

THE COVENANTER



THE REGIMENTAL JOURNAL OF
THE CAMERONIANS (SCOTTISH RIFLES)

2007

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, Baillieul, 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**, Rumani, Egypt 1916-17, **Gaza**, El Mughar, Nebi Samwil, Jaffa, **Palestine 1917-18.**

The Second World War - Ypres-Comines Canal, **Odon**, Cheux, Caen, Mont Pincon, Estry, 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

Regimental Trustees

Lieutenant Colonel Ian McBain (Chairman)

Major John Craig TD DL · Major Brian Leishman MBE

Colonel Hugh Mackay OBE · Major Lisle Pattison MBE TD

NOTICES

The Editor wishes to thank all contributors for their submissions without which this journal could not exist. Readers will have read that it is intended to cease publication of the *Covenanter* with the 2008 edition. It is for consideration however that this might be followed by as definitive a list as possible containing the names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of all living Cameronians.

"THE COVENANTER"

Published: Yearly in January.

Editor: Major (Retd.) B.A.S. Leishman, M.B.E.
61 Northumberland Street,
Edinburgh EH3 6JQ.
(0131) 557 0187 (H)

Annual Subscription

By Bankers Standing Order *or* Cheque/Postal Order to The Editor - made payable to The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Covenanter Fund.
UK **£5.00**

Overseas Printed Paper Rate

Europe **£6.00**

World zone 1 **£7.00**

World zone 2 **£7.50**

Postage included

Location List - Subscribers only

Several subscribers have yet to increase their subscription in accordance with the appropriate Revised Annual subscription.

Literary Contributions: The Editor welcomes articles, drawings, photographs and notes of regimental or general interest for publication. The closing date for submissions each year is 30 November.

The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Officers Club

Chairman:

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

Hon. Secretary/Treasurer

Major Peter Carroll TD 07711 002 767

Regimental Club

The Cameronian Memorial Club -
9 Holyrood Crescent, Glasgow.

Museum:

Low Parks Museum

129 Muir Street, Hamilton ML3 6BJ

Tel: 01698 328 232

2008 DIARY OF REGIMENTAL EVENTS 2008

MARCH

Friday 14th 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 Peter Carroll TD.
Tel: 07711 002 767

MAY

Saturday 10th May -

Officers Dinner Night - Edinburgh

Sunday 11th May -

Cameronian Sunday -

The Douglas Valley Church - St Bride's, Douglas
10.00 am (see also page 2)

All Ranks Reunion 11.30 - 1345

Ceremony at the Cairn 14.00

NOVEMBER

Friday 28 November

Officers Luncheon -

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

The 40th Anniversary Commemoration

The Trustees have indicated their intention to mark the 40th Anniversary of the disbandment of the 1st Battalion by holding an Officers Dinner Night on Saturday 10 May This is followed by an All Ranks gathering on Sunday 11 May at 11.30 - 13.45 at Douglas, on the site and on the day nearest to the raising of the Regiment on the 14 May 1689. After which, a ceremony at the Cairn organized by The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Friends and Family Members..

Details in regard to the officers dinner night have been sent to those who have indicated their intention to attend and Luncheon Tickets have been sent to all those who have asked for them. Applications for these may still be accepted from those who may yet wish to attend.

Given the poor response to a proposal to provide transport to Douglas no arrangements have been made. However those wishing to avail themselves of an arrangement made each year by the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Memorial Club may wish to contact Mr Roy McCartney at 0141 427 4668 by 15 March

REGIMENTAL MATTERS

Editors Note

Given that this is the penultimate edition of the Regimental Journal I am conscious of the debt all readers have to those whose contributions over the last twenty one years have made publication possible. For me it has been an honour to have been the one whose sole contribution has been that of a collator of content. Over the years I have been struck by the many letters received, not all of which have been published, that lament, in one way or another, the fact that some families have not been able to share the military highlights in the lives of their forbears. I have attempted to list the sources available to those who still strive to obtain information in this regard in both this publication and on the web site, at www.cameronians.org

Next year the Covenanter will report on the two major events scheduled to take place this year in May. It has been suggested that the final edition should be one that records the impact that the Covenanter and indeed the Regiment has had on all Cameronians.

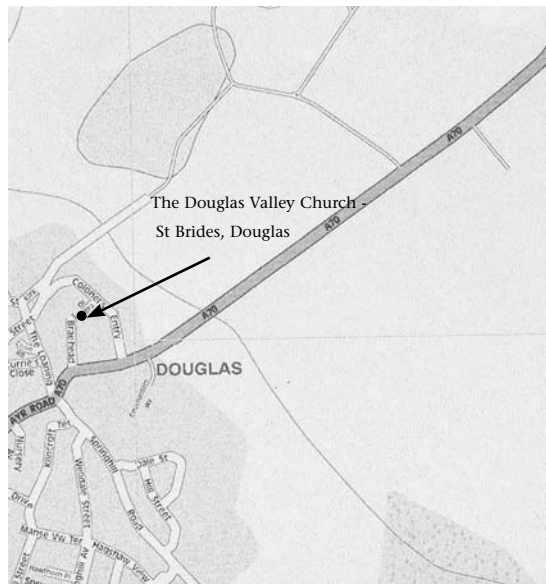
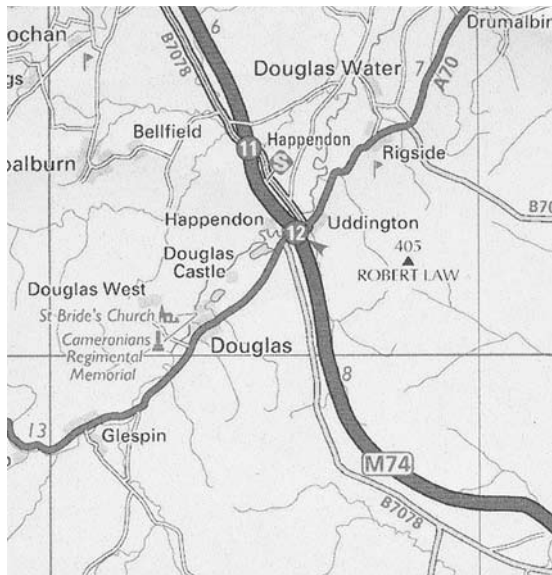
The Regimental Journal - The Covenanter - Readers should note that the Regimental Journal will cease publication with the next, the 2008 edition (distributed Jan/ Feb 2009). Those who subscribe by Bankers Standing Order should advise their Banks accordingly.

All Ranks Reunion

Car Parking at Douglas -

The gathering will be held in the Douglas Estate, adjacent to the Cairn marking the site of the disbandment parade. There is ample parking space along the Estate road and beyond the gathering

For those attending church, there is very limited parking in Braehead which should be left for those who have difficulty walking. There is some parking in residential streets on either side of the main A70 road, or at the entrance to the Estate from where the church can be accessed via 'Colonel's Entry.' We are endeavouring to get permission to park cars in the school playground. If this is allowed the route to it will be signed.



Museum Report Year 2007

MLA Museums Accreditation Scheme for Museum Awards 2007

In July 2007, our three museums sites - Low Parks Museum; Hunter House Museum and John Hastie Museum - were awarded full Accreditation with Commendation. We understand that a Commendation is unusual for a local authority service. The MLA stated: "It is a great achievement and demonstrates that your museum has achieved the nationally agreed standards on how to care for and document collections, govern and manage collections, and deliver information and services to users." In the commendation section the MLA focuses on our "approach to Forward Planning which it regards as an example of best practice in this field."

New acquisitions

It has been a busy year in the collections team processing over 3100 objects this far in 2007, of that 331 are Cameronian related making some 10% of this years collecting. To give a better idea of what objects we are collecting we have broken the collections down into 5 categories. Of that we have collected 20 medals, 209 pieces of archive ranging from letters to books, 39 photographic objects, 47 objects from cap badges to wash stands and 16 paintings.

A large collection of index cards from the National Archives has been handed to Low Parks Museum, referencing the gallantry awards given during WW2, this collection is slowly being added to the database and scanned.

A collection of medals donated from Cpl. N. Tarver 2nd Battalion have been also been accessioned and photographed. This framed collection consists of a cap badge, 1939- 45 War Medal, Italy Star, Defence Medal and 1939 - 45 war Medal.



Enquiries

It has been a busy year again for enquiries. We have recorded the number of enquiries to the year end at 368, of which 149 were about The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) - We have as usual been contacted from all over the world including, England, Republic of Ireland, Isle of Man, Spain, Belgium, Australia, Canada, New Zealand. It should be noted that whilst interest in The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) continues, it is also believed that increased interest in Family History research motivates a considerable number of the total enquires in this area. The general public looks to The Museums Service to provide assistance in understanding the information they may invariably have sought and found themselves.

Friends of Low Parks Museums Society

Following on from their excellent work in 2006, 2007 has been another busy year for the Friends of Low Parks Museums Society. Transcription and digitisation of the 1st Battalion War Diary for Malaya, 1951 - 1953 has been completed. The transcribed version of the diary is now fully searchable, and is much more accessible to both Museum staff and members of the public alike. Thanks to this excellent work by the Friends, we were able to make full use of the Malayan war diary in our 2007 temporary exhibition, Without Glory, in which a printed copy of the diary is available in full.

At the beginning of 2007, the Friends completed the mammoth task of transcribing the John McNair letters from the museum collections. McNair was an officer who played a crucial role in the raising of the 90th Perthshire Light Infantry. Between 1794 and 1826, he wrote 117 letters from all over the UK and the West Indies to the Colonel, Thomas Graham.

The Friends have also completed the mammoth task of photographing and indexing all 13 of our Regimental Enlistment Books from the 1920s and 1930s. Searches can now be carried out across all 13 volumes for surname or Army Number in one complete index, which gives the volume and page number for each entry. With all pages now digitally photographed, after a simple search of the master index, the full entry for each individual can now be printed off at the touch of a button.

Future projects for the Friends include the transcription of the diary of Sergeant Lachlan Rattray, who served under Colonel Preston in the 26th during the early 18th Century. The museum acquired a microfilm copy of Rattray's diary from the National Archives for Scotland, and the Friends have kindly agreed to transcribe it for us. The diary will be an interesting addition to our Cameronian archive, giving us another Rank's insight into a period of history from which we have very few primary sources.

It is hoped that work will soon be able to start on another digitisation project, in which information from our 6000 plus Officers index cards will be input into Vernon, our collections database. We are lucky to have inherited from the Cameronian museum an index card database of almost every single officer who served in the Regiment since 1689 until Disbandment in 1968. Having the information from these cards in our collections database will be extremely useful to us, not only for research, but also in fleshing out our collections records. Again, the Friends have valiantly agreed to undertake this valuable project.

Two teams of the Friends of Low Parks Museum have been working at 116 Cadzow Street, Hamilton ML3 6HP this year:

Monday Team:

- Alan Johnstone
- Marie Cullen
- Irene Garry
- Ian J Wilson

Wednesday Team:

- Alan Johnstone
- Allan Colthart
- Robert Earl
- Iain McAusland

The Friends have previously transcribed the parts of 4 War Diaries from the Second World War 1939-1945 that the Museum holds together with three other War Diaries from 20th century conflicts across the globe.

We at the museum are extremely grateful to the Friends for their continued dedication and hard work.

Lanarkshire Family History Society

From 2001 to 2005, Volunteers from

the Lanarkshire Family History Society transcribed a total of 12 War Diaries from the First World War 1914-1918. This massive task has been immeasurably helpful in giving access to museum staff, as well as local and family historians to the "hidden history" contained in these Diaries. We are very grateful to the Volunteers and to the Society for all their hard work.

Their Past Your Future (TPYF) Projects

As reported in previous issues of The Covenanter, The Friends of Low Parks Museum have produced seven local history trails on the Second World War 1939-1945 supported by Lottery funding. In a new development, the Scottish Museums Council with Lottery Funding is planning on featuring some of the material in a Legacy of TPYF website. It will also feature clips from the interviews with Cameronian veterans of Second World War 1939-1945.

Cameronian Digitisation Projects

In 2006, the Cameronian Trustees generously agreed to fund the digitisation of some key books and documents that were out of print or were unique. The objective of this group of 27 projects was two-fold: firstly, to create a digital legacy of the Regiment to match the bricks, mortar and collections legacy. Secondly, it is intended that the projects will deliver better public access to the collections and the knowledge we hold on them.

Private Charles Bow's (7th Battalion) Gallipoli Diary

This was planned to be the first and pilot diary to be worked on. Members of the Museum staff have transcribed it into a searchable document and have also scanned the hand-written original, added a glossary of the unusual words and compiled a summary of the service of the 7th Battalion in the Great War. A researcher at Kew has supplied some further information on Bow from The National Archives. The final part is to add photographs from the collection to illustrate the final version. We are very grateful to Mr Peter Goodwill who gifted the diary of his ancestor, Charles Bow and has provided much valuable information.

'Recollections of an Infantry Subaltern' by Lt-Col. J. D. Hill M.C.

The reminiscences of a young infantry subaltern from the first year of the Great War have recently been scanned and transcribed by the museum staff. Lt-Col. Hill wrote

his memoirs in the early 1960s, describing his experiences as a junior officer with the 1st Battalion in France from August 1914 till September 1915. The original typed manuscript has been scanned by museum staff and made into a fully searchable .PDF document.

The Seven Battalion Histories from WW1 and WW2

These books have an enormous amount of information that is often easier to search than the four volumes of the Regimental History. A South Lanarkshire-based company has digitised all seven books and the digital versions are stored in the Council's IT server where their fully searchable format means that they allow public enquiries using them to be completed much more quickly and easily.

They are:

Great War 1914-1918

- 5th Battalion
- 8th Battalion
- 10th Battalion
- 12th Battalion

2nd World War 1939-1945

- 6th Battalion
- 7th Battalion
- 12th Battalion

Private Wickens' Diaries 1857

Charles Wickens' diaries of the Indian Mutiny have been transcribed by the Friends of Low Parks Museum. Wickens describes in detail the sinking of the 90th's transport ship, the *Transit*. On arrival at Cawnpore, India, there was evidence of the earlier massacres of the British families: "There were little children's socks and shoes and dresses of every description all covered with the blood and brains of the innocent."

Future digitisation projects include a reprinting of the four volumes of the Regimental Histories. In addition, Field Marshal Sir Garnet Wolseley's diaries, Lord Lynedoch's diaries and the complete run of *The Covenanters* since 1921 are planned to be completed, together with three of General Henry Hope Crealock's art albums from the Crimean War, 2nd China War (as a staff officer, neither the 26th or the 90th took part) and the Zulu War.

New Cameronian History

In 2005 the Trustees commissioned a new single-volume history of The Cameronians

(Scottish Rifles). This was to fill the gaps identified by many visitors to Low Parks Museum for an accessible history of the regiment that told the story behind the campaigns- what soldiering was like for the men of the regiment and their families from the 17th to the 20th century.

The text and images draft of the book has been reviewed by the Regimental Trustees and their comments are being incorporated in a revision. The research, writing and design are by Katie Barclay MA MPhil, an Honorary Fellow at Glasgow University. It is hoped to publish the book in 2008.

Cameronian (Scottish Rifles) Exhibitions

Current exhibition: "Without Glory – Counter-insurgency with The Cameronians"

Featuring three insurgencies that the Cameronians were involved with: the American Revolution 1776, Malaya in the 1950s and Aden in the 1960s Without Glory is currently showing at the new ground floor temporary exhibition area in the Riding School until summer 2008.

Cameronian Exhibition 2008

2008 marks the 40th anniversary of the Disbandment of the 1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in 1968, and we are in the advanced planning stages of the exhibition to be mounted in the two largest temporary exhibition galleries at Low Parks Museum, Hamilton.

The exhibition is intended to be rich in objects and images and to be centred on several themes that are common to both Cameronians and civilians alike. Among the themes are food; travel and transport, recreation and social, relationships and "life beyond the regiment." Underpinning these themes are the stories of Cameronians across the Regiment's 300 years of service. Watch out for the army animals, and some of the extraordinary love and war stories that we plan to feature. We'll be revealing the answers to some questions such as: what is the connection between the first President of Pakistan and the Cameronians?

Cameronian Tree

The Regiment is now represented in the National Memorial Arboretum with a fine, young Scots Pine. Mr William Bannister (7th Bn) brought it to our attention that the Regiment did not have a memorial tree in

the Army Parade at the National Memorial Arboretum. The matter was raised with the Regimental Trustees and it was agreed that arrangements should be made to rectify the absence. The Regimental Plaque next to the tree bears the following inscription:



The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)
1689-1968

'No old forgetful age will end our story
Death cuts our days but could not stain our glory'

The quote is the last two line of Colonel Dow's poem Another Acrostik Upon His Name, a response to the poem written for the first Commanding Officer in 1689.

We thank Mr Bannister for bringing the absence of a Cameronian tree to our attention, and for his continued updates and reports from the Arboretum.

Cameronian Images on SCRAN

We make no apologies for drawing this to your attention once more. SCRAN (The Scottish Cultural Resources Network) host many photographs by R C Money, a junior officer in the Great War. If you log onto SCRAN at your local library you will probably get the full access which lets you read the supporting text. For Money's images, once you've logged on to SCRAN at scan.ac.uk search for "trenchlife" without quote marks and no spaces. Another search is "crealock crimea" for drawings and sketches by Henry H Crealock, at the time of the Crimean War a Captain in the 90th Perthshire Light Infantry. Museum staff devised and carried out the work on these projects SCRAN grant aided these (and several other) projects, and we are grateful for volunteering work on these projects by Molly Magee of South Lanarkshire Council and Katie Barclay MA MPhil who is just completing a PhD at Glasgow University.

Website

The official Cameronian website has been expanded this year to include a section dedicated to the work of the Museum. If you have not already visited this much needed resource, the site is well worth a

look. Regularly updated, the new pages give information on News and Exhibitions as well as providing information on 'Star Objects' from the collection and biographies of former soldiers of the regiment.

We are pleased to be able to provide a section on Research and Enquiries, from which website users can download a Research Guide proving a list of our resources at the Museum and helpful hints for family history researchers to useful resources elsewhere.

We are very grateful to the Trustees for their generous offer of substantial space on their Website for Museum information.

<http://www.cameronians.org/museum/index.html>

Shop at Low Parks Museum, Hamilton!

Looking for something special for a birthday, anniversary or for the person who has everything: why not contact the reception staff at Low Parks Museum for a price list. Amongst the many amazing choices of gifts are: Crystal pedestal clock, Pyramid paperweight, Border lager glass. Jura paperweight, Jacobite glass with airtwist stem, crystal coasters and many more. All engraved with the Cameronian crest.

Also in stock are limited edition plates displaying the Cameronian Battle honours, Regimental Plaques, Ties, Tie slide and cuff links, Polo shirts, sweat shirts and baseball caps. Plans for 2008 for the shop at Low Parks Museum are to have an online ordering facility. Look out for news on the South Lanarkshire Council website.

For further information contact

The Front of House Team at Low Parks Museum

129 Muir Street Hamilton ML3 6BJ,

or telephone 01698 328232. Email

lowparksmuseum@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

Letter from London

November 2007

Once again, I am writing to you from a lovely, sunny and warm Indian summer day here in the Metropolis.

I was highly amused by the article in last year's Covenanter by Mike Sixsmith regarding Pte. Wilson. This state of affairs not only concerned Pte. Wilson, but was reflected at regimental levels. You see, when the depot at Winston Barracks, Lanark

received intakes of recruits, a situation would arise at the long counter in the Q.M. Stores when kit and clothing were being issued; you would hear the plaintive cry, "Ah don't want thae daft troosers, ah want ma kilt". This cry of hurt indignation meant that the recruit should have been at a similar counter in Cameron Barracks, Inverness, home of the Cameron Highlanders. Likewise, on occasion, a similar cry would erupt from a Cameronian recruit wanting his trews in the Cameron Barracks.

On these occasions, the disgruntled recruit would then be despatched post-haste to his correct depot.

Also, in the same issue of the *Covenanter*, the name of Lieutenant Q.M. Bill Bunce appeared, albeit very briefly. Bill Bunce, or "Luggy" as he was affectionately known by everyone, was the Q.M. of the battalion in Gibraltar. He was a rather dour, gruff Londoner, having been born and brought up in Fulham. However, he proved to be an excellent quartermaster, so much so that, when the Bn. left Gibraltar en route to Trieste, the sum total of barrack damages levied against the Bn. was in the region of five shillings (twenty-five pence). Bill remained in Gibraltar in order to hand over the barracks to the Gibraltar Defence Regiment. I believe that, when the sum of the barrack damages was conveyed to the Quartermaster General at the War Office in London, he immediately flew out to Gibraltar to meet Bill Bunce and to find out how this miracle had been achieved. Truly, Bill Bunce was a remarkable Cameronian. By contrast, when Lt. Col. R.A. Buchanan-Dunlop, our Commanding Officer, paid a visit to Rossetti Barracks in Trieste prior to the Cameronians' arrival there, he was appalled by what he saw. The barracks were in such a state of disrepair that he immediately informed the War Office that his battalion should not be accommodated in Rossetti Barracks until the essential repairs had been carried out. As a result of his genuine complaint, things moved rapidly, and by the time the Bn. arrived in Trieste the barracks were once again habitable. The whole episode caused a great deal of embarrassment for the outgoing Regiment, namely the 1st Bn. The Royal Scots, whose Commanding Officer had to take full responsibility for the situation.

I hope to attend the service at Douglas next May to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the disbandment of the Regiment. I believe this will be the final

curtain for the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and I cannot think of a more appropriate occasion for this curtain to fall. No doubt, for many of us it will be a very sad moment. However, we must be deeply grateful to certain surviving members of the Regiment who, during the last forty years, have perpetuated the memory of the Regiment by some extremely hard work, and deep dedication. To those members, I give my sincerest thanks, and deepest gratitude.

On 21st August this year, I watched on television the Edinburgh Military Tattoo; it was awesome. This annual spectacle has become more international in its production and content. I was delighted to see our regimental tartan on parade, being worn by the 7th Ghurka Pipe Band. A heart-warming moment indeed. We must also take pride in the knowledge that several of our officers at one time or another worked on this great Scottish enterprise.

As a lover of classical music and opera, I always watch *The Last Night of the Proms* from the royal Albert Hall on television. So, as you can imagine, I was delighted this year when a young choir from Scotland gave a brilliant rendition of "The Skye Boat Song". Sheer bliss!

This will be my penultimate "Letter from London", as our journal ceases publication next year. For me, *The Covenanter* has been one of the best reads I have enjoyed during my sixty-two years' association with the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), always a credit to amateur journalism, considering that virtually everything published was written by ordinary mortals, expressing views and anecdotes during the life and demise of the Regiment. I hope to say my goodbye to this great journal in our final issue.

As I write, I am awaiting confirmation from the Royal British Legion regarding the arrangements for the opening of the Field of Remembrance, which this year takes place on Thursday 8th November.

At the beginning of this year, to my horror and disgust, I learned that there were no more military hospitals in existence, and that members of our Forces were being sent to civilian hospitals for treatment. As someone who remembers our outstanding British military hospitals during my Army service, I find it difficult to find words to describe my feelings regarding the present situation. Our vastly overpaid and insensitive Members of Parliament have a lot to answer for in respect of their duty towards our service personnel. Word has just reached me that our former

Association Chairman, Andy Berry, has successfully undergone eye surgery, which has saved him from possible future blindness. Well done, Andy. You can now send me down your white stick, as I may need it soon.

Word also reaches me that Colonel Hugh Mackay is still doing sterling work several times a year in his capacity as a Regimental Trustee. This task involves his having to fly back and forth up to Glasgow, where he is faithfully met and motored around by Alex and Beth Maxwell. What a team: well done all of you!

I will now close this letter by saying I hope to meet many of you at Douglas next May. Wishing you all a happy and guid new year.

Yours,
Eddie Clark

Westminster Abbey 2007

As I mentioned in my "Letter from London", the opening ceremony at Westminster Abbey was due on 8th November. However, by 7th November, I had not received my security pass, or any information regarding the occasion. I immediately contacted the person concerned at the Royal British Legion, who informed me that everything had been sent to me a week previously. It was now 17th November and I still had not received my pass from the RBL. Apparently the postal sorting office in the area where I live has a very militant trades union staff who are working to rule, despite the latest strike being resolved; hence, the reason for the postal mayhem.

The RBL rose to the occasion on the day, and I was cleared to take up my position at our plot.

Once again, I was delighted and heartened by another good attendance at the Abbey. Despite the weather being a wee bit dreich early on, it cleared up sufficiently by the time HRH Prince Philip arrived (Her Majesty the Queen had been given a rest day). As usual, Prince Philip did a splendid job, stopping and speaking to every regimental representative. When he stopped in front of me, he bade me "good morning" and asked how I was keeping. When I assured him that I felt fine, I then congratulated him, and Her Majesty, on the occasion of their diamond wedding anniversary this month. I know that his reply was very funny, because we both laughed heartily. However, I am ashamed to admit that I cannot remember

his funny rejoinder. I am sure that this is due to the fact that, as Prince Philip walked away, Air Marshal Ian MacFadyen, the RBL National President, descended upon me, shook my hand and started chatting to me. As he walked away, it was then the turn of the Dean of Westminster Abbey, The Very Reverend Dr John Hall, who shook my hand and had a few words with me. So, as you can imagine, it was a rather whirlwind few minutes for me. What followed next was quite hilarious. My daughter, Helen, who had taken up a vantage point to allow her to take photographs, was almost trampled underfoot by David Davis, the Tory Shadow Home Secretary, as he scrambled across the path to meet someone. Then it was my turn. As the Royal Party came towards me, a television crew filming the event almost brained me with a large camera. If I hadn't swerved in true boxing fashion, I have no doubt I would have been counted out. Ah well. Even Westminster Abbey has its exciting, and fraught, moments!

Once again it was delightful to see some ex-Cameronians on parade, namely Majors Philip Grant and Mike Sixsmith, Eddie Crawford, Ian Bilboe, Alex McBride, Tom and Dorothy Gore, myself and Helen. Afterwards, some of the party retired to the Union Jack Club where we enjoyed an excellent lunch. For me, this is a wonderful



annual opportunity to meet up with members of our Regiment to enjoy a good blether about old times.

Finally, I would like to single out, and thank, two members of the Royal British Legion staff for their efforts on our behalf. I have nothing but praise for Mr Ray Burrell and Mr Bill Kay, who have been invaluable, ensuring our regimental plot is being cared for, and assisting me on various matters arising.

So, fellow Cameronians, I wish you all a very merry Christmas, and a guid and happy new year.

Yours aye,
Eddie Clark

The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Officers Club 2007

The annual dinner of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Officer' Club took place at the Western Club in Glasgow on the 9th of March. 23 Cameronians and guests attended the dinner. As usual the quality of service, food and other sustenance was excellent.

The AGM was held prior to the dinner, attended by Maj Guy Maxwell TD (chairman), Maj Peter Carroll TD (secretary & treasurer), Col E Scott, Maj SD McGeorge TD and Capt C Pettit (all regular attenders and Old Cameronians). The passing of the following old friends was reported at the AGM: Col RJ Dobson TD, Capt C Donald, Capt D Hotchkis, Lt S Scroggie. The date for the 2008 dinner was confirmed as Friday 14th March at the Western Club. Cameronian officers who have never attended the dinner, or who have not attended for some time, are encouraged to come along. The contact is Maj Peter Carroll (mobile) 07711 002767 (e-mail) peter.carroll@smurfitkappa.co.uk.

Officers Club 2008

The AGM and Dinner will be held on Friday 14th March 2008 in the Western Club, 32 Royal Exchange Square, Glasgow G1 3BA. The AGM will start at 18.30 pm. Dinner will be 19.00pm for 19.30pm.

Bedrooms are available for anyone attending the Dinner. Those wishing to stay should contact the Western Club Secretary to make their reservations (Western Club, 32 Royal Exchange Square, Glasgow, G1 ABA (0141 221 2016)).

The cost of the Dinner, which includes aperitifs, wine and port (exclusive of after dinner drinks), will be £62.50 per head.

Unfortunately the increase in the ticket cost is necessary in order to maintain the format, content and standard of the evening, and at the same time reduce the financial loss incurred in previous years.

Please bring a guest(s) to ensure a great evening. Officers wishing to attend should contact me.

Major Peter J. Carroll TD
Secretary & Treasurer

Remembrance Sunday – 9 November 2008 The Cenotaph, London

Formal application has been made to the Royal British Legion asking that a contingent be allowed to take part in the Cenotaph ceremony and March Past as above. This will be the final major event in the year to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Disbandment of the 1st Battalion. It is hoped that as many as possible members of the Regiment will be able to take part.

The only required standard form of dress for the Ceremony and March Past will be Glengarries (with which hackles have never been worn) and medals. Any other forms of dress including blazers or trews are entirely optional. The weather usually dictates that overcoats and gloves are highly desirable.

Those able to be in London on the Thursday before (6 November) may like to be present when the Duke of Edinburgh opens the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey. A Regimental plot has been kept going there for many years by ex-Colour Sergeant Eddie Clark. He would always appreciate more support there.

Details of the Ceremony and March Past will not be available until summer 2008 but when they are they will be posted on the website (www.cameronians.org) as well as being available from the organiser who may be contacted by mail (see the Location List) or, preferably, by email (see below).

Details will also be available through The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and Family Members Organisation. It is hoped that if there is sufficient interest a sizeable party from Scotland may swell the ranks already within easy reach of London. Details will be circulated through the Secretary, Mr Andrew McArthur TD, 18 Rosewood Avenue, Bellshill, Lanarkshire ML4 1NR, telephone 01698 746 863 or by email: andy.mcarthur@openreach.co.uk.

Major Philip R Grant - prgblue@yahoo.com

THE CAMERONIANS (SCOTTISH RIFLES) & FAMILY MEMBERS

Royal British Legion Scotland Glasgow & Western Counties Area

Standard Bearing Competition 15th April 2007

The Standard of the Cameronians (SR) and Family Members Organisation was proudly paraded at the Royal British Legion Scotland Glasgow & Western Counties Area Standard Bearing Competition held on the 15th April 2007. The location for the competition was the Drill Hall of the 32nd (Scottish) Signal



Regiment (Volunteers) in Maryhill, Glasgow. The Drill Hall is the second oldest in Britain the oldest being the Honourable Artillery Company in London. Participating in the competition were Standard Bearers Robert Gracie and Bill Gough. Cameronian Eddie Wallace was one of the four judges assessing the entrants. The event was opened by the



Area Chairman Andy Bryan with a warm welcome speech. The Judges then inspected the Standard Bearers prior to the drill section. Each entrant in turn was marched in and commanded through routine of Standard Bearing Drill Movements. Both Robert and Bill produced an immaculate turn out and although not winners they both performed extremely well. The competition was very close and congratulations went to Pat Ponsoby the over all winner. Also in attendance as spectators were the Treasurer Mrs Margaret Ballantyne and the Secretary Mr Andrew McArthur.

Cameronian Sunday 13th May 2007

Cameronian Sunday 2007 was held on the 13th of May 2007. The flag of the Organisation was raised at the Douglas Victoria Bowling Club. Bugler John Farrel played reveille while Andy Anderson raised the flag. Morning Service followed at Douglas Valley Church which was well attended. Special welcome was made to the Cameronians by the Rev. Harry Findlay temporary Minister at the church. New friends joined the service, a party from Cumnock lead by Royal British Legion Branch Secretary David Russell including two veteran Cameronians who also attended. The Organisation Flag was then raised at the Memorial Cairn prior to the afternoon service. The Rev Lawrie Lennox former Minister of St Brides Church Douglas now Douglas, Valley Church, took the Memorial Service. Immediately before the service the widow of the late Secretary Mr. James Ballantyne scattered her late husband's ashes. Following an introduction by the Rev Lennox Mrs Ballantyne escorted by Mr. And Mrs Alex and Beth Maxwell along with the Secretary Mr. Andrew McArthur carrying the urn entered the Memorial Cairn. Mr. Ken Robinson gave a eulogy for Jim Ballantyne. Mrs Ballantyne laid a wreath to all Cameronians then scattered her late husband's ashes. The Memorial Service followed and the Rev. Lennox preached a passionate service. Including the memorial to Jim Ballantyne, the recently



passing of Cameronian Ronny Hoey and to all Cameronians. Then proceedings were followed by a buffet at the Douglas Victoria Bowling Club. Thanks were extended to the Club President for the hospitality shown.

Remembrance Service held on Wednesday 7th November 2007

At the Parkspring Care Centre Motherwell a Service of Remembrance was held on Wednesday the 7th of November 2007. The service was led by the Rev Annette Morrison Minister of Motherwell Baptist Church. Jim Masters ex-Royal Artillery works in Parksprings and co-ordinated the bringing together the residents, Salvation Army, Royal British Legion Scotland and Cameronians (SR) and Family Members Organisation. The Care Centre was decorated with memorabilia of WWII from the Motherwell Heritage Centre. These included posters, ration books, dried milk tins and medals. Four residents who saw active service were present, John Maxwell Black Watch, Jim Miller RAF, Charlie Gibson Cameronians (SR) and Bill Nicholson Royal Signals. Participating in the service Standard Bearers Benny Sweeney and John Lard of Wishaw and Shotts Branch of the Royal British legion Scotland, Salvation Army Bugler Andrea Still and Cameronians (SR) and Family Members Organisation Secretary Andy McArthur. The Rev Morrison gave a sermon which reflected the difficult times endured by the residents who had lived through WWII. Many residents spoke of their own memories and reflected on the past. In closing the Rev Morrison thanked all who had participated especially the residents.





Lanimer Day



Lanimer Day



Remembrance Sunday

MISCELLANEOUS

An Appointment with a Field Marshal

Recollections of a Former Cameronian

It was February 1947, almost two years after V/E Day and bitter mid-winter in peaceful 'sunny' Italy; a peculiar time, one might think, to receive orders to preserve strictest secrecy. Reporting to the Orderly Room I was instructed to be ready at short notice, complete with revolver and ammunition, to board a train to proceed from Mestre (at the base of the causeway to Venice) where I was stationed, to Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Sealed Orders would be delivered at the railway station, to be opened only after departure. As there were no Cameronian battalions stationed in Italy at that time, one might well wonder what this might have to do with the Regiment, since then I was serving with the Essex Regiment? Let me explain.

The cessation of hostilities in Europe in May 1945, brought with it the reduction of the British Army in that sector by demobilisation. Territorial battalions returned to their peacetime roles in the United Kingdom. Members of the H.M. Forces were returned to civilian life according to length of service, and in some cases, national need. On a date selected by the Ministry of Defence, each group was demobilised by return to the United Kingdom to be kitted out with civilian clothing - many will recall the receipt of a 'demob suit' and a trilby hat! The demands of the Far East conflict apart, there was still a need for considerable numbers of occupation troops both in Germany and Austria, and to a lesser extent Italy, while civil administration was re-established. This was fulfilled by regular soldiers and by those younger men whose service careers had begun later in the war. Many of the latter group (of which I was one) were retained for up to two years after the cessation of hostilities in Europe.

Those with combat experience were posted to regular battalions. In the case of 6th Cameronians with which I served at the end of the European campaign, the two youngest officers (Lt Bob Bruce¹ and myself) together with a substantial draft of other ranks, suddenly found ourselves transformed into

'Desert Rats' of 7th Armoured Division, shortly to be posted to Berlin. Two junior officers and an equal number of other ranks from 7/9 Royal Scots joined us. It was not the happiest of postings, many of the Jocks being unwilling to relinquish their Scottish affiliations, and particularly reluctant to remove from their battledress sleeves the 'Mountain' insignia, which they regarded as a qualification. In fact, this, accompanied above it by the Saltire, simply denoted 52nd (L) Division's role as a specified Mountain Division, and was part of the divisional sign. After an interesting few months in the devastated German capital, and a period in the foothills of the Hartz mountains the re-formed battalion was sent to Italy at Trieste², as part of a trouble-shooting brigade, charged with patrolling the Yugoslav Border. In that freezing weather of early 1947, after fruitless attempts to stop Yugoslav insurgents from crossing the border to cause trouble in the city, it moved to former Italian Army Barracks at Mestre, where this improbable tale begins. The party heading for Frankfurt comprised Major Tim O'Reilly, (Battalion 2i/c) in command, myself (then a Captain of a few month's experience, aged 21), a sergeant and four soldiers, at least two of whom, I can recall, were former Cameronian Riflemen. We had guessed from the small nature of the party and the fact that Service Dress was not required and we were fully armed, but ordered to travel light, our duties were unlikely to be ceremonial. This did nothing towards ameliorating our shocked surprise when Tim O'Reilly unsealed our orders. Our mission was to proceed to the Headquarters of the U.S. Army of Occupation at Frankfurt, there to take into our custody the legendary former German Field Marshal Kesselring. At the time of the German surrender in May 1945, Kesselring was in command of the entire the Western front including Italy - a remit even larger than that of the Allies' General Eisenhower. Prior to this, his military record had been second to none. He was one of the officers entrusted with establishing the principles on which the German Wehrmacht secretly was re-established after World War I. In 1939, he commanded one of the two German Airfleets in the invasion of Poland at, next in 1940, at the Battle of Britain, and

then in the highly successful initial stages of the Russian campaign in 1941. That year, promotion followed as Commander in Chief of the Mediterranean sector (with Rommel as his subordinate). Kesselring's masterly conduct of a staged retreat up the Italian peninsula, still is regarded as one of the outstanding examples of its kind. He was one of 'Hitler's Generals-loyal to him to the end.



Field Marshal Kesselring

The reason for the insistence on secrecy was made clear. Kesselring was known to be one of Hitler's favourite generals; he was popular with both the German civilian population and with former servicemen, many of whom at that stage still harboured illusions about the 'Master Race'. Once committed to our custody, we were to be wholly responsible for his secure conduct through southern Germany (including areas of known Nazi sympathisers) thence Austria, and finally to Rimini on the Adriatic Coast of Italy. Kesselring was to be delivered to the British Military Police at a P.O.W. Camp, and soon after was to stand trial in Venice charged with War Crimes. His forthcoming trial was a matter of great interest both to the victorious and defeated nations, following as it did the Nuremberg Trials of other major figures of the Nazi regime, and the trials in Rome of two of Kesselring's former

subordinate generals. At the Nuremberg War Trials, Kesselring, although not himself a defendant, had given evidence in support of the defence (Goring, in particular) to considerable effect. While we travelled through Germany, and maybe Austria, there was the possibility that supporters of the Nazi regime might attempt to stage an escape, and although this was not specifically stated, clearly this was a fear³. It was also possible, that while we were travelling through Italy, there could have been an attempt to attack Kesselring in revenge for alleged crimes committed by him against the Italian population. Our route by train involved travel through the very areas in which these crimes were said to have been committed. Had an escape taken place or had Kesselring been attacked or even killed by aggrieved Italians, there would have been a public outcry, the consequences for which Tim O'Reilly and myself would have had to answer in no uncertain fashion.

According to our orders, all arrangements had been finalised with the relevant US Army authorities, to which we were to report at the former headquarters of the German IG Farben chemical conglomerate in Frankfurt, a huge office complex now taken over as Headquarters of the U.S. Army. Our journey by British Military train to Strasbourg, and then by U.S. Military train to the Frankfurt Central Bahnhof was uneventful. It was here that our troubles began. There was no transport awaiting us, and attempts by Tim O'Reilly to contact anyone in authority at U.S. HQ. failed. Due to the secrecy of the matter, Tim O'Reilly was unable to disclose the nature of our business to other than the authorised persons. We were expected to take over responsibility for Kesselring the following day; the orders giving no indication about our overnight accommodation - possibly in view of the secret nature of our mission, a matter that caused us some concern. After further fruitless enquiries, the party was forced to board a city bus, and to arrive outside the former I.G. Farben building in the late afternoon. It was bitterly cold. Entry to the building was refused save for Tim O'Reilly - the remainder of the party was left standing at the bus stop where it had alighted, while he attempted to bring some order into the situation.

We stood for four hours on the pavement (which included a snow storm for good measure). We were fast becoming the object of curiosity for the local population, which

probably never before had seen British troops in the flesh, since Frankfurt was situated deep in the US. Army of Occupation sector. An exasperated O'Reilly at last emerged to announce that while he had been unable to make any progress about hand-over details, he had succeeded in arranging accommodation for the officers in a transit hotel, and similar accommodation for the other ranks elsewhere in the city.

O'Reilly apart, the party was beginning to show symptoms of hypothermia by the time US. transport arrived to convey us to our respective destinations.

The Officers' transit hotel was in the centre of Frankfurt, and I was left to check on the rest of the party, while O'Reilly returned to U.S. HQ. the following day. He came back later to report that he had been unable to make any progress both in hand-over and travel arrangements. By the second day of waiting with matters little further advanced,



Goering & Kesselring inspecting
Luftwaffe 1940

I was finding difficulty in travelling on foot (there was no transport provided) to the other ranks' accommodation, due to the fact that I was unable to leave my revolver and ammunition in a safe place. Several times I was stopped by US. Military Police, who demanded to know what by what authority a foreigner apparently was wandering the streets of Frankfurt with a loaded revolver. Most of the US. Military Police had never seen a British soldier, and clearly had no idea of the relevance of the uniform, let alone an understanding that the usual method of approach to an officer in the British Army amounted to more than a two fingered mouth-whistle delivered from the opposite side of the road! Refusing to answer until

actually approached, then mustering all the dignity of my twenty one years, and adopting as high handed and authoritarian manner as I was able, I announced that I was a British Officer engaged on secret duties that I was not prepared to discuss. Surprisingly, I managed to evade being hauled in for questioning. However, worse was to come....

By the middle of the third day of waiting. with relations becoming somewhat fraught. Tim at last convinced the U.S. authorities that our documents were genuine. that we needed travel facilities to return to the British sector via Strasbourg, where we were to join the normal British Military transport rail link from Calais to Italy.⁴

The arrangement was that Kesselring would be handed over to our custody at the Bahnhof Hotel in the early evening of the day after our arrival. This was an hotel commandeered by the U.S. Army for officers, and was sited opposite the main Station - a terminus. The party would then be transported to a second station in the city through which a U.S. troop train was due to pass on its way to Strasbourg. It was understood that appropriate secure sleeping car berths had been booked for the party, bearing in mind that two men and one officer would have to be on guard constantly. All this, O'Reilly had been given to understand, had been ordered in the greatest secrecy. He made it clear from his view of the attitude the U.S. Officers with whom he had dealt, that there seemed to be a marked reluctance to hand over their prisoner.

We arrived at the appointed time, posted the men at appropriate strategic points in the hotel, then proceeded to one of the hotel conference rooms, to await the arrival of our charge and his escort.

After a short wait, during which we speculated that some other communication failure had overtaken the exercise. Kesselring appeared accompanied by the American Col. Potter (The head of the U.S. Army Historical Division). Kesselring was dressed in a suit that yet had a military cut, and wore his German Army great coat minus all insignia. and carried a trilby hat. Nevertheless, he was a man of some presence - at least to a young and somewhat overawed junior office so much so, that when shaking hands on being introduced to Keeslring he clicked his heels in the approved Prussian fashion, and I remember with some embarrassment, that I returned the compliment without thinking! The formalities of the hand-

over were completed smoothly and we were informed that transport would arrive shortly to convey the party to the relevant station. As far as I am able to recollect, there was about one and one half hours to spare between Col. Potter taking his leave, and the time of train departure. However as minutes passed without sign of any transport, timing was becoming critical, and once again, anxieties arose about the efficiency of the U.S. authorities arrangements. I was despatched to the hotel entrance to ensure



Kesselring reports to Adolf Hitler
(Field Marshal Rommel to his left)

that when transport did arrive, there would be no doubt in the driver's mind about the importance of meeting the train on time. With only half an hour remaining before departure time, still there was no sign of any vehicles arriving, and desperation was fast taking over. It was clear that some immediate action was required - if necessary by commandeering ad hoc transport. This might have been possible for a British officer in the British sector, but attempting to requisition US. vehicles in the US. sector without authority, was a totally different proposition. The foyer was busy with US. army officers coming and going, so I decided the only chance we might have of making the station on time was to break security, and seek the assistance of the highest ranking officer in sight. At the entrance, I spotted an impressive looking Colonel, I guessed himself also awaiting the arrival of transport. Fortunately for me, and possibly because he may have sensed my concern, he grasped the situation immediately, and accepted what must have been an unlikely tale of woe. With a brief 'Alright son, leave it to me' he dashed down the front steps of the hotel into the roadway, and signalled down the

first empty vehicle that passed - a hooded Jeep.

While he held the vehicle, and gave orders to the driver, I hurried upstairs, gathered the party, and with Kesselring in its midst, we bundled him down to the foyer.

The Colonel had not been able to commandeer any other passing vehicle, and now time was so critical that we decided we must somehow accommodate two officers, five men and our charge plus our kit in and on the jeep, and head for the station at speed. Tim O'Reilly, the sergeant and Kesselring crammed in the rear seat. Two of the men were jammed into the front passenger seat with our kit, while the two remaining other ranks and myself were draped on the outside, hanging on for grim death, myself partially spread-eagled across the bonnet. I shouted my thanks to the helpful Colonel, as the jeep sped off to the amazement of several passers by. I suppose it was unreasonable to expect that our journey to the station would not pass without incident, even if one or other of the 'outriders' had not fallen off. However, we were not allowed that privilege, since after about a mile, the sound of the siren a US. Military Police car caused our by now reluctant driver to pull to a halt. I must admit that it was entirely reasonable for a police patrol to wonder what troops in strange foreign garb might be up to in the late evening, apparently enjoying a drunken celebratory joy ride in the middle of Frankfurt? There followed what first must have appeared to the patrolmen, a discussion of pantomime proportions.... I cannot quote verbatim, but the gist went in this manner:

Patrolman:

'And what the hell do you think you're doing bud'

Driver:

'I am taking these men to the station to catch the evening train'

One could sense that this apparently fatuous statement was falling on stony ground.

To the patrol officers it clearly had the resonance of a drunken idiot attempting to make fruitless excuses after being caught red-handed. A look of *deja vu* passed between the policemen.

Patrolman:

'And why the hell do you have two men in the passenger seat, three jammed together in the back, plus three men hanging on outside'

Driver:

'I was ordered by some Colonel to take them all'

Patrolman:

'And what is the name of this Colonel, where's he from?'

Driver (Getting desperate)

'I don't know his name or his unit'

The attitude of the patrolmen clearly quickly was hardening into annoyed disbelief as the driver was ordered to dismount. They were clearly puzzled by the fact that nobody seemed to be drunk or in party or celebratory mood. At this point, Tim O'Reilly intervened in his best British accent.

'We are engaged in a special mission escorting an important German prisoner and are rushing to catch a train that leaves in a few minutes. The transport we were told that was arranged by your Army Headquarters failed to turn up'

Patrolman;

'Yeah, and who the hell are you .. You sound like a limey to me? What business have you behaving like this in the U.S. sector?'

Again one couldn't dispute that undoubtedly this was a perfectly sensible question to ask. Time was flashing by, and we didn't relish the prospect of being stranded late at night with Kesselring and our party in the centre of a prominent German city, having neither arrangements about security and accommodation, nor alternative onward transport the following day-particularly in view of our previous problems. Tim's only option was to come clean:

'Beside me is the German former Field Marshal Kesselring whom we are escorting. We have only minutes left to meet the night train to Strasbourg, and if we fail to join it I will hold you personally responsible!'

A pregnant pause followed in a situation that had deteriorated into near farce, the patrol was clearly in a quandary. They peered inside the jeep and saw Kesselring seated in his former Wehrmacht topcoat. Uncertain now, they stood back for a short discussion. Clearly, they decided to give us the benefit of the doubt:

'OK you can proceed, but only with one man in the passenger seat. The extra man and all those hanging on the outside are arrested. and will come with us to Police H.Q.'

By now the time factor was critical; to argue would have resulted in all failing to catch the train, with the consequent disruption of what we understood was an ongoing carefully planned sequence of events for which already, we were three days late. Tim and I agreed the only option was to accept the situation. We, the arrested, grabbed our kit and surrendered to the police as Tim, the Sergeant and one man, plus Kesselring, sped

off into the distance driven by a shocked driver, who by now must have wondered whether or not he was experiencing a singularly lurid nightmare!

Kesselring throughout had remained silent. I could only conjecture that he might have been registering acute astonishment that his country managed to finish the war on the losing side? I must confess that my own feelings were very much akin, as all the documentation authorising our mission (there was only one set) remained in Tim O'Reilly's possession, leaving me with no validation whatsoever, and no body or person that I could contact for verification.

After a second vehicle arrived, we were driven at high speed to the Military Police Headquarters and were paraded before a duty officer who held the same rank as myself. He listened to my account of recent events with interest (I emphasised that secrecy was paramount) and initially some incredulity, and then expressed considerable surprise that I was totally unaware that some ten miles outside Frankfurt there was a British Military Liaison Unit. I could only surmise it was due to the secrecy of the operation that we had not been informed about it, and arrangements made for us to stay there. However after some time, while we remained in custody, he was able to check with the railway authorities that travel arrangements were in fact in place for our party, and that the others had departed on the night train for Strasbourg.

Now satisfied about our bona fides, he contacted the British camp, and arranged for our collection. I am quite sure that he was relieved to be rid of a situation that had the makings of an international incident.

The immediate problem was to catch up with the meagre escort then with Kesselring, since we were to connect with a routine British troop train that was to have a special coach attached of the corridor and compartment type, exclusively for our occupation.

At each end of the corridor a soldier had to be constantly on watch under strict orders to forbid entry to all, while Tim O'Reilly and I were to take alternate watches to ensure that Kesselring was never left alone. I was able, without difficulty, to have a 15cwt vehicle provided by the British Liaison Unit into which we piled ourselves and our kit. We set off at breakneck speed on the autobahn towards Strasbourg on a freezing and hair-raising journey in search of the now missing main body. I was as unaware of its whereabouts, as were they of Ours. I need

hardly add that the days of mobile phones lay in the distant future!

Later, I learned from Tim O'Reilly that he still was encountering difficulties about security. While sleeping accommodation had been arranged on the night train, he found that Kesselring's sleeping berth was located in the 'public' part of the train, and as soon as he and his party were boarded, word spread about our prisoner. The result was a long queue of U.S. soldiers seeking Kesselring's autograph, a request O'Reilly felt unable refuse because of the open nature of the sleeping berth, and in the interests of allied goodwill. After all he was heavily outnumbered, on a U.S. train, our cover had been well and truly blown, and Kesselring seemed to be quite happy to oblige.

On arrival in Strasbourg, through contacting the Transport Officer, I was able to locate Tim O'Reilly and the rest of the party. Once more in the absence of any provision for accommodation, ad hoc arrangements had been made for himself and Kesselring to spend the day at the house of an American civilian, while the sergeant and private remained on guard it was there that I located them. Kesselring refers to the handover at Frankfurt and this interlude in his Memoirs ... *'Colonel Potter and another Colonel escorted me to Frankfurt, and there handed me over to two very pleasant English officers.'*

As a symptom of the confusion of the times (incorrectly he refers to the location as 'Salzburg') *'these last and myself were guests for one day of a private American resident, only to spend the same night in bunks in what had formerly been stables'....*⁵ I suspect he used the word 'confusion' with sardonic reference to the preceding shambles! By mistaking the city, it is fairly clear by that stage his mind also must have been in something of whirl! Once back under the auspices of British transport control, and our journey to Rimini began, the following day's events took a more sedate but much more interesting turn.

O'Reilly and I took it in four hour shifts to remain in a separate compartment with Kesselring, while the other rested. After a short time it became apparent that my German and Kesselring's English were inadequate to conduct a meaningful conversation, but we found that each of us spoke enough French to serve the purpose. He was never anything other than pleasant, and quite prepared to talk about his time as a German Field Marshal and the War as a whole. Surprisingly, I found him quite

happy to discuss issues about the allegations he faced at his trial. By that time he had been subjected to so many interviews and examinations both by the U.S. and British interrogators, that probably he was past caring about being guarded. He was charged with firstly, having ordered the execution of Italians in Rome (the episode is still known in Italy as The Ardeatine Cave Murders (335 Italian citizens shot) as a reprisal to a bombing by resistance fighters in the city that killed many German Soldiers, and secondly, ordering reprisal shootings against the local population in any place Resistance Partisans caused the death of German troops or disrupted German communications (1,087 Italians shot).

His response to these charges is dealt with at length in Kesselring's Memoirs. Briefly, he denied that he was responsible, citing his duty of obedience to orders as a soldier, and alleging that decision making about the level of reprisals rested with others. I recall him asking me what measures I, as an officer on the spot, might have taken to maintain order and protect his tenuous lines of communication over the Alps? It is at this point that I regret failing to keep a full diary note of our conversations. I refused to enter into a theoretical discussion, but I must admit from the German point of view, it is arguable that extreme countermeasures would have seemed to be necessary.

However even almost two years after the cessation of hostilities, Kesselring still considered himself very much of Field Marshal status and a professional soldier. He felt very strongly about several occasions when in the custody of both U.S. and British troops, he deemed there was a failure to give it due regard.

We stayed overnight en route at Villach in Austria, guarding him in the same manner. Still it is matter of some surprise to me that Kesselring was prepared to discuss these issues with a junior officer. I can only say that I found no difficulty in conversation after all, it would have been extremely hard to remain totally silent hour after hour, face to face in an otherwise empty railway carriage compartment, and also in a bare barrack room. In some respects, I warmed to him as a person and a man of high principles, however mistaken these might have been. He was willing, when asked, to express opinions about Allied Generals. Alexander was rated ahead of Montgomery, purely on the grounds of flexibility. I recall him using with hand illustration, the

expression 'pied-a pied' to describe what he considered to be Montgomery's pedestrian methods. Occasionally his voice changed to one of such commanding authority, that led me to be thankful I was never in the shoes of an erring subordinate !

Whether or not it was said tongue-in-cheek to pull my leg, I am still unsure, but he told me (I think in all seriousness) Hitler had designated him prospective Military Governor of the United States, but that he had had to decline because of his lack of fluency in the English language! Of one matter he was convinced that the death sentence awaited irrespective of whatever defence he might submit. His wish was that execution should be in proper military fashion by firing squad, and that no other death was appropriate for a soldier of his stature. Kesselring viewed fellow soldiers of whatever nationality as a race apart - this he made abundantly clear in his memoirs, stating that it 'cheered his heart' to see in the brief intervals of his journey from his prison at Allendorf in Germany to Rimini, that comradeship does not draw the line at frontiers or between victors and vanquished⁶. Since he referred to us as 'two very pleasant English officers', perhaps we were a little over deferential towards him, and ought to have been more forthright in pointing out that he had been a member of an aggressor nation!

On the fourth day of our journey, the carriage was detached from the rest of the train, and shunted into a siding in the P.O.W. Camp at Rimini. Clearly he was pleased to be met by an influential delegation of British officers⁷, to whom, with considerable relief, we transferred our responsibilities. I suspect that many of those present were there out of pure curiosity, rather than for the preservation of military protocol. As a soldier Kesselring remained extremely proud of his achievements, and was determined to maintain to the end his dignity as a representative of the German Military. Neither Tim O'Reilly nor myself met Kesselring again. He was in Military Police custody throughout his trial in Venice. We returned to our battalion, and repaired to the Danielli Hotel in Venice the next evening for a relaxing meal. When we entered the officer's lounge bar, I was astounded to see Major General Hakewell Smith the former Commander of 52nd (Lowland) Division in which my former Cameronian Battalion had served in Holland and Germany. I and an ex Royal Scots officer introduced

ourselves as former 52nd men, only to be informed that the General had arrived that day to be President of the Military Tribunal charged with the trial of one Field Marshall Kesselring of whom the general thought we might have heard?

The full circle had been turned. Kesselring had been appointed to his final Command of the entire Western Front the very day after 52nd Division had suffered one of its most costly actions 10/11th March 1945, in the last stages of operations 'Veritable' and 'Blockbuster' on the banks of the Rhine .

The trial lasted more than three months, and to this day is one of the most heavily criticised of the War Trials, particularly for the incompetence of the prosecution. Kesselring gaining considerable sympathy for the dignity of his conduct throughout, particularly for his robust handling of the prosecution's cross-examination. However, his prognostication proved to be correct. He was found guilty on both counts, and condemned to death by shooting.

Some two months later this was commuted to life imprisonment. On 15th July 1952, Kesselring was given leave on parole for an operation, and was released as an act of clemency on 24 October, on the grounds of ill health. While in prison, he was made Honorary President of a German Ex-Servicemen's Association the 'Stahlhelms' that had unfortunate right wing connections dating from World War I. Although his ideal of maintaining the honour of the German Military remained unaffected, this association damaged his personal reputation at a time when in all likelihood, he was too ill fully to appreciate the consequences. He died in a sanatorium on 20th July 1961, according to his son a broken man as a result of his imprisonment.

Despite having failed until some time later, to make more than sketchy notes of the entire incident, and although some of the minor details may have been blurred by time, my recollections of the salient features of such an unusual experience for a young and impressionable officer, remain clear.

Cliff Pettit 2007

- 1 The late Capt. Bob Bruce was demobilised in September 1946, and later gained a Scottish International Rugby Cap.
- 2 It is of interest to note that 2nd Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) followed to the same posting shortly afterwards.
- 3 That there was substance in this, is illustrated in Kesselring's Memoirs. After the conclusion

of his trial, he was approached by a former S.S. Major, who informed him that everything was prepared for his escape. Kesselring refused the offer. The Memoirs of Field Marshall Kesselring p311 William Kember (English translation). It is possible that British Intelligence already was aware that an escape plan was afoot.

- 4 Calais Channel Port terminus was the point at which both the trains from British Occupied Germany and Austria and Italy departed. It was not uncommon for our troops from Germany to taunt those from Southern Europe by shouting 'D-Day Dodgers' - usually grounds for immediate reprisal by the 'Southerners' (where the fighting had been equally as hard) often ending in scuffles on the platform
- 5 See The Memoirs of Field Marshal Kesselring
- 6 See: The Memoirs of Field Marshal Kesselring p 297
- 7 See: The Memoirs of Field Marshal Kesselring p297

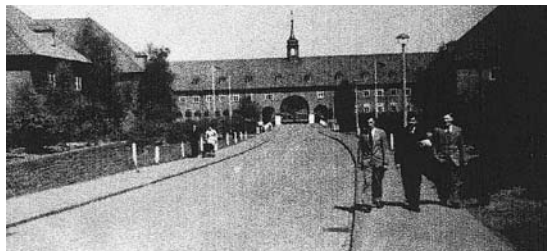
Jubilation, Frustration, Lamentation

The other day, in a committee room in the Knesset with other members of a Christian group to which I belong, I was privileged to present to Dr Yuval Steinitz, the Chairman of Israeli Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee, two books, including my own treatise against that theology which denies that God has future purposes for Israel. However I could not help but chuckle to myself, recalling the first time I had contact with a politician of such seniority. Mr Julian Amery held a defence portfolio in the Macmillan government in 1957. That autumn he visited those Cameronians who were based in Bahrain.

We in 'A' Company at Jufair Barracks had carefully rehearsed a demonstration of Internal Security drills - how to handle a crowd of unruly or violent protestors with the minimum casualties. At the last moment Captain Alan Campbell, our company commander, heard that D Company at Muharraq airport, which Mr Amery was due to visit first, had switched their plans and also decided to do an IS demonstration, thereby unwittingly (one hopes) stealing our thunder.

It was too late to alter our schedule. I was hurriedly summoned to the company office. I fear that in those days I was regarded as being talented in the unconventional rather than the conventional. In accordance with guidelines, I acquired some cocoa from

the cookhouse, liberally daubed my face and other exposed areas and dressed up in pyjamas and oddments borrowed from the OM store to look vaguely like one of the 'locals'; I had authority to recruit a couple of other likely lads in supporting roles, one of whom I think was the multi-talented LCpl Terry Malone. We added a good deal of colour to proceedings. When one of the 'rioters' was 'shot', I ran forward, bewailing the fact that the deceased was Ali, my brother, and the father of eleven innocent children. I called down the wrath of Allah against the 'feelthy British'. Apparently our honoured guest was suitably entertained. My 'get up' must have been quite realistic, because I was shouted at by the QM, in a



way which would no longer be regarded as politically correct, for daring to enter one of the offices.

I left the Regiment four years before disbandment. Having come top of the linguist group on a long Russian course, I joined the editorial team of the hefty 1968 Russian-English military dictionary. My weapon training instructor qualification from Hythe proved surprisingly useful, as I became a specialist in infantry and artillery weaponry terms among other things. But when my CO applied for my substantive promotion, a curt response was received from Scottish Infantry Records at Perth to the effect that this NCO would be considered for promotion when he returned to regimental duties. This did little to motivate me in my further academic studies. Not without regret I transferred to the Intelligence Corps, whence I was commissioned in the RAEC after teacher training.

Since moving from Berwickshire to Tweeddale in 2006, I have regularly bumped into old Cameronians. Round the corner from me lives Tom Brown, a KOSB who was one of a number of National Servicemen sent to our 1st Battalion at Minden when their own battalion was posted to the Far East. He became an MT corporal; for many years he was sales manager for our local Ford main dealer. Ian Crooks I remember from my days as a training corporal at Lanark.

Whilst on basic training, Ian was given permission to play for the Galashiels cricket team at Glasgow; he had already played for South of Scotland. He was immediately spotted by a colonel at Scottish Command who, two days later, phoned the Depot CO. His posting to Kenya was cancelled, and he forthwith became a regular all-rounder for the Scottish Combined Services team. He was eventually made provost corporal, but seems to have been away rather a lot on sporting activities! That sort of thing used to happen in those far-off days. He is still grateful for encouragement received from (then) Lt Dudley Lucas and Sgt Eddy Clark, his training sergeant. Many years later he was President of the Scottish Cricket Union. He lives in Galashiels, but suffers from knee injuries resulting from many years of sport. In town the other day a regimental tie identified Tom Cameron, who served in 'B' Company in Malaya.

My wife and I enjoyed the informal officers' luncheon at Duns arranged by Major David and Sue Nisbet. The only down side was that I could not help feeling my age, as, whenever I enquired about names which cropped up, I was told in a kindly sort of way, "Oh, that would be after your time in the Regiment". Good Gracious! It's been disbanded for nigh on forty years. Major Bill and Sheana Roger restored my self confidence; we were able to recall the halcyon days at Buxtehude - and they do not look old!

May I be allowed to digress about Buxtehude? I felt that it did not fare well in the regimental photograph album which was published a few years ago. Perhaps that was because it was not active service; but I rather think that it was because of the lack of photographers. That keen camera man, then Captain DEN Cameron, was at the Depot throughout those twenty five months. I submit three of my own photos to our revered Editor in case he has space to spare. After all, for several hundred Cameronians, Buxtehude was the only foreign station they ever knew - and very comfortable and well appointed Spey Barracks were. Apparently when the occupation forces named them thus it did not occur to them that the local populace thought that it was the Graf Spee which was being honoured! In 1982, when I was British Liaison Officer, I was invited there by the German 3rd Panzer Divisional Commander to speak about the Soviet Exchange Mission. The barracks had changed very little. When we left in September 1956 we handed over to the new German army being re-formed

within NATO The athletics track, when it was built shortly before the war, was of Olympic standard. At week-ends we allowed local athletic competitions to be held there, and I was actually invited to run the 400 metres for the Buxtehude club; my name appeared as Kamerun in the Hamburger Abendblatt! I wonder what colour readers thought I was.

The sports at which we excelled at the time were boxing, hockey, football and basketball. As PRI corporal, I remember we gave a small allowance to ensure that our boxers had nice fat juicy steaks for a week before one competition. Hockey played on the MT square was a fast game. Capt Leslie Dow and certain members of the military band were superb players. At least one had represented Scotland. As far as I can recall, the basketball team knocked out a Canadian team on the way to the Army final; that sort of thing was not meant to happen.

One of our finest all-round sportsmen was Sgt Arthur Thurlow, the oompah player in the Military Band. He had the figure of a Japanese sumo wrestler, but was incredibly light on his feet and could pack quite a punch. I recall how, as one of the few sober bystanders when our wooden gymnasium caught fire after an all ranks' dance, I had to restrain Arthur, by persuasion rather than physically, from entering the blazing building to rescue the double bass which he had taken with him half way round the world. Later he became General Sir Horatio Murray's butler at Land Forces Northern Europe.

The Battalion had its fair share of potential trouble makers; but there was a certain brand of truculent soldier who, if properly motivated and if feeling gainfully employed, could be an absolute tower of strength. Such was Tarn Norton, a middle-weight boxer of some note even before he was called up. When I was a section commander in 'A' Company he was my 21C; it was a sheer pleasure for him to dig trenches for himself and me on the Luneburger Heath. Sergeant Major Johnny Hannah MM knew what he was doing when he put the unlikely pair of us together, because we exerted positive influences on each other. Ours was a remarkably happy platoon.

Our football team also did remarkably well, winning the 7th Armoured Division Cup among other exploits. Our team manager and top grade referee was WOII (later Lt Col OM) George Soper.

I am tempted to sign off there; however

Major Brian Leishman MBE has prevailed upon me to include some more short extracts from my "Lamentations of Alpha", written at Sharjah early in 1958 and published in the *Covenanter*.

Now it came to pass that in the fifth year that Elizabeth was Queen there went forth a decree in the East that the Sons of Alpha that are of the tribe of the Cameronianites, from the Captain even unto his she-dog, should be led into captivity unto a desert place which is called Sharjah. And there was weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth in the camp of the Sons of Alpha. And they arrayed themselves in sackcloth of Effessemo, and they cried with a loud voice: ***"Let the Children of Delta go unto Sharjah, but let us abide here among the vineyards of Naffi."***

But Kemal, the High Priest, hardened his heart against them and hearkened not unto their cries, and said unto them: ***"Ye shall arise very early in the morning ere the cock shall crow, and shall fly with the wings of the wind unto the desolate place which is prepared for you. And your habitation shall be with the Raff and with the Teeyo-Ess,"*** And it was so even as Kemal had decreed. And it came to pass, while they were yet in Bahrain, that they did see the Sons of Bravo afar off, fleeing from the face of Oman. And they beheld them come with great haste, even he that is called Nick, with many men and goats. Thus the Sons of Alpha came unto Sharjah, and they are there even unto this age and generation. And they took possession of the dwellings of the Sons of Bravo.

Now Bigbil, Captain of the Sons of Alpha, spake, saying: ***"Ye shall put away from before thee all the idols of Bravo, and ye shall bum them upon the altar, Incinerator. Ye shall not look upon their pinups, neither upon their carvings upon the walls of the marsh place that is called Boggz."*** Now all that the Sons of Bravo had left behind them in their flight was dyed with the blue of the sea. And one, Penman, was commanded that these should henceforth be green, from the postbox even unto the detailboard.

And it came to pass after the feast that is called Hogmanay, that the Sons of Alpha were weak by reason of their rejoicings. For Bigbil had said unto them: ***"Eat, drink and be merry, for the old year is passed away and a new year is come, which shall be unto many of them which are called Nashees, a year of jubilee called discharge; and they***

shall return unto the land of their fathers, where the sun shall no more smite then, and they shall have rain in abundance."

But after a few days their strength returned unto them, and Bigbil said unto Bigron, the son of Gib: ***"Thou shalt take with thee Chinook and two score valiant men which dwell in the tents of Tooplatoon, and thou shalt journey unto an exceeding desolate place which is by the shore of the bitter sea; and thou shalt abide there a short time until thy men are skilled with the firearm and the shooting star which is called mortarbom."*** And he did so.

And the men of Wunplatoon did behold their chariots departing, and did laugh among themselves and did mock Bigron's men. But Bigbil heard their laughter and was wroth and said unto them: ***"Laugh not, for the day cometh and is even very nigh when ye also shall also go out after them. And they shall return without thee and laugh you to scorn."***

And Melvil, leader of Wun was sore dismayed.

That might be an appropriate point at which to break off, as, when I left 'A' Company, Lt Melville was given the, unenviable task of writing the next episodes of these Lamentations. Bigbil was of course Captain Alan Campbell and Nick was Captain Nick Carter. The Trucial Oman Scouts were the TOS - which also signified the Tarn O' Shanter incidentally. Full service marching order was FSMO. Company 'heraldic' colours were fashionable; anything that did not move was fair game for a splash of paint. Bigron was 2Lt Ron Gibson, who later became a notable Arabic speaker; he gave me my first driving lesson in the desert. He must have been good as I have held a clean licence for forty-nine years. Thanks! The goats were a present from a Bedouin chieftain at the Buraimi Oasis. Cameronians were good at making friends. I referred to Captain Campbell's golden labrador, Sheila. I have her on 8mm film barking silently but excitedly at camels drawing water from a deep well somewhere up-country in the Trucial States.

They tell me things are a little different in and around Sharjah nowadays. I wonder. Can that be true?

From Sergeant to Student.

Between passing my Army First and my arrival at the Intelligence Corps Centre (ICC) in 1955 I had begun to study to qualify for

higher education . I knew I would receive no dispensation and would have to reach the same standard as the other applicants . I was advised that once I was qualified I would be interviewed but would also need to prove that I had the required cultural hinterland to be happy and accepted in the then academic life. I thought I had a good chance because many of the likely candidates among the National Servicemen told me that the pressure from their schools and parents had put them off doing any further study.

At the ICC I was greatly helped by Les Treen and Tom Sibly of the Ed. Corps and members of the Intelligence Corps. John, a Russian linguist sergeant, invited me to his regular discussion group where I had my first opportunity to take part in conversations on current affairs and almost any other topic. John 's record showed he had served five years as an officer in India in the war.

Like Lawrence of Arabia, he had decided to re-enlist in the ranks. As I was bound to keep this information secret, I was unable to speak to him about it. Later when we were both students in London I met John coming out of Senate House. John, having being posted to Hong Kong, decided to learn Chinese. His progress was so rapid that the army sent him to read Mandarin Chinese at the School of Oriental and African Studies. John was the most interesting and learned man that I had met in the army.

I had always been a regular theatre, concert and ballet goer because I had wanted to hear the music I had played as military band arrangements in their original forms. I was able to go so regularly because free tickets were available at the Nuffield Centre where Sheila Branton kindly saved the tickets for anything she thought might be of help to me. Being posted near London, I frequently went to the lectures at the museums and galleries as well as listening to good speech in the law courts and Parliament. I tried to read a broadsheet each day, often read the Spectator and the Listener to read the texts of the broadcast that I had heard on the earlier versions of Radios 4.

Although I was briefed as well as I could be by the Ed. Corps, I felt unnerved as I faced the panel of gowned staff. Alex Evans, the grey haired principal, looking at me above his half glasses, said to me in his very lyrical Welsh voice : "Your references state that you have every prospect of continuing an excellent career in the army and so I must ask you why you are giving it all up?" They

laughed when I said that the army might be trying to get rid of me by using lavish words. I immediately added, in common with many army boys, I had enlisted at fourteen out of social necessity and not out of real choice. I now wanted to continue my education to do something of my own choice .I went on to tell them that I had been denied fluent speech because of my once bad stammer and was attracted to teaching, not only because of its importance, but it would allow me to earn my living by speaking. The panel asked me what I did in my spare time, what I knew about current affairs, leading to questions about Germany which gave me the opportunity to describe what it was like living with a German family. I added that I hoped to add economics and German to my qualifications before I left the army. At the end of my interview the principal said to me: "If most of our students had to come to us your way, they would not have made it." One of the three senior officers who acted as my referees, discussed with me the cost of entering higher education, meaning that the terms are short, and would I be able to keep myself in the vacations. I told him that I was still homeless but with a little help from friends I hoped that my grant combined with my savings and work in the vacations would be enough. The College was informed of my circumstances. It was a pleasant surprise when I received a duel offer of a place and of all year round accommodation at one of their lodgings. I felt a sense of fate when I saw the number of the house was 26. My Cameronian connection did not stop there. Paddy Mulvenna lived nearby and whenever we met his ability as an Irish Seanchai came into being, for Paddy was never lost for words either in fact or fiction. Two of the 1946 boys, Den Hall and Lofty Hammond, were continuing their service with the Scots Guards Band in London.

St Mark and St John, known as Marjons, was a constituent college of the Institute of Education of the University of London, allowing us to be overwhelmed in our choice of social events at the other colleges. Marjons occupied nine acres of land between King's Rd, Chelsea and the Fulham Rd: buses went by either road into central London. With the high walls and the gaps between the buildings, a quiet atmosphere of lawns and gardens was created: the only audible sounds were from the tennis courts or from the sound of mallets used by the white clad, boater wearing croquet playing players on Sunday summer afternoons. Often before

breakfast I used to sit in this haven reading, looking or just thinking about my good fortune to be there. Bordering this quietness were buildings of different ages from 1691, Georgian, Victorian and modern. The most impressive was the Georgian House occupied by the principal. At the side of this house, dating from the 1800s was the beautiful Hamilton Room, whose main feature was a grand piano, awaiting the many recitals, chamber music and the more intimate lectures or discussions. A frieze, in the background colour of Wedgwood, displayed the original casts of the Elgin Marbles.

On our first day, having been welcomed by the principal, we met and had briefings from the staff. We were reminded that we would be required to wear jackets and ties until 4pm and to dinner at 7pm on weekdays. We would have three meals a day plus tea; dinner would be served formally four times a week and preceded by a said or sung Latin grace. Although the study bedrooms college would be cleaned daily, we were requested to be tidy and considerate to the cleaners. Years later when I returned to the college for a function one of the staff told me the later direct entrants from school were not as interesting and tidy as the ex-servicemen. The ex service element did introduce over the years a reluctance to wear blazers, college ties or gowns: a minority did so.

I was not the odd man out because the majority of the men had done National Service while the staff, in some form or another, had done war service. Alongside the students were the postgraduates who qualified in a year and serving teachers taking courses in music and science.

Although the women were a small minority, other women came to us on the inter-collegiate courses, perform in our drama, music, came to dances and so many other things. Girlfriends were everywhere at weekends.

The National Service era and the wartime conscription had created the good effect of social mixing. It was evident in the seminars that the NS men had gained sympathy and understanding for the less well off Frank Coles, our tutor and a former drama teacher at the Cooper's Company School in Mile End, sometimes invited me to speak about my childhood in the East End and how the ill effects of the war led me to joining the army at fourteen. I told them I was among them as a mature student because I believed my circumstances made it impossible for me to qualify at eighteen. Frank sometimes

served us with sherry and went through the pipe smoker's ritual of leaving doubt in our minds if he would ever light his pipe. He had served as a major in the war; he always enjoyed talking to me about the army as well as about the social situation in the East End. He once said to me: "You are always smiling Bill, but deep down you know there is little to smile about."

Frank Coles decided that I should do all my teaching practices in leafy Surrey and Croydon. It was a cushy way to qualify, for I knew I could sail through my lessons with an almost certainty of success. I was well prepared, had maturity on my side, the ready availability of humour and my army service allowed me to recall extra items of interest. However, I did have to put one boy in his place by telling him he had enough mouth for two sets of teeth. Having had no secondary education myself, I was amused at the absurdity of teaching in a secondary school. Whenever I filled in job applications I must admit I felt some delight when I have written NONE in the section named 'Details of Secondary Education.'

The excessive use of "Sir" by the pupils gave me a feeling of what might have been had I stayed in the army. Whenever my supervisor came to assess me my classes were on my side. One day the supervisor mistakenly left the classroom by the wrong door and found himself in a broom cupboard and felt too embarrassed to come out. We all had a good laugh. I remember one little girl saying to me: "Were we all right Sir?"

My savings and my vacation work allowed me to leave college without debt. Although I knew I would be earning more, I correctly estimated that the overheads of civilian life would make me 20% worse off. I began to do travel work in the school holidays to save some money. Was the study worthwhile? Yes, because it paved the way for me to become the person I wanted to be. I was able to enter Birkbeck College to read for an honours degree, leading to a higher degree. I wrote to Alex Evans to thank him for giving me my chance. I am grateful to all the people who helped me but I must also give thanks to all the known and unknown taxpayers who contributed to my success.

Bill Coughlan

The Harvard Trainer

(A recent sighting at Shoreham Airfield, Sussex, of a beautifully-restored Harvard Trainer sparked off the recollection of a

memorable weekend in East Africa more than fifty years ago).

"How about a little bombing raid on Saturday then"? Chris and I, both newly arrived KAR subalterns were on a three week Swahili language course @ GHQ Nairobi, billeted at Buller Barracks and accompanied on the course by personnel from all sorts of other units, including some pilots based at RAF Eastleigh, and lunch-time conversation had turned to what we might do on our free weekend.

Game parks were mentioned, as was a game of golf at Muthaiga Club which was definitely in the lead, until one of the RAF chaps came up with this new suggestion, which was promptly declared a clear winner on points, and arrangements for Saturday began.

The RAF really did carry out bombing raids against terrorists as part of the anti-Mau Mau campaign, both low-level attacks from Harvards and high altitude sorties from Lincolns (one of which was to occupy us on the next weekend) but our Saturday trip was to a "barraza" at a village beyond Thika.

A "Barraza" we were told, was a village gathering with entertainment and a show of military might to reassure the local people of the strength and resolve of those working on their behalf in those troubled times.

"It's really just us showing off" said one chap from GHQ "rather like a village fete with a few bombs".

We mustered at RAF Eastleigh on the Saturday morning and having signed all the disclaimer forms, were issued with the standard visitor's flying kit of a "Biggles" flying helmet with intercom, para-harness with a sit-on chute, prayer book and sick bag and we were ready to go. Outside, the two Harvards sat side by side, hatches slid back ready as we clambered aboard. To complete the "Boys Own" unreality of it all there really were chirpy lads with names like Smudge and Ginger to strap us in, test the intercom and wave us off with 'thumbs up' signs, just like all those war movies!

As we flew towards the 'Barraza' village we learned that today's show of military might consisted of a police band, two Land Rovers and us. Our target was to be a large patch of whitewashed stones laid out on a hillside across the valley from the village. The stones would be bombed and strafed by each aircraft in turn to, it was hoped, the great delight and amazement of the many folks gathered beneath us, whom we could see waving as the show began.

Dive bombing, to the amateur, is something of an acquired taste. You are flying steadily along when suddenly your horizon disappears away above your head and your entire world is just a solid wall of fast approaching countryside. You hear a sustained high-pitched whining wail, discover that it is coming from you, and realise that the aircraft is making an almost identical sound. Your past life flashes before your eyes, sometimes accompanied by your breakfast. You resolve, if you survive, to be a better person in future and would willingly swear an oath to this effect if only the downward G-force would ease and allow you to raise your right hand. The lunatic flying the machine chuckles quietly as you struggle to find your camera which, since the plane is upside down, is hanging above your head.

The second time is easier and the fifth or sixth time in you are becoming increasingly confident of your own survival, or at least your ability to retain your latest meal. With the bombing and strafing runs complete both planes made a low pass over the Barraza village while we all waved out reassuringly to the villagers beneath and then banked away to begin the flight home.

As we levelled out my pilot reached back over his head and passed me a heavy object in wood and metal. This introduced a new element of excitement to the flight since a swift glance confirmed that I was now holding the plane's main navigational compass.

He seemed unperturbed "must have worked loose during the last few dives" he said on the intercom. I was reassured by the fact that we were in formation with the other Harvard, whose pilot would still be able to find the way home. Since it was still daylight we obviously weren't lost but I did take a moment to wonder, if the compass could fall off, just how likely was the rest of the aircraft to hold together until we landed at Eastleigh.

Back in the mess, exhilarated and excited by a great day out, I found that none of the RAF chaps seemed concerned by the collapsing compass. Indeed, one said "that's why we call the bloke in the rear seat the copilot-because he has to cope with anything the pilot throws at him".

They all spoke of the Harvards with great affection, since most had done a lot of their flying training in them, and were prepared to overlook the rattling and the creaks, the worry about bits falling off and the primitive

standards of comfort of a simple gutsy plane they all admired.

That affection lingers still which is why, more than fifty years later, you may chance to see, and hear, a Harvard Trainer patrol the Sussex Coast.

George Ferguson

BOOK ONE: *The Beautiful Mrs Graham*



Peter Craigie

A COMING STORM

This novel is closely based on real events that took place between 1776 and 1780

In 1776 on the eve of the American War of Independence, Charles George MacPherson, a patriotic young American is forced to flee from the Mohawk Valley in New York after killing a well-known Loyalist. He embarks on a journey of self discovery which takes him to Europe.

In Paris he becomes embroiled in Benjamin Franklin's machinations to bring France into the war against Britain but in London discovers friendships among the people he had presumed to be the enemy. Only gradually are his conflicting loyalties resolved.

At the heart of his dilemma is his life-long love for the beautiful, fragile Mary Graham and his developing friendship with Thomas Graham, her devoted husband. At her request he undertakes a Grand Tour of Italy, a journey she knows she will never make herself.

Commando Country

By Stuart Allan published 4th October 07
Mountains and lochs, rugged terrain, challenging weather, seclusion: the Scottish highlands had everything that was needed to prepare soldiers for Commando warfare.

From 1940-44 highland properties were selected and transformed into special training centres to teach guerrilla methods, assault landings and survival techniques. Commando Country looks at the variety of establishments set up during the Second World War for special service training and describes the use made of the landscape and coastline and of specialist civilian skills such as stalking and mountaineering.

The story involves people famous in other walks of life such as author Gavin Maxwell, actor David Niven, mountaineer John Hunt, and polar explorer Martin Lindsay, as well as military figures such as David Stirling, founder of the SAS, and Special Operations Executive Violette Szabo.

Conveying the atmosphere of the locations - such as Achnacarry, Arisaig, the Cairngorms, the Isle of Arran, the Isle of Skye, Inveraray and Lochailort - the book makes use of photographs and personal testimony collected from those involved as well as official sources to give a unique Scottish perspective on this most uncompromising kind of warfare.

Stuart Allan is Senior Curator of Military History at the National War Museum, Edinburgh Castle where the exhibition 'Commando Country' is running until February 08. He is co-author, with Allan Carswell, of *The Thin Red Line: War, Empire and Visions of Scotland*.

If you would like to speak to Stuart Allan please contact Hannah Dolby, Press Office, National Museums Scotland, 01312474288 h.dolby@nms.ac.uk

If you would like further information on the book *Commando Country* or other NMS titles please

contact Kate Blackadder, NMSE - Publishing, National Museums Scotland, Chambers Street, Edinburgh, EH11JF 0131 2474083 k.blackadder@nms.ac.uk

Major Peter Carroll

One of our old and bold officers from the former D Company in Hamilton has re-established contact with your editor. Still in the TA after 23 years, and still living in the Glasgow area, Maj Peter Carroll has had an interesting last few years.

From leaving D Company as a platoon commander, he took over as recce platoon commander in 1/52 Lowland in 1989. He then moved to Ayr in 1992 as OC B Company. In December 1995 he deployed to Bosnia and spent 6 months with the headquarters of 4 Armoured Brigade in the

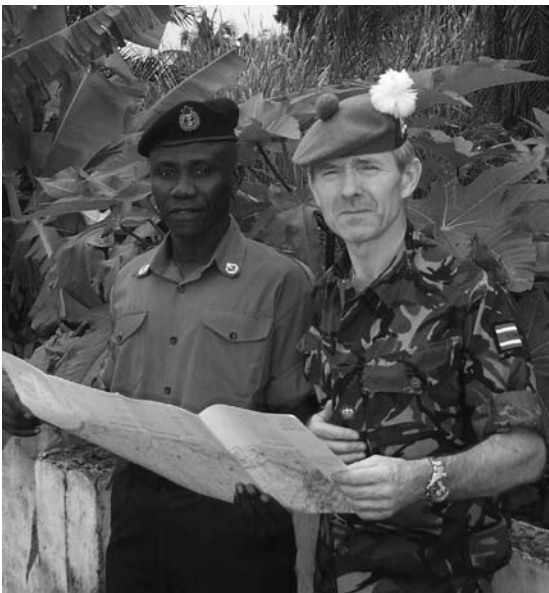


town of Sipovo in Bosnia Herzegovina. 4 Bde was commanded at that time by Brig Richard Dannett, now General Dannett CGS. Maj Carroll then moved from 1/52 Lowland/3 RHF to 2/52 Lowland/Lowland as battalion 2IC at Claremont Street in Edinburgh.

After completing TA Command and Staff College in 1998 and he then moved to the Civil Affairs Group as a SO2 in 1999, based at Gibraltar Barracks in Camberley. The Civil Affairs Group became the CIMIC (Civil Military Cooperation) Group, and latterly has become tri service.

More recently Maj Carroll was mobilised for Operation Telic 1 in Iraq in 2003. He completed a 6 month tour as SO2 CIMIC in the HQs of 102 and 101 Logistics Brigades, and then with HQ Joint Forces Logistics Contingent, based in the port of Umm Quasr in the south of Iraq. Maj Carroll was the CIMIC advisor to the Brigade Commander in all civil military matters affecting the port and town of Umm Quasr.

The Joint CIMIC Group (JCG) has taken



Maj Carroll to a number of unusual locations on exercise: Kathmandu in Nepal, Belize, and just recently to Ghana. In all of these exercises, the aim of the JCG was to evaluate those countries' plans for disaster management, this being identified as a useful vehicle for practicing a number of CIMIC skills.

Just when he thought that age had beaten him, Maj Carroll will be promoted to Lt Col in 2008, and pick up a SO1 appointment within the Joint CIMIC Group.

Maj Carroll has maintained contact with the Cameronian Officers' Club, and this year took over from Maj Guy Maxwell as club secretary and treasurer. Maj Maxwell is chairman of the Club.

Cameronians at the Cenotaph

The Cameronians were mentioned at the Cenotaph On Remembrance Sunday just before the Royal Gurkha Rifles Pipe Band played 'The Flowers of the Forest.' The announcer said the Gurkhas were wearing the Douglas Tartan in recognition of their war time service alongside the Scottish Rifles, the Cameronians.

I assume the link with the Cameronians was with the 1st battalion in the Burma campaign.

However, Volume IV of the Regimental History by John Baynes records the post war affiliation ceremony between the Cameronians and the 7th Gurkha Rifles on the Singapore quay when the 1st battalion docked there during their voyage from Trieste to Hong Kong on Christmas Eve 1949. There may not have been a Burma connection, for John Baynes states: 'Quite recently the Cameronians had become affiliated to the Gurkha Rifles, though the two regiments had at this stage only exchanged greetings.' During the Singapore ceremony the Gurkhas presented the battalion with a silver kukri while the Cameronians gave the Gurkhas a silver salver. Later, on the 2nd January, the Colonel of the Regiment allowed the 7th Gurkhas Pipe Band to use the Douglas Tartan.

'The above named ceremony is described as follows: *'The Cameronians formed a full Guard of Honour under the command of Major. A.C.A. MacKinnon on the quay beside the troopship, and representative parties of both the 1st and 2nd Battalions the 7th came down.'* Although I was on the ship, I do not recall the event taking place. As the military band was not involved, is a partial explanation together

with the fact that I recall leaving the boat at 11am to spend the day in Singapore.
Bill Coughlan.

Memories of the trenches: brilliantine, rats and the Hun interrupting a good smoke

**Amid the horror of the First World War,
lighter moments from a soldier's diary**

The harrowing but humorous memoir of an Army officer who survived the horrors of trench warfare during the First World War has been published for the first time.

Capt Alexander Stewart's handwritten diary, a copy of which was recently discovered by his grandson, describes the grim reality of the Somme and other battles with a wry sense of humour similar to Capt Edmund Blackadder in the famous BBC comedy.

Among harrowing accounts of his comrades being ripped apart by shells, the officer jokes about nearly losing his life and even quips about getting shrapnel lodged in his throat - the injury that would eventually cause him to be sent home.

In one entry he describes his annoyance at having to stop smoking to shoot a German who had gained entry to the trench. Capt Stewart started the diary in 1915 when he was sent to France and then Belgium with the 3rd Scottish Rifles. He was finally sent



home in 1917 to Richmond Surrey after two years on the front line. He was due to return when the war ended a year later.

With acknowledgements to The Daily Telegraph article dated Thursday 8 November 2007

Editors Note:- The photograph which reputedly shows Captain Stewart on horseback is reprinted with the kind permission of The South West News Service

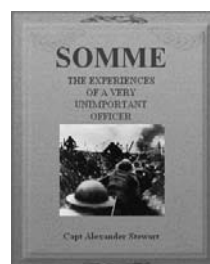
Grandfather's Great War

The Experiences of a
Very Unimportant Officer



Ninety years ago my grandfather wrote a very personal and graphic account of his time on the Somme in the Great War. He typed three copies and called it 'The Experiences of a Very Unimportant Officer in France and Flanders during 1916-1917. Until now it has only been read by one or two members of my family and close friends. But now, as his grandson, I would like to share this amazing piece of personal history of his time in the trenches as an officer serving with this amazing piece of personal history of his time in the trenches as an officer serving with the Scottish regiment The Cameronians. This account brings to life the reality and horror of what happened to him in those war-torn fields and the loss of life at Mametz Wood.

I hope you will find it equally fascinating.'
Jaime Cameron Stewart



Excerpts

**The mud that claimed
lives:**

"This part of the line was up to then the worst in which I had been. I refer more particularly to the mud and water. All the land had been

very churned up by shell explosions, and for many days the weather had been wet. It was not possible to dig for more than about a foot without coming to water. Mud is a bad description as the soil was more like a thick slime than mud. When walking one sank several inches in and owing to the suction, it was difficult to withdraw the feet. The consequence was that men who were standing still or sitting down got embedded in the slime and were unable to extricate themselves. As the trenches were so shallow men had to stay where they were all day. Most of the night we had to spend digging and pulling men out of the mud. It was only the legs that got stuck; the body being lighter and larger lay on the surface. To dig a man out the only way was to put duck boards on each side of him and then work at one leg, digging poking, and pulling, until the suction was relieved. Then a strong pull by three or four men would get one leg out and work would be begun on the other. Back to Battalion Headquarters was about 800 yards. At night it would take a "runner" (i.e. an orderly taking messages) about two hours to get there. Going to and from Battalion Headquarters from the line, one would hear men who had missed their way and got stuck in the mud calling out for help that often could not be sent to them. It would be useless for only one or two men to go to help them, and practically all the troops were in the front line and had, of course, to stay there. All the time the Boche dropped shells promiscuously about the place. He who had a corpse to stand or sit on was lucky."

Shooting and pipe smoking:

"I then saw the tin helmet of one of the machine gunners; at this helmet I fired with my revolver and do not think I can have missed. I then had a shot at a man who appeared the other side of the gun, I think I got him also. Then a head and neck appeared where the first man had been and I had my third shot. Then some blighter in the trench just opposite me threw a stick bomb at us or me; it exploded just by my feet; he was a sitter and I got him also with my revolver. By this time things were happening a bit too rapidly to remain clear in my memory but there was one young chap I remember very clearly shooting in the back as he was running away but I forget whether I got him with a revolver or a rifle. My next recollection is that I had no more shots left in my revolver and was still not yet in the trench. As I had no intention of getting into

the trench unarmed I proceeded to unsling the rifle with fixed bayonet I had over my shoulder. I should have mentioned that after my third or fourth shot I found that the bowl of my pipe and the smoke from it was obscuring my line of vision as I was firing slightly downwards all the time. Much to my annoyance, I had to put my pipe in my pocket alight as it was; it was lucky that it did not burn my jacket. Just as I got my rifle working I saw a man in the trench calmly kneeling down and taking careful aim at me. At the moment I saw him he fired. But in some miraculous way he missed."

House flies:

The flies in this part of the line at that time were a perfect plague. They covered everything. In this same Company Headquarters dug-out they were massed on the ceiling like a swarm of bees. These flies made it very difficult to eat as they covered the food one was going to put into one's mouth. I was fortunate in having muslin net I put over my head when resting. They were filthy, fat, dirty flies that used to swarm round the dead. I had a great loathing for them. When a man was asleep they would settle all round his mouth and over his face.

August 27th.

In trenches south of Bezantine le Grand. Leave for trench on Mametz Hill. Very wet dug-out, cut out of soft sandstone and all the time water was trickling down the sides and oozing up from the floor. Whilst here we received our parcel post mail. Very strangely I and another officer both received a tin of shortbread from the same shop in Glasgow; evidently both sent off at the same time by different people. Mine was from my then future wife. Living in a soaking wet dug-out we never got dry. The weather was wet and beastly, and, although August, very cold.

August 28th.

In a trench on Mametz Hill. Very wet and damp.

August 29th.

Leave for trench by side of Fricourt Wood. Wet night. Thunderstorm. I forget if we were all very lousy at this time; we were all certainly very wet. The wet weather however had one advantage, and that was that the shells were not nearly so dangerous; they generally buried their noses before they exploded and most of the splinters went upwards.

© Barlass ePublishing 2007 / © Copyright Stewart Estate 2007

The entire diary may be purchased at:
www.grandfathersgreatwar.com/2html

Advice & Support for Veterans and their Families

Who is a veteran?

Veterans are former members of HM Armed Forces (Navy, Army or RAF- regular or reserve). Indeed, the term applies to all UK exServicemen and women. There are an estimated 5.5 million in the country and with their wives, husbands, partners or children, they compnse the 10.5 million strong Veterans Community.

Are veterans all elderly?

Certainly not! This is a common misconception but veterans can be any age from 18 to 100 plus. As soon as someone leaves the Armed Forces they become a veteran.

Hundreds of thousands are in their 20s, 30s and 40s.

Are National Servicemen veterans?

Yes. The youngest is now aged 62 plus there are an estimated 2.2 million in the UK.

Who else can be called a veteran?

Veterans status also applies to a number of special groups such as those who served in Polish detachments under British command in WWII and Merchant Mariners who saw duty in military operations.

Do you need to have seen action to be a veteran?

No. Veterans need not have served overseas or in conflict.

How does Service Personnel and Veterans Agency support veterans?

The Agency administers the Armed Forces Pension Scheme and makes payments to veterans injured or disabled through service in the Armed Forces and to the widows, widowers and civil partners of those killed in service. In addition, the (free) Veterans Helpline and website provide sound advice on many topics. We may redirect enquiries to a range of organisations that work in partnership with the Agency to support the Veterans Community.

The Helpline has up-to-date information on central! local Government and 500 plus exService organisations and other voluntary groups.

What kind of advice can I get?

On almost any matter but largely on statutory benefits and pensions, money worries, loans and grants,

emergency accommodation, finding a Job, retraining, health issues, any welfare concern, Service records and medals.

Who can get the advice?

There are no restrictions but mainly veterans, their relations and friends and professional advisers acting on their behalf.

5 WAYS TO GET HELP

1. Call the Helpline -

FREE 0800 169 2277

Minicom (textphone) users call
0800 169 3458

overseas callers +44 1253 866043

All callers speak directly to a UK based Agency adviser. You may be offered a call-back if lines are particularly busy.

Lines are open:

Monday to Thursday: 8.15am-5.15pm

Friday: 8.15am-4.30pm

2. Write to us

at Veterans Advice Team, Service Personnel and Veterans Agency, Tomlinson House, Norcross, Thornton-Cleveleys FY53WP

or e-mail :

veterans.help@spva.gsi.gov.uk

or fax: 01253 332014

3. More personal attention required?

Sometimes a veteran will need help in completing forms or may have needs that are best dealt with through a personal visit. The Agency has a national network of welfare offices and a home visit can be arranged to resolve personal matters or issues of concern on a one-to-one basis.

Simply call 0800 169 2277 and ask for your nearest regional welfare office or look in the local telephone directory under 'Veterans Agency' or 'Service Personnel and Veterans Agency.'

4. Get online

at www.veterans-uk.info to access over 20,000 pages of advice, guidance and links.

5. Polish veterans call

01626 353961

If you (or someone you know) served in Polish forces under British command in WWII or were displaced from Poland during 1939.-45, then you (or they) may be eligible for long term residential or nursing care at the Government's Ilford Park Polish Home in Devon. Called 'Little Poland', it currently accomodates around 100 veterans.

Other useful information

The Minister for Veterans welcomes comments on how the quality of life can be improved for UK veterans and their families. The Minister is spearheading a cross-Government programme to improve services.

Write to the Minister at : Veterans Policy Unit, Ministry of Defence, Floor 7 Zone I, Main Building, Whitehall, London, SW1A 2HB.

War Pensions Committees are independent statutory bodies that consult with Ministers, raise public awareness, support and monitor the work of the Agency's welfare service and help resolve the problems of individuals, war pensioners, war widows war widowers and civil partners.

To contact your nearest committee call 0800 169 2277, or go on line at www.veterans-uk.info

Ministry Of Defence Army Personnel Records

HISTORICAL DISCLOSURES

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) keeps the records of former members of our Armed Forces for administrative use after their discharge. The Army Personnel Centre - Historical Disclosures Section has access to Army records dating back to the 1920s. Records of service prior to then, such as World War 1 records, are held at the National Archives (formerly Public Record Office), Kew.

INFORMATION HELD ON FILE

There is not as much detail held on Army personal files as people think. Army files are paper-based records that follow the career of the individual and, in most cases, make little mention of theatres of operation or action seen. Medals and awards are recorded but citations are never included. Only very rarely does a file contain a soldier's photograph, and photographs are not held in the Archive. Some files contain more information than others and we have no way of knowing what any particular file holds until we have looked at it. Regimental War Diaries, which are held at the National Archives (see 'Helpful Contact Addresses') may be of more use than Army personal files in providing an insight into an individual's

war experience.

THE SERVICE PROVIDED

For former Army personnel, their widows or widowers, we can supply copies of service documents or confirmation of particular aspects of service from those records we hold. There is no charge for this service. We can provide the same service for members of the family or other members of the public, subject to consent of the next of kin and the payment of a fee.

OTHER RECORDS

If we do not hold records for the service in which you are interested, there is a list of addresses where you may be able to find help later on in this leaflet.

ARMY RECORDS

Historical Disclosures has access to the records of all Army personnel discharged from regular or reserve service between 1921 and 1997 except Officers and Soldiers of the Foot Guards Regiments. These records are held at the Regimental Headquarters in Wellington Barracks, Birdcage Walk, London, SW 1E 6HQ.

RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Information from files can be released to former Army personnel, and in the case of deceased individuals, the next-of-kin or legal representative. We will also provide information to anyone who has the written consent of the former service person, or if appropriate, their next-of-kin. We take our legal obligations regarding confidentiality very seriously and are careful to protect the personal information we hold. This is why we ask for proof of death and next-of-kin details.

THE DATA PROTECTION ACT

The Data Protection Act of 1998 gave former soldiers and officers a statutory entitlement to access to information about them held by the Ministry of Defence, including personnel records. If you are a former member of the Army and wish to be provided with copies of your service record please apply, enclosing proof of your identity e.g. a copy of your driving licence, passport or a utility bill, and details of your service, to the following address: Disclosures 2 (Data Protection Cell) Mail Point 5 15 Army Personnel Centre Kentigern House 65 Brown Street GLASGOW

N.B. Entitlement to information under the Data Protection Act exists only in respect of the individual concerned.

HOW RECORDS ARE LOCATED

If Historical Disclosures are provided with the service details of the ex-service person then the task can be quite straightforward. However, when these are incomplete or unknown, it can be like looking for a needle in a haystack. Ideally we need the full name, date of birth, Army number, regiment and year of discharge of the individual. We will do our best to help but we do need you to provide as much information as possible. The more clues you are able to provide, the more chance we have of locating the file. Please note, if you do not know either the date of birth or the service number of the subject of your enquiry - a successful search for the file is unlikely, no matter how much other information you are able to provide.

ESTIMATED REPLY TIME TO A LETTER

Urgent welfare enquiries from organisations helping former service men and women are given priority over family interest enquiries. We endeavour to supply you with information as soon as possible, but a wait of 4 months or more would not be unusual.

CHARGES FOR INFORMATION

There is no charge for the service provided by Historical Disclosures to ex-service personnel enquiring about their own service or to widows or widowers asking about their spouse's service.

ALL OTHER ENQUIRERS ARE CHARGED £30.00 WHICH IS NON-REFUNDABLE.

Charges are made because in 1986 it was decided that the cost of answering non-official enquiries was an unfair charge to the taxpayer. Consequently, the only alternative to turning down such requests is to recover part of the costs of the tracing and researching activities involved in answering them. The cost is open to review annually.

STEPS TO BE TAKEN NOW

Former Army personnel need only write a simple letter specifying their request and provide proof of identity such as a copy of a driving licence or utility bill.

Widows/Widowers enquiring about the service of their deceased spouse must provide:

A letter detailing your request

Proof of death if the service person died after leaving the service

* Confirmation that you are Next-of-Kin

Everyone else must send us:

Consent to disclosure from the person about whom you are enquiring or Power of Attorney if appropriate or if he/she is deceased, the consent of his/her next-of-kin

Proof of death if the service person died after leaving the service

A cheque or postal order for £30.00 made payable to "MOD Accounting Officer"

PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH

Army Contact Addresses

Officers or Soldiers whose service ended before 1921*

The National Archives

Ruskin Avenue

Kew

Richmond

Surrey

TW9 4DU

Telephone 020 8876 3444

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk

*Microfilm copies of World War One Service Records are also held by the Church of Jesus Christ and the Latter Day Saints (Mormons).

Films can be requested for viewing at their local Family History Centres.

www.familysearch.org

Officers or Soldiers whose service ended between 1921 and 1997

Army Personnel Centre

HQ Secretariat

Historical Disclosures

Mail Point 400

Kentigern House

65 Brown Street

Glasgow

G2 8EX

**Officers and Soldiers of the
Foot Guards Regiments**

Regimental Headquarters
The ***** Guards
Wellington Barracks
Birdcage Walk
London
SW1E 6HQ

***** (Insert as appropriate: Grenadier,
Coldstream, Scots, Irish or Welsh).

**Officers or Soldiers whose regular or
reserve service ended after 1997**

Army Personnel Centre
HQ Secretariat
Disclosures Section 1
Mail Point 520
Kentigern House
65 Brown Street
Glasgow
G2 8EX
Tel 0845 600 9663

Royal Navy Contact Addresses

Officers aged 60 or under

Naval Secretary (OMOBS)
Room 169,
Victory Building
HM Naval Base
Portsmouth
POL 3LS

**Officers born before 1914
Ratings enlisted before 1924**

The National Archives
Ruskin Avenue
Kew
Richmond
Surrey
TW9 4DU
Telephone: 020 8876 3444
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk
enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk

Ratings enlisted after 1924

NPP Accounts 1, AFPAA
Centurion Building
Grange Road
Gosport
Hampshire
PO13 9XA

**Royal Marines Contact
Addresses**

**Officers and Other Ranks enlisted
before 1925**

The National Archives
Ruskin Avenue
Kew
Richmond
Surrey
TW9 4DU
Telephone: 020 8876 3444
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk
enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk

**Officers and Other Ranks enlisted
after 1925**

Historical Records Office Royal Marines
Centurion Building
Grange Road
Gosport
Hampshire
PO1 3 9XA

**Royal Air Force Contact
Addresses**

**Officers whose service ended in 1920
or later Airmen whose service ended
in 1928 or later**

PMA (Sec) IM 1 b
Room 5
Building 248a
RAF Innsworth
Gloucester
GL3 1EZ
Telephone: 01452 7 1261 2

Officers whose service ended in 1920 or earlier and Airmen whose service ended in 1928 or earlier

The National Archives
 Ruskin Avenue
 Kew
 Richmond
 Surrey
 TW9 4DU
 Telephone: 020 8876 3444
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk
enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk

OTHER USEFUL CONTACT ADDRESSES**Service Medal Enquiries**

MOD Medal Office
 Building 250
 RAF Innsworth
 Gloucester
 GL3 1HW
 Telephone: 0800 085 3600

Regimental Histories

The Imperial War Museum
 Lambeth Road
 London
 SE1 6HZ
 Telephone: 020 74 16 5000
www.iwm.org.uk

Regimental War Diaries and Information on Citations

The National Archives
 Ruskin Avenue
 Kew
 Richmond
 Surrey
 TW9 4DU
 Telephone: 020 8876 3444
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk
enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk -

War Graves Enquiries

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission
 2 Marlow Road
 Maidenhead
 Berkshire
 SL6 7DX
 Telephone: 0 1628 634221
www.cwgc.org

Indian Army Officer's Records

British Library
 Asia, Pacific and Africa Collection
 96 Euston Road
 London
 NW1 2DB
www.bl.org

War Pension Enquiries

Veterans' Agency
 Norcross
 Blackpool
 FY5 3WP
 Telephone: 0800 169 2277
www.veteransagency.mod.uk

Identification of Uniforms

National Army Museum
 Royal Hospital Road
 Chelsea
 London
 SW3 4HT
 Telephone: 0207 730 07 17
www.national-army-museum.ac.uk

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,
Further to your email thank you for allowing me to place this small memorial in The Covenanter.

In memory of Private John Dallas 290888 1st/8th Bn, Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) who died on 2/11/1917 at Umbrella Hill, Gaza Remembered with honour Granddaughter Agnes and Great Granddaughter Sarah

Yours etc
Sarah Rogers

Editors Note: About 2am on the 2nd November 1917 the 4th Royal Scots together with X and Z Company 8th Battalion, climbed out of the trenches and deployed in four waves on tapes already laid out nine hundred yards from EL Arish Redoubt. The deployment was observed by the enemy, who immediately opened fire causing casualties. With magnificent steadiness the 4th Royal Scots, followed by the two companies of the 8th Battalion advanced on a front of three hundred yards ... when the barrage lifted the leading ranks swept over the trenches to the third and fourth lines; the succeeding waves cleared up the first and second lines. The Turks resisted stubbornly in dug-outs and saps and for sometime prevented the capture of the final objective known as Little Devil Trench, but by 3.15 am all had been gained. The casualties suffered by the Regiment between the 31st October and the 7th November were, 7th Battalion 37 all ranks killed, 126 wounded - 8th Battalion 35 all ranks killed and one hundred and four wounded. (The History of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) 1910 – 1933)

Sir,
I attended the Dedication of the Plaque to Serjeant Hugh Gavin of the 9th Battalion Cameronian (Scottish Rifles) who was killed at Paschendale on the 29th of September 1917. His name is remembered on the Tyne Cot Memorial. His son Hugh T H Gavin never knew his late father. Hugh is a Normandy Veteran and wished his late father to be remembered. The Standard Bearers Bill Gough, Robert Gracie and Eddie Wallace represented the Organisation by parading the Organisation Standard. I took

along Margaret Ballantyne who enjoyed the service of dedication too. The hosts Millport RBLs Branch arranged transport and hospitality for the service.

Yours etc
Andy McArthur

Sir
9th Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) at Moyland Wood, Germany: Operation Veritable Feb/March 1945

In September 2008, I have been asked to accompany a study group of the Officers of 2nd (Infantry) Brigade to Germany. This is a repeat of a previous battlefield study of this operation and also of the subsequent Operation Blockbuster.

Part of the study includes the action of the Canadian Army in the attack at Moyland Wood near the Dutch/German Border. This was initiated on 14th February 1945 by 15th (Scottish) Division ñ then under command of the Canadian Army. The 9th Battalion of the Regiment was a member of 15th Scottish, and was heavily involved. Being personally concerned with Veritable and Blockbuster in another sector, I have little detail of the Moyland Battle other than from the War Diary and the Regimental History. While the main presentation about Moyland will relate to the Canadian side of the attack this will be given by a Canadian Colonel and Military Historian have been asked to deal with the 15th (Scottish) Division, and particularly the 9th Battalions attack on the wood itself.

I would be most grateful if any reader who served with 9th Battalion in and around that time, and who can recall the operating conditions, or any particular incidents relating to the action would contact me? I will have any lengthy telephone call charges reversed to my account!

Yours etc
Cliff Pettit,
Tel: 01665 602401

Sir,
Two 19th Century Cameronian Knives. I wonder if anyone can help. The knives and sheaths - illustrated here- were found by a widow friend in her attic. They were alongside a tulwar which she knew had



been given to her late husband by a sikh for saving the lives of his family in 1947, at the time of the partition of India. The knives she had never seen before though she assumed had been acquired about the same time. I have shown them to three antiques experts whose opinions on them differed so my questions are ; -



1. Were they completely made: in India, or elsewhere, or taken there and then decorated. North America has even been suggested.
2. Did infantry regiments have workshops in the 19th Century, perhaps caring for horse tack? -



3.To which family does the crest belong-McFarlane or Moncrieff or other?

4. Was it usual to decorate knives and similar items in an individual style!

They are certainly not army issue. The knives themselves are 13½ and 14½ respectively; the handles are not of shagreen but of wood with criss-cross patterning finely done; the steel blades and the brass are not of high quality although the inscribed decoration is.

Any light that can be thrown on the origin of these unique Regimental items would be of great interest.

yours etc,
J Burrell

Sir,

Thank you for another excellent edition of *The Covenanter* , and congratulations to Philip Grant too for another extremely interesting and erudite essay on the Regiment, this time his article on Cameronian VC holders, *The Bravest of the Brave*. I hope he will not take it amiss if I have a quibble over one aspect when can a regiment claim a VC as one of its own? He explains some of the difficulties lucidly in discussing Evelyn Wood's VC, but he might have taken the argument further. I suggest that the acid test is that the holder should be "cap-badged" to the regiment at the time of the deed.

A case in point is the VC won by Surgeon Anthony Home, and also by Assistant Surgeon William Bradshaw. Anthony Home spent some three years with the 90th Perthshire Light Infantry but was never commissioned in the Regiment as such. My late uncle, Major Anthony Home, South Wales Borderers, was a direct descendant of his famous namesake and the citation of his forebear's VC used to hang in his house, but he never regarded it as a 90th VC and the fact that the VC is in the Army Medical Services Museum tells its own story. This of course should not detract from the great pride that the Regiment can take in that both VCs were won while the holders were serving with it. As a postscript, your readers may be interested to know that my uncle pronounced his name "Hume" in the Scots fashion as Surgeon Anthony Home would have done.

Another article which caught my eye was Tom Russell's fascinating account of the 10th Battalion and particularly his remarks about the commander of A Company, Captain John Frost, shortly returned from

service with the Iraqi Levies and tongue tied in female company. I was General Johnny Frost's ADC, initially when he commanded 52nd Lowland Division and then when he was GOC Troops Malta and Libya. I can recall him telling me that his posting to the Iraqi Levies was the result of collusion between his commanding officer and his father, a Brigadier-General in the Indian Army, who were anxious to remove him from what they considered to be an unsatisfactory love affair! Shy with women or not, he married the strikingly beautiful Jean Lyle in 1947. By then he was a war hero, and one of the reasons he gave me for volunteering for the special forces was that he didn't see eye to eye with the Adjutant, presumably of the 10th Battalion.

While we were in Malta Johnny Frost decided that my military education needed broadening and I was despatched to do a short attachment to the Libyan Army, or more precisely the Cyrenaica Defence Force. King Idris was still on the throne and although speculation was rife as to who would succeed him, Libya was a stable country. Iraq, Libya - how the world has changed!

Yours etc,
Robin Buchanan-Dunlop

Sir,
Please find enclosed photographs taken in Aden by the Regimental photographer S/Sgt John Reily A coy who by rights should have been the CO's Escort, as he was such a keen photographer he was given this job. He stayed in the next tent to me in the Red Fan and before he left he gave me these photographs they may be of some use to you or the museum.

After the Regiment disbanded I went to the Gordons as a WOII but did not fit in and I was always 'The Cameronian' every job I got I was being tested. I was promoted to TQMS after our second NI tour and then I took a secondment to teach Chinese Soldiers in Honk Kong which was great for my infantry skills. I retired after almost 5 years in Hong Kong having completed my 22 years service.

I got a bit fed up with the UK weather and moved to Australia 20 years ago and found it was the best thing we have ever done, all my family are over here along with of my grandchildren. Half of my family are in Brisbane and the remainder with us on the Sunshine Coast

We are both in good health, I run four days a week and do weight training about five days a week, when asked recently 'why do you do it?' 'Because I can!'

I'm also in the local lions club and at the moment 3rd vice president and PR officer. We have a big garden and won the county 'Most Colourful Garden.'

My wife Margaret has a large orchid collection of over 200 orchids so that's about everything in a nutshell.

I will be sorry to see the end of the Regimental Magazine, it most certainly kept me up to date. I do write back and forth to some of my old comrades so I won't be completely out of touch.

yours etc,
Ian Collinson

Sir,
I thought you would like this photo taken in Malaya in 1953 of 7&8 platoon "C" coy. I also enclose an account of my time with the Regiment.



Here are members of "C" Company, 7 & 8 Platoons and nearly all national servicemen aged 19-22 as we experienced the delights of jungle warfare in 1952-3.

Our base was Awat Camp near Gemas, Johore, where we soon slipped into the routine: maybe out on patrol on Monday, spending three nights in the jungle before returning for a shower and a night in bed on the Thursday, then two days in camp with a night's guard duty, before going out on patrol again. The only variation was if you were in camp on Sunday, you got cold meat salad for dinner and the afternoon off.

No crew haircuts just short back and sides and most will be grey headed like myself now (front row second from the left) and we did not need to blacken up as after half-an-hour in the jungle with the sweat pouring out of you, you were soon black.

Doing stag at night, you'd be accompanied by the camps four dogs and have to fight them for a space to lie down on the guard tent floor afterwards. By day you might be standing guard at the gate of one of the Kampongs to ensure nothing was smuggled in or out to aid the terrorists. I have pungent memories of ordering one man with a milk churn on his bicycle to "Open up" only to discover he was !DAN,DAN the sanitary man.

On patrol, we were meant to wear canvas jungle boots - a dead give-away to the bandit trackers, so we'd wear sand shoes just like theirs.

All day we'd be in and out of the river, up to our ankles, up to our necks, before an evening meal from a can (I'd enliven mine with an Oxo cube) we'd fold the can lids in four and drop them in the empty cans before leaving them on the track as an audible alarm if bandits approached.

Those not doing stag would then bed down stillwet, under the thin green blanket they'd wrap you in if you were killed. By morning you'd be dry and ready to go in the river again.

The leeches were the worst thing-you had to burn them off with a cigarette. Our tracker dog, Monty, suffered even more when a hornet stung his private parts- bad news for his handler, who had to suck the sting out. But we pressed on, through the Malayan downpour. I remember being stood down one day and with the wireless operator illicitly listening to Radio Singapore's Top Ten with Jo Stafford singing "See the jungle when its wet with rain"

"See it?" We cried "We're standing in it"

With us were the Iban trackers from Borneo, who had their own culinary habits. One of them found a turtle in a stream and carried it for two days on his back- pack-alive and looking around most comically- before propping it on two bricks over a fire back in camp to cook it for their dinner.

One time we went on a combined operation with the SAS to destroy a bandit camp-a large affair with sheds full of dry firewood parade ground and a factory for making guns from conduit tubing, wrapped tightly with wire to reinforce it. After we'd spent the night there and searched the place, the SAS men threw phosphorous grenades into them. When the bandits returned they wouldn't have found much left of their camp.

By New Year of 1953, the end of our tour of duty was in sight. As the Officers of the Regiment served us our New Years Day

dinner, the Pipe Major spotted me struggling with a turkey drumstick and offered some friendly advice:"Just pick it up in your fingers, son-and enjoy it!"

yours etc,

Ronald S Henderson.

Sir,

In spite of the fact that I knew it was inevitable, I was very saddened to read the our magazine was going out of production. I have thoroughly enjoyed reading all the Regimental news over the years

Yours etc

James Borthwick

Sir,

I am sorry to inform you that my husband James Borthwick died yesterday. We had just received the invitation to the commemoration of the disbandment of the Cameronians, and he especially asked me to write to you and thank you for the invitation but explain he could not come. However he did say to tell you he hoped you had a very memorable gathering.

He was always a very proud Cameronian and thoroughly enjoyed reading the Covenanter, often sending you articles for it. He was certainly very sad to see such a long Edition coming to an end.

yours etc,

Katheleen Borthwick

Sir,

I promised to let you have details in regard to my uncle Rfn Jim Closs 6th Bn The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) :-

Jim Closs was born in Uddingston, attended the local school Muiredge Public. When he left school, like most other boys he went to work in the coal mines. He was always interested in the Cameronian Regiment. When he came of age he joined the Territorials (6th Bn The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) which was the Uddingston, Bothwell Battalion

When WW I started he was exempted as he worked in the Coal Mines but this did not suit him so he left the pits and joined the Army. After training he was sent to France where he became a Bombardier. However during training someone pulled the pin on a hand grenade and it exploded killing one or two. Rfn Closs received twenty two wounds and his left eye blown out, that was in 1916.

He was brought home to Scotland and spent

a long time in hospital where they managed to remove most of the shrapnel, but they were unable to remove one piece which from time to time caused him sickness and involved bringing up blood. He was transferred to St Dunstan's where they managed to save his other eye. He had lost the use of his left arm but after being moved to Gales Camp in Ayrshire the salt water helped the arm and he was able to move it slightly.

Following upon his discharge he worked with the Earl Haig ex service men's organization in the Blythswood area of Glasgow until the start of WWII. He was very independent and would not stop working. He got a job at Singers factory in Clydebank as Gate Man. However he said that he owed a lot to the Red Cross so he became a first aid man with that organization. He joined the Civil Defence organization and served his time on duty with the Red Cross.

When Clydebank was blitzed he was on duty both nights, during which time his home was destroyed and attended to 126 wounded by the raids,. He moved back to his mother's house in Uddingston but continued his work with Civil Defence. Subsequently he received an invitation to Buckingham Palace to receive an honour from the Queen in recognition of his work in the blitz namely for "Distinguished War Service" (he was one of the first men to receive this award). His name does not appear in any publications about the Clydebank blitz and he never boasted about his award.

Jim Closs, my uncle, was a proud Cameronian and one whose service was very much in the best traditions of the Regiment

Yours etc,
Bill Closs

Sir,

Funeral of George Edward Stewart on Thursday 19 April in Glasgow

As you suggested I contacted Mr. Andy MacArthur who was most helpful and saw that everything went well last Thursday – his colleagues from the organization were there in fine number and my father would have been very proud had he known of their presence.

His life was celebrated by a funeral service in Glenrothes in Fife then again at the crematorium at Cardonald in Glasgow which had been the one most used by the family in recent times..

My father was a much loved character and

his retiral collection raised the grand sum of £750m which will go to Rachel House the children's hospice in Fife – my father would have been so proud of this.

Yours etc,
Sheena Pirrie

Sir,

To all remaining Cameronians and families. I would like to wish you all a happy future, especially those in Minden 1960 -1964 one of the best postings for the families.

I can still remember most names and faces 40 years on.

I would also like to thank the editor for producing 'The Covenanter' for keeping us all informed and in touch.

Thank you and Goodbye.

yours etc,
Joyce Sneddon

MEMORY LANE

Disbandment of the 1st Battalion May 1968

"No old forgetful age will end our story,
Death cuts our days, but could not stain our
glory."

Such are the concluding lives of the poem which Leslie Dow, the last Commanding Officer of the Regiment, had composed as a tribute to its first leader, William Cleland, that devout Covenanter and fearless soldier, who had fallen in the Battle of Dunkeld in August, 1689, only a few weeks after he had marched his men from their first mustering on Douglas Dale.

Those two lines would seem to provide a fitting epitaph to the sad passing of the last battalion of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) a staggering event for us all, and one which, only a few years ago, we would never have regarded as altogether conceivable.

Now that that heartrending day however, has actually come and gone, bringing with it, as our old friend Padre Donald MacDonald had so truthfully said: "A pang of sorrow beyond the telling", we can only pray, and cling to the hope, however slender and seemingly forlorn it may be, that we Cameronians have not come "to the end of our story", and that some day, and in some way, our Regular Battalion will be restored. For who can tell what tasks may face the British Army in the years ahead, or can be sure that the devoted services of famous fighting Regiments such as ours, can be so lightly dispensed with for all time?

We have now perhaps, become more or less resigned to the periodic and far-reaching measures which have been (and continue to be) introduced "to streamline the Army", or "to tailor it to the requirements of the Nuclear Age" - as their purpose has so often been described by the Powers-that-Be.

Looking back however, we remember how utterly dumfounded and distressed we all were in 1947 when the first of these unwelcome and previously unforeseen steps was put into operation. That was the year when one of the two regular Battalions of every Infantry regiment was disbanded - or,

as the Authorities had rather beguilingly put it, "was placed in suspended animation!"

It was then that our own Regiment had lost its original and famous 1st Battalion; only so recently come from its arduous campaigns in Burma, where its brave exploits had added so much to its already splendid reputation, and where a Higher Commander of world-wide renown, had said of its Officers and Men: "They are absolutely bloody magnificent!"

At first, there had seemed to be a chance that the "suspended" units might, at some future date, be "re-animated", but in the following year, our hopes were shattered upon the arrival of instructions from the War Office, that all surviving regular battalions were henceforth to be called "First" Battalions, regardless of their previous titles.

Thus it was, that in August, 1948, our original 2nd battalion (the one-time "Perthshire Greybreeks") had changed its number, and in becoming our new "1st" battalion, was thereafter regarded as the embodiment of both the former Regular battalions.

Those disbandment's and the subsequent changes which the Infantry have had to undergo, have brought a sad end to the time-honoured and popular "Regimental System", which had survived the test of two World Wars, and which most of us had probably regarded hitherto, as the very bedrock upon which any further re-organisation of the Army would be based.

That System had come into force with the Cardwell reforms on 1881, and it may be of interest here to review it.

Prior to 1881, nearly all Regiments of the Line had been of single-battalion strength, and had no organisation behind them, to maintain their links with the localities in which they had first been raised. On the contrary, they had been obliged to obtain their recruits from the areas in which they had happened to be stationed from time to time, and when serving abroad, had often had to take over men from other regiments which were on their way home. This had made it virtually impossible for Scottish, Irish and Welsh regiments to maintain their National character. For example, it is recorded, that a party of 148 recruits who

had joined the "90th" soon after its arrival in Belfast in March 1803, there were 55 Englishmen, 47 Scotsmen, 28 Irishmen, 11 Manxmen, 5 Welshmen, 1 German and a Spaniard! In 1881 however, single-battalion regiments were amalgamated in pairs (in arbitrary "marriages" which were by no means popular at the time), to form new regiments, each of two battalions which were to take it in turns to serve at Home and Overseas. At the same time, a Depot for each of these new regiments was established in the Town, Country or geographical district to which that Regiment was thenceforth to be permanently linked. It was in that year, that the "26th Cameronians" and the "90th Perthshire Light Infantry" had been amalgamated to form the 1st and 2nd Battalions respectively, of the (then) new Regiment, The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and that the latter was to become the County Regiment of Lanarkshire (with a Depot at Hamilton), and to have the distinction of being Scotland's only Rifle Regiment.

In 1908, the "Regimental System" was extended and strengthened by Lord Haldane (the Secretary for War) who established the Territorial Force (later to be re-named the Territorial Army), by converting all the separate Volunteer and Militia Units up and down the Country, into Territorial and Special Reserve Battalions respectively, which he then allotted to the existing regiments of the Regular Army. As a result of that plan, the formed 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers became respectively, the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th Territorial battalions of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and the formed 3rd and 4th Militia Battalions became the 3rd and 4th Special Reserve Battalions of the Regiment. That had been the springboards from which our own Regiment, has been able to muster as many as 27 battalions (10 of which had taken the Field) during the First World War, and our two Special Reserve Battalions had turned out some 2,000 Officers and 100,000 other Ranks between them, as reinforcements for our fighting battalions.

Value of the "Regimental System"

Although some of those Cameronian units of 1908 had disappeared, or had been converted to other Arms before the outbreak of the Second World War, the "Regimental System" had nevertheless remained basically unchanged, and had enabled the Regiment during the course of that War, to produce

eight Battalions - five of which had fought with outstanding valour in its wide-spread campaigns, and had earned Battle Honours of which we are all so justifiably proud. It had been under that System, that our regimental Family Circle had become such a wonderfully happy and united one, and that such a tremendous spirit of camaraderie and of pride in the Regiment (as signified in the old saying "Aince a Cameronian, aye a Cameronian") had grown up amongst all its members.

Post-War Changes in Infantry Organisation

We can surely be forgiven therefore, for having viewed with feelings of nostalgia - aye, and with considerable misgivings - the abolition of that System, under the successive stages of Infantry reorganisation which have followed those disbandments of famous regular battalions in 1947. At an early stage, many Territorial battalions were disbanded or amalgamated, leaving our own Regiment with one only - our 6/7th Battalion.

Then came the linking of the regiments into geographically-based Brigades and Groups, some of which, bowing to what they foresaw perhaps, to be the trend of future events, elected to become larger Regiments.

Only a few years later, in these columns of the *Covenanter*, we were expressing our profound sympathy for the members of the many fine regiments which had lost their separate entities and historic names in the large number of arbitrary regimental amalgamations that had then just taken place, and our heartfelt relief at our own Regiment's escape from a similar misfortune. An escape which has now turned out to have been so short-lived.

At about that time too, came the news that Regimental Depots were to be closed down, and were to be replaced by Brigade ones - a move which actually took place so far as the Lowland Brigade was concerned, early in April 1964, and which resulted in the physical severance of three of the Lowland Regiments (including ours) from their own Regimental "Homes" and areas of the previous eighty years, or more.

Then early last year, in the re-organisation of the Auxiliary Forces, the Territorial Army as we had known it, ceased to exist, and was replaced by the much smaller T.A.V.R. This had resulted in the case of our own Regiment, in the disbandment of the 6/7th Cameronians - the last of our Territorial

Battalions - and in our being left with only two Cameronian Companies in the new set-up.

All these measures had brought about a complete change in the Regimental life that so many of us had enjoyed, and a departure from the System which had made each regiment a "home from home" for its members, and had provided its Regular personnel with security and stable careers.

The Hammer Falls

Now has come the day - and for us, the saddest one of all - when the last active elements of certain Regiments such as ours, which have given long and devoted service to Crown and Country throughout many past generations, and the histories of which, contain such proud reading, have been (or are about to be) removed from the Army List altogether, in disbandments of a kind which has hitherto been unknown in our time.

Following as it did, so closely upon our 1st Battalion's having been singled out for special praise by the highest military authorities, for the humane, yet efficient and highly successful way in which they had carried out their difficult and dangerous role in Aden, the Defence White Paper's announcement last July, that the Battalion was to be disbanded, had been all the more bewildering and hard to bear.

While a number of us may have reached that stage in life when we tend perhaps "to deprecate all change - even if it is for the better", it never-the-less seems probable all the same, that among military men of all ages, there will be more than a few who (with all respects to the Powers-that-Be), may rather have wondered whether all these drastic changes have indeed been "for the better", or whether some of them have not merely been the result of pressure from Politicians, who, regardless of the Country's Defence commitments, tend to look to its Armed Forces and the Army in particular, as a ready means of cutting down expenditure whenever the National Economy has run into difficulties! Be that as it may however, "Orders are Orders", and although this last one has been the most un-welcome and hard to bear of any which the Regiment had ever received during its long history of two-hundred-and-seventy-nine years, its soldiers have always obeyed their orders without argument - and they have done so now, in a way moreover, which was deeply moving to behold, not only for all the ex-members and

friends of the Regiment who were present at the 1st Battalion's Disbandment Parade at Douglas on the 14th May 1968, but for all the many thousands of people who will have viewed the Television Programme which has since depicted that Ceremony.

But then (and again we quote Padre MacDonald, who has known the Regiment so well during the past forty-three years) : 'It has never been the habit of Cameronians to whimper, and we shall not whimper now.' Today, Redford Cavalry Barracks at Edinburgh (only so recently the quarters of our 1st Battalion, and the scene then, of military bustle and activity), are silent and almost deserted. No longer are the mornings greeted there, with the bugler's cheerful sounding of 'Charlie! Charlie!' and the piper's 'Hey Johnny Cope', the rousing calls which, at the start of each new day since times of long ago, had wakened Cameronians and had summoned them to their duties. For that Battalion has now marched into the future happiness and good fortune of all its personnel, and (as the Colonel of the Regiment had so rightly foretold in his final address) part of the hearts of all who watched it go.

Looking to the future

It is at least something for us to be thankful for however, that two Cameronian Companies of the T.A.V.R. and our Cadets remain, to carry on the name, traditions and uniform of the Regiment, and it is upon those sub-units we must now pin our hopes, and must lavish all our allegiance and support.

Naturally, for as long as any ex-Cameronian exists, the spirit of the Regiment will continue, and will manifest itself in the activities of our Regimental Association and Clubs and in their perpetuation of our Annual Commemoration Ceremonies, Reunion Dinners and other gatherings of the 'Old and Bold, of all ranks.

Closing Words

We began this Editorial by quoting the last two lines of Lieut. Colonel Leslie Dow's recently-composed poem to the first of the Regiment's Commanding Officers. It now therefore seems appropriate that we should close it with the simple but nonetheless memorable words he had used towards the end of the recent Farewell Ceremony at Douglas, when he had reported to Lieut.-General Sir Derek Lang, the C.-in-C in Scotland, and had sought the latter's permission to complete the final steps in

the disbandment of the Battalion.

They were the last words to be spoken by a Commanding Officer on a Cameronian parade, and their very simplicity conveyed the sad significance of that tens and historic moment, more eloquently than any formal phrase could possibly have done.

"We have to go now, Sir! he said. 'It is time for us to go'.

Greeting and Good Wishes to All Wearers of the Douglas Tartan

Of all the many issues of 'The Covenanter' which have appeared in the forty-six years since our magazine was first published, none has ever carried an account of a more grievous event in the fortunes of the Regiment, than that which now features in this current number. Indeed, until only a short while ago, we could scarcely have believed that there would ever come a day when these pages would be recording the closing hours of our Regular Battalion, and when we should be reading the news of its activities for the last time. Even now, it is still hard to believe that this has actually come upon us, and that a Regiment of such ancient and romantic origins, and of such wide renown for its fighting qualities, has now been rendered inactive - at the stroke of a pen. This last appearance in 'The Covenanter,' of the 'Notes from the 1st Bn.,' which have so regularly kept us in touch with the serving members of the Regiment through the years, and have ever inspired us with pride in their achievements, brings home to us how much we are going to miss such news in future - and at the same time, reminds us of our great debt of gratitude to the writers of those Notes, who have given up so much of their spare time to prepare them, and who must often have found it a wearisome task. We feel sure therefore, that all our readers would not only wish to join us in expressing our sincerest thanks to those faithful scribes, but to join us too in sending our very warmest regards and best wishes for the future, to each and all of the regular officers and men who, until a few weeks ago (whether serving with the Battalion, or in Extra-Regimental Employments) were wearing Cameronian uniform. We hope that those who are now in other Corps and Regiments, will meet with happiness and success in their new 'homes,' and that those few who have left the Army, will find occupations to their liking, and every good fortune awaiting them in civilian life. We

hope too, that they will remember 'the Old Firm' and their former comrades in it, as we shall remember them, and that we shall have the good fortune of meeting them again in the not too distant future, at some of our future Regimental Reunions, where they can always be sure of a ready welcome. May God bless them all.

Farewell Speeches and Messages during The 1st Battalion's Disbandment Parade

The Message from Her Majesty The Queen

(read out by Lieut-General Sir George Collingwood, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., Colonel of the Regiment). 'Please convey my warm thanks to the Commanding Officer, Officers and Men of the 1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) for their loyal message on their disbandment.

This is a sad occasion, but the Regiment can look back with great pride, as I do, on a distinguished history of nearly three hundred years of service to their country. As your Sovereign, I wish to pay tribute to the splendid achievements of a fine Scottish Regiment, and to wish you every good fortune in the future.'

Elizabeth R.'

The Message from His Majesty King Gustaf VI Adolf of Sweden, Colonel-in-Chief of the Regiment

(read out by General Count Bonde, His Majesty's Aide-de-Camp General).

'I much regret that I have not found it possible to attend the final disbandment ceremonies on the 1st Battalion of my Regiment.

I am deeply grateful to Lieut.-Colonel Dow and all ranks of the 1st Battalion, for their faithful and distinguished service in my Regiment, and I am proud of the steadfast manner in which they have faced up to and carried out the unwelcome orders for disbandment. I wish them and their families happiness and success wherever they may serve or work in future.

To the remainder of my Regiment, the Headquarters, the Territorial Volunteers, the Cadets and our Associations and Clubs, I would say this "I keep alive our' fine Regimental spirit, our' traditions and our customs, so that if the call should come for our Regular Battalion to be reformed, it will have a live and solid Regimental foundation on which to build. God bless you all."

The Address delivered by the Rev. Donald MacDonald (the much loved former Chaplain for many years in India, to each of our regular Battalions in turn).

"Cameronians! This is a grievous day for you and all of us here. We may well say it is a grievous day for Scotland, seeing that your' roots have been so closely intertwined with the troubled history of Church and State in this land. Today, you cease to be a regular arm of Her Majesty's Forces. It has never been the habit of Cameronians to whimper and we shall not whimper now, for, thank God, we can till this doleful moment with gratitude and pride. On this historic spot, we remember the men who on the 14th May, 1689, gave the Cameronian name to the Regiment of my Lord Angus," then raised as the 26th of Foot. They were men into' whose moral fibre the Bible as the Word of God, has woven its own strong and distinctive pattern. It is surely fitting that we should seek from that same Word, inspiration and encouragement to sustain the present hour. And here it is! From the 1st Chapter' of the Book of Joshua:-" Be strong and of good courage. Be not afraid, neither be disheartened, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

It is a Word for all of us. It is a Word for you who have been serving in the 1st Battalion, and over whose future may hang a cloud of uncertainty. I say to you: "Be of good courage." The mystic element of "Morale" has always been a feature of the Cameronians, and never more so than when facing grim situations. You could not fail to have been caught up in its strong influence. So take it with you to the various units where you continue your service. It will be an addition to their strength, and with your own disciplined minds It will be a rewarding possession to yourselves wherever you go. Our text has also a word for those who have given a lifetime of service to the Regiment, and to whom this day must bring a pang of sorrow beyond telling which lies at the heart of love. Yet they need not be disheartened, for to them is the precious remembrance of a ??? accomplished and a duty well done. To most of us here, and to many not here, so long as life lasts, this Regiment will never die. It shall live in our hearts till mind and memory flee.

So then, above all our regrets, there is gratitude to God for the blessings of the years, and there is pride in the exploits of

comrades past and present. Look at your Drums! They carry Battle Honours that are epic in British History. From them, we can take comfort that today's sad event has come to you, not because you or your forbears ever shirked any duty committed to your charge. It is not YOU 'who are being proved unworthy or unwilling to share the solemn trust of maintaining the dignity and furthering the destiny of this realm. Recent years speak their witness on that point, and it is a witness which can stand alongside the heroic story already engraved upon your annals.

You now move out of the Army List because of changes of emphasis in our Defence Systems coupled with economic duress - and political expediency. But be not disheartened.' The Army List is a document of temporary significance, liable to amendments or excision according to the whim and swing of governments.

So put pride in your step Cameronians! As you march out of the Army List, you are marching into History, and from your proud place there, no man can remove your name, and no man can snatch a rose from the chaplet of your honour. Be of good courage therefore! The Lord your God is with you wherever you go, and to His gracious mercy and protection, I now commit you. The Lord bless you and keep you, and make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen."

The Speech of Lieut.-General Sir George Collingwood, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O. (Colonel of the Regiment) addressed to Major-General F. C. C. Graham, C.B., D.S.O., D.L. (Colonel Commandant of the Scottish Division).

I speak for all Cameronians Scottish Riflemen, whether here present today, or unable to attend but here in spirit. we are greatly honoured by the presence here, of General Count Bonde (who has come from Sweden as the personal representative of our revered Colonel in Chief) - of the Duke of Hamilton the Earl of Angus, to whom we are deeply grateful for undertaking the sombre task of taking leave of the Regular Battalion of the Regiment, which was raised by his forbear, James, Earl of Angus, within a mile of this spot, on the 14th May, 279 years ago) - of Miss Douglas-Home

(representing her father, Sir Alec Douglas-Home, by whose kind permission we are holding this parade here today) - of General Sir Geoffrey Musson (Adjutant-General of the Forces), and General Sir Derek Lang (Commander-in-Chief in Scotland, and an old and trusty friend of the Regiment) -- of the Lord Lieutenant and Civic Chiefs of our own County of Lanarkshire - of eminent Ministers of the Church of Scotland, with which we have such close historic ties - and a host of friends and supporters of our Regiment from Lanarkshire and far beyond. Since we made our home in this County nearly a hundred years ago, we have received the support of the County and Burghs of Lanarkshire, of the Church of Scotland, and of the two great branches of the House of Douglas (whose tartan we wear), headed by the Dukes of Hamilton and the Earls of Home, and I feel sure that this support will be continued in even greater measure (as the need is greater), to our two Companies of Territorial Volunteers and our Army Cadets, the remaining rearguards of our Regiment, by whom we hold to life, and on whom rest our hopes of revival. I would appeal to all these great interests to exert their power and influence to keep in being these remaining elements of this famous and historic Regiment, which is not only ours but also theirs. General Graham, I address you as Colonel Commandant of the Scottish Division. We are very grateful for your presence here, and for the presence of so many of the Scottish Colonels and representatives of our Sister Regiments in Scotland and of those beyond, including the 7th Gurkha Rifles.

We are intensely proud of our 1st Battalion, and deeply grateful to Lieut.-Colonel Dow and all ranks for having so faithfully upheld the unique customs and traditions, the honour and high reputation of our Regiment.

When they disperse and go their various ways in the next few days and weeks, they will go with our hopes and prayers for their happiness and success wherever they may serve The Queen. We are happy, Sir, in the assurance that they will be welcome and honoured members of their new Regimental families. When the Battalion flag comes down in a short time and the Battalion marches away to lay down its arms, part of all our hearts will go with it. In a few days time, we shall deliver this Battalion flag to you for safe custody on behalf of the Regiment, in the Scottish Division, to keep among you

as a token of our Regimental spirit which, through our long history, has inspired all our devotion, all our valour, and all our sacrifices in the service of the Sovereign and of the Country. That spirit will of course, live on in our Territorial Volunteers and Cadet Units, and our Association and Clubs, but for the time being in the Regular Army, this flag must 'be its symbol.

We Cameronians cannot regard this disbandment as final, because we have sufficient conceit of ourselves to believe that in time of stress, our Country could ill afford to dispense with the services of such a well-tried and renowned fighting unit. Our record from 1689 until today, and the unusual, if not unique number of famous leaders our Regiment has produced, is the testimony of our worth. We would make of you, Sir, a particular request. That if and when it becomes necessary to expand the armed forces - and no wise man today, would assert that it could not happen --- then we would ask that you or your successor at that time, should urge the highest military authorities and the Secretary of State for Scotland as a first step to re-muster our Regular Battalion, so that it can fly this Flag again and take up its arms from where this fine Battalion is laying them down today. We believe that that would be the wish of our Sister Regiments in Scotland, in general of the people of our home County of Lanarkshire which is so strongly represented here today. It remains for me, Sir, on behalf of us all, to wish you and all Scottish Regiments good fortune and long life in the service of The Queen."

Reply by Major-General F.C.C. Graham, C.B., D.S.O. D.L. (Colonel Commandant of 'The Scottish Division) to the Colonel of the Regiment.

"General Sir George Collingwood and All Ranks, The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). On this dark day in the history of the Scottish Infantry, we, your Sister Regiments, stand beside you in deepest sympathy. Your proud Regiment, never before forced to yield to its enemies, is at long last overcome, not by sword, but by the stroke of a Whitehall pen. Like you, Sir, we believe that the Cameronian spirit will never die, and that your Regiment will rise again to bear arms against the Queen's enemies, and we pledge ourselves to do all in our power to keep your memory alive. To this end, we propose that the 14th May annually shall be held as ..

Cameronian Day" throughout the ranks of the Scottish Infantry. On that day, your Flag will fly on the ramparts of Edinburgh Castle, and at the two Scottish Infantry Depots. On that day also, a short history of your Regiment will appear in Daily Orders of each Scottish Battalion, and your Duty Pipe Calls will be sounded in their Barracks. By this means, we hope that your memory will live for ever green throughout the ranks of the Scottish Infantry, and indeed, among Scottish people. It remains only for me, on behalf of the Scottish Infantry, to salute you, Sir, and your illustrious Regiment."

The Brief Announcement by Lieut.-Colonel L.P.G. Dow (C.O. 1st Battalion) to the Commander-in-Chief in Scotland, that the moment had come for the 1st Battalion to be disbanded .

We have to go now, Sir! It is time for us to go."

The Reply by Lieut.-General Sir Derek Lang Commander-in-Chief, Scotland to Lieut.-Colonel Dow.

"Colonel Dow, I must conform to instructions I have received, and with very great regret, give you permission to disband."

The Sympathy of our Friends

We publish hereunder, some of the many expressions of sympathy which were received from Friends of the Regiment upon the disbandment of our 1st Battalion.

From Our Colonel-in-Chief H.M. The King of Sweden

Dear General,
I have received four silver tankards offered to me by the Officers (past and present) as a gift in memory of the disbandment of the 1st Battalion of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). I have great pleasure in accepting this beautiful gift, so intimately connected with the Regiment. I thank you and the Officers (past and present) of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) most sincerely for the gift, and for the kindness and friendship I feel it represents. The tankards will always remind me of the proud 1st Battalion, and of the sad day of its disbandment.
Stockholm, Royal Palace, 28th May, 1968.
(Signed) GUSTAF ADOLF R

From General Dwight Eisenhower, ex-President of America, and former Supreme Commander of the Wartime Allied Armies in Europe - 26th April 1968.

Dear General Collingwood,

By a letter from Lieutenant-General Sir Alexander Galloway, I have heard of the disbandment, by government order, of the Cameronian Regiment. As one who learned, both through history and through association with them during World War II, of their fighting qualities', I must express to you my great regret that their existence' as a Regiment is now to terminate.

The gallantry and morale of Scottish soldiers in the war became a byword throughout the Allied Armies in Europe and in Africa. Their deeds were an inspiration to us all. Beyond this, the Scottish people have been more than kind to my wife and me. We have been warmed by their welcome to us in their own country; indeed, through the generosity of the Scottish Trust, we have been given the privilege of a second home in Ayrshire

So it is with a feeling of real kinship to all Cameronians, that I send to them greetings and my lasting sense of obligation to those, living and dead, who played such a significant part in bringing victory over the Nazis and the destruction of Hitler's tyranny.

With best wishes and a Salute to Comrades-in-Arms of W.W.II.

Sincerely

(Signed) DWIGHT EISENHOWER.

From the Duke of Hamilton (Earl of Angus)- 15 May 1968.

I cannot attempt to express my feelings at the very moving Ceremony yesterday, but I would just like to tell you how very greatly I appreciated having the honour of taking the Salute, and saying a few words to the 1st Battalion just before that very moving Conventicle."

From Sir Alec Douglas Hume 6th June 1968

I ought to have thanked you for the Silver memento which you were so kind as to give me to mark the Cameronians' Douglas Ceremony. I won't say the last, because' I have a feeling that there will some time in the future, be another rally and rebirth. The plaque about which Hamilton spoke to me, will be a great addition to a historic scene'.

From Field Marshal Sir Gerald Templar.

"For what it is worth, I send you all, on

the tragic occasion which takes place on Tuesday, 14th May, my admiration for what your distinguished Regiment has achieved over the years. I do so particularly as an old Irish Fusilier, whose' Regimental forbears fought under that great soldier Thomas Graham-later Lord Lynedoch at the Battle of Barrosa in 1811. I only wish I could, have been present to pay my respects to you in person. This is a pretty poor letter, but it comes from my heart,

From Field Marshal Viscount Slim.

(a) His Signal to the Colonel of the Regiment-10th May 1968.

"On behalf of my Regimental Association and All-Ranks of the 7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles., I send you and all members of your Regimental Association and! all ranks of your 1st Battalion our warm greeting and sincere best wishes on this sad occasion in the' long and. distinguished history of your famous, Regiment. We feel deeply that the affiliation of our two' Regiments should have to be severed like this after only 20 years of close association. For me, this is a particularly painful and distressing milestone, for over the years I have been proud and honoured to be associated with you on active service. Although you will no longer have an active Battalion, the name of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and the traditions handed down from your forbears will live on, and not least 'in the hearts of the 7th Gurkha Rifles.

To all members of your Battalion, we send our very best wishes for the future."

(b) Extract from his letter to the Colonel of the Regiment.

'I am more sorry than I can say, to have' to miss saying goodbye to a Regiment I have served alongside in many parts of the world over the last forty years or so and which has always earned my highest respect. I had very close contact with it especially in Burma, where I personally owed a great deal to its officers and men. I would be grateful if you would give my warmest respects and good wishes to all Cameronians at the Parade and tell them that had it been possible, I would have been with them"

From General Jeffrey Baker, Chief of the General Staff.

"I send you my deepest sympathy on the' disbandment of your 1st Battalion. For

nearly 300 years, the Cameronians have given outstanding service to their country in countless gallant actions throughout the would.

I am particularly sad that this should come so soon the' 1st Battalions distinguished performance in Aden. However, the memory of the Cameronians achievements will remain as an example to us all in the years to come.

From Lieutenant-Colonel M. G. Borwick, Chairman of the Royal Scots Greys Association.

"On this sad occasion, all members of the Greys Association send you and all Cameronians, past and present, very sincere respects. We may have been Claverhouses Dragoons, as we were King's men., but log Years of friendship have erased the memories, of thos sad beginnings. We wish you all every good fortune in the future, whatever it may hold. We will never forget you all"

From Major-General P. M. Hunt, Colonel of the Queen's Own Highlanders-14th May 1968.

"All-Ranks. Queen's Own Highlanders greatly regret the passing of your distinguished Regiment. We extend our special sympathy to you personally, to Lieutenant-Colonel Leslie Dow, All-Ranks of the 1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), and your old comrades parading at Douglas today. Scotland will never forget You.

From Brigadier D. McQueen, Commander Lowland Area, in a Special Order of the Day-14 May, 1968.

"I wish to offer to the 1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) on this day, the sympathy and also the congratulations of all ranks serving in Lowland Area. Sympathy, because the Battalion was disbanded, congratulations for the very courageous way with which the Battalion faced this decision, and also for the manner in which right to the last moment of its existence at Douglas. the 1st Battalion maintained the very highest standards as set by their forbears. To all ranks of the 1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) I wish Good Luck for the' future' and my grateful thanks for all your excellent work during "your tour in Edinburgh."

IN MEMORIAM

To those they leave behind may their memories be happy ones

Roddy Munro

It is with great sadness we report the death of Roddy Munro who died suddenly on the 17th January 2007 two days after he returned to his home in Canada after a long wonderful holiday in Spain with his wife Dimp. Although the cause of Roddy's death was an aneurism in his stomach, Dimp believes that coming from two months sun in Spain into the worst ice storm in Toronto for years may have been detrimental to Roddy's health.



Roddy, a native of Edinburgh was one of the fifteen boys who joined the military band in Hamilton in 1946. I always saw Roddy as quiet and strong with ability to be friendly with everybody. I had every reason to be grateful to him because he ignored my then bad stammer and always treated me with kindness.

Roddy did not like swearing. If any of us forgot and swore in his presence, a look from Roddy would ensure that the offender would become silent or change to more acceptable words. Whenever Roddy was angry or slightly annoyed he would go no further than saying ruddy.

In Gibraltar, the boys had to provide a bout for boxing matches. Roddy and Don Gow were always chosen to fight. Don, the senior boy, bossed us around too much so we were delighted when Roddy beat him in each match.

Roddy served with every battalion posting

until his demobilization in December 1957. During his trombone training at Kneller Hall in Twickenham in 1950/1 he met and married Dimp. In 1960, they decided to emigrate to Canada and settled in Ottawa in Ontario. About this time two other boys of our era, Den Hall and Jimmy Lee, decided to continue their service with Canadian Service Bands.

Roddy joined General Motors and worked for them for thirty-two years until his retirement in 1994. He put his trombone to good use by playing in a local band sponsored by his firm: he later played in the Silverthorn Canadian Legion Band. He was able to relive his Cameronian days by playing in the parks on Sundays and for special events when a band was required.

Dimp said their life in Canada was a happy one. In common with other Canadians, Rod and Dimp saw as much of this vast country as possible by driving a camper. They drove as far as British Columbia and into the United States to Virginia. Those who live in the freezing, snowy climate of North America escape the cold by becoming what the Americans call 'snow birds' in their flight to the sun and spend part of the winter in Florida. Dimp said when their retirement loomed in sight they tried Florida but found that it did not appeal to them.

However, a solution was soon at hand, for they remembered an enjoyable demob holiday they had spent in Spain and decided to go there again. They immediately liked the atmosphere, bought a house in Malaga to avoid the Canadian winters. Dimp said they had originally planned to buy another camper to tour Europe. This did not become a reality, for as Dimp said: "Once Rod had hit the beaches and the bars of Spain he did not want to go anywhere else." Except a postcard told me he had taken Dimp to

Gibraltar for old times sake.

We send our condolences to Dimp, his son Roddy, Debbie and other members of his family and friends.

Bill Coughlan.

Ronnie Hoey

It is with great sadness we report the death of Mr Ronnie Hoey in May 2007

Kerr McGregor

It is with great sadness we report the death of Mr Kerr McGregor - who served with the Regiment for 1944-1947 and served in India at The Erskine Home on 3 June 2007.

Major Kenneth Muir Cooper 13th June 1930 - 27th July 2007

It is with great sadness we report the death of Ken Cooper he was born in Simla, India when his father was employed as a superintendent engineer with the Indian Railways. He returned to school in Edinburgh firstly at the Academy and then to Fettes. After leaving school he did an apprenticeship in marine engineering and then his National Service where he was commissioned into The Cameronians in 1950 and posted to join the 1st battalion which was serving in Malaya during the Emergency there He served with "B" Company under Major Peter



Bryceson where he spent most of his time out on patrol with his platoon in the jungle. They carried out several successful patrols against the terrorists and were responsible for a number of "kills". After completing his service, he moved to Belgium to work with his brothers engineering business and it was during this time that he met his future wife, Eleanor, who was also working in Brussels. Ken found civvy life boring after his army experiences and applied to rejoin again in 1954. He was accepted back into the Cameronians who were then stationed at

Barnard Castle and stayed with the 1st battalion when they moved to Buxtehude during which time he married. He took over the Mortar Platoon there which he commanded until 1958 which included time spent in Bahrain, Gilgil in Kenya,



Donald Sinclair and Ken Cooper

Muscat. Jordan and Nairobi . He spent his final period with the Cameronians in Minden before being seconded to Ghana as G3 with one of the Ghanaian Brigade HOs At this time, the Ghana Army was under the command of Gen Henry Alexander but after some political upheavals he returned to the UK and command was given to a Ghanaian brigadier. Ken was kept back as there was no Ghanaian available to do his job so he and his family stayed until he had completed a year after which he was posted to Aden for 2 years to complete his staff tour much to the dismay of his family who had already seen Aden from the troop ship "Devonshire" with the 1st Battalion on their return to the UK from Kenya! He served as Staff Capt. 'A' . with Aden Garrison HQ and was lucky enough to have a married quarter just outside the camp occupied by the King's Own Scottish Borderers who were extremely hospitable!

After leaving Aden Ken was posted to the Lowland Brigade Depot as Weapons Trg Officer a job he thoroughly enjoyed as it involved a lot of shooting and training of a team for Bisley. He was then posted to Jamaica for 3 years attached to the British Joint Services Training Team (BJSTT) which was a politically difficult job at times. Whilst still serving in Jamaica, he worked as the Administrative Officer for the Jamaican Defence Force Coastguard, a post which he thoroughly enjoyed especially when out on the patrol boats. His final period of Army service was spent with the RHF at Fort

George. Inverness and he retired in 1969 He had decided to buy a sub-post office/shop in Galloway which he ran very successfully for 6 years after which he and the family moved to Perthshire where he spent his final years as Cadet Executive Officer with the Perth and Kinross (subsequently the Black Watch Bn) Army Cadet Force.

in 1990 on taking early retirement, he and his wife Eleanor moved to the south of France where he enjoyed doing endless DIY jobs as well as the very relaxed lifestyle.

The last few years of his life were marred by increasingly poor health, with heart and lung problems and eventually a stroke in April, followed by a short final illness in July.

He is survived by his wife, Eleanor and three daughters, Alison, Caroline and Gilly and 7 grandchildren I was completely shattered to hear of Ken's death. I new he had had a stroke, and was told that he had gone into hospital, but never for a minute did I expect to hear that he was dead.

We first met in Minden when we both served in Support Company, he had the Mortar Platoon and I eventually had the Machine Gun Platoon. When the Battalion moved to Bahrain we were in Sitra and shared a room. I really was very fortunate, Ken was a delightful man to share a room with, and we got on very well. Again when Support Company moved to Kenya we shared a room in Gilgil. Don't ask me for how long I am an old man now, and I really can't remember, but we served together for at least two years and I have feeling that it may well have been three.

Just sitting here, thinking about him, I am struck by the thought of what a very real friend he was. I can think of no one else in the Regiment who one could trust and rely on more. That is not just me, I am sure there wasn't a single officer, warrant officer, N.C.O. or man, who would say a word against him, when it came to the crunch.

I was trying to think of a single word that would describe Ken. The first word that came to mind was popular, but that is not Ken, that is a cheap word, you can buy popularity, and Ken wasn't cheap. The word that really describes Ken is loved. He was an officer who was loved by all ranks, because he was completely honest, straight forward and sincere. He was a friend, in the true meaning of the word, who would give you the shirt of his back, if you asked him for it. He will be sadly missed.

I consider myself very fortunate to have

known him, to have served with him, and to count him as one of my very real friends. I shall miss him, but at my age not for very long, I am sure we will meet again. Mind you, I am in no hurry.

WAL Rodger

Bernard Kilpatrick D.C.M.

It is with sadness that we have to report the death of Former Sergeant Bernard Kilpatrick in October. He served with the 12th and 6th Battalions during the Second World War. He is thought to be the last member of the Regiment to be awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal in that conflict.

Born in Motherwell, he was a clerk with L.M.S railways prior to volunteering for military service in 1940. Family lore has it that he dared not return home for three weeks afterwards! It is said that after volunteering he did not return home for three weeks in order to escape his mother's wrath. He opted as his first choice, to join the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), and arrived at Hamilton towards the end of that year. He recalled the primitive conditions that existed in the old barracks, as well as the problems of training new recruits in wartime conditions. A blackout of all windows was in force, and Hamilton was constantly subject to air raid warnings, being on the flight path for German bombers heading for Glasgow. On these occasions all ranks were under orders to muster at Hamilton racecourse, across the road from the Barracks. No lights were allowed in the barrack rooms, as the opened doors during the troops' exit would have released shafts of light across the ground outside. The result was a chaotic hunt in the dark for one's clothes under pressure from the barrack room N.CO. to vacate the premises in the shortest possible time. Often men appeared at the racecourse partly clad or in all manner of dress.

Bernard was posted to the Mortar platoon, which at the time had neither weapons nor the Universal Carriers that was the establishment mode of transport. As a substitute, each man was issued with a 'sit up and beg' bicycle.

At the first parade the platoon formed up in threes, each man standing on the left of his bike, left foot on the pedal poised to push his steed into motion as he mounted. Unfortunately, no check had ever been made about ability to ride, and at the word of command 'Mount' it was soon apparent that very few were able to do so. The entire platoon finished up in an undignified heap

of arms, legs and tangled metal, which could barely be said to grace the parade square.

A posting to 12th Battalion and service in Iceland followed. In 1942 Bernard joined 6 Battalion, and by 1944, had been promoted Sergeant of 10 Platoon of B Company, at that time commanded by the Late Lt. Col. (then Major) Stanley Storm M.C. He remained with the 6th when 52nd Division joined the fighting in Europe. He was a participant in the epic Crossing of the Sloe at Walcheren, and in the fighting on the German/Dutch border at Breberen. As was the case with most infantrymen who survived action without harm for any length of time, he had several lucky escapes - on one occasion an enemy mortar bomb landed between his feet, but fortunately was a 'dud'. However it was in March 1944 at the conclusion of 'Operation Veritable' which took place between the Rivers Maas and Rhine, that he gained particular distinction.

On 9th March B Company was ordered to attack a factory to the rear of Alpon Village, some five miles from the Rhine banks. He was now a battle hardened veteran, and one suspects for this reason had been given as Platoon Commander, a young and inexperienced 2nd Lieutenant to take under his wing. 10 Platoon were to follow up 11 Platoon in a surprise assault. As Platoon Sergeant, Bernard was with platoon H.Q. at the rear. His platoon commander and the forward sections came under heavy fire, suffering severe casualties, and became cut off from H.Q. section. Several men lay wounded in the open. Still under heavy machine gun fire he unhesitatingly attempted to attend to them, while also trying to regain contact with the remnants of the platoon. He was wounded in the arm for his pains, but continued to try to offer support to his isolated comrades by seeking to locate the source of the enemy fire. He did this by standing in the open seeking to draw the enemy's fire on himself, and while returning it with the only remaining Bren gun available, received a further wound. Seeing that the attack was in dire trouble, standing in the open, he directed the laying down of a smoke screen in an attempt to buy time to reorganise, but then received a further and more severe wound in the shoulder. It was only then that he was persuaded to retire from the fray, taking with him a message of the platoon's plight. For this action he was awarded The Distinguished Conduct Medal. The citation stated that the award was made for 'fortitude, courage and coolness in a very

critical situation'.

Sergeant Kilpatrick spent several months recovering from his wounds and thus was unable to rejoin his Battalion. A bullet lodged in his shoulder remained in place for some years until it was safe to have it removed. This together with his medals, he donated to the Regimental Museum at Hamilton.

A member of a staunch Roman Catholic Family (his late brothers both were Priests and his two sisters Nuns and Missionaries in India). He was treasurer of his local Church St. Brides, East Kilbride, for many years. His funeral Mass at that church was attended by a large congregation, no less than three Priests as well as the local incumbent, all of whom took part in the service. A floral tribute was sent on behalf of the Regiment, which also was represented, particular mention being made of his wartime service in the Address. Bernard Kilpatrick's wife predeceased him. There were no children of the marriage.

His nearest surviving relative is his nephew, Professor J.H. McKillop of Glasgow, the son of the late Dr. McKillop, his third sister, who suggested that his medals and memorabilia be donated to the Regimental Museum.

C.S. Pettit

Michael Burns

It is with great sadness we report the death of Mr Michael Burns of Viewpark Uddingston in January 2008

Major MT MacNeill TD

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Malcolm MacNeill who died suddenly on the 29th February 2008. He was known as Malcolm in the Regiment but often as Torquil to members of the family and others. He was a Law Student at Glasgow University at the outbreak of World War II, where he was a member of the University OTC. He interrupted his studies to volunteer for military service. He joined the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) as a Rifleman and after serving the statutory six months in the ranks and four months at OCTU was commissioned in 1940.

Malcolm joined the 6th Battalion. He served with it during its short spell in France when 52(L) Division was landed at Brest to support the French Army just before the evacuation of Dunkirk further to the North. After the French Army collapse and having seen little action the Battalion was withdrawn through Cherbourg.

He continued to serve with the 6th in England and later in the Highlands when 52

(L) Division was converted to a mountain warfare role. Malcolm was a member of a Divisional Party which was sent to the Rockies of USA to evaluate the suitability of mechanical equipment to operate in snow. One of his remits was to test the small tracked vehicle known as the weasel which was adopted for use and later served extensively both in Western Europe and Italy. He crossed the Atlantic in the famous luxury liner the 'Mauretania' at the time converted to a troopship then engaged in carrying American troops to Europe in preparation for the D day landings. He took part in the first major action by 52 (L)



Division at Walcheren in the Netherlands. This culminated in an epic assault by the 6th Battalion at the crossing of the sloe where the Battalion paddled its way under heavy fire across the estuary in assault craft, then waded its way through a mile of more or less waist deep mud to execute a classic left flanking attack to break the enemy's strangle hold on the Beveland causeway.

Malcolm was promoted to Captain in command of the Battalion's Mortar Platoon and also undertook duties as Intelligence Officer at Battalion Headquarters. At the battle of Alpon in March 1945 was ordered to attempt to obtain information from

Brigade HQ a particularly difficult time – an experience he remembered vividly since he arrived at a tense moment just after the arrival of the Divisional Commander who had taken personal control of the action involving the 6th that had run into severe trouble.

After the losses suffered in that battle he took over as 2i/c B Company under the late Colonel Sandy Storm MC (then Major) On VE day the 6th Battalion were on special duty at Sandbostel Concentration Camp between Bremen and Hamburg – a camp of Belsen proportions that has received little mention in Britain largely because there were hardly any British internees or Prisoners of War held there. (Editors Note see Covenanter 2004 page 13) The harrowing scenes he witnessed greatly affected him as it did all who encountered them. When in May 1945 the Battalion was posted to 'Magdeburg' on the River Elbe opposite the Soviet Army his responsibilities included the return of forced and voluntary labour to the Eastern Sector across the river over "The Friendship Bridge" It was here that he first came into contact with the Communist State and its apparent indifference to human life

Soon after the cessation of hostilities Malcolm was released to complete his studies at Glasgow University. He maintained his Cameronian by joining the 6/7th Battalion the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) receiving promotion to Major. Later he served with the Territorial Unit of the Parachute Regiment. He was appointed to the Procurator Fiscal's Service and progressed to become Regional Procurator Fiscal for the Grampians Highland and Islands Region. He retired in 1984 and spent the last years of his life in Edinburgh. Malcolm was immensely proud of his association with the Regiment. A regular attendee at Cameronian functions both in Edinburgh and Glasgow, including 156 Brigade reunion functions, he rarely missed the Officers Annual Dinners in both cities. An unassuming and interesting man he is survived by his wife Morag and children Deidre, Ruari and Calum
CS Pettit

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

