Laye and his wife were of



Anna Maria Laye nee Leishman 1902

the same generation as my paternal grandparents (John Moncrieff Wright and Cathleen Honoria Wright), who from 1908 were living at Kinmonth House, which is near Perth and where I now live. It is known, particularly from photographs, that Major-General Laye made numerous visits to Kinmonth and he became very friendly with my grandparents. These visits became more frequent following the death of his wife, Anna Maria.

In his retirement Major-General Laye had been Colonel of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) from 31 July 1910 to 13 June 1918.

The Will of Major-General Laye is long and interesting. It contains clear instructions for the distribution of many of the mementoes he had collected throughout his life. Those of possible interest to readers of *The Covenanter* are as follows:

"2. . . . the Regimental Tartan Rug of the Scottish Rifles and my two Zulu Sticks shall be placed on my Coffin and shall be buried with me . . ."

"3. . . . I give to the said Mabel Gurnora Martyn . . . and the three small pictures relating to the Cameronians Scottish Rifles (Hamilton) . . ."

"7. I give to Major Douglas Graham Moncrieff-Wright, MC, Elcho Park, Rhynd, near Perth, the Bronze Plaque of myself and General Davis."

"9. I give all my Crucifixes Statues Books and Pictures on religious subjects . . . to the Roman Catholic Church of Saint Agatha at Dawlish . . ."

"11. I give the following pecuniary legacies . . . to the Priest in charge of the said Roman Catholic Church of Saint Agatha, Dawlish, aforesaid at the time of my death . . ."

Many other people, and charitable organisations, connected with the Roman Catholic Church were also beneficiaries of his Will. These bequests are but one indication of his strong Catholic faith.

In June 2001, which in the South of England for a family wedding, my wife and I visited as many of our family graves as we could. I had previously obtained from the Cemeteries Manager of Portsmouth City Council the location of Major-General Laye's grave in the Highland Road Cemetery. He and his wife Anna Maria have a combined gravestone. We found this in a reasonable condition, though some of the lettering was missing or defaced. I arranged with a local stonemason for these letters, 286 in all, to be replaced and I now have photographs of the restored gravestone.

Lt.-Col. John G. Moncrieff

Memories of Treetops

Coverage of the Queens Golden Jubilee in last year's celebrations included the recollection that she and Prince Philip had been on an African tour when her father died, and had spent the night before the news of his death and her accession at Treetops Hotel in the forest above Nyeri in Kenya, before travelling back to Sagana Lodge, her wedding gift from the people of Kenya, where the news was broken to her next morning.

Reading about all of this brought back a flood of memories of my own visit to Treetops, only a couple of years or so later and in much more pedestrian circumstances, during operations against Mau Mau in the emergency in Kenya in the middle fifties.

Treetops, sometimes more grandly known as Treetops Hotel was run by the owners of the Outspan Hotel in Nyeri, a nearby town. It was a long, wide, single-story wooden building with dining and bedrooms behind a long verandah, all built high up in a giant fig-tree, shored up at the ends on giant log piles, and with a wooden staircase leading up from the approach-path.

On suitable evenings small parties of guests would be driven out from the Outspan Hotel, would alight and then walk, escorted by rifle-toting game wardens

looking appropriately alert and fearsome, to the staircase which they would then mount, to find drinks and dinner ready to be served as the light faded and darkness fell.

The attraction of Treetops for guests and game alike, lay in the fact that the large clearing before it, either a shallow pool or a muddy wallow, according to season was a massive salt-lick of such great appeal to all kinds of game that they would ignore the intrusion of spotlights from the balcony and go about the business of getting seriously salted to the great delight of the guests on high.

Sated with salt, the animals would disappear up the many game trails which led down to the pool. The last elephant to leave would put out the lights and the guests would retire to be up in the tree. A surreal and memorable experience for all who shared it.

By 1955 however, much had changed. Mau Mau was at its height, Treetops had been torched and partially destroyed by terrorists and the army was in the forest to root them out.

For four weeks we had been involved in an operation in the Aberdares, starting up in the moor lands above the forest fringe and patrolling down hill each day, 'bumping' the occasional gang and, we hoped, driving them down to a solid line of ambushes set up along the lower forest edge for the duration. In the path of our Company lay Treetops.

On the penultimate day of the op. our three platoons received orders at first light that we were to prepare a final sweep next day from our positions to the forest edge (and into the ambushes, we wondered?) across a front of some 1500 yards, through an area including Treetops, in which a large gang of up to one hundred had been reported (by whom, we wondered; we were the only people there and we certainly hadn't seen any gangs of one hundred).

My neighbouring platoon commander and I bivouacked together that night to prepare a plan of action for the morrow.

Three days previous one of my askaris had been fatally wounded when he was gored by a maddened rhino already suffering agony from an ant-infested open wound on its belly (as we found when we shot it). The askaris, normally placid and completely at ease in the bush were jumpy on edge. Our four-week advance down the mountains may have driven the gangs downhill; it had certainly pushed all the teeming wild life ahead of it, while the presence of the ambushes had prevented the animals which instinctively turn away from the sounds and smells of man, from

breaking out into the open bush and plains below the forest edge. We were now being ordered to conduct a 'sweep' in a single line abreast with a hundred men across a front of fifteen hundred yards, against a gang with a rumoured strength of one hundred through an area famed throughout Africa for the abundance of its wildlife, all of it presently seething with annoyance at being hemmed in for the last four weeks!

Spread evenly across the line of advance the troops would have been fifteen yards apart. In thick bush at five yards you can't see anything. We felt that at best we would see nothing and, at worst, people might start shooting each other. We decided on patrols of four which would move along the edges of the game trails.

At the signal we set off. Apart from occasional angry-animal-crashing-through-bush noises ahead of us all was still. Away to both flanks we heard an odd burst of fire from time to time. After an hour and a bit my patrol came out into the Treetops salt-lick clearing just as my fellow platoon commander and his patrol broke cover one hundred yards away to our left across the pool. We circled it and both teams sat down under the burnt-out Hotel high above us.

After a break we decided to stay in each others view for the last few hundred yards to the forest edge and moved down the trail with thick bush on either side. Suddenly the point man stopped; so, too, did everyone else. Fieldcraft, forest-style was second nature to these fellows and there was absolutely no sound as they all dropped to positions of all-round defence almost instinctively.

The point-man signalled and Peter, my colleague and I crept forward. He pointed. There less than ten yards ahead of us in the poor light of the narrow trail with its close canopy of high trees were the double horns of a huge black rhinoceros sticking out across our path as the rhino browsed waiting.

We had seen nothing, 'bumped' nothing, shot nothing. I had got my patrol trophy three days before when we shot the mad rhino. This was a beauty and it could be his. Still in absolute silence Peter signalled for the Bren gun. Our chaps were good and normally responded immediately, but no Bren gun or gunner appeared.

We looked round. The Askaris were shaking in silent mirth. Naturally they all

knew what the danger was Bundara, the Bren gunner was already fifteen feet off the ground, nestled in the ford of an absolutely smooth tree - still holding his Bren gun! Soon, startled by something, the rhino charged off down the trail, through the bush and disappeared and we set off, Peter still trophyless, for the last two hundred yards towards the ambushes as we led, white faces to the fore and making plenty of noise to give them plenty of warning, out into the sunlight and the welcoming open fields.

I never did go back to Treetops nor, subsequently, have I been back to Kenya, but the images of that magical majestic country, among them that of the tree-bound Bundara with his Bren gun remain forever clear and vivid.

G.F.

South of the Border "The Lost Consonant of England"

'America and Britain' said George Bernard Shaw 'are two great countries divided by a common language' and he was absolutely right. For me, however, the division is much nearer to home, and although I have lived in Southern England for yehs and yehs (translation - a very long time) I still find regional accents endlessly fascinating, not least because many of the folk in South East England, while regarding Scots and many others as almost unintelligible, consider that they themselves do not have an accent at all.

Fed by television on a diet of Taggart ('there's been another murrduur') and Andy Gray on Sky Sports, who can make the objective of football ('tae sco-ur a go-ull') into six syllables, they can be forgiven for finding the accent quaint and sometimes extreme. Recently I overheard someone in Glasgow talking about 'the jookie embra', who turned out to be the Queen's husband, - an expression that falls easily upon another Glasgow ear but could bewilder a stranger!

The division by accents is not, of course, just a north-south divide, since every part of Britain has its own eccentricities - A while back I was in Dorset (pronounced Dahrsit) and looking, in a pub in Portland Bill, for the words, or failing that, the coy little pictures of top hats and ladies - bonnets which indicate the Ladies and Gents, I found only a six letter sign on an

obvious door which said 'Yer Tiz' - so I went through the door and there sure enough, 'twas!.

The cryptic West Country style was also obvious on the side of a mobile hot food outlet, or chip van, with a sign which read simply 'Yer be burgers'.

This divide is also a development of comparatively modern times, since in past centuries a man would grow up and live his life in one locality where he would understand, and be understood by, everyone around him. But modern transportation allowed people to travel far and often and broadcasting brought the wider world into the homes of those who didn't venture far.

And here, not for the first time, did a Cameronian play a vital role since the man who effectively created the B.B.C. and set the standards in spoken communication for generations was Sir John Reith, who had been Transport Officer in the Cameronians in the first World War. What Sir John wanted, and got, was clarity. So what the B.B.C. audience heard, 'received English' was almost universally understood by the listening audience.

At home of course they still spoke in their own accents and didn't try to copy what they heard on the 'wireless'. Why would this be so? Well it could all be, as a friend with an academic interest in linguistics suggests, entirely flippantly, a result of the war!

'During the war, as some people remember, there were shortages of all sorts of things and we had to do without. In Scotland we went without our tea, or rather our 't' and when things got better, or be'er, afterwards we never went back to using it'

'Down South' he suggests, 'or rather 'Dahn Sarf' as they say, they had little else to swallow, so they took to swallowing their consonants. After the war the practice persisted and this led in time to the lost consonant of England. An early casualty was 'r' and over the years 'l' almost disappeared.'

'A good example of the way words suffered in those austere times is the round device on which our vehicles run, known in the South East as a 'weow'. Indeed my earliest encounter with the lost consonant came in the army when our M.T. instructor introduced a lecture on military transport by saying 'Terday, gennomen, we are doing' the jeep - Nah the jeep, as you will see, has foive weows. Foah roud weos and a steerin' weow'. The sound of his voice has remained with me ever since'.

'The wartime austerity, of course, affected all classes and everybody had to give up something. Many upper-class people gave up not only letters but whole syllables. A good example is 'pahtickully' as in 'I like wine and I'm pahtickully fond of claret' and many of them use the word in this form still although the 'lar' they dropped has been available again for years'.

So, despite the B.B.C's best endeavour under the ex-Cameronian Lord Reith in the post-war years, the lost consonant of England was never found and restored to its rightful place, and the folks in Southern England whether picking a fight, (wot you on abaht?) chatting to neighbours (weally noice pepow) or relaxing with a drink (Oi'll 'ave a li' a 'ow) will continue to consider what they don't have an accent at all!

G.F.

Corned Beef with everything

Whenever we heard the duty bugler play 'Come to the Cookhouse Door Boys' we picked up our utensils and plates, knowing that we would not care about the food we were about to eat: there was no chance we would enjoy eating it. As wartime children brought up on dried eggs, Spam and mousetrap cheese, we were not used to lavish food but had some idea how wholesome food should taste. At nights, whenever we could afford it, we ordered NAAFI suppers to retain some pleasure in eating. We could not avoid noticing the board displaying the large amount paid each month from the NAAFI to the PRI.

As we queued, we noticed the vapour coming from three large, joined receptacles labelled WASH - RINSE - STERILIZE to remind us of the order in which we should wash our plates and cutlery. Alas! - this was largely ignored. Three containers of water soon had the appearance of smelly, dark looking hot water. The cook sergeants, looking like catering misfits, had the look of good mess members. My lasting memory is of what I called Dalmatian potatoes: boiled potatoes carelessly peeled, left with most of the black eyes, mixed with tinned milk and margarine to make a glue like substance which left the serving spoon with reluctance and then wanted to stick

to our plates. Of course, bulk cooking is difficult and if food is cooked too soon and left too long its taste becomes a deserter. I used to think of other things when I ate, knowing that most of my meals would land in the swill bin.

Our period of service from Trieste to the Far East (1949-52) I think of as our corned beef era. We were fed corned beef so often, and in so many so many different ways, that we expected it to be the meat in most meals. London Roast had corned beef beneath the pastry: shepherd's pie had corned beef mixed with the potatoes: fritters had corned beef inside them: sausage rolls conceded to a filling of corned beef: haversack rations had corned beef sandwiches: salad had slices of corned beef: soup had shreds of corned beef floating on the top. I have not eaten corned beef for almost fifty years.

On active service and on training exercises, the rations for all ranks are the same. Some armies, such as the German, have the same kitchen in barracks to ensure that good meals were served to all. With hindsight, I can suggest a remedy that would not have cost anything. If the orderly officer and sergeant had eaten their meals each day in the cookhouse and senior officers, including the CO, had taken the occasional meal with us, it might have given the right level of supervision. The basic food in the officers' and sergeants' messes was probably the same: the problem in the cookhouse was the cooking. We were so confirmed in our apathy that we no longer complained.

I do remember standing looking at a board, which described the meal we were about to attempt to eat as 'Tiffin'. Two new Glaswegian riflemen were discussing what this word meant with no success. I told them it was probably a Hindu word for lunch brought back by the regiment after many years of service in India. I then asked them if they would be going to the band concert that night? One said to the other: "Wullie, are you no going to the concert tae night?" "No", replied the other. "How no" was the prompt reply. To my disbelief the answer: "Its all f**king music". *"If one plays good music, people don't listen, if one plays bad music, people don't talk". Oscar Wilde.*

I am aware by my conversations and reading that ex-public schoolboys generally complain about the standard of food in their old schools. Did this colour their

attitude to cookhouse food? On a recent BBC Radio 4 programme about British Food, a story was told of an American writer who had been entertained to lunch by a peer at his London club. Thinking that his meal was some kind of joke, he rang a reporter for an explanation. He had been served oxtail soup, a tiny burnt lamb chop, cabbage, carrots, boiled potatoes and rice pudding. The journalist explained to him that he had been eating the same kind of food that is consumed in British preparatory and public schools. He went on to say that the peer was just recreating his schooldays by the aid of his club and meant no offence. Can one be conditioned to accept the merit of food being tasteless? *"Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me". Proverbs 30:8.*

Six months before my engagement ended I was able to improve the standard of food in the cookhouse. I had accepted my college place, had no further career ambitions in the army and, therefore, felt free to do something that could have landed me in trouble.

One late Sunday afternoon 1 (Br) Corps, Bielefeld, I was alone on duty in the cookhouse. It was obvious to me by sight and smell that the evening meal was a collection of the inedible leftovers of many days. Complaints came from the tables of mainly Corps National Servicemen with such remarks as: "Would you eat this sergeant?" An ACC corporal who was in charge said to me: "they should take it or leave it". I told him to throw the meal in the swill bin and then cook something fresh for about fifty men. After protesting that he had only the next morning's breakfast, he relented after I gave him an order to provide a meal with fresh ingredients. The men were pleased but I knew that I would have some explaining to do as well as having to face the wrath of the cook sergeant.

The next morning shortly after 0900 hrs telephone call from the RSM, with all the tones that I should expect something unpleasant, and then ordered me to report to the Camp Commandant's office immediately. Soon I was facing a Lt-Col in the Irish Hussars. He knew me, for he had interviewed me at length before writing one of my references for college. With a wry smile and some irony, he said: "Sgt Coughlan - you were busy yesterday!" With some passion and concern, I described the meal on offer and my own experience of

cookhouse food. I ended by saying that I was on duty for a purpose and not there in the role of an ornament. He nodded approval. I saluted and left. The next day an ACC WO1 was placed in the cookhouse for a week. As the meals improved the junior ranks passed me with the words "thank you".

Bill Coughlan

The New Reality

(A Board Game for 10,000 players)

The game is based on a board depicting Land Command divided up into a number of Divisions which vary from 4 to 10 depending on the weather, time of year, by-elections, government in power; etc. Boards showing BAOR as a District are faulty and should be returned to the manufacturer. Boards showing India or Africa are antiques and should be sent to Sotheby's as part of the Unit's Income Generation Plan. Also shown are a number of well-known ATRA locations such as Glencorse, Pirbright, Larkhill and Bovington. Each location has a number of counters, depicting activities such as Infantry Phase 1 training, Intelligence Corps Phase 2 training, Sapper Phase 3 training etc, together with the number of bed spaces required.

The aim of the game is to restructure ATRA in such a way that all the Scotsmen are trained in England, all recruits have a long train journey between phases 1 and 2 and that no activity takes place in its traditional location. Thus a solution with a Cornishman joining REME, going to Glencorse for phase 1 training and Crickhowell for phase 2 before being posted to Norfolk would score maximum points. Bonus points would be scored if activities change location mid-course or a huge delay is programme when moving between phases. There is no requirement to worry about factors such as training areas and facilities as these are all being sold off by civilian accountants under an "Asset Realisation Scheme". Bed spaces are everything. Thus the training of all RAC Tank Drivers could be located at Edinburgh Castle vice the Army School of Bagpipe Music providing that there are enough bed spaces. Bed space capacity may only be exceeded in the case of chiefs and medics who probably share beds anyway and Scottish Infantry who sleep on the floor.

"Restructuring is a game of chance not logic. Thus moves are controlled by a dice. There are also two packs of hazard cards - one civilian and one military. The civilian cards contain forfeits such as "Close ATR in a marginal constituency - lose 50 points" or, "You fail your income generation target - miss 3 turns". The military hazard pack contains cards such as "Go to war without any equipment". There are also 2 wild cards, labelled "Baldrick" and "Apache". Possession of these cards entitles you to 2 extra turns whilst all other participants have to recount bed spaces. There is also a joker in the military pack marked "Another Pointless Review" and whoever draws this may completely re-write the rules in mid-game. For instance, the joker might decide to merge the Household Cavalry with the REME to form the Household Repair Service (4 bonus points for income generation potential), or amalgamate the Light Division with Combined Services Entertainment to form a Light Entertainment Division.

Any player who considers his is within 3 moves of a solution must shout "Change!" He then circulates a paper giving details of his plan. All the other players then rubbish his plan. They may be as rude, personal and abusive as they like, providing they start their diatribe with "Thank you for Reference A. In General I suppose the principles laid down . . . " Comments should include words such as "unacceptable", "gravely damaging to the Regimental System", "Lowest common denominator", "Equal opportunities", "Health and Safety", "North of Watford", "Over my dead body", etc.

Enjoy!!!!

Editors Note: I very much regret that I do not recall the source of this article

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

If it is not too late for the next edition of the *Covenanter*, can you please include an item to say that there is now on my website a contemporary collection of photos of Elizabeth Barracks, Minden www.boyle.connectfree.co.uk/RAPC/Cameronians/Cameronians.htm

Yours etc,
Ed Boyle

Sir,
While reading Volume 2 of the History of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) by Colonel H. H. Story, I came across quotations from a book, which was unpublished at the time at which Col. Story was writing. The book was entitled 'Their Mercenary Calling' and was written by Captain Malcolm Kennedy. Captain Kennedy was the last surviving Officer of the Battle of Neuve Chapelle and, indeed, took the salute at the last Neuve Chapelle Day Parade at Redford Barracks, Edinburgh, in March, 1968.

I would be grateful if any of your readers could enlighten me as to whether Capt. Kennedy ever published his book if so, where I might see a copy. If he did not, in fact, publish it, does anyone know what happened to his manuscript?

I have a copy of 'A Soldier's History' of the Royal Highland Fusiliers which I obtained from the RHF Museum when the Fusiliers celebrated their tercentenary in 1978. Did The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) ever issue such a handbook to their men and if so is there still a copy in existence?

The other book which I am trying to obtain is a Cameronian Bible. I have only ever seen one but I should like, if possible, to obtain one for myself and, more importantly, for a very good friend who is eager to possess one.

I look forward to hearing from anyone who can help me with these enquires.

Yours etc

Richard Fowler.

Captain Thomas Healey, DCM & 2 bars

Sir,

For the purposes of a magazine article I am researching the life of the above officer between his retirement 18th May 1904 and his death on 14th April 1928.

I enclose a copy of an extract from the records of the Cameron Highlanders which details his remarkable career. Of course, you will be aware that his DCM with 2 bars is unique to the pre-1914 era.

If you have any knowledge of his civilian life - employment, marriage, children, address, cause of death etc, - or copies of any obituaries or other documents relating to him, I would be very interested to hear from you.

Thank you for any help you may be able to give me.

By the way, I have already contacted South Lanarkshire Community Resources (who gave me your address) but they have been unable to provide me with any additional information beyond that obtainable from the Cameron Highlanders' records.

Yours etc.,
Henry Keown-Boyd

The Old Rectory,
Thornbury, Nr. Bromyard
Herefordshire HR7 4NJ
Tel 01885 410275
Fax 01885 410575

Healey, Thomas Henry, D.C.M. He belonged to Glasgow, b. 18 May 1859. Enlisted, 1878, (No. 2070). In Ranks 17 yrs. 144 days: 2nd Lieutenant (from Sergeant, 79th, and Sergeant-Major in the Egyptian Army) 9 Oct. 1895; Lieutenant 5 April 1898; promoted into Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Captain, 23 Aug. 1899 H.-p (on account of ill-health) 30 March 1902; Retd. Captain, 18 May 1904.

Served in the Egyptian Campaign of 1882, being present at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir (Medal and Clasp and Khedive's Star). Served with the Egyptian Army in the Nile Expedition, 1884-85, (Clasp); Sergeant-Major of the Soudanese (9th) Battalion throughout the operations of the Soudan Frontier Field Force, 1885-86, (Clasp). He was present at the engagement of Giniss, 1885, (D.C.M.); investment of Kosheh Fort, 1886: present at the action of Sarra, 1887, during which he killed a celebrated Dervish leader, Nur Hamza, and gained possession of his sword and spear; (Bar to D.C.M.; Despatches; wounded - five wounds in hand-to-hand encounter): present at the action of Gemaiza, 1887, (Clasp), and the action of Toski, 1889, (2nd Bar to D.C.M.; Clasp). He served with the Dongola Expeditionary Force, 1896, on transport duty; operations of 7 June and 19 Sep. (Despatches: promoted 2nd Lieutenant): served in the Nile Expedition, 1897, (Clasp, Soudan 1897): present at the action of Abu Hamed (Despatches; Clasp): served in the Nile Expedition, 1898 (Clasp), in charge of transport Flying Column: present at the battles of the Atbara and Khartoun (2 Clasps to Egyptian Medal): present at the action of Gederef (Despatches: awarded 4th Class of the Medjidie. On promotion to Captain, for service in the Field, he passed over the heads of some twelve of his seniors in his new Regiment.

14th April 1928.

The Covenanter - 2001 Issue

Sir,

I am sorry to have taken so long to write, but I have been extremely busy with the day job, which has encroached further into the night as SQA deadlines draw nearer.

I thoroughly enjoyed the latest issue of *The Covenanter* and found a lot of interesting information packed into its pages. Reading the various contributions, what has impressed me is the continuing spirit of *The Cameronians* and how, despite so many adverse circumstances, it continues to show and to flourish. *The Covenanter* continues to be excellent value for money and is a great source of information about life in the Regiment, containing so much that is personal to the writers and that might easily be missed by a 'formal' historian.

At Irvine Royal Academy we have come through the first set of Burns Competitions with two first places and one second, despite having a team which was under strength because people were ill. We are now working on a presentation entitled 'What makes a Hero?' for Cameronian Sunday. All our award winners will be present and I hope that you will enjoy our part in the afternoon.

I look forward to meeting you again then. Meanwhile, the Rector and I both send our congratulations on yet another first-class issue of *The Covenanter* - not that we would have expected any less from *The Cameronians*! - and our best wishes for future issues.

Yours etc,
Richard Fowler,
Teacher in charge,
Irvine Royal Academy Burns Club.

Letter from London

On the 12th of May I was delighted to attend Cameronian Sunday at Douglas. As usual the event was very well organised. I was highly honoured at being selected to carry the huge bible to the high altar prior to the beginning of the service.

However, I was again highly honoured, and stunned, when Jack Gibson outlined to the large congregation my work at Westminster Abbey in laying out regimental plot for the past two years. Then, to my astonishment, he made a presentation to me on behalf of the members of the organisation which left me

quite speechless. having now regained my speech; I wish to thank all members of the *Cameronians* (SR) and family members for the beautiful miniature whisky decanter and glasses bearing the regimental crest, these items I assure you will be treasured.

I now congratulate the Rev Jim Strachan, the Rev Brian Kerr and the pupils of Irvine Academy for a wonderful afternoon of excellent sermons, music, and song. The musical highlight of the afternoon for me came when a talented young man playing the piano went through a repertoire of tunes from the past including a wartime song recorded by the lovely singer Ann Shelton. The song entitled "Lay Down Your Arms and Surrender to Mine". Just before the record was released for sale some buffoons at the War Office had it banned, citing that it could cause servicemen to take the words literally and so cause morale to be badly affected. A short time later sanity prevailed and the record was released for general sale. The reaction of our servicemen was incredible, instead of morale being badly affected, it had the opposite effect and Ann Shelton and the song became a massive morale booster.

The next number played brought back memories of me sitting on my grandads knee as he sang the words of "Keep Right on to the End of the Road", I was a wee laddie of three or four then. So when the congregation sang the words of this lovely old song I joined in with great gusto, as Jack Gibson who was sitting in the pew in front of me will attest. Childhood memories indeed! I have no doubt that the dedication ceremony at the Cairn will be well documented elsewhere, so suffice to say here, that it was a very moving service beautifully conducted.

Since leaving the army in 1968 I have always looked forward to, and thoroughly enjoyed what I and my late wife Ellen called "Our Cameronian Weekend", this year was no exception. Meeting all my old regimental friends, and all the friends of younger generations of *Cameronians* is for me a heart-warming experience, I would like to thank everyone who made my weekend a huge success, especially Alex and Beth Maxwell who picked me up at Glasgow Airport, wined and dined me over the weekend and returned me safely to the Airport for my flight back to London. I look forward to seeing you all again in May 2003.

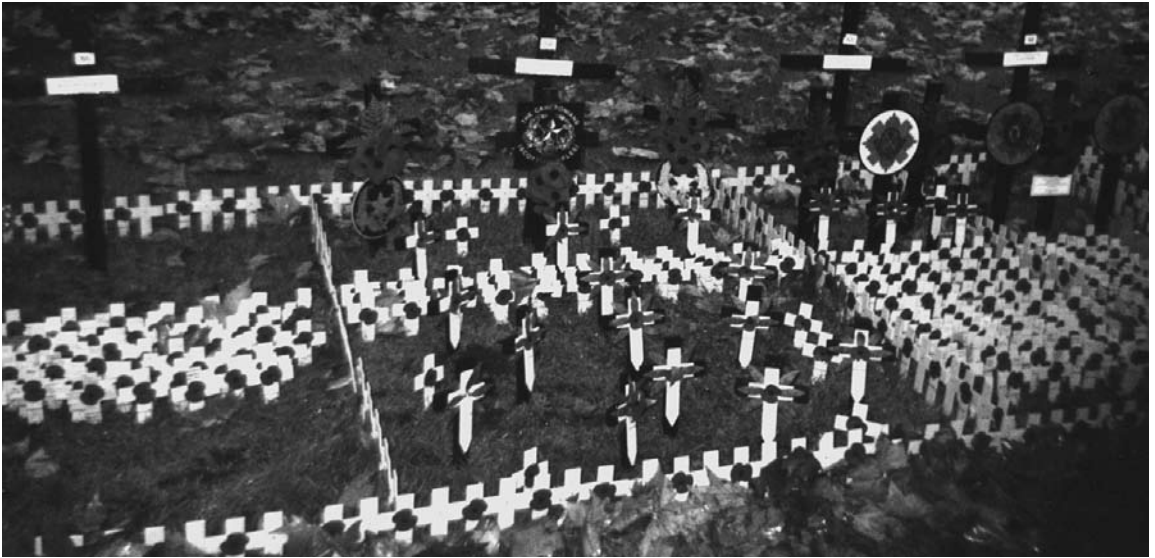
On Thursday 24th october I received official notification from The Royal British Legion that this years' opening of the Field of Remembrance would be attended by Her



Mr Eddie Clark at Westminster

At the Regimental Plot - Westminster, 2002. LtoR: Mr Alan Halliday, Major Philip Grant, Mr Bill Kennedy, Mr Tom Gore, Major Mike Sixsmith, Mr Eddie Clark





The Regimental Plot - prepared by Mr Eddie Clark and his daughter Helen

Majesty The Queen, who would be conducting a review of the regimental plots. The letter went on to say that security arrangements for the event would be on a massive scale, and emphasising that only one regimental representative would be allowed to stand in front of each plot, enclosed with the letter of notification I received a security pass to attach to my clothing.

On the 6th of November my daughter Helen and I set out for Westminster Abbey with all the crosses and regimental crests tucked away in the boot of my car. By the time we reached the Abbey, the rain which had been coming down steadily now became torrential, after sitting in the car for ten minutes it became evident that this torrent would be with us for a good length of time. A decision was then made, we must leave the car and brave the torrential elements and get on with the job. This we did.

By contrast, the 7th November dawned sunny and bright, with a cool westerly breeze. As in years gone by the attendance once again at this moving and poignant occasion was vast. Despite this, the police did a first class security job, their efficiency on checking and searching people was accompanied by a terrific sense of humour.

At approximately 11.20hrs Her Majesty The Queen arrived and a short service began, followed by the ritual two minutes silence. This completed, Her Majesty began her review and inspection of the regimental plots. On arrival at our Cameronian plot, Her Majesty stopped; and I reported to her that I was representing

the regiment, whereupon she asked if I was responsible for, and the laying out of our plot, I answered in the affirmative. After a few seconds looking at the plot she remarked "Very Nice" and moved on.

During my lifetime I have met many famous (and infamous) and prominent people, but this was the pinnacle for me. It was a feeling of great satisfaction that I had met this wonderful lady as a representative of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) especially during this; Her Golden Jubilee Year.

You may recall, that in the last issue of *The Covenanter* I reported that I was the only person to attend last years opening of the Field of Remembrance. I then appealed for people to come forward for the next opening service. Well, this year I was absolutely delighted when the following came "On Parade", Major P.R. Grant, Major M.D. Sixsmith, Alan (Doc) Halliday Ex 1st Bn., Bill Kennedy, Tom Gore, both Ex 9th Bn. and myself Ex 2nd and 1st Bns., Mr Bert Abbott and Alex McBride. It was a gratifying experience to meet and have an albeit short chat with them. Thank you all for coming to pay your respects.

Just before I sign off, I would like to congratulate ex WO II Glen Cowie, and his wife Nan on the occasion of their Golden Wedding Anniversary. I'll be there in Nerja, Spain on January 17th to take part in the celebration.

Well, that's it for another year, and as usual I am looking forward to representing the Regiment here in the Metropolis again next year.

Eddie Clark

Mr Joseph R. Gorman
21 Ashford Avenue
Castle Hill
NSW
Australia 2154
Fax: 61 2 9620 9900

Sir,

**Re: Lance Corporal Joseph
Gorman
(No. 6672) 2nd Battalion
Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)**

I am researching the life of my Grandfather, Lance Corporal Joseph Gorman who was killed on The Western Front on 10th March 1915 in the Battle of Neuve Chappelle. His wife Julia predeceased him in the October of 1914. This left their children Annette and John (my father) orphaned and in the care of his sister, Mrs C. Strickley.

Joseph married Julia Caughtry on 2nd February 1907 at St Anne's Church, Alcester St Birmingham. Their daughter Annette (Nancy) was born on 13th September 1907 and their son John (my father) was born on 28th August 1911. Both of the above are now deceased.

At about the time he rejoined his regiment, his wife Julia, became seriously ill and passed away on 25th October 1914. Joseph was still in camp in England prior to his departure for The Western Front in November 1914. I understand that he could not get leave to visit her during the time of her illness, as his unit was in training ready to ship out. It is thought that he was allowed home for her funeral.

When Lance Corporal Joseph Gorman was killed, my father was 3 years old, so there is little information about him or his service with the Cameronians that has been passed down to my generation.

Lance Corporal Joseph Gorman also served with the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in South Africa during the Boer War 1899-1902. I am interested in any information that may shed some light on his service record and where he served. I have also written to the Public Records Office in Kew in the hope that some information may be available through them.

I have been in touch with the Cameronian Museum through the South Lanarkshire Council who have been most helpful and supplied me with a great deal

of general information about his regiment's involvement in the Boer War and the battle of Neuve Chappelle.

In order to complete my research, I am trying to obtain as much information including the source of any photographs that record any involvement by the Cameronians in the Boer War and on the Western Front up to and including the battle of Neuve Chappelle.

I thank you in anticipation and look forward to any advice you may be able to provide. I may be contacted by email at jgorman@bigpond.com.au if this is more convenient.

Yours etc.

Joseph R Gorman

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Sir,

Many thanks for the two copies of The Covenanter for the year 2001, as per our telephone conversation.

I would be most interested to know by what means, (other than Bankers Order) that I can be included in the Location List? As the records will show I have been a recipient of the magazine for a number of years and wish to continue to do so. At what date would you wish to receive my payment for the next issue?

I was rather interested in photograph on page 58 of the current issue, headed Memory Lane. Alas no Battalion is mentioned, could it by any chance be of the 9th Battalion, there seems to be some familiar faces which I recognise from my time with them? I note the date given as 1946 and yet, whilst most of those in the photograph are wearing campaign medals, thus confirming active service, the Other Ranks all have their tunic collars buttoned to the neck. This practice ceased, with the issue of "collard shirts" and ties I feel sure, some time, in 1944. I would be most interested to hear more on this.

The Article beginning on page 30, (current issue) "Problems of Reinforcement" made most interesting reading. My thoughts turned to Regimental Numbers. I was very aware when I joined the 9th Btn. In 1943 that most of the existing soldiers had Regimental Numbers relating, not only to the Regiment, but also to which Battalion they had joined on enlistment. (1st or 2nd).

Now, on the other hand, we later volunteers, (1942) all had Regimental numbers at least 8 digits, in my case 14401367. These were issued whilst based at the new Infantry Training Centres, in my case, because I had stated a preference for the Middlesex Regiment on Enlistment, went to the I.T.C. outside Chester. This Centre was staffed, and would supply recruits to, the then, Heavy Machine Gun Regiments. If my memory serves me well including The Cheshire Regiment, The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, The Middlesex Regiment (the D.C.O) and The Manchester Regiment.

You may wonder why I had a change of heart as to which Regiment I wished to serve with when I enlisted, being the Middlesex. There were two reasons, the first, when, having completed my basic training. On Parade one day a call went out

for volunteers to serve with a 'Scottish Regiment', being a Scot by birth, I volunteered.

The second reason was much more practical. Our final training had consisted of instruction on the Heavy Machine Guns (Vicars) we would eventually operate in the H.M.G. Regiments. A few training sessions where we had to gallop around with the very heavy Base plate, or Tripod, greatly reduced my enthusiasm, and the fact that Rifle Regiments, are by their nature, lightly armed mobile forces finalised my decision. I have to admit the early Boyes Rifle, the Bren Gun, and the Two Inch mortar were just a wee bit on the heavy side.

I will close now with my thanks again for the magazines.

Yours etc,
Nat. Gormlay

Mr N. Gormlay
'HILL COT' 33, Greenhill Avenue
Kidderminster
Worcs.
DY10 2QU.

Sir,

I apologise for not answering your previous letter on the future of The Covenanter but I can only plead mitigating circumstances. My wife has been in hospital recently and I also run a retired group for TESCO covering North Staffs, South Cheshire and part of Shropshire. At this time of the year it involves trying to please them all with Xmas festivities that they want and seventy five per cent of the others who want something else. This over and above organising trips and theatre visits plus monthly meetings and lunches out. AND! on top of this I have Bill Coughlan after me for not remembering things that happened fifty years ago!

As regards the Regimental Magazine, I would be sorry to see its demise. If raising the cost is the means of saving it then I am wholeheartedly in support of this. It is a small price to pay for keeping in touch with old colleagues.

I managed to get up to Douglas in May and met a couple of people I had not seen for years. Elky Clark being one, and he has since been in touch with me. I also have been in touch with several of the older band members. Not so long back I visited

Major 'Dickie' Dunn (who will be 100yrs old on Jan. 1st as you will no doubt be aware of). He lives quite close to my eldest daughter and if we are down visiting her I try and call round to see. Last time I was down I rang to see if it would be convenient to go over and his housekeeper informed me that he had popped down the library so he is still mobile. I did spend an hour with him and he is still well up for it.

I hope that you are still fit and well. And all the ex-Cams that you manage to keep in contact with.

Yours etc.,

John McEwan
Barratt cottage
Bar Hill
Madeley Nr. Crewe
Cheshire

Sir,

First to introduce me to you. I am always involved for the reception of the veterans and the organisation of remembrances WWII. I also have contact with many veterans of the 15th Scottish Division. My wife and I visited the Cameronians SR & Family Members Meeting in Douglas some years ago. Have also contact with several veterans of the 9th Cameronians.

When I read your letter, my thoughts went back to 27th October 1944 in Tilburg. I wrote a book named: 'Stories written by liberators about the liberation of Tilburg'. In this book also a chapter from the book History of the Cameronians, Scottish Rifles, Brig. C.N. Barclay, special the story of Lt. Col. H.M. Villiers, Chapter II, part II.

On 26th the Cameronians were near Tilburg (Football-field Longa, beside the Wilhelmina canal). That night a patrol went over the canal and was later that night captured by a German patrol. Next day the 15th Scottish Division entered Tilburg.

Still every year we have on the 27th a commemoration near the monument 'Scotland the Brave' (A Scottish Piper) on which the names of the 9 battalions of the 15th Division. Music played by our own Dutch Pipes and Drums (founded in 1945), schoolchildren who have adopted this monument, veterans and civilians. In 2004 (!!) again a big ceremony.

Some years ago we placed a message in the Scots paper under the title 'Dutch search for lost patrol', and we did get contact with

them. We always say: 'They were the first Scots to enter Tilburg'!

We always like to hear from former veterans of the 9th battalion.

So I will end with a special salute for all members 9th Cameronians, Greetings Theo Dekker, Wandelboslaan 49, 5042 PA Tilburg

Sir,

I am researching the history of the Intelligence Sections of all Airborne, Parachute and Air Landing units. As part of my research I am trying to compile a list of all Intelligence Officers and men who served with these sections including the air landing Chindit Battalions. I am inquiring if it possible to submit a plea for information through your Regimental Journal. I would like to hear from anyone who may have served or knows of anyone who served in the Intelligence Section of 1st Battalion of the Cameronians in 1944 during the second Chindit operation. Currently I do not have any names of anyone who served in this Section.

Thank you very much for your time and I would be very grateful for any information at all.

Yours etc.

Sergeant Graeme Deeley
89 (Airborne) Military Intelligence Section
Goojerat Barracks
Colchester
Essex
CO2 7SW
Telephone 01206 782827

Sir,

I am researching my family history and have come upon a photograph (copy enclosed) of a person I believe to be a 'Bobbie' Carr. As far as I can ascertain he would appear to be a friend of the family rather than a direct link. My parents were always mentioning him, although I cannot remember in what connection. My parents lived in Preston and Lytham St. Annes in the early part of 1900s and if 'Bobbie' was a friend I presumed he lived locally.

I have written to the Regimental Museum who have only two Carrs on file, neither of whom would appear to be 'Bobbie'. They gave me your details and I wondered whether any of your readers could throw any light on this gentleman.



"Bobbie" Carr

Why would he have joined a Scottish Regt from the Preston area? He was possibly a non conformist but this is the only connection I can think of with the Cameronians.

I would welcome any information about this man and hope you may be able to assist.

Yours etc.
Brian Airey

125 Totterdown Road
Weston-super-Mare
Somerset
BS23 4LW

Sir,

I recently received a 'back number' of the magazine published by the Burma Star Association called, Dekho, In the 'seeking information' section I noted a request for news of a former Cameronian (SR) Tommy

Greer (in fact the article incorrectly printed the name Greet). Herewith an extract. 'Can anyone remember the late Tommy Greer, 1st Btn. The Cameronians and 111 Chindit Brigade. A former Member of the Deal and Dover B.S.A., His Grandchildren are looking for any information about his service in Burma'.

May I request that a copy of this letter be published in the next issue of the Covenanter in the hope that one of the readers may have some news.

All information should be sent to.

Mr. Pat Moran Hon. Area Secretary.
81 Watern Road
Deal
Kent
CT14 6PT

Yours etc.,

Mr N. Gormlay
33 Greenhill Avenue
Kidderminster
Worcs.
DY10 2QU

Sir,

I attach a copy of a letter written by Lt. Col PL Hendricks MC to his parents shortly after his return from Dunkirk. The letter describes actions in which Col Hendricks was involved while commanding B Company of the 2nd Battalion and for which he was awarded the first of his 2 MCs.

Yours etc,
Ian McBain (Lt. Col.)

Coryton
Near Cardiff

My Dear Mum & Dad

Kenneth Bruner & young Colville and I arrived here at the Depot of The Welch Regt. There are only about 30 of our Regt in this particular place. Our Div. is going to be concentrated up at Elgin near Aberdeen. We will move up there as soon as accommodation etc. had been arranged. I gather that the idea then is to give everyone 48 hrs leave within the first 10

days or so from there. Then possibly a longer period later. I've no idea yet how long we will be here.

Luckily on our arrival we had lunch in the local big Hotel. They gave us the Hell of a spread, plied us with wine & cigars, and then refused any payment. Then the Manager put himself and his car at our disposal. Kenneth had the bright idea of calling on some relations of his wife's - Lady Cory and her daughter, who is living here. She is married to the elder brother of a chap called MacGowan, who was at St. Andrews with me. The father is the big noise in I.C.I., her husband is also high up in munitions, but chucked it all to go and fight with his Territorial Regt, and is in the Near East somewhere. They insisted on all three of us staying with them. Kenneth has gone off up North as he is on the Div. Staff.

We are still here in the absolute lap of luxury. Living in a lovely old country house in the most glorious surroundings. They insist on feeding us like fighting-cocks and giving us breakfast in bed. They have also lent us their car to get about in. We had a tennis party yesterday. I am now completely rested and recovered and fit as a flea.

One must have burnt up an enormous amount of energy. The amount one could eat and sleep for the first couple of days was quite remarkable. I had reached the stage at one time of going bang off to sleep standing up and even while marching. The distances we marched must have licked the old Mons affair into a cocked hat. We had four days marching towards Belgium, were lorried up to a river-line, which we held while the others got away. Then fought and marched round in a complete circle and a bit back into Belgium again. Then fought and marched back to Dunkirk, in various rear-ground positions parts of it were of course by M/T, but that provided little rest of us leaders, as of course one had to keep awake to watch the route and see things were going all right. We had our toughest bit about two days march outside the perimeter round Dunkirk. We lost some 500 chaps there. Burke came up to take command again as the Col. had stopped a couple, and Jack Sutherland, who had missed the worst of it as he was doing M/TO. Archie Douglas and I were the only two original Coy. Comdrs left. Archie proved himself a first class fighting soldier. He became 2nd I/C and we reorganised into two Coys of about 60 rifles each. Known as the Hendriks & Sutherland Coys respectively - quite like the old days of Angus Regt! On the day our Brigade had

the heavy casualties we were I believe opposed by a whole German Corps and I believe it was touch and go. However, the chaps behind were able to get away. So much happened and so quickly that it is impossible to sort it all out in ones mind yet. But alone get the true story of what happened to other people.

So many are just missing, and so far one has not been able to find out any more about them. Edward Bradford I hear was shot in the thigh and leg. I can't find out anything definite about Peter T. One man told me he had seen him fall and hold his leg as if hit. Another that they passed him when he was lying in a ditch helping a wounded man, and that he had laughed and waved to him. Robert Miller was killed a day or two earlier. Poor Tim Hickman was leading a patrol against some snipers when he was machine-gunned and killed - he'd shown me his map-case earlier in the day, which had a bullet right through it. Michael Turner was seriously wounded by M.G. fire in the afternoon. I hear some chaps tried

to bring him in, but when they lifted him the blighters opened fire and got him again and he asked to be left. There were volunteers to go after him next morning but Burke quite rightly had to refuse to allow it. About dusk on that big day, there had been a mistaken order to withdraw about Ω a mile. The C.O. personally led a very gallant bayonet charge back to the hill we had vacated. John Law & I were on the right flank doing heroic stuff out in front. I remember pulling John's leg about it as we advanced! We regained the hill, but were blown to Hell by enemy M.Gs., Mortars and Arty. Old John went back to rally some stragglers, brave as a lion and threatening to shoot 'em. I hear he stopped a bad one in the arm while doing

so. I had some 20 rifles and one Bren in a furrow on top of the hill. Jerry then opened up the very devil of an Arty & Mortar concentration. When it had abated a bit I was trying to discover if anyone was left on my left, when old Pop appeared supported by three chaps & hit in a couple of places. He was very heroic, and said 'Well I leave you in sole charge. This position is vital to the B.E.F. and must be held at all costs'. I said I'd do my best - with 20 men!

Next Johnny Gausson appeared. He had been carrying on since morning winged in the arm and now had one in the leg. He still wanted to hang on and try & help, but I with some difficulty persuaded him to

make his way back. Then old Archie appeared grazed in a couple of places. I told him of the C.O. being wounded and he went off to see if Burke was still in the land of the living, and get or make a decision as to whether I had to hang on or not. Message came back that I'd to hang on while Burke saw the Brigadier. We must have been up there an hour or so - quite the worst of the whole party as we were completely isolated. Eventually a guide arrived to lead us into positions a mile of so back. One of my Subalterns informed me that after bayonet charge and subsequent heavy shelling Roy Money was with him. Roy was O.C. our picked P1. of patrol men. Apparently he then led some five of these forward towards the enemy entirely on his own initiative.

This must have been well to my left and towards where Michael Turner - his great friend, - had been hit earlier on.

None of them were seen again. I had sent a Recce patrol out that way to my left, but they reported no signs of any of our own troops on that side of the hill. Of course numbers of chaps in that sort of show got lost and turn up with other Regts and so forth, so there is always hope. Roy told me himself that earlier that day he had seen the Bosche shoot down some of our chaps they had captured. However, they were quite reasonable to wounded in the last war, so let's hope they are in this one. As I know that on several occasions it was impossible to get all the (Brickman was wounded in the bottom & I believe evacuated to U.K.) (Padre seriously on the beach) wounded away and dressing stations had to be left with a couple of Medical Orderlies in charge. What a party it was. We were left with only a few Brens in working order at the end. The Bosche had several different sorts of Mortar and they were very skilled indeed in using them. We only had some Smoke bombs for our 2' Mortars - never any H.E. Their sniping and use of ground was excellent too. Besides our 3 in Mortars had been called in just before the party started and we never got 'em back! As far as we were concerned in the actual fighting areas, the enemy had complete air superiority. We had the sky black with enemy planes at times. In spite of seeing an enormous amount of S.A. fire, I only saw about three planes brought down by it. For seven days we never saw one of our own. On nearing the perimeter one of our fighters passed overhead - all the troops raised a derisive cheer. Doubtless they were busy

defending the port, but why weren't there some spare from us?!! We were only 250 strong when we reached the perimeter, and had the rotten luck to get some 30 more casualties on the actual beach, from a couple of bombs. Luckily I was doing 2nd i/c at the time and was at the rear of the Bn, as my Orderly and Coy S.M. who were at the head of my Coy - where I normally would have been - were both hit. When we did see our air force in action they were grand, you would see three of 'em go straight for anything up to 20 Bosche bombers, and knock down five of six, but there were always plenty more.

The rest of the letter is unfortunately lost.

Rank and Name: Captain P.L. Hendriks

Unit: 2nd Bn. The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)

Decoration for which recommended: Military Cross

Details: During the operations between the 11th and 30th May, 1940 this Officer commanded a rifle Company with exceptional courage and ability. In particular on the 28th May, 1940, when this Company was holding an advanced position near WYTSCHAETE, by his personal example in directing the small arms fire of his Company and the Artillery supporting his sector he succeeded in beating off a strong German attack and inflicting heavy losses on the enemy. Later, owing to his coolness and ability, his Company - acting under orders - was successfully withdrawn when in close contact with the enemy.

Alexander Craig
20 Diamond Crescent
Belleville
Ontario
Canada K8N 5G6

27 Sept 2002

Sir,

I have enclosed a short article, and photograph of a gravestone of a former Cameronian. I think this is an unusual find as the Cameronians did not see much service in North America.

If you find the article of interest and you think other Cameronians would like to read it, you may wish to consider it for publication in the Covenanter.

I placed a Cameronian Glengarry (size 7&1/8) next to the stone to give a visual reference as to the size of the stone.

My late father was a serving Cameronian and I am a member of the Cameronian (SR)

and Family Members Association. I am also a member of the Royal Marines Historical Society. I collect military artifacts to both the R.M. and the Cameronians, and when possible, I do research in Canada on the Royal Marines which was my own Corps.

I have given several lectures in the USA and Canada, and had a series of articles published on the Royal Marines, I also take an active part in the activities of the Royal Marines Association, of which I am also a member.

I hope at some time in the future to be able to attend a parade of the Cameronians in Scotland. In the meantime, I will be on the look out for any other connection to the regiment here in Canada.

Sincerely yours

Alexander Craig
(Ex RMR 205794)

A Proud Cameronians Gravestone

In the university city of Kingston Ontario, near to the downtown core, stands 157 year old St Paul's Anglican Church. The land on which the church stands is reputed to be the oldest Protestant burial ground in Ontario.

In 1783 this land was set aside as the "Lower Burial Ground" later named "St Georges Cemetery" in Kingston, the new town being built by United Empire Loyalists. In the main these loyalists were former soldiers of the Kings Royal Regiment of New York, a provincial unit raised to fight for the British cause during the American Revolutionary War.

Since the War had been lost, these American Loyalists had to leave their homes and move to other parts of the British empire. Upper Canada (now Ontario) was a prime destination of choice. Kingston was located at the mouth of the Cataraqui River, and at one time fortified by the French who first arrived there in 1673.

This new town was to become the capital of Upper Canada, and eventually the capital of the Dominion of Canada. It also provided a prime location for the British military and naval establishments.

When looking at St Paul's Church it is apparent that many of the grave stones have been used in the construction of the outer walls of the church.

I had been working as an assistant curator in the museum of the Princess of Wales' Own Regiment, in the armoury building located opposite St Paul's, when

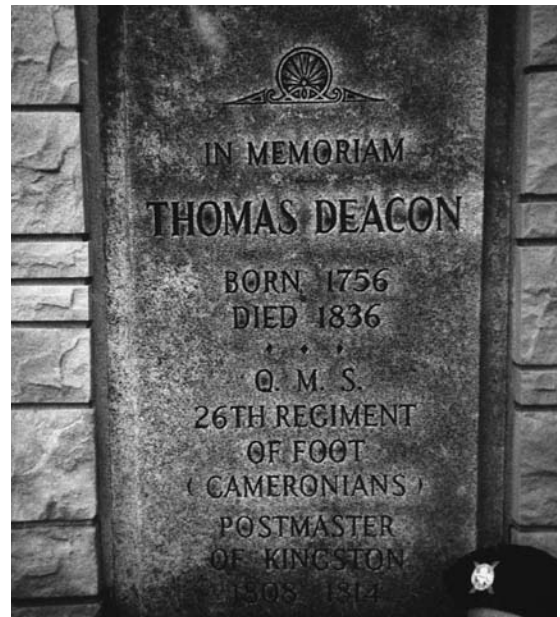
one day I noticed the word *Cameronians* on one of the gravestones. I was at once drawn to read the stone in detail.

The large, high quality granite stone is deeply carved with "In Memoriam Thomas Deacon. Born 1756 Died 1836 QW.M.S. 26th Regiment of Foot (Cameronians) Postmaster of Kingston 1808-1814".

This former Cameronian is buried in a cemetery which contains many of the notables both military and civil of his day. Sir Robert Hall K.C.B. R.N. (Died 1818), Colonel Sir William Bonnycastle R.E. (he built Fort Henry at Kingston), Colonel F.S. Tidy C.B. (Commanding Officer of the 24th Foot), Colonel Colley F.F. Foster (Died 1843).

The cemetery also includes some who are buried as nameless ones, the parish register entries show "A Sailor", "A Black boy" and other entries show Negro slaves were buried there.

I know little about Thomas Deacon's military service. However it seems entirely possible he served with the regiment during the American Revolutionary War and after. If so, he would have been in Canada at some point during the War. His



Thomas Deacon - Postmaster of Kingston

rank of Q.M.S. would indicate a lengthy term of service with the colours. Whatever his service, his pride of regiment is obvious in his last statement to the world.

As the first Postmaster of Kingston he would have been affluent, if not rich. He and his wife Isabella (1766-1822) would have mingled with the cream of Kingston

society. The position of Postmaster would have been a political appointment, and being the first person to hold the job Deacon must have been well connected with the provinces most powerful people. Indeed his son became the third person to hold the Postmasters position.

St Paul's Church was built on the cemetery ground in 1845 by the Royal Engineers in memory of Reverend Robert Cartwright chaplain to the forces in the Kingston Garrison. In 1872 the parish hall was added and Thomas Deacons stone implanted in the wall at the junction with the main body of the church. Here it is sheltered from the elements, and is in excellent condition. The last burial in the cemetery took place in 1862.

St Paul's Church still functions with regular services and is the Regimental Church for the Princess of Wales' Own Regiment. The church and cemetery have been part of the fabric of Kingston for over two hundred years, and provides a link with the British military past of Canada.

Submitted by

Alexander Craig
Belleville, Ontario.

Funeral of Mrs Mary Spiers

Sir,

On behalf of myself and that of my brothers and sisters I would like to thank the 'Cameronians Association' for the representation at my mothers funeral and cremation on 1st December 2001. It was a very moving tribute to her and shall always be remembered. My wife who comes from Devon was overwhelmed at the loyalty shown by old Cameronians. These fine men were very smartly dressed and carried her coffin from the hearse to the crematorium.

Once again I thank your association on behalf of the Spiers family

Sincerely Yours etc

John Spiers
Son of Capt. John Spiers (Jock)

Sir,

I am the daughter of Capt. John Spiers Q.M. you will remember him.

I am writing to ask if you can put this letter in the next *Covenanter*. It is from our oldest brother John, and was sent to me to

show our appreciation, and respect for the loyalty, love and respect shown at my darling mums funeral on last November, by the Cameronians, I did not write to you earlier as I know the *Covenanter* won't be out again until next year. I do hope you can fit it in.

We miss her so much, life is not the same, did you know, my dad met my mothers brother Tom McFarlane, at the gates of Hamilton Barracks on the way in to join up, that's how he met my mum, dad was orphaned at a young age, and he joined the Cameronians His young brother James Martin Spiers was 19, and killed in Burma, he was nicknamed Eppie or Effie, and I think he was a Bugler.

Tom used to take my dad home with him when they got any leave, to Ballyclare in N. Ireland, met my mum, and that was it. My 3 brothers John, Jim and Sandy were born in Ballyclare, and Margaret, Catherine and I born in Hamilton Barracks, Rosemary was born in Nairobi, when my dad was then attached to the K.A.R. for a short spell (1955). We had a wonderful life with the regiment from Gibraltar, Trieste, Winston Bks (twice) Hamilton Bks 3 times, Dreghorn, Bahrain, Nairobi etc., then of course when I married George Winkley in 1962 I was with the Cameronians until he left, Dad was 28 years, and George was attached for 12 years, not bad for one family?

George is doing fine, he was 75 in July, and is still a very lively man, involved with the council, youth clubs, bird clubs, etc., and still very young looking too. We are 40 years married in March this year. How times fly. I remember all the families and their children, and the baby sitting I did, for a lot of them, as if it was yesterday, how the Cameronians looked after us children on the beach in Gibraltar I could write a book, of it all, it is so sad when we hear of yet another old friend passing away, like Ben Page and Ian M Knight.

Well sir, I will close now, and so hope you are well.

Yours etc,
Anne Winkley

Reference:

A Boy in the Barracks

Page 35 The Covenanter 2001

Sir,

After reading this article, would it be possible to let me have the address of this chap Cooper, as I'm sure we have a lot in common to talk about. We were also in the Hamilton Barracks at the same time, and if he wants to come up I have a place for him to stay with George and I.

Anne

In Memoriam

To those they leave behind may their memories be happy ones

Mr John (Paddy) Duffin

At the age of 96 Sergeant (Paddy) Duffin enlisted in 1926 and spent 7 years abroad, serving in Egypt, India and Hong Kong. He



Sgt John Duffin and son

was recalled to the colours in 1939 and served as an Instructor at various locations including Maryhill Barracks, where we lived and where he completed his second period of service in 1950.

The stories he told me of his foreign service were a major factor in my decision to join the Regiment in 1956, Many of his old colleagues were still serving including my recruit training squad Sergeant Paddy Mulvenna.

Following my posting to B Company and our move to the Gulf, I was able to tell my father stories of my service in Bahrain, Aden and Kenya.

Stewart Duffin

Maj TV (Tommy) Gilfillan was born in Glasgow on 1 April 1921. Though he was plainly no fool the date may have set a pattern for him for life. Writing after his death ADIN refers to his "... infectious laugh and his long repertoire of jokes and stories."

A great deal of his long service was to be

spent abroad where he made use of his clear aptitude for languages. He had to learn Urdu and Pashto during his wartime service. In retirement he taught himself Gaelic. He also spoke some French and German, and he probably picked up some Norwegian during pre-War visits there.

Brought up in Lanarkshire he joined The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) as a territorial on 1 September 1939. Three years later he was commissioned into the JAT Regiment, Indian Army, where he was first of all the Motor Transport and Carrier Officer. Less than a year later, still only 22 years old, he was made Adjutant and promoted to Captain. Two years later he transferred to 4 Indian Parachute Battalion to be Adjutant of that unit, becoming a company commander in the rank of Major in June 1945.

Come the end of the War, though still in India, he was granted a regular commission in The Cameronians. But service with the Regiment was yet some time in the future. January 1946 saw him a company commander with 1 Indian Parachute Battalion and two years service with the (North West) Frontier Corps followed from which he gained an extensive knowledge of Baluchistan, Sind and the Afghan border.



Major TV (Tommy) Gilfillan

His first post-War service in the UK was not to come until early 1948 when he took up a staff appointment at HQ Lowland District. By September the following year he was back to airborne service when he started three years as Adjutant of 15 (Scottish) Battalion, The Parachute Regiment TA.

Two years followed when he filled Ground Liaison appointments first at HQ East Africa (attached to the Kenyan Police Air Wing) and later, at the height of the Emergency, with HQ Malaya in Kuala Lumpur. During this time he regained his Wartime rank of Major.

Service with 1 Cameronians did not come until late 1956 when he joined the Battalion in Bahrain later moving with it back (for him) to Kenya. ADIN writes:

"I was privileged to serve as one of his Platoon Commanders in Support Company in Kenya in 1959. A formidable team we were! Life was never dull: we all worked hard and played hard. "TV" was a character par excellence. Sadly there are few left in the army today. There are many, many stories (most of the unprintable) of the various exploits of Support Company in 1959. Wherever we went "TV" always knew somebody and that meant an entrée into a Mess, Club or a private home for all of us."

After Kenya there followed three more years in Africa, this time on loan service with the Nigerian army. During that time he was Second-in-Command of the 5th Nigeria Regiment which he later briefly commanded in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He also served with the UN in the Congo. From 1963 to the end of 1967 he served at HQ Rheindahlen Garrison. This was followed by two years at RAF Cyprus during which time, when The Cameronians disbanded, he transferred to the King's Own Scottish Borderers. His last posting was to HQ1 Division at Verden in Germany.

Leaving the army in 1976 "TV" first took up a Retired Officer's job in York. Ten years later he and Eleanor (whom he had married on his return from India in 1948) retired finally to Perthshire, to Killin, where he could indulge his passion for salmon fishing. His crowning exploit there was the landing of a 24lb salmon. But life even then was not unadventurous. On one expedition he even managed to break both arms falling off a rock while fishing on the River Dochart!

To his wife and family we offer our most sincere condolences.

PRG

Mr John Gallagher on 24th October 2002

Mrs (Mary) Spiers in 2001 - see letter from John Spiers and Anne Winkley son and daughter of Captian John (Jock) Speirs.

Mr John Hannah (1928-1944) in March at Rosepark Nursing Home

Mrs (Armida) Burns on 9 July 2002 at home in New Elgin

Mr Terence Brennan At Erskine Hospital on 30 October 2002. Served with the Regiment from 1939 to 1946

Mr (RSM) Ronnie Andrews on 30 May 2002 in France.

Lt. Col Moir Stormonth Darling on 6 April 2002. For a successful military commander whose exploits occasionally verged on the impossible etc to end of article plus *Acknowledgements to The Herald Newspaper - Gordon Casely*

For a successful military commander whose exploits occasionally verged on the impossible, Moir Stormonth Darling appropriately shared his birthday with General William Sherman, victorious Union commander in the American Civil War, and the scientific romanticist Jules Verne. Stormonth Darling, the Angus laird who has died aged 89, commanded one of the Long Range Desert Group's two squadrons in the Aegean campaign of the Second World War.

Major-General David Lloyd Owen, commander of the LRDG (forerunner of the SAS), said of Stormonth Darling that he had selected a winner in appointing a soldier whose leadership, planning skills, and stalwart support contributed greatly to the success of the unit.

In 1943 after the Italian surrender, Stormonth Darling's squadron of 80 men and eight officers was sent to the Dodecanese, the Aegean islands lying directly on the German supply route. It was a role for which his men were neither equipped nor trained, and he was overwhelmed. He successfully made his way to a neighbouring island, where in the laconic words of Lloyd Owen, he 'had an uncomfortable time'. Eventually he was taken off by RAF launch.

Determined to show that enemy lines could be infiltrated, Llyod Owen moved

Stormonth Darling to GHQ Italy to handle detailed planning. Resulting drops north of Rome obtained information about German troop movements, with small-scale raids in the Dalmatian Islands, and a raid into northern Yugoslavia to destroy two spans of a large railway bridge. Stormonth Darling's reputation for meticulous planning shone through.

Never content driving a desk, Stormonth Darling persuaded Lloyd Owen to let him lead another mission, and in October 1944 he and two patrols were parachuted into the Florina area of Greece with orders to harass retreating Germans. In one instance, charges in road culverts were detonated as an enemy convoy passed over, resulting in the leading three vehicles creating a massive road block. Stormonth Darling and his men, hidden up the hillside, opened up with every weapon they had, then called in the RAF to finish the job.

Moir Stormonth Darling, brother of Sir Jamie, was born in Edinburgh, son of Robert Stormonth Darling, Writer to the Signet in Kelso. After Winchester and reading law for a year, he was commissioned into the 2nd Bn the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in 1935, spending three years in Palestine before returning to the regimental depot at Hamilton as adjutant. In 1942, he left with his regiment to India, Iraq, and Persia. His recruitment to the LRDG came after replying to an advertisement for a ski instructor in Lebanon.

After hostilities, he was posted as a general staff officer to HQ British Troops in Austria before returning to staff college in the UK in 1947. A spell at the War Office preceded his transfer in 1950 to West Africa to serve first with the Gold Coast Regiment and latterly in Sierra Leone. On his return to the UK, he was posted to Northern Command as deputy assistant adjutant general and to HQ Lowland District in the same appointment.

His final appointments were in 1954 with his regiment to BOAR, and then to take command of the Queen's Own Nigeria Regiment. It was a matter of some disappointment to his friends that at the conclusion of his distinguished military career in 1958, Stormonth Darling had received only a single mention in despatches.

The previous year he inherited the estate of Lednathie from a bachelor uncle. The property in Glen Prosen, north of Kirriemuir, was run down. The same

energies and leadership skills Stormonth Darling had employed in wartime were brought to bear on restoring the fortunes of the land.

His Army contact continued, serving as colonel of the 4th/5th Bn Black Watch TA for three years until 1961. In 1960 he led his men on a 30 mile overnight march in rain from Cortachy Castle, the Ogilvie property near Lednathie, to the Queen Mother's residence of Birkhall on Deeside.

He gave generously of his time and talents as a county councillor with Angus County Council, and was appointed a deputy lieutenant of the county in 1961. In 1970 he recorded a coat-of-arms at the Court of the Lord Lyon, the stars on one quarter symbolising the navigational skills he put to direct use during the war.

Moir Stormonth Darling married Beth Lucking (nee Evans) in 1941. She died three years ago, and he is survived by his son, James, daughter, Kate, and step-daughter, Sally.

Mr Roy Wilfrid Downie 18/10/1920 - 3/1/2003.

Born in Edinburgh in 1920, Roy was educated at George Heriots School. Shortly after leaving school he was called up and commissioned into the 7th Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). He trained in the Faroe Islands and Iceland before heading for Normandy. A few weeks into the campaign he received a serious leg wound, which ended his War.

Following treatment for his wound, Roy went to Edinburgh University where he studied Medicine, qualifying in 1950. He practiced as a GP both at home and abroad, spending some years in Africa before returning to finish his career in London. He and his wife Wyn retired to The Sanctuary, London.

His death came quietly at home on 3rd January, 2003. He is survived by Wyn, his wife of forty years, a daughter, step daughter and two sons.

Major John Williams 1943-2002 on 14 November at home in Gosforth.

John Williams was born in Plymouth in November 1943. He gained a scholarship to Plymouth College where he was good academically but excelled at sport - in particular long distant running and rugby.

His ambition to join the Army was achieved in the summer of 1964 when he went to Sandhurst. Here he enjoyed the mix of military life and sport and in his final terms achieved promotion to Junior Under Officer. In the summer of 1964 he was commissioned in The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) then serving in Edinburgh on public duties.

I first knew John when I joined the Cameronians in late 1964. He was 4 months ahead of me at Sandhurst and therefore well placed to give advice to a newcomer still wet behind the ears. He took me under his wing and gave sage advice for which I will always be grateful. This was the start of a friendship of 35 years and was cemented when we both attended the Platoon Commander's Course. I got to know John as a quiet but determined man who would always stand by his convictions and his friends.

It was shortly after returning from Aden that we learned that the Battalion was to be disbanded in May 1968. Meanwhile John had met Anne prior to leaving for Aden and in the autumn of 1967 they married in Edinburgh.

We had become good friends during our time in the Battalion, but sadly our ways parted on disbandment. John decided to join the RAOC while I went flying helicopters wearing an RCT capbadge. John, after his initial Ordnance course, served a tour in the Ordnance Company in Plymouth. He then volunteered for the 15 month Ammunition Technical Course, passing with an 'A' grade, and starting out on a career in guided weapons, explosive ordnance and bomb disposal. On one of several tours of Northern Ireland he was awarded a very well deserved Mention-in-Despatches for his prolonged work over a very difficult period. Staff jobs followed until progressive deafness caused him to be invalided from the Army in July 1986.

He then secured the civilian position of Safety Officer at the Eskmeal ranges on the west coast of Cumbria - almost a military job in civilian clothes and one he thoroughly enjoyed. He also acted as a case officer for The Royal British Legion and had particular success in acquiring deafness benefits for many individuals. Living in the small community of Gosforth, he was able to fully develop the country pursuits that had always been his joy - fishing, both sea and river, shooting and new hobbies, bird watching, 'gathering fungi', Autumn

fruits etc. He particularly enjoyed 'cracks' over a pint with the locals and was quickly accepted into the community.

John faced many years dealing with unexploded devices. Like most people in the forces, I have known fear from time to time, but thankfully in short measure and well interspersed. John in his job faced these fears and pressures day-in, day-out, especially during the tours in Northern Ireland. This showed real dedication and I am full of admiration for the fortitude and courage he showed during that lengthy period. It took its toll on his health and throughout this period he was fully supported by Anne. I will miss the subaltern I knew in the Cameronians and the friend of many years and offer deepest sympathies to Anne, Sarah and Esther on their very premature loss.

F.M.

Editors Note - My thanks for the obituary for WO11 Ian McNight published in The Covenanter 2001 which was taken from the Regimental Journal of The Royal Highland Fusiliers with the approval of Regimental Headquarters The Royal Highland Fusiliers.

Useful Numbers

Commonwealth War Graves

Commission Telephone 01628 507 200

e-mail address: casualty.enq@cwgc.org

Royal British Legion Remembrance

Travel Telephone 01622 716 182

British Legion (Scotland) Legion

Affairs Department Telephone 0131

557 2782

MOD Records Telephone 01815 733 831 X 334

Army War Medals Office Telephone

01905 772 323

*Any man should be proud to say -
“I served in The Cameronians”*

