

# THE COVENANTER



THE REGIMENTAL JOURNAL OF  
THE CAMERONIANS (SCOTTISH RIFLES)

2002

## ***The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) (26 and 90)***

The Sphinx, superscribed Egypt. The Dragon superscribed China.

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

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

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

### Trustees

Lieutenant Colonel Ian McBain (Chairman) · Colonel Hugh Mackay OBE

Major Brian Leishman MBE · Major Lisle Pattison MBE · Major John Craig

# NOTICES

## "THE COVENANTER"

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## The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Officers Club

*Chairman:*

*Hon. Secretary/Treasurer*

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

## Regimental Club

The Cameronian Memorial Club -  
9 Holyrood Crescent, Glasgow.

## Museum:

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

**Location List** - Subscribers only.

# 2003 DIARY OF REGIMENTAL EVENTS 2003

## MARCH

Friday 7th March -

### **Cameronian Officers Dinner Club -**

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



## MAY

Sunday 11th May -

### **Cameronian Sunday -**

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

Friday 23rd May -

### **Officers Luncheon -**

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

Sunday 18th May -

### **Aitken Trophy -**

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

## OCTOBER

Saturday 11th October -

### **Officers' Luncheon -**

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

## Cameronian Pin Brooch

4 x 3 cms

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

## Last Friday of the Month Meeting (Not December)

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

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

## Museum report The Covenanter 2002

### 'The Real Tartan Army' TV Documentary

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

## EXHIBITIONS

### *Cameronians in Camera*

Cameronians in Camera opened in February 2002.

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

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

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

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

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

### *Medals Exhibition - by popular demand!*

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Digital Collections Gallery**

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

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

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

## Storyboards

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

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

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

## Medals and badges

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

## Uniforms, accessories and equipment

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

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

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

## Photographs

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

## Archive

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

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

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

## Enquires

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

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

## Who is he? - Jimmy the Donkey!

## War Diaries Transcription - Work in Progress

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Lanarkshire Family History Society volunteers are:

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

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

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

[www.lanarkshirefhs.org.uk](http://www.lanarkshirefhs.org.uk)

## Activities

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

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

## Report Aitken Trophy

19th May 2002

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

On what was a convivial and clement afternoon the trophy was won by Major J.G. Maxwell and J. Watt (former Captain) with a combined score of 73<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>. In second place Lieutenant Colonel Ian Lewis and W.R. Hutton with a combined score of 75 and hard on their heels in third place Major Sproul and W.M. Darroch with a combined score of 75<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>.

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

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

List of Army Players

Aitken Trophy - 19 May 2002

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

## LETTER FROM SYDNEY SCROGGIE

Roseangle Cottage  
 Rosemill Road  
 Bridgefoot  
 Strathmartin  
 Dundee DD3 0RW

Tuesday 12th Nov, 2002

Fellow Cameronians,

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

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

*Sydney Scroggie*

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

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

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

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

To: **The Rev. Jim Strachan**

Sir,

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sir,

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

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

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



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

Yours etc

J. Strachan

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

## **Cameronian Sunday 12th May 2002**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Dedication of the Cairn was given by Rev J Strachan

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

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

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

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

### **Cameronian Sunday, 2002**

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

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

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

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

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

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

R.F.

### **Remembrance, 2002**

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

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

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

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

R. Fowler, November 11, 2002

### **The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) And Family Members Association.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## ***The Real Tartan Army***

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

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

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

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

### ***Quotable Quotes***

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

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

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

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

From a KOSB Sergeant at Hamilton:

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

And the reply:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Random Jottings.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Garden of Remembrance Hamilton**

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

### **Festival of Remembrance East Kilbride**

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

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

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

### **Tradeston Ex-Servicemans Club**

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

### **Remembrance Service Motherwell**

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

### **Glasgow Central Station**

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

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

### **Westminster Abbey London**

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

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

### **Hamilton Covenanters Society Commemorative Conventical Sunday 21 July 2002 Memorial Service**

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

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

### **Queen's Jubilee Festival Cavalcade 4th August 2002**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



*The Cairn - Douglas*



*Service of Commemoration, The Cairn - Douglas*



*Remembrance Service - Glasgow Central Station 2002*



## *The Hearse Revisited*

*A True Story by R.J. Coleman*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Authors note:*

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

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

## **Will Glahe - Played for the Cams**

*A True Story  
By R.J. Coleman*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Will Glahe was found accommodation

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

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



*Will Glahe - Inscribed "" In Remembrance of Bad Gandersheim*

dance and so Will mainly played Glen Miller and Tommy Dorsey music much to the delight and satisfaction of the troops. Once the fraternisation ban was totally lifted, Waltraut and I never missed a dance and it was here that we became very close as a couple on the dance floor.

Months passed by and I was demobilised and returned to the U.K. Waltraut and I were married in 1947 and from that time on we were totally locked together, having children and making a life for ourselves but we never forgot Will Glahe and his music and the pleasure he gave us during our courtship.

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

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

It was early afternoon when we arrived at the home of Will Glahe only to find that he was not at home but a neighbour told us he would return with his wife at 5 p.m. from Zurich where he had been performing. As an introduction to our visit, in his letter box I left a 'cutting' from an old program in 1945 when Will had performed with others in concert and this turned out to be our entry passport home.

Soon after 5 p.m. we returned and were welcomed at the door by this maestro of music and his charming wife, Josephine and we sat down to talk and were served with cognac and pretzels.

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

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

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

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

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

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

*'I treasure his memory'*

R.J. Coleman

Ex Sgt. 2nd Battalion Cameronians S.R.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **France, October, 1916, To September, 1917 27th (Infantry) Brigade, 9th Division, October 23rd, 1916**

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

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

### **November 12th, 1916**

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

### **November 18th, 1916**

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

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

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

### **November 28th, 1916**

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

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

### **December 12th, 1916**

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

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

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

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

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

### **February 15th, 1917**

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

### **March 4th, 1917**

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

### **April 9th, 1917**

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



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

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

### **April 10th, 1917**

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

### **August 5th, 1917**

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

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

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

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

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

### **September 20th, 1917**

My Dearest Beloved

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **27th Brigade, October 5th, 1917**

Dear Madam

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

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

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

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

## *My Cameronian Days*

By an Ex London Scot

Part 11

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Major Walter Hunt was the 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>c</sub> but his civilian employers had posted him to New Zealand where, as far as I know, he still is! Consequently Major Bob Dobson, as the senior company commander, was left to keep the battalion ticking over, a near impossible task which Bob did most successfully with considerable help from Peter McGhie, the O.R.Q.M.S. (Orderly Room Quartermaster Sergeant).

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

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

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

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

My wife Peggy, however, although realising that it would mean 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> years 'hard labour' for both of us was very keen that I should accept so I agreed to do my best to try and restore the battalions fortunes. Peggy was marvellous and at all times gave me her unqualified support both then and subsequently.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

effective than telling them to mind their language.

Despite the weather we did have our lighter moments.

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

Quite the best recruiting propaganda.

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

C.E.M.

## ***Back to Buxtehude***

*Major Donald C.B. Cameron*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 'Been there got the T-Shirt'

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The column left Koi Sanjah at seven next morning, marching to Serkhuma, some thirteen miles distant, which it was intended to use as a base for operations, owing to it being the junction of five tracks. From here one could see the snow-topped mountains of Persia, which looked comparatively near. The track to Serkhuma led over a range of steep mountains, which alone took 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> hours to surmount, and at the top of which half a company of Sikhs was left as a permanent piquet. We had not been long in camp at Serkhuma before definite information was to be had regarding the adventures of the night before. They consisted of a party of 30 Turks, who had beaten a hasty retreat to Rania, a village ten miles away, noteworthy as a hot-bed of Turco-Kurdish intrigue, and to Serkabhan, an adjacent village five miles north of Rania.

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

heretofore. All the old articles were burned.

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

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

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

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

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

R.G.T.

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

*"A sacred trust of civilisation"*

League of Nations Covenant Article 22

### **Iraq 1923, Palestine 1936, Trieste 1949.**

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

"A spring jaunt in Kurdistan" - Iraq 1923

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

### **Some Introductory notes on Kurdistan campaign 1923**

## **History Repeating Itself? - War in Iraq 1923**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sources: Encyclopedia Britannica (1947), XII, 589

New Encyclopedia Britannica (1981) 11, 995

Atlas of World War One

A J P Taylor England 1914-1945, 229

Prepared by TF Mackenzie MA (Hons)  
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## *The Regiment's Links with Oman*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PRG

### **Thomas Graham of Balgowan**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



## ***2nd Bn Cameronians in Sicily Return to the River Simeto***

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### ***'MacSchnabel' - an Austrian Cameronian***

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

C.S.P. October 2002

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

## Robert Owen and New Lanark

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Bill Coughlan*

### ***'Within a Mile of Edinburgh Toon'***

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

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

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

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

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

*'Twas within a Mile of Edinburgh Town,  
In the rosy time of the year,  
Sweet Lavrocks bloom'd and the grass was down,  
And each shepherd woo' his dear.  
Bonny Jockey blith and gay,  
Kiss'd sweet Jenny making hay,  
The lassy blushed and frowning cry'd no, no it will  
not do,  
I cannot cannot womnot wonnot munot buckle too.*

Drink until you are half-fou and try to sing the words at Cameronian pace.

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

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

Bill Coughlan

## **Kenya - Mau Mau 1952-2002**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

G.F.

## **Major-General Joseph Henry Laye, CB, CVO**

1849 - 1938

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

subsequent promotion to substantive Colonel on 8 November 1898.

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

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

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

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

Major-General Laye and his wife were of



*Anna Maria Laye nee Leishman 1902*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Lt.-Col. John G. Moncrieff

### *Memories of Treetops*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

G.F.

### ***South of the Border*** ***"The Lost Consonant of England"***

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

G.F.

### *Corned Beef with everything*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Bill Coughlan*

## **The New Reality**

**(A Board Game for 10,000 players)**

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

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

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

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

Enjoy!!!!

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

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Sir,

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

Yours etc,  
Ed Boyle



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

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

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

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

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

Yours etc

Richard Fowler.

### **Captain Thomas Healey, DCM & 2 bars**

Sir,

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

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

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

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

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

Yours etc.,  
Henry Keown-Boyd

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

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

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

14th April 1928.

*The Covenanter - 2001 Issue*

Sir,

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

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

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

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

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

### ***Letter from London***

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

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

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

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

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

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

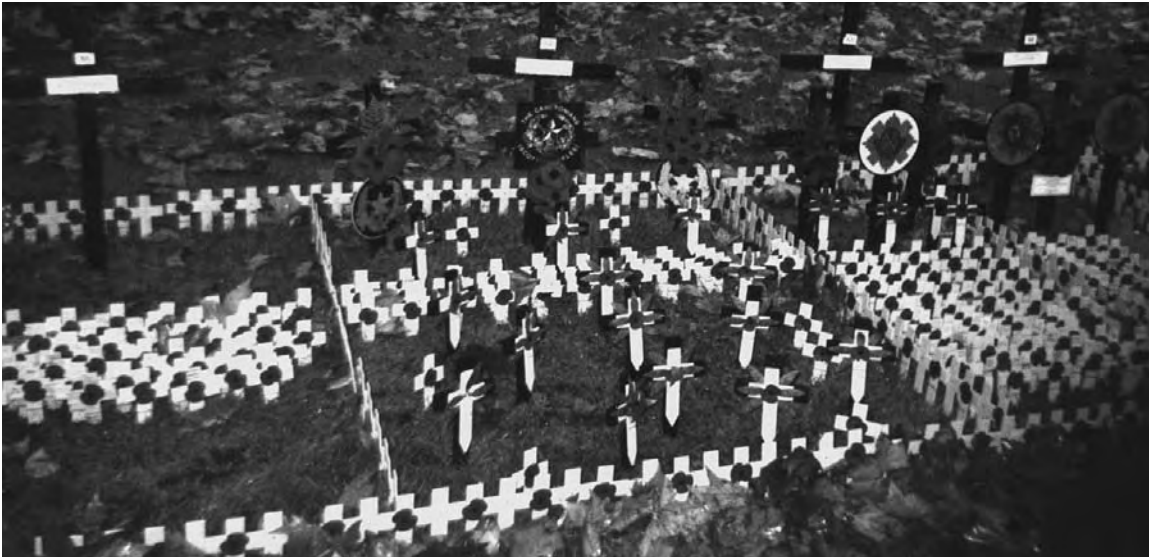
On Thursday 24th october I received official notification from The Royal British Legion that this years' opening of the Field of Remembrance would be attended by Her



*Mr Eddie Clark at Westminster*

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





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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Eddie Clark

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

Sir,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Yours etc.  
Joseph R Gorman

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## Medal Mounting & Displaying Service

For further details contact:  
Hugh Macpherson Ltd  
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Sir,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Yours etc,  
Nat. Gormlay

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

Sir,

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

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

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

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

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

Yours etc.,

John McEwan  
Barratt cottage  
Bar Hill  
Madeley Nr. Crewe  
Cheshire

Sir,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sir,

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

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

Yours etc.

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

Sir,

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

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



"Bobbie" Carr

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

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

Yours etc.  
Brian Airey

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

Sir,

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

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

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

All information should be sent to.

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

Yours etc.,

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

Sir,

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

Yours etc,  
Ian McBain (Lt. Col.)

Coryton  
Near Cardiff

My Dear Mum & Dad

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

make his way back. Then old Archie appeared grazed in a couple of places. I told him of the C.O. being wounded and he went off to see if Burke was still in the land of the living, and get or make a decision as to whether I had to hang on or not. Message came back that I'd to hang on while Burke saw the Brigadier. We must have been up there an hour or so - quite the worst of the whole party as we were completely isolated. Eventually a guide arrived to lead us into positions a mile of so back. One of my Subalterns informed me that after bayonet charge and subsequent heavy shelling Roy Money was with him. Roy was O.C. our picked P1. of patrol men. Apparently he then led some five of these forward towards the enemy entirely on his own initiative. This must have been well to my left and towards where Michael Turner - his great friend, - had been hit earlier on. None of them were seen again. I had sent a Recce patrol out that way to my left, but they reported no signs of any of our own troops on that side of the hill. Of course numbers of chaps in that sort of show got lost and turn up with other Regts and so forth, so there is always hope. Roy told me himself that earlier that day he had seen the Bosche shoot down some of our chaps they had captured. However, they were quite reasonable to wounded in the last war, so let's hope they are in this one. As I know that on several occasions it was impossible to get all the (Brickman was wounded in the bottom & I believe evacuated to U.K.) (Padre seriously on the beach) wounded away and dressing stations had to be left with a couple of Medical Orderlies in charge. What a party it was. We were left with only a few Brens in working order at the end. The Bosche had several different sorts of Mortar and they were very skilled indeed in using them. We only had some Smoke bombs for our 2' Mortars - never any H.E. Their sniping and use of ground was excellent too. Besides our 3 in Mortars had been called in just before the party started and we never got 'em back! As far as we were concerned in the actual fighting areas, the enemy had complete air superiority. We had the sky black with enemy planes at times. In spite of seeing an enormous amount of S.A. fire, I only saw about three planes brought down by it. For seven days we never saw one of our own. On nearing the perimeter one of our fighters passed overhead - all the troops raised a derisive cheer. Doubtless they were busy

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

*The rest of the letter is unfortunately lost.*

*Rank and Name:* Captain P.L. Hendriks

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

*Decoration for which recommended:* Military Cross

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

---

Alexander Craig  
20 Diamond Crescent  
Belleville  
Ontario  
Canada K8N 5G6

27 Sept 2002

Sir,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerely yours

Alexander Craig  
(Ex RMR 205794)

### ***A Proud Cameronians Gravestone***

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

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

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

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

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

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

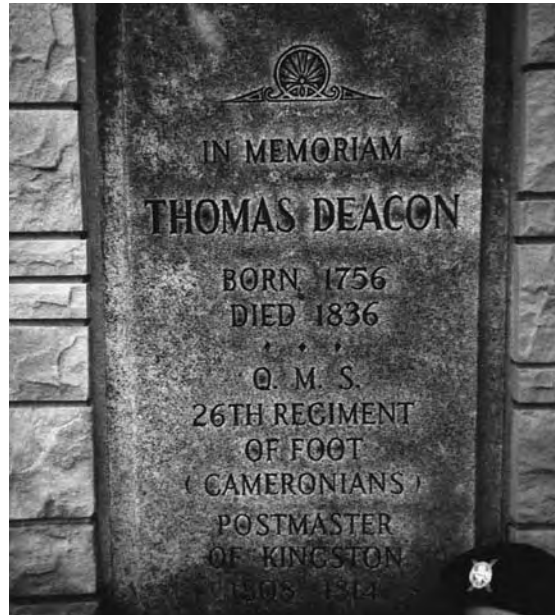
one day I noticed the word *Cameronians* on one of the gravestones. I was at once drawn to read the stone in detail.

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

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

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

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



*Thomas Deacon - Postmaster of Kingston*

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

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

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

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

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

Submitted by

Alexander Craig  
Belleville, Ontario.

### **Funeral of Mrs Mary Spiers**

Sir,

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

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

Sincerely Yours etc

John Spiers  
Son of Capt. John Spiers (Jock)

Sir,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Yours etc,  
Anne Winkley

Reference:

### **A Boy in the Barracks**

*Page 35 The Covenanter 2001*

Sir,

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

Anne

# In Memoriam

*To those they leave behind may their memories be happy ones*

## Mr John (Paddy) Duffin

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



*Sgt John Duffin and son*

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

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

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

Stewart Duffin

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

A great deal of his long service was to be

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

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

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



*Major TV (Tommy) Gilfillan*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PRG

**Mr John Gallagher** on 24th October 2002

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

F.M.

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

Useful Numbers

**Commonwealth War Graves**

**Commission** Telephone 01628 507 200

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

**Royal British Legion Remembrance**

**Travel** Telephone 01622 716 182

**British Legion (Scotland) Legion**

**Affairs Department** Telephone 0131

557 2782

MOD Records Telephone 01815 733 831 X

334

**Army War Medals** Office Telephone

01905 772 323







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



# THE COVENANTER



THE REGIMENTAL JOURNAL OF  
THE CAMERONIANS (SCOTTISH RIFLES)

2003

## ***The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) (26 and 90)***

The Sphinx, superscribed Egypt. The Dragon superscribed China.

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

*The Great War - 27 Battalions - Mons, Le Cateau, Retreat from Mons, Marne 1914, 18, Aisne 1914, La Basseé 1914, Armentières 1914, Neuve Chapelle, Aubers, Loos, Somme 1916, 18, Albert 1916, Bazentin, Pozières, Flers-Courcelette, Le Transloy, Ancre Heights, Arras 1917, 18, Scarpe 1917, 18, Arleux, Ypres 1917,18, Pilckem, Langemarck 1917, Menin Road, Polygon Wood, Passchendaele, St Quentin, Roslères, Avre, Lys, Hazebrouck, Ballieul, Kemmel, Scherpenberg, Soissonais-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, Nobi 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

### Trustees

Lieutenant Colonel Ian McBain (Chairman) · Colonel Hugh Mackay OBE

Major Brian Leishman MBE · Major Lisle Pattison MBE · Major John Craig

# NOTICES

## "THE COVENANTER"

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**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:*

Colonel J.G. d'Inverno TD ADC, (0131) 226 4081 (0)

*Hon. Secretary/Treasurer*

Major J.G. Maxwell TD (0141) 204 4441 (0)

## Regimental Club

The Cameronian Memorial Club -  
9 Holyrood Crescent, Glasgow.

## Museum:

Low Parks Museum  
129 Muir Street, Hamilton ML3 6BJ  
Tel: 01698 328 232

**Location List** - Subscribers only.

# 2004 DIARY OF REGIMENTAL EVENTS 2004

## MARCH

Friday 5th March -

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



## MAY

Sunday 9th May -

**Cameronian Sunday** -  
St Brides Church, Douglas at 10.00a.m.

Friday 28th May -

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

Sunday 16th May -

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

## OCTOBER

Friday 8th October -

**Officers' Luncheon** -  
Officers Mess Craigiehall, Edinburgh  
Contact is Lt Col I.K. McBain.  
Tel: (0131) 445 2953 (H). (It has not been possible to arrange this on a Saturday)

## Cameronian Pin Brooch 4 x 3 cms

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

## Last Friday of the Month Meeting (Not December)

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

Any Cameronian who finds himself in Edinburgh on the last Friday of any month (except December) should meet from 12 noon onwards.

## Trustees Matters

For some years now the Trustees have been taking action to preserve the heritage and traditions of the Regiment against the times when there will no longer be any Cameronians in a position to play an active role.

The Douglas Monument and grounds are now cared for by the National Trust for Scotland and the Cairn commemorating the disbandment of the 1st Battalion has been restored and, we anticipate, that this will be looked after locally.

A substantial sum has been paid out in benevolence to former Cameronians in financial need. These payments are managed by Regimental Headquarters, The King's Own Scottish Borderers and will continue to be paid out, with the actual funds being provided by the Army Benevolent Fund to which the Trustees made a large donation in 1998.

Arrangements have been made to continue to commemorate the Raising of the Regiment in St. Bride's Church in Douglas on the appropriate Sunday in May.

In 1989 the Trustees began negotiations with Hamilton District Council to merge and develop the Regimental Museum and the Hamilton Museum. These negotiations resulted in 1995 in an agreement between the Trustees and the Council whereby the two museums would merge and the Regimental Collection, whilst remaining under the ownership of the Regiment through the Trustees, would be managed by the professional museum staff. Considerable sums of money were raised including a Lottery Grant of over £2 million and the merged and developed Low Parks Museum officially opened in May 2000.

The Trustees had, from an early date, been considering how best to ensure the integrity of the Regimental Collection housed and displayed in the Low Parks Museum when, in the not too distant future there would be no Cameronians available to act as Trustees. It was decided that ownership of the Collection should pass to South Lanarkshire Council (the successor local authority to Hamilton District Council) and for a petition to be presented to the Court of Session in Edinburgh for this to be authorised. As I write these notes (Nov 2003) the petition is pending.

Hopefully, the petition will be approved and, although the ownership of the

Collection will pass to South Lanarkshire Council, the Trustees will still be represented on the Museum Advisory Group, which continues to advise on policy and displays within the museum.

Lt Col I.K. McBain Chairman, Regimental Trustees

## 1976/77 Pension Trough Group

Over 250 ex-servicemen and their widows have formed a group to campaign against the injustice of what is commonly referred to as the 'Pension Trough'.

Those who retired in the period from 1st April 1976 to 31st March 1978 (Pension Code Years 1976 and 1977) were affected. At that time the government imposed pay restraint for two consecutive years when inflation was extremely high and this caused a permanent reduction in service pensions. The reductions affected all ranks and varied between 18% to 30% compared to contemporaries who retired in earlier and later years. What is more disturbing is the effect that the reduced pension has had on their widows who in many cases only receive a 1/3rd of their deceased husband's pension which, despite index-linked increases, still leaves them permanently and severely disadvantaged.

This injustice, that has resulted from the unforeseen permanent consequence of temporary pay restraint, has for many years been refused redress by government on the grounds that there can be no retrospection. However, retrospective action has been employed by MP's to enhance their own pension benefits on more than one occasion, most notably in 1996 when they voted themselves a backdated increase worth 26% to those who retired at the subsequent election. Moreover, with the recent revision of the Armed Forces Pension Scheme retrospective attributable benefits will be available to unmarried partners. The government claims that any moral justification for a remedy to this legacy issue cannot override financial constraints.

If you are one of those affected by this situation and would like to support the Pension Trough Group in their pursuit of a resolution to this longstanding

discrimination please contact:



The Organiser  
Pension Trough Group  
5 Swaynes Lane  
Guilford  
Surrey GU1 2XX  
Tel: 01483-504972  
E-mail: pensiontrough@ntlworld.com  
Website: www.pensiontrough.org.uk

## World War II Anniversaries - Involving Scotland/ Netherlands Relations

In the second half of 2004 it is expected that there will be a series of 60th anniversaries acknowledging the part played by Scottish Regiments who were involved in the liberation of the Netherlands in 1944-45.

Surviving members of the then 6th, 7th, and 9th Battalions who might wish to be involved should contact the Editor.

## Museum Report Year 2003

New Acquisitions to the The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Collection 2003

### Humphreys medals group

This important purchase for the collection was made possible by partnership funding from The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Regimental Trustees, the National Acquisitions Fund and South Lanarkshire Council.

Corporal George Humphreys (90th PLI 1853-1874) served in the Regiment during two major conflicts: the Crimean War (1854-1856) and the Indian Mutiny (1857). At the siege of Sevastopol in 1855 Cpl Humphreys was recommended for the VC for his act of valour in bringing to safety a wounded Officer under heavy enemy fire from "the most advanced trench". Later the request for the VC was deleted because Cpl Humphreys was "in possession of medal for Distinguished Conduct in the Field". We have four medals and supporting documentation, all relating to Humphreys. It is hoped to have the group as part of the Crimean War exhibition in 2004-2005 (please see report). Later, the medals will form part of the permanent medals display in the drawer units.

### Medals and badges

Group of 6 medals and cap badge

### Uniform accessories and equipment

A group of 7 Cameronian objects belonging to the late Major Harvey  
Items belonging to Pte W S Lockhart

### Photographs

Photographs of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) band in Malaya 1950s  
Group of 5 photos of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) 1920s and 1930s  
Photograph 'F' Coy 6 Bn The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) August 1914  
Photos of 'D' Coy The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) TA 1992

### Archive

A collection of Cameronian archives  
Book "Traditions of the Covenanters"  
Cameronian Xmas Card 1939  
Poem dedicated to 6th Scottish Rifles  
Decorated WW1 shell case  
Photo of painting of, transcript of letters written by, Lt William Browne 26th 1802 - 1805; drowned on active service

War Diaries Project - "Increasing public access to the collections without increasing the staff workload"

The team of dedicated volunteers from the Lanarkshire Family History Society have continued to work tirelessly on transcribing the hand-written Commanders' War Diaries into an easy-to-use computer package. They have transcribed over 200,000 words and have entered into a database the names of over 4,000 Officers and Other Ranks.

With a few clicks of the computer mouse, staff can find if there is any mention of any known person, place, ship, weapon, etc. Previously to do such a search in hundreds of un-indexed hand-written pages was so time-consuming as to be almost impossible.

The team has almost finished the 2nd Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in the First World War 1914-18. This will be added to the completed First World War 1914-18 War Diaries of:

1 Battalion  
7 Battalion  
11 Battalion

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

Current members of the two Lanarkshire Family History Society transcription teams are:

Allan Johnstone (Lanarkshire Family History Society co-ordinator)  
 Alan Coltart  
 Margaret McKenzie  
 Irene Garry  
 Marie Cullen  
 Ian Wilson  
 Charlie Bennett  
 Ian McCoslin

We also wish to thank past team members whose new work commitments have obliged them to withdraw from direct transcription work with the teams but whose contribution is gratefully acknowledged.

Terry F Mackenzie acts as project manager for South Lanarkshire Council.

### Volunteers

Two new volunteers have joined us in 2003, Joanne McPhie MA (Hons) MPhil, started early in the year and has made an invaluable contribution in improving our digital imaging, accessioning new objects, assisting with the Medals Exhibition and in researching Cameronian enquires. Katie Barclay MA (Hons) has joined us in November and has been involved in researching enquiries and in accessioning.

### Student Placements

We have had three students on placement in 2003. They have been involved in researching enquiries and drafting replies for the public. Virginie Tricot from France, in addition helped with the Cameronians in Camera exhibition and the Medals Exhibition. In a new partnership with Strathclyde University and South Lanarkshire Council called Roots, we provided placements for 2 mature students returning to working life. Their role was to help with family history enquiries about The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles).

### Digital Collection Gallery

Although the Cameronians in Camera exhibition was taken down in April 2003, you can still browse and order copy prints of almost 200 images of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) serving abroad between 1918 and 1968. The Digital Collection Gallery unit is installed on the Mezzanine Floor at Low Parks Museum.

### Storyboards

The first three Cameronians Storyboards are

now live at Low Parks Museum, Hamilton! The story Jordan 1957, Oman 1958 and the Band and regimental music can be seen on the unit that also houses the Digital Collections gallery. If you've not seen the Storyboards yet, it's well worth a visit. You can follow the story of the operation written by one who took part, illustrated by photographs, many from private collections. There's Regimental music to accompany the start of each Storyboard.

### SCRAN

This is not food or eatables, but the acronym for Scottish Cultural Resources Access Network. It began as a millennium project with the objective of creating an enormous database of all museum collections in Scotland. Over the last 18 months or so, South Lanarkshire Council museums took part in a total of 6 projects, three of which featured objects from the collection of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). In the Health project we offered many sketches illustrating the health hazards of Army service abroad in the Zulu War 1879 with the 90th Perthshire Light Infantry. Henry Hope Crealock (1831-1891) had a project all to himself as we featured 28 sketches and watercolours from his Crimean War album. The five striking and unique Lanarkshire Covenanter banners were featured for the first time in a new project.

What's special about all this? Simply this - anyone anywhere in the world with access to the Internet can see these objects from the collection of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) together with a brief description of them. Those with full access, mainly in education (in Scotland, that means every school pupil) can see in addition to a full screen image of the object, 120 words of description of the significance of the object with full references to every associated person or place.

How to find it: HYPERLINK <http://www.scran.ac.uk> [www.scran.ac.uk](http://www.scran.ac.uk)

In the homepage you'll find a window: "Free scran search service" type in what you want to look for e.g. "cameronians" and the system will find all the records with any reference to The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). Good hunting!

### Enquiries

As ever, the public enquiry service continues to be an important part of our work. Each year, we receive about 400 enquiries that

require research. 62% of these research enquiries are about The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in the current financial year beginning 1 April 2003. Enquiries came from all over the UK, France, Denmark, Holland and Finland, as well as Canada, USA and Australia. Such diverse bodies as the Glasgow School of Art and the Cabinet War Rooms joined individuals who wished to know about their ancestors' time in The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles).

### Talks

A new addition to our talks has been introduced during this year - "The Cameronian War Diaries". As is the way of these things, the talk developed from a report given to meetings of the Lanarkshire Family History Society and now many of our customers want to hear about it too!

### The Cameronian Exhibition 2004-2005

"The Crimean War - Such a Mad and Murderous Enterprise" is the title of the exhibition that will replace the current Medals exhibition on the Mezzanine Floor at Low Parks Museum. It is planned to run it from June 2004 for about a year.

Medals fans rest easy! It is planned that the medal cases will be remaining on the Mezzanine.

The exhibition commemorates the 150th anniversary of the 90th Perthshire Light Infantry's involvement in the Crimean War (1854-1856) and will be themed as follows:

Introduction to the exhibition  
 Introduction to the Crimean War  
 Weapons & equipment  
 Tactics  
 The Assault on the Great Redan  
 Health  
 Photography  
 Journalism  
 Biographies/writing home/memoirs  
 Sightseers and followers

We have been offered objects from the Scottish National War Museum, to supplement those from the collection of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). We wish to show the most interesting Humphreys medal group. Please see the new objects report for details. We also plan to use a fascinating group of Robertson and Fenton photographs from the Crimea.

In a new initiative, we will be having an associated virtual presence on South Lanarkshire Council's Intranet. It is planned that thousands of Council workers will

be able to access this Intranet from their desks from early in 2004. This new facility will give an insight into work in progress on the exhibition behind the scenes at the museum. Once the exhibition opens at Low Parks Museum, we plan to have in due course a virtual exhibition using text and images from the main exhibition on the Intranet also. This virtual exhibition can remain long after the real exhibition has been dismantled. In a major new departure, in consultation with the Regimental Trustees, we plan to have a basic Website on The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) as a taster to see what the public would like us to provide on behalf of the Cameronian family worldwide.

Staff are kept very busy producing exhibitions and answering enquiries here at the museum, but important work also goes on behind the scenes.

We are presently conducting an audit or inventory of all the objects held in the museum's stores including items such as swords, trophies, medals, archives and uniforms ñ to name but a few. Volunteers are also very kindly lending staff a hand to work their way through the regimental archive of letters, diaries, newspapers, books, maps, and personal papers. The audit is being undertaken to meet current national standards for museum documentation.

We receive many enquiries here at the Museum and to answer them we spend a lot of time digging through boxes of archives to find a letter or photograph. Unfortunately this means we are not able to answer enquiries as promptly as we would like to.

Each item in the archives room is identified, measured, and given a number. It is then put in an archival plastic envelope to protect it and stored in an acid-free box. The boxes are numbered and placed on shelves in the archives room. All this information is typed into a computer database along with the item's location. By the completion of the project we will be able to access a large amount of information. We will know what is held in the collection and where to find it.

If, for example, a researcher wished to find information on the Crimean War, we will be able to identify and locate letters, diaries, newspapers, and other records relating to the campaign.

As part of this process the condition of each object in the collection is noted. This helps when determining if an item is

suitable for display. We can also identify what items should be sent to a specialist for conservation.

All of this behind the scenes work will help us to provide a better service for our visitors and researchers. It will also help ensure that the collection will survive for future generations.

## Regimental Curling

In spite of advancing years and dwindling numbers the Regiment continues to take part in the Lowland Brigade Bonspiel, and the traditional Brigade matches against the Highland Brigade.

The Lowland Brigade Bonspiel took place at Murrayfield on Wednesday 5th February, with The Cameronians only able to provide one rink of 4 curlers. In the morning session the Regimental rink of Malcolm Macneill, Jim Orr, Hugh Mackay and Ian McBain lost 8-4 to the Royal Scots. In the afternoon session, which followed lunch, The Curling Club AGM and the Lowland Brigade Club AGM, the Regimental rink took on the RHF and won 12-3. The overall winners of the Lowland Brigade Cup were the KOSB, who retained the trophy, with The Cameronians finishing in 2nd place followed by The Royal Scots.

For the away leg of the Inter-Brigade match at Perth on Friday 21st February the Regiment could only raise three curlers - Malcolm Macneill, and Hugh Mackay - and were augmented by the stalwart figure of Peter Clapton SG. The Rink took on the strong HLDERS 'A' rink and narrowly lost 7-5. The home leg of the Inter-Brigade match took place on Friday 28th February at Murrayfield, and the Regimental Rink of Malcolm Macneill, Fred Prain, Jim Orr and Hugh Mackay lost 12-4 to the Argylls 'B' Rink. David Scott and Ian McBain curled for the Mixed 'A' Rink which beat BW 'A' rink 17-5. Overall, The Highland Brigade retained the Inter-Brigade Trophy by the convincing margin of 126 stones to 74. There is always next year - age and health permitting!

The fixtures for the 2004 season have been confirmed as **Wednesday 4th February** for the Lowland Brigade Bonspiel, **Friday 27th February** for the home leg of the Inter Brigade match, and Friday 5th March for the away leg. My grateful thanks to the small but happy band of Regimental Curlers, and I look forward to seeing you all on the ice in 2004. Happy Curling

JAO

## Aitken Trophy David Lanark 18th May 2003

Fourteen Army team members took the field at Lanark for the 56th Annual Match in the most challenging climatic conditions experienced in the last ten years.

Through frequently torrential rain the match proceeded but rounded off, with a typical Scottish versatility, in brilliant sunshine for the last 30 minutes.

A list of Army players is attached. The trophy was won by Major A Sproul and John Pearson with a score of 77. The runners up were Martin Stephen and Bill Daroch with a score of 78 and Vice Captain of Lanark Jim Boyd with a score of 78 ½. Following the traditional two-ball foursome stroke play on handicap the Lanark members entertained the Army team to the traditional, and standing weather conditions, most welcome supper within the Clubhouse.

The numbers playing remain reassuringly constant at around 14 or 15 and the match looks set to continue indefinitely.

Readers may be interested to know that the 'Third Lanark' Sergeants Trophy, presented to the Club by the 6/7th Battalion Trust on the occasion of its 150th Anniversary, is now to be played for annually as the 'Senior' Club Champions Trophy. This is appropriate as a number of those among whom the trophy will be competed for are of an age to remember the football team of that name if not the Rifle Volunteers!

Joseph d'Inverno  
Colonel TD ADC

List Of Army Players  
Aitken Trophy - 18th May 2003

Name	Handicap
1. Major Peter Eydes	23
2. Major W.A.L. Rodger	13
3. Mr A.S. Watson	17
4. Major Alan W.A. Sproul	17
5. Adam W. Gray	18
6. Captain R.L.J. Hewat	19
7. Mr. W.J. Scholes	14
8. Lt. Col. I.K. McBain	20
9. Major Ian Farquharson	24
10. Major F.M. Philip	19
11. Mr. Martin Stephen	18
12. Mr. M.J. Connor	18

13. Major G. Maxwell 24  
 14. Colonel J.G. d'Inverno 28

## Officers London Luncheon Friday 23rd May 2003

The Officer's annual London Luncheon was held at the Army and Navy Club St. James's Square of Friday 23rd May 2003. Attendance was well up on the previous year and it was good to see people from far and wide including several from Scotland and also from Northumberland and France. It was gratifying to find people still attending for the first time, namely Robert Maxwell who was a National Service Officer with the 1st Battalion and Regiment Depot between 1952-1954 and who served subsequently with the 6/7th Battalion.

The following attended:

Mr and Mrs G. C. M. Brunker  
 Miss A. Brunker  
 Colonel R. D. Buchanan-Dunlop CBE  
 LT Col. J. Burrell  
 Lt Col. A. Campbell  
 Capt. DR. Craig  
 Mr and Mrs N. S. I. Daghlish  
 Maj. P. R. Grant  
 Mr J. Hawtrey-Woore  
 Mr and Mrs D. G. P. Heathcote  
 Mr J. A. Irvine  
 Capt. I. M. Lindsay-Smith  
 Col and Mrs J. N. D. Lucas  
 Col H. Mackay O.B.E.  
 Mrs L. M. Mackintosh  
 Lt Col and Mrs F. C. Matthews  
 Mr R. J. Maxwell C.B.E.  
 Mr J. D. Muir  
 Mrs L. Smith (daughter of John Muir)  
 Maj I. C. Park-Weir  
 Capt. and Mrs J. A. C. Weir  
 Mr I. R. Wightwick M.C.

### Letter From London

As I commence writing this letter, It is the 5th November, 2003, and tomorrow I will

be at Westminster Abbey for the opening of the Field of Remembrance Service. I mention this, simply because these last twelve months have gone by so rapidly that it has almost taken my breath away.

Last year I discovered that any regiment, or regimental association, could have their plots at Westminster Abbey laid out by the Royal British Legion (RBL) garden workers.

I contacted one of the RBL officials at Richmond about this, and he assured me that this was the case. As a consequence of this, I went down to Richmond armed with a blown up print of our plot, and met the official, whereupon it was arranged that our Cameronian plot would be laid out as specified in the photograph. As there was a fee to be paid for this service, I kept the Regimental Trustees informed, and they agreed to meet the cost of our plot being organised by the RBL.

On the morning of 6th November, I arrived at Westminster Abbey feeling a bit anxious as to how our plot would look. I needn't have worried, the RBL staff had done a fine job, and our plot looked as I hoped it would. As in previous years the turnout for the occasion was massive, as were the security arrangements. At approximately 11.30am the service began, and on its conclusion HRH The Duke of Edinburgh commenced his tour of inspection. I was impressed by the fact that he was stopping and talking to every regimental representative, which meant that for an eighty two year old, it was quite a feat of endurance. However, he may be sound in wind and limb, but I'm afraid his mind faltered a wee bit. On stopping in front of me he asked, glancing at my medals, if I had served in the Royal Navy? With great tact and diplomacy I assured HRH that all my army service had been with the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), whereupon he gave a little wry grin and moved on. Royal Navy indeed!

So, another remembrance service passed off brilliantly, also the weather matched the occasion, the temperature rising to 65<sup>0</sup> Fahrenheit was the 'icing on the cake'.

I'm afraid we had a very poor regimental turnout, apart from myself, the only other attendees were Tom Gore (Ex 9th Bn) and his wife Dorothy. I had hoped that more people would have turned out, however, I look forward to a better attendance next year.

I was deeply saddened to hear that Mr (RSM) John Sneddon had passed away. Big Jake, as he was known affectionately by all

who served with him; was a legend in his lifetime. For many years Jake and I were great friends, a friendship which started when we were boxers in the 2nd Bn. I also owed him a debt of gratitude, as I always believed that an act of kindness he showed to me was responsible for me meeting my late wife, Ellen, and resulting in almost fifty years of a terrific marriage. My condolences go out to his widow, Joyce, and family.

I was also saddened by the death of Jerry Dawson. For many years here in London, Jerry did sterling work for the Regiment. He was convenor of the Old Cameronian Association, and in that role was responsible for arranging many functions, not least the many reunion dinners, many of which I attended, and thoroughly enjoyed. To his good lady, I also extend my sincere condolences.

In a recent conversation with our Editor, he informed me that he had received a photograph of a hockey team from Mrs Joyce Sneddon, which included her late husband.

As soon as the Editor identified the players that he recognised in the photograph including myself, I remembered straight away that I had a copy of it in my collection.

Yes, that was some hockey team. The photograph was taken at the end of the 1958-1959 season. It was the Regimental Depot, Lanark, team. During the season we reached the semi final of the Army Cup, being narrowly beaten 2-0 by a R.E.M.E. team at Aldershot. We won the Scottish

Command Championship, and the Lowland District Cup. C.S.M. Burns and I also had the honour of playing for Scottish Command that season, and I also played for a civilian club, Edinburgh Northern. The mention of the Edinburgh Club brought back to me a coincidence last year. My grandson, Ashley, attends Alleyn's Independent School in Dulwich, south London. The then Headmaster of the school, a Scot called Dr Colin Niven, and I, whilst watching a hockey match started chatting about our hockey careers. When I mentioned that I played for the Edinburgh side he told me that he also had played for the team just before becoming a Housemaster at Fettes College. Unfortunately, I have been unable to talk my grandson into becoming a hockey player.

In conclusion, may I wish everyone of you a Happy 2004, and let's see you roll up to Westminster Abbey next November.

Eddie Clark

## The Cameronians (SR) and Family Members

The Rev. Jim Strachan, L. Th., Dip. Th., was inducted as the Minister of the Congregational Church, Kilwinning, on April 25 this year. The Rev. Jim Smith, himself an Army chaplain and Minister of the Congregational Church in nearby Androssan, inducted Jim, who was resplendent in Douglas Tartan trews and rifle green shirt. Several Cameronians attended the service, including Colonel



Hugh Mackay, OBE, and Eddie Wallace, escorted by Willie Gough, ensured that the Standard of The Cameronians (SR) and Family Members was prominently displayed at the front of the Church during the Induction Service. Colonel A R Kettles, who commanded the 1st Battalion of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) when Jim served with the Regiment, sent a letter of congratulation and good wishes.

A larger body of Cameronians (SR) and Family Members attended morning worship in the Church on Sunday, April 27, at which Jim preached his first sermon as Minister of the Church.

In addition, in April, The Cameronians (SR) and Family Members were present at Lesmahagow when the refurbished tombstone of a famous local Covenanting Minister was unveiled and re-dedicated. The preacher on that occasion was the Rev. Jack Campbell, minister of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland in Airdrie. This Church was founded by Cameronian Covenanters and continues to uphold their faith and principles to this day.

Cameronian Sunday was held in Douglas and this year took the form of a Conventicle in the enclosure at the statue of the Earl of Angus, the founder and first Colonel of the Regiment. The Rev. Jim Strachan conducted the service. Kilwinning Amateur Prize Flute Band provided the music to accompany the signing. The scripture lesson was

read by Colonel Hugh Mackay, OBE. The Cameronians (SR) and Family Members were well supported by the Royal British Legion (Scotland) branches in Lanarkshire. The Rev. Mr Strachan dedicated the new Standard of The Cameronians (SR) and Family Members at this Conventicle. Tom Balloch, MBE, assisted by obtaining from Kelvinside Academy, a drum which had belonged to the ATF there when the ATF was affiliated to The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles).

The RBLs West of Scotland Drill Competition was won by The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). Rab Gracie, Bill Gough and Eddie Wallace beat off strong competition and won the contest handsomely.

June saw The Cameronians back in Lanark for the annual Lanimer Day Parade. In August, The Cameronians (SR) and Family Members held a parade at the Covenanters' Prison, Greyfriars' Churchyard, Edinburgh, when the Rev. Jim Strachan conducted worship and gave thanks for the Covenanters and the rich heritage that they had left us - including the Regiment. At this service, Mr. Strachan dedicated a second new Standard, which the Organisation had obtained. This means that, on days when there are two parades to which representatives of the Regiment have been invited, a Standard will be present at each.

On August 3, The Cameronians (SR) and Family Members returned to Kilwinning.



On that date, they laid up their original standard in the Congregational Church. During the service, Mr. Richard Fowler gave a short account of the history of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) for the benefit of anyone in the Congregation who did not know about the Regiment. The Congregation was visibly moved during the service and everyone present was greatly impressed by the professionalism of the drill of the Standard Bearers. After the service, the members of the Church provided lunch for everyone in the Church Hall.

In September, the Motherwell and District Family History Group had as their Guest Speaker Terry Mackenzie, the Documentations Officer at our Regimental Museum in Hamilton. The Museum possesses all the War Diaries of the Cameronians Battalions which were raised and saw service in the First World War. A team of volunteers from the Society is busy transcribing the Diaries and putting them on computer to enable easier access to the information which they contain. Mr. Mackenzie brought a computer and multimedia projector and demonstrated the ease with which one could access the information. The War Diaries of the 1st, 6th and 7th Battalions have been transcribed and work is now progressing steadily on the War Diaries of other Battalions.

On Sunday, November 9, 2003, the Remembrance Service at Kilwinning's Cenotaph and Garden of Remembrance was conducted by the Rev. Jim Strachan, L. Th., Dip. Th., while the Address was given by Fr. Matt McManus, Parish Priest in St. Winnin's RC Church, Kilwinning. Around 150 people turned out to parade from the Town Centre to the Cenotaph, where a further 500 had gathered to honour those who had made the ultimate sacrifice

for their country. The last Cameronian to conduct this Service before Rev. Mr. Strachan was the Rev. Ian M. Reid, MA., BD., who was then Minister of Kilwinning Abbey, but who had served as Chaplain to the 7th Battalion of the Regiment during World War II.

A good attendance of Cameronians took pride of place at the annual Service of Remembrance held at Glasgow Central Station on Tuesday, November 11. Standard Bearers of RBLs Scotland were also present to welcome the Standard Bearers of The Cameronians (SR) and Family Members. Wreaths were laid by various Rail Companies who use Glasgow Central Station; by two pupils of Irvine Royal Academy; and by Mr. George Stewart, the oldest Cameronian. Mr. Steven Black, Railway Chaplain, West Scotland, gave the address. The Rev. J. Strachan conducted the service, after which Bonaparte's Restaurant laid on a buffer lunch for the invited guests.

Richard Fowler,  
(proud to be a Friend of the Regiment),

## A Camp Followers Tale - Part 1 Family Life With The Regiment 1959 - 1960

### Kenya 1959

We said goodbye at the dockside and embarked for Kenya, on the good ship SS Dunera. After being shown to our cabin, we went back to the deck to wave goodbye to Mum and Dad, while a military band played us away from the quay.

The cabin was adequate for our needs;





the bunks, and a sink under the porthole. In the passageway outside were the baths and toilets. Next, we had to find the dining room which was to be shared with Sgts Mess 2nd Bn Coldstreams. But our tables were separate and we kept the same table for the length of the journey.

The first three days were not memorable. The weather was dismal, and the children were not too happy with the movement of the ship.

John had been stationed in Gibraltar so we were looking forward to passing 'The Rock'. But we were woken up to the sound of a fog horn and it continued to sound for the best part of twelve hours, quite unnerving when you are responsible for two small children.

The fog was quite thick, and it did not clear until well into the Mediterranean. The weather warmed up and we were allowed on the aft deck. The forward decks were for the troops.

A safety measure taken for the children were canvas sheets lashed to the rails so no-one could crawl under; at times some tried to see over the top!

Keeping the children amused was the chief occupation. Ian was already reading and writing so it was easy listening to his reading, and setting him small writing tests. Marion however was another kettle of fish, due to three quick house moves her reading ability suffered and though I had correct reading books she didn't want to know. We didn't make a great deal of progress in 28 days. But I read to them a great deal, mostly before bedtime. They were in their early teens before I gave up. By that time we'd read most children's books together.

First stop on the journey was to be Cyprus. When the ship anchored a tender came out to take off troops, or families who wanted to go ashore.

On looking over the side we saw that the tender had just a flat open deck with no sides and the men were lined up on it.

Most families stayed on board, just as well, given the state of some of the troops returning, how they didn't fall over board I'll never know! It had been a fiesta day in the town, so all the shops were shut and probably just as well to stay on the ship.

Underway again, the next port of call was Alexandria in Egypt, which viewing from the deck looked pretty unsavoury, on my own I might have gone ashore, but not controlling two children. We were there for about ten hours then up came the anchor

and we steamed out to join a line of ships waiting to go by Port Said and then into the Suez Canal (truly an engineering miracle). Several merchants were allowed on the ship selling all kind of souvenirs (we were told to lock our cabin doors as some were light fingered). One man called the Gulli Gulli Man entertained with day old chicks in the old 3 pot game instead of a pea, it was a chick, of course the children loved this. Fortunately, they didn't see when a chick's leg or wing was broken, he wrung its neck and tossed it overboard. When we reached the other end of the canal they disembarked and returned on another ship. They seemed to make a good living.

The speed through the canal was very slow, so the heat was unbearable and it became more uncomfortable when a sand storm blew up and every door and port hole was closed for a couple of hours until we steamed out of it - the heat was building inside the cabin - we lay like stranded whales on our bunks. It was sometime before we could go on deck, the crew and troops were clearing it of sand by water hoses and brushes.

We carried on down the Red Sea and every so often we could hear the Moslem Kitchen Staff on their mats on the lower side deck praying towards Mecca.

Aden loomed up next and we took on water. No-one mentioned it has little or no minerals in the water. Tea or coffee didn't taste the same and very few wanted to drink water. Lots of the children after a few days came out in spots; I spent more money on soft drinks than on the rest of the voyage.

Only a few days remained before we reached Mombasa, so it should be plain sailing, wrong! This was the monsoon season and as we pulled out of the Red Sea into the Indian Ocean we met very heavy seas. Because the seas, the Red, the Arabian and the Indian Ocean all seem to converge, the ship not only went up and down but side to side as well. It was very scary and once again everything was battened down and we had only cold meals - for those still able to eat!

Mombasa at last - I had very little money left so I hoped there were no hidden costs.

Wrong again, everyone on board had to fill in a form provided by the Port Authority who aimed to take 10% tax from the ship. I realised all my goods came to £70 tax which I didn't have.

The only Officer on board from our Bn was a Major Smith, whom I had a nodding

acquaintance in Buxtehude. I approached him at the ship's rail and asked for his advice. He perused the form minutely, and then said "get another form and put a depreciation value on all my goods". Straight away I realised that none of the luggage was brand new, except the clothes which didn't count. Thanking him I breathed a huge sigh of relief. In any event I paid nothing and they didn't open my boxes. Most of the officers had their boxes opened so I suppose the tax was collected somewhere.

Ian and Marion were getting excited, expecting to see their Dad, but John was meeting us at Nairobi, a twelve hour train journey away, so I had to calm them down.

The Mombassa to Nairobi train is famed for its services, food and decor - all well deserved. We were shown to our couchette all to ourselves, lots of sitting room. At night the Somali steward came in while we were having dinner and made up two beds and one bunk.

The dining salon was something to behold, draped velvet red curtains - Victorian style, white tablecloths and napkins, vases of exotic flowers. The glassware sparkled in the lamplight and the waiters - all Somali - dressed in crisp white jackets. We or rather I was served a five course meal and they catered for the children as well so we staggered back to our beds.

Only one more night to go. On waking, we dressed and packed the cases and were summoned to breakfast by a gong sounding along the corridor. Breakfast was just as plentiful, one could have had about seven courses! Juices, grapefruit, cereals, porridge, eggs, bacon, sausage, scrambled egg, poached egg and kedgeree or kippers. How they cook all that in their small galley is a mystery.

At least we have arrived a new chapter begins.

John was waiting for us, and the kids went wild. I had to wait my turn for a decent hug and kiss. John had purchased a car on his arrival and when I saw it, I was astounded, it was an American car a Plymouth. It was huge and guzzled petrol, after a few weeks he traded it back to the Indian dealer for a smaller model.

We left Nairobi Station in stately fashion - I was dying to laugh, but didn't dare - John would have been upset, the kids just about sunk out of sight in the back seat.

Our destination was Muthaiga Camp, about 5 miles south of Nairobi. The camp

was mostly tented with the exception of all three messes; Officers, Sergeants, Other Ranks and the Church - all had been built by a squad of Engineers of an earlier Regiment so there were some comforts. The tarmac road wound its way past two or three Kikuyu Villages - just mud plastered into conical shapes.

We passed the entrance to the Camp and turned off onto a red murram track. (this red dust was to be the bane of my stay).

The car drew up in front of what I could only think of was a wild-west homestead. Five of these homes in a row in the middle of a field, nothing else in sight, except the back end of the tented area about 150 yards away.

It was a bungalow made by engineers already mentioned, the front facing north had a long wide veranda, very cool in hot weather.

On entering - the main room was very spacious and had a huge fireplace and windows the full length of the room. Three bedrooms and a bathroom - all large and all the floors were paving stones which kept the place cool. The rooms were in hardboard - ceiling and walls. With the exception of the kitchen which although within the building allowed all the heat to go into the corrugated roof and the wood stove pipe went right up through the roof. The kitchen also had a gas stove, but not much else - a sink, draining board, meat safe, no fridges in those days, not for us. But the messes probably had them.

Nairobi was 5,000ft above sea level so it took some time to adjust to the climate, a half hour's housework and you had to sit down till your heart stopped racing. The same thing happened to John - he was running up the hockey pitch and his legs began to feel like walking through treacle and he had to stop. No-one seemed to advise on this kind of effect, you just had to find out by trial and error. After a few weeks we became accustomed and carried on as normal.

The previous occupant of my bungalow departed for the UK and I inherited a Kikuyu house boy. I didn't like the idea of him doing the cooking, because he was none too clean, so I employed him as a Shamba boy at the same pay. This kept him outside - keeping the grass down round the area of the houses.

Every night for two weeks I'd turn the light out in the kitchen and wait about 15 minutes, then, armed with an insect spray

I went to work on the cockroaches and finally eradicated them. As long as nothing was left uncovered and the table scrubbed and the floor swabbed, we kept them at bay.

One other incident in the kitchen later in the year - a swarm of hornets came to rest on the inside of the apex roof. This was dangerous. John ran to the camp for a huge can of insecticides and with towels over our heads nose and mouth took it in turns to stand on the table and spray the area - the whole tin was used, but it did the trick. We opened all the windows and doors to get rid of the excess. Mosquitoes were also a pest - we all slept under nets, you could hear them zooming around. If one got under the net the kids yelled for you to kill it.

We had an elsan dry toilet, at the back of the bungalow about 15 feet away it was very eerie going out to it after dark. I went with a torch one night and, after seating myself the torchlight shone on the door corner, and sitting there blinking was a huge bullfrog. I was glad it wasn't a snake.

The first trip to town I purchased what passed for Potties so the children didn't need to go out during the night. The previous occupant, had the dry toilet in the bathroom. How they stood the chemical smell and the Kikuyus trooping in every day to empty it, I can't imagine. For a little privacy we put up a rush fence to the toilet, all the bungalows were staggered in such a way the neighbours could count the times you went. It worked well.

The families were split up in three locations. Half were in Kahawa, about four miles further out from our huts, the rest were, conveniently for the wives (but not for the troops) on the other side of Nairobi in blocks of flats, close to the NAAFI - The shopping place for the army. The Kenya Regt had a barracks there, mostly white officers and Somali troops. They were good trackers as well as soldiers and they showed this during the Mau Mau troubles.

John took us by car to do the weekly shopping and to enrol the children at the Army school, mornings only. This was all right for Ian as he could already read and write, but not so good for Marion, already behind - she did not progress very far in the year we were stationed there.

The children were taken to school by bus, we walked them up the murrum track to the main road, and waited for the bus. This was no problem in the dry season, but quite another in the rainy season. The murrum

turned to red mud, and we trudged up the track with about six children keeping dry under rubber ground sheets held high over their heads. I wish we could have taken pictures it was a weird sight (the mothers got wet!)

To go to Nairobi on my own, I had to walk across the field, to the front of the camp and wait for the African bus (I couldn't drive at this point in time). It was pretty basic, full of Kikuyu women going to market, and various hens, vegetables, etc. The bus went to the terminal in the centre of Nairobi, so it was safe enough. Returning, I always took a taxi to the Camp gates.

My impression of the town was that the centre square mile was modern - a large hotel dominated the main road (Delamere Avenue) the new Stanley Hotel. All the shops were one storey with overhanging walkways which kept the sun at bay.

The shops were mostly run by Indians - they almost swamped the blacks, and used them for labour. It is not surprising the independent Kenya pushed them out of the country on taking over.

There was a large new cinema called, I think, 20th Century. We went only once - you had no idea who you'd be sitting next too and the bodily smells in the heat were overpowering. I had always believed that Kenya was one of the best of the colonies but on arrival I was disappointed to see only part of Nairobi was up to date. Everywhere else was Kikuyu shanty towns and villages further out, people came looking for work and just set up a hut for themselves.

The Mau Mau troubles were over but there still was a feeling of tension; if there was a slight traffic accident there would suddenly be hundreds of blacks milling round from nowhere.

The flower market was beautiful; flowers were arranged from floor to ceiling on raised planks in large buckets. The perfume was thick, and all the English type flowers were three times as large as the ones back home.

The fish market was also something to see. I didn't recognise any of them apart from the shellfish.

Lots of the shops had material in, but no shops which made up clothing - apart from Safari type gear. I was glad I had my sewing machine as everything for Marion and me had to be made. Including, a ball dress of pale pink brocade for the New Year's Ball. I was proud of myself, it turned out very well. I also made about six Christmas party

dresses for various friends children, and numerous day sun dresses for myself and Marion. It kept me busy because on the whole it was not a lively posting.

The Bn went away on schemes up country past the escarpment to Gil Gil and beyond and sometimes to the Border with Somalia.

This was a bit nerve-wracking for me with two children to think off, you began to wonder what you would do if remnants of the Mau Mau decided to attack these five isolated bungalows from the back door it was about 150 yards dash to the back fence of the camp, but the gate would be locked and a roving army piquet could be anywhere in the Camp. The other alternative was to hoist the children up into the water tank, but of course if they set fire to the place we would have cooked nicely.

The land looked very dry and I couldn't believe the change after the rains came. The grass, flowers and bushes seemed to come from nowhere. The Kikuyu women worked the fields to keep the grass short; you'd see their sickles fly up in the air chopping a snake in half.

There were quite a few in the area, one morning we found one squashed in the hinge part of the door, it must have tried to slither in when John came in the evening before.

We always had a baby sitter when we went to the Mess, usually an 18 year old (homesick). I'd leave a supper etc and sometimes it would be someone studying for exams when his national service was finished. It meant we could go out without having to worry.

On New Year's Eve the sitter hadn't arrived so my next door neighbour said she would take the keys and look in. After midnight John popped home to check and found the sitter fast asleep on top of the packing cases on the Veranda. The door being locked he did not want to leave them. It was a good thing he didn't know it was a favourite place for the wild cats to chase around!

Weekends were special, we went to The Nairobi Game Park on several occasions. One visit was a bit hair raising, the car had a habit of stopping because a small spring jumped off, this happened about 4pm one afternoon on a steep dip in thicket country - and a lion area.

John said to me he had to get out, so we all looked out of the windows on each side and back, John jumped out quick and flicked it back on again. We held our breath,

the engine started right away. Failing that, you have to keep sounding your horn and the keeper comes to your rescue. Another outing was to a close by open air cinema, not far from the Taikka Road House (a sort of up market pub). The children had their baths, and sat in the back seat of the car with pillows and a blanket. You drove in and parked in rows on a slight incline. On a post next to the car was a receiver to put in the car. This relayed the sound of the film on a huge screen in front of the cars. Next you pressed a button and a waiter came for your supper order - the kids thought this was great.

More often than not they were asleep before the film finished and we just had to pop them into bed on return to the house.

The wives had very little to do, and a wives club did not exist, so from that point of view it was a boring posting.

John by this time was a Company Sgt Major so our wages had improved, but every time we had a raise over the next five years, the Army raised the house rents etc. It was only from 1965 to 1969 that we had really good raises. This helped John's pension prospects quite a bit.

## KENYA 1960

Once the New Year had passed we all were looking forward to returning to the UK and wondering where our next posting would be.

One incident I forgot to recall was when the Bn (that came out on our ship). They were sent up past Gil Gil to barracks, but about a month after that, one company was given leave to come to Nairobi, and as our Bn had been in the town a few months, they did not take too kindly to the Coldstreams, (or the Woodentops as the Cameronians called them) on their territory! Needless to say once the drink was flowing, the fighting commenced, John was on duty that night, and it took the full night of both Bns Regimental Police to bring them to order.

John said afterwards it was a sight to behold, on the bus station square the Guards drunk, as they mostly were, stood in lines ramrod stiff. The Cameronians however were all over the place, John couldn't throw them in the trucks quick enough, but next day after they'd all been charged and sentenced. John saw the funny side of it. Rather like a Fred Karno film, but of course he had to be very stern instead.

The Guards needless to say did not come

down again until after we'd left.

The too good news is through, six weeks leave in the UK, a posting to Germany - Minden this time. The bad news is that we are returning on a Troop ship 'The Devonshire' This was because with the whole Bn, 800 men and 150 families, it was cheaper than flying.

I was not looking forward to it one little bit.

We packed up and the families left for Mombassa a week ahead of the Bn. We travelled again on the beautiful train and on waking looked out on the game park in the morning mist. We reached Mombassa after breakfast.

Next stop was a holiday camp on the shore. It was situated in amongst tall trees, wooden huts on stilts.

The children could hear rustling when the lights were out. When you switched it on again little lizards were darting for cover all over the ceiling.

We walked to the dining room for our meals. It was very pleasant among the trees, and the monkeys never stopped chattering all the way.

Mombassa was very hot, and one had to be careful not to get badly burnt. The first day on the beach one mother left her fair skinned children all day in swim suits. They spent the rest of the week in casualty with second degree burns.

We went swimming in the early part of the day, but kept t-shirts on. If the tide was out some of the pools were uncomfortably hot. After I'd trod on a sea urchin, we wore sand shoes in the water, from 11am until 2-30 we stayed inside amusing ourselves. Resting, reading or playing games and down again to the beach until dinner time. We had a lovely week. In Nairobi we didn't tan much, but we certainly did in Mombassa,

Before we left Nairobi we gave the Shamba boy the German wide wheeled scooter, and a blazer and a pair of slacks. We didn't realise that he needed a note from us to say he'd been given them.

He turned up at the house with the Military Police who were convinced he had stolen the items. We made out the note and he went on his way.

We did however pack the plastic swimming pool - the children had used this almost daily - as they wanted to take it with us. We had to empty it every night or the frogs and toads took up residence, as a consequence of which the surrounding area

became quite green over a period of time.

The week's holiday was over and it was time to embark, as we walked along the dockside John's head popped out of a port hole to greet us. He said how brown and healthy we looked.

He took us down to the cabin which would be our home from home for 28 days.

## A Camp Followers Tale - Part II Family Life With The Regiment 1960 - 1964

### Minden

The time had come to move on, our travel documents arrived, and for a change we travelled together.

Once again, we were at Harwich for a night crossing, to the Hook of Holland. We didn't see any other members of the Bn. But as they would be coming from Scotland they would probably be on later sailings. We had a cabin again and landed early morning to entrain right away. All our boxes had gone straight to Germany from Southampton.

The train was still run by the Army and we had breakfast, lunch and dinner - arriving in Minden after dark. We never seem to go into a quarter in daylight. It is a bit daunting to say the least, because the next morning the Quarter Master Sergeant came to hand over the contents to you, so it's a scramble to fold all the blankets and sheets and wash up the breakfast china. At least this time a box of groceries awaited us which was very welcome.

The house was quite modern, and had parquet floors downstairs which polished up brilliantly. The basement contained 3 rooms with steps and a door to the back garden. One room for storing boxes etc, one for coal and the other for laundry purposes - what a laugh - two deep concrete sinks, you could easily bathe in. They were so deep, if you were hunting for socks you used the wooden cooper stick to track them down.

Then there was the cooper itself. Another concrete edifice fired by coal. You heated the first lot of water for the coloured items, and transferred it with a huge metal scoop into the sink. Refill and put the whites in to boil. All the bedding was white, all the coloureds had to be washed by hand and with a wash

board, rinsed, then mangled in the next sink - it was pretty time consuming.

When the weather was bad, the washing had to go up to the attic, which had about twenty lines and opened windows both sides, this meant one had to climb three sets of stairs with a basket full of washing, but thankfully it did dry quite well.

The central heating system was a nightmare; John never did get the hang of it. It was a hot air system fired by coal, the boiler was in the front hall, so dust everywhere when cleaning out the ashes. Thanks be when the Spring came!

The boxes arrived and our bits and pieces made it more of a home than a duplicate of all the other quarters in the area.

The house was in a terrace of eight houses with another terrace behind. Facing our back garden at the end was a block of twenty flats.

The wives now formed a larger amount of numbers of the Bn's official list. The Bn had matured in the last nine years and all ranks were getting marred and the Bn had become a really good unit. So the number of families on strength was close to 300. We also had young marrieds coming over, out-with quarters staying in dubious German flats, or rooms. They of course did not get the overseas allowance, so they existed on the Rifleman's pay, which although greatly improved, was hard going.

For the first time our pay rise was without strings so at last we could clothe ourselves better. We bought a radio, 'Keno' the British cinema in the town of Minden sold or rented them to the troops and families so we were able to keep in touch via British forces network with all that was happening in Britain.

John, as a Company Sergeant Major, was very busy as the Bn took its role in the area. I took Ian and Marion by school bus to enrol at the British Army School. Ian was ok having already learned to read and write, but Marion had to struggle for a few years to get up to scratch. She never liked school and the restrictions it placed upon her. They went to school daily by bus.

Next task was the shopping. A bus went three times a week to the NAAFI. There one could obtain all the British food. It was useful, but the bus trip went round all the quarters, so it took almost an hour to reach the other side of town. And was hot bed of gossip for all the wives.

John and I had a chat about whether to put a deposit down on a house in

Edinburgh and rent it out, the cost at the time was £22,000 which at the time seemed a fortune, the second option was to buy a car - a new Hillman Minx cost £500 and no tax to pay, if we stayed here for three years. So we decided on the car, and I have to say it gave us a lot of pleasure over the next ten years.

John had learnt to drive in Bahrain in the desert, but he had to brush up a bit. After that he taught me, and we didn't have any major arguments except I kept stalling in second gear, at roads etc. He discussed it with someone in the motor transport pool, and it turned out with our model one should start in first gear, it solved the problem, and I passed the test soon after.

The car was a boon, no more NAAFI bus and I could go into the market in town and shop for fruit and vegetables. The only problem I had was tuning my ear into the local dialect.

Buxtehude and Verden to Minden, like Yorkshire to London, so I stood at the stalls and listened until I got my tongue round it, the same time with the butcher shops, some of the wives never visited German shops at all, their diet restricted to the NAAFI.

My friend Milly and her family had arrived from Lanark, I was very pleased to see her and the fact she was on the same terrace was a bonus.

I said in Kenya that we'd have a families club and fortunately, the CO's wife was on our side so we were given a hut at the back of the barracks. No facilities except a WC. All water and urns of tea had to come from about 200 yards away, and returned after.

We had table and chairs and I scrounged brushes and paint from the quarter master, and about ten of us set-to and painted the walls. I went to the local market and bought 40 metres of colourful curtain material. I paid for this but recouped when we were in funds.

My trusty sewing machine did its job and we had six pairs of curtains which on winter nights gave us privacy from the troops, as well as brightening up the place.

We started the club with about 20 wives and gradually raised it to 50. We didn't have room for more, as we found out on a coffee morning when close on a 100 turned up plus toddlers.

Profits started building up, we played whist, then tombola (bingo) and a raffle so we were able to buy cups and saucers, and an electric kettle, large teapot. All proved their value over the four years. The club ran

every Monday night for four years.

After nearly a year John became RSM of the Bn. The wives club finally came in from the cold. We were given the empty dining hall under the Sergeants Mess - what a difference this made, we could really spread out and numbers went right up. At one point we had ten tables of whist and about 100 for tombola and with the raffle we were coining money.

In 1961, I took part in my first of many funerals. The wife of a Colour Sergeant had died from a brain clot, I and other wives went with wreaths from the families, this meant a drive to Hanover on the autobahn to the Army Cemetery.

I had never been on the autobahn before, and to keep a steady place behind a hearse in a right hand drive car was a bit hair-raising, with cars whizzing by at 100 miles an hour. That was the last time I went behind the hearse. Thereafter, I always made my own way there.

Ian was reaching the end of primary school, and we had to decide what to do about his education. The schools in Germany for secondary pupils were boarding schools and we did not think they were very good.

The alternative was Queen Victoria School at Dunblane for the sons of 'other ranks'. We worried about it for ages, we sent away for the information and received brochures back. We went home on leave and took him to the School. It was a good place but I hated leaving him. He was just 10½ and we had been a close family. He must have been homesick, but he stuck it. And after two years was Head Boy of the Junior School. His first Christmas he spent with my mother and father. My sister-in-law put him on trains to London and my dad met him at the other end.

The Annual Ball for the Bn Sgts Mess took place on New Year's Eve, it was always a splendid affair, long evening dresses and long gloves. The best thing however was that all Mess members had a new Mess dress - a jacket in dark green, and fine trews. I made John a cummerbund from the new stiff lining (just on the market) covered it with black satin, it was very smart. I ended up making 15 more for other members.

All the top brass from Brigade came, and also other units came by invitation. It was very funny watching English units trying to do the reels and other Scottish dances. We danced till about 3am. The dance band was excellent and no-one wanted to leave.

Our babysitter was asleep on the settee so we left him there and gave him breakfast before he went back to Camp.

Now we had a car, we decided to have a camping holiday in Germany. We borrowed two tents from the Bn. One shaped like a tepee and one a three sided tent for cooking in, and went north to the Plonasea area. The camp site was basic but the Germans had better tents than we had.

The village was called 'Da Soime'; meaning The Pig - why - I have no idea! The weather was good but the nearby lake was a bit chilly, we swam quite a bit.

The last day was a colder day, John suggested we had one last swim. Soon after John's back seized up, and he couldn't drive the car. Fortunately, we had already packed up the camping gear. Now comes the test, I'd only driven round Minden, so now I had to drive 250 miles and a lot of it was autobahn but even so driving on the right, in a right hand drive is quite wearing.

On arrival Milly gave us the budgie she had been minding for us, and the next morning it was lying feet up in the cage. The house must have been too cold.

Ian and Marion were upset so we got out a shoebox and lined it. Ian dug a hole in the garden and we laid him to rest.

Next again day, I go down with pneumonia and couldn't breathe. John could not get the central heating going, so Milly came in and got it working. Some end to a holiday!

Next happening, Bill, Milly's husband came racing along to say Milly was ill, I went down and he left for work.

On seeing Milly I realised it was something quite serious, and sent a neighbour to call the Army Doctor. - she was being sick every two minutes and I told him to get an ambulance, it could be appendicitis. He did so, and Bill came back to go with her to Rinteln. The Army hospital was twenty miles away, on arrival Milly was operated on immediately and was only an hour away from peritonitis, so the Surgeon said.

I looked after the children while she was away and Bill stayed in barracks.

The Bn was away on an exercise and I was just walking back home from a coffee morning when a big black car drew up and out popped the Families Officer, a Major, "Mrs Sneddon I need your help". I got into the car and he told me a Corporal had died on the exercise from a breach block misfire, and would I go with him to see the wife. Well, I could hardly say no, so off we went.

A telegraph from the UK, told us that John's mother had died suddenly at Jedburgh in Scotland. She was only sixty years old and after working all her married life, was told to take it easy, and to clear up an ulcer in her leg, go to bed and rest it but after three days she died.

It seems that life is never fair. John's mum had eight children and worked all the time as her husband could not get work in the early thirties. She was twenty years younger than he was, but he lived on until his 90th birthday.

John arrived in Jedburgh to find all the sisters were waiting for him do all the arrangements. He had to think it out as he'd never had to do this before. However, he coped very well, and the funeral went without a hitch.

Meanwhile, I was getting used to funerals. Day old babies were buried in Germany, so sometimes I was the only mourner, apart from the parents and the Family's Officer, as it required four people to lower the coffin, small though they were, I would be left holding wreaths, flags, hats and sticks on my own at the head of the grave. One sad funeral was a young boy drowned in the fire water tank in the barracks.

By the end of the four years, I had attended thirteen funerals. The dark suit I had bought for these occasions was never worn again, it reminded me too much of sad times.

The money from the wives club allowed us to run a families dance every two months and a night out for a dinner with all the wives.

Another summer, I started a Saturday morning cinema it was a great success. I hired the films from the AKC at Minden. Every child paid 6 pence (old money) and was handed a raffle ticket, then half way through the film we held the raffle - mainly boxes of small sweets the kids loved this and it helped the summer holidays along.

Christmas and New Year were very busy times. We held a tombola night with prizes instead of money. Milly and I visited Hanover, Beilefeld, Minden and Verden for suitable prizes at reasonable prices.

We had become very good at this doing the same for weekly raffles and all the shop keepers got to know us and were always ready to show us something new.

We also held sales of work, lots of wives would make things, we travelled miles to other British units to get wool for knitting and collecting goods for the stalls from the

wives. We always made a good profit and this in turn paid for dances and outings.

The next major happening was an exercise called 'Short Commons', four Bns in the area were approached by the top brass boffins to see if any of them would take part, all turned it down as it was in the middle of winter. However, the Cameronians took it on and it was a very hard task. All the food was dried mixtures, and the troops did twenty mile route marches in the snow night and day. They then had to be stripped, weighed and measured for fat tissue etc, urine and faeces also were tested. The Bn stood up to it very well.

Half way through the exercise the Btn football team were due to play in the final of the British Army of the Rhine Cup. The CO trucked the whole Btn to the football ground in Minden. And the Military Police made sure they were sealed off from all possible food, not to mention families.

The Cameronians won the cup and the moral of the troops was lifted for the rest of the exercise. The scientists thanked the Bn and a lot was learned about the quality of survival food.

Ian came to Germany for holidays. The logistics were as follows; John's sister put him on the train for London (when he was older he made the trip with the other boys). Then mum and dad put him on the plane at Heathrow and we drove to Hanover to pick him up, at the end of the holidays it was a reverse procedure.

Another major happening the whole world heard about! There was a pub on the River Wesser in Minden which some of the troops frequented. It was a bit of a dive and it was also used by the German Bargees. On this particular night one or more bargees called the troops 'poison dwarfs' well most Cameronians from the Glasgow area are short but they make up for it in fighting spirit. So, naturally, a fight broke out and the landlord called the Military Police and all concerned were arrested. They were duly up before the CO charged and sentenced, all this was over and forgotten. Until...

A few weeks later all hell broke loose. The press had somehow missed the incident and swarmed all over us, the CO went ballistic but gave very good statements.

The press came round the houses about midnight, trying to question the families, it was an absolute disgrace - I have never trusted the press since. The paper headlines in the UK read 'The Poison Dwarfs'. It took years to live down that name, ours was a



good mature Bn.

The truth came out later that they were really after the Mr Profumo the Defence Minister, and picked on us well after the event as a link to his problem.

One Christmas and New Year we sent Marion home to mums and Ian joined them. John and I were out every night for two weeks attending Bns function running Christmas draws, children's Christmas Parties, and finally the New Year's Annual Ball. We had clothes landing everywhere, No 1 Dress, No 2 Dress, Mess Dress, Cocktail dresses and Evening Dresses. We were absolutely tired out at the end of it.

We always seemed to be the last to get our leave, three times we made the trip to the UK by car sharing the driving. Sometimes it was quite hair raising, on one occasion I had been driving, I woke John up to take over and I guess his eyesight hadn't quite adjusted to the night, about five minutes later I shouted 'stop' at the top of my voice, we were heading for a 15 foot drop, the tree lined roads in Belgium are poplars and in the dark two roads diverging looked like one. It happened again later, we drove straight into a town square, trees lined with same optical illusion.

We usually reached Ostend by 5am and cooked breakfast on the grass verge before catching the ferry.

One year we went in August, Ian was still at home, we reached the ferry no problem and then came the worst sea journey I have ever made. We were at sea for seven hours we couldn't get into Dover, even the ship's crew were sick, we eventually found a sheltered spot on deck and stayed there until we landed, we all looked green. The Custom's Officer took one look and quickly flagged us through we pulled up outside Dover and we all went to sleep.

Each time we went home, both Milly and I saved up our cash and I went up to Oxford Street. If the sales were in progress Milly gave me her measurements and foot size.

Clothes in Germany were very expensive, apart from cotton underwear which was very cheap and Milly being a very small size could only buy children's clothes.

One year I purchased for her a winters coat, dressing gown, 2 pairs of size 3½ shoes, a skirt and blouse all for about £20.00.

For myself I went straight to Marks & Spencers and bought three jersey wool suits and a jersey wool dress. They were always one of the best buys, it's a pity they changed to synthetics in later years.

As the RSM's wife, I had to look as smart as possible, and with the right shoes, the jersey wool suits were always admired. One coat also admired was the grey fake fur with angora wool cuffs and large collar. This coat came out for every dance or ball over four years in Minden, bought for Pat's wedding it was too decorative for every day wear. It is still in the cupboard 40 years later, Marion says 'it's her heirloom'.

Nights in the Sgts Mess were very entertaining, we had an excellent Dance Band. We had theme nights but best of all was the music and better still, the Twist started. John and I were very good ballroom dancers. Dancing together since 1945, but the minute the Twist started we were hooked, we'd start about 9pm and were still at it at 4am! We often walked home in the morning mist.

One such night proved disastrous for me, I had made gingham circular skirts for Milly and myself, with a wide band at the waist with the very frilled underskirts - very much in fashion.

This night was themed which included a fish and chip supped in a newspaper, about midnight I began to feel a bit under the weather and I put it down to the mix of drink, food and frantic dancing.

Next morning, I felt all right and took the children to a local lagoon (once a sandpit) we went swimming, and as I entered the water up to my waist, it was quite cold I felt something jump in my right side, I didn't think much about it. But, twenty four hours later it was a different matter, I felt ill but had no idea why. The Doctor came and gave me some mixture and left. On taking the medicine, I was violently sick, but not from the pain.

John took action, I staggered down to the back seat of the car, with a basin across my knees and he drove the 20 miles to Rinteln Military Hospital, like a bat out of hell. On arrival I was put into a wheelchair, at the entrance there was a large mirror - I caught sight of myself and I thought I was dying. I was a lovely shade of grey.

I was in hospital for two weeks waiting for the inflammation to die down in the gall bladder, no food just lucozade. Then x-rays were taken, and the surgeon came to me and said it was satisfactory, by that I thought he meant the stones had gone through, not so!

The stone was the size of a peach stone the mixture of fish and chips, rum & coke and the cold water swim had dislodged it

and it went over the tube and the bile built up.

I was sent home to get fit, then went back for the operation. I was in for two weeks again and had so many visitors who, I discovered, expect you to do most of the talking. One morning I suddenly felt miserable, the walls were closing in, the surgeon said 'stitches out and go home' praise be I'd survived.

I got around driving the car. Milly lifted the shopping and coal etc, so between Milly & John, I managed not to strain, however, it was about six months until I felt normal.

## 1964

The Bn had been posted back to Scotland. I personally was glad to be nearer Ian and the fact that I could visit to take him out for the day, was a good prospect. Packing up is always a chore, we now had two children's bikes to crate up. However some goods could be taken by car. We drove home to Harrow, and stayed with mum and dad, then the trek north, back once more to Redford Barracks in Edinburgh.

The circle is complete, we are back in an old house 18 years later. The house was pretty small and no garden, it was built about 1890's. It stood opposite the NAAFI - so it was quite noisy from the troops.

John was very busy as the Bn was now on Royal Duties. This consisted of placing daily guards at Edinburgh Castle and Holyrood Place. I have an excellent picture of John in full regalia, sword, etc, The Guard was marching down the Royal Mile and the morning sun shone all over the silver. It is the best picture of John in uniform.

Joyce Sneddon (Mrs)

## Musical Usury.

The credit card interest and the rate charged by loan sharks does not seem excessive when compared with the rate charged by the Military Band loan club. For every £1 borrowed the interest was 1s 8d per week or just over 8%, which if borrowed for a full year, even without using the accumulated compound interest, would amount to 400% per annum.

The band loan club lasted for ten weeks at a time to avoid continuous excessive debts and the likelihood of bad debts. Each period of the club finished before a posting or the beginning of a leave: sometimes the club continued through the time of a tour.

I am sure the rate of interest will be a shock to readers but it must be accepted that the loan period was short and people borrowed just for a week at a time. It made cash available between pay days.

The band, seeing me as an honest clarinettist and the least likely to fiddle,



asked me to run the club. They would accept my using the funds for the occasional NAAFI supper or trip to the cinema but would not have tolerated any step towards living beyond my means. As nobody ever gave me any reward for my efforts, I knew it would be acceptable to cost in a modest fee, which I showed in the accounts.

I worked out double-entry bookkeeping as an obvious way to keep the accounts. It was only during my pay sergeants' course that I realised that I was being taught something that I had worked out for myself.

At the beginning of each period shilling shares were sold. Most of the shareholders bought shares valued between 10s and a £1 payable weekly over ten weeks. Although I did not know the names, bandsmen also invested on behalf of those outside the band. In the same way, borrowers came from without the band. To prevent bad debts such loans were made and repaid on a weekly basis.

The weekly cash amounted to about £25. With the high rate of interest, combined with the continuous compound interest, someone who did not borrow could expect a return of between £6 or £7 on an investment of £10 after ten weeks.

The anomaly was it cost interest to borrow your own shares. Some people always took their shares as a loan and borrowed more in addition. Borrowers had to have the permission of the investors who had to

accept the consequences for bad debts.

All this was taking place without being known to the officers or the members of the sergeants' mess ever finding out. What we were doing was possibly illegal or unacceptable?

The value of the shares was eagerly awaited at the end of each period. None of us knew anything about the stock market and were unaware that our exorbitant rate of interest would be inapplicable in the real financial world.

The medieval church banned usury because of its potential evil. Even today the Islamic Faith does not allow it. The result is that Muslims have to engage in the most complicated financial arrangements to observe their law and get mortgages.

I hope that the Editor does not check the Queen's Regulations and the Manual of Military Law to find the section to publish me as a minor usurer. I am concerned, for I live but one hour from the cells of Colchester.

Bill Cougлан.

## Within a Mile of Edinburgh Toun

Since writing my article last year, I have tried to discover why the Cameronians choose 'Within A Mile of Edinburgh Toun' as their regimental quick march. I have some more information but cannot find any record of meetings that gave the reasons for the acceptance of the Hook tune.

The British Library records show that there were close links between Edinburgh and the Cameronians and this may have influenced the choice of 'Within a Mile of Edinburgh Toun' as the regimental quickstep in 1878. However, the curator of the Music Collections at the British Library has confirmed that he cannot identify it as either being registered as a regimental quick march or printed in one of military band journals.

The year 1878 was before the merger and, therefore, it can be established that 'Within a Mile of...' was selected for the 26th Cameronian Regiment and not for the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) of 1881. Terry MacKenzie, the Museum Collection at Hamilton, send me 'The Regimental Standing Orders of 1930. Under X1 Music one can learn that the 1st and 2nd battalions were preserving their origins by playing

mostly the music of either the 26th or the 90th on parades and during the timetable of the regimental day. The 2nd Bn, possibly because they saw it as much as a march from the 26th, did not play 'Within a Mile of Edinburgh Toun'. The 2nd Bn used 'The Gathering of the Grahams' as the quick march for both the pipes and drums and the military band. Although 'Within a Mile of...' was the 1st Bn quick march, it had limited use, for it was only played for the march past by the military band if the pipe band was not on parade. Even at the end of band concerts, according to the 1930 orders, 'The Cameronian Rant' was to be played instead of 'Within a Mile of...' However, during my time in the band 'Within a Mile of Edinburgh Toun' was played after the 'Cameronian Rant.'

In my time 'Within a Mile of Edinburgh Toun' was played the end of concerts and mess nights but never on parades. At the end of Retreats the Military Band marched off in silence behind the pipe band playing 'Kenmuirs On an' Awa' and the 'Gathering of the Grahams.' It is likely that 'Within a Mile of Edinburgh Toun' was known to but a few in the battalion.

The Royal Military School of Music, did not reply to my letter or respond to my telephone calls about 'Within a Mile of Edinburgh Toun.' I had hoped they would have its origin recorded in their library of regimental marches.

I have read that new regimental marches are now decided by competition. For example, the newest army corps, The Corps of Army Musicians recently chose an arrangement of 'The Minstrel Boy to the Wars has Gone', by such a competition, as their regimental quick march. The origin of their march will never be a mystery.

Bill Cougлан

## All this for Eight Minutes!

**The Gallipoli tape at the Regimental Museum.**

When it reopened in 1999, the new exhibits in the Regimental Museum at Hamilton included a video describing the experiences of the 7th and 8th Battalions The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) at Gallipoli in 1915/16. The video still is on display, but unfortunately, apart from the contents of the video itself, there is nothing to draw to the visitor's attention the subject matter, its location, or its significance to the Regiment. The boards

surrounding the screen remain bare. It is hoped that this article will in some way go towards rectifying the position. Also, it may enlighten the reader on the problems of preparing and producing documentary films of military history - even in a case of a film of some, eight minutes' duration.

In 1994, following an earlier series of four half hour programmes produced for Tyne/Tees Television and Yorkshire Television on the Battle of the Somme in which I acted as military adviser and presenter, the same company was engaged to prepare a further series on the Gallipoli Campaign of 1915/16 for the same organisations and also for Scottish ITV. I was pleased to be asked to act in the same capacities for the new series of four programmes. The only way in which justice could be done to such a series, was for some of the footage to be shot on the Gallipoli Peninsula. Fortunately, budgetary provision had been made for a two-week reconnaissance of the battlefield. As a former Cameronian, I was aware that the Regiments 7th and 8th Battalions - still using the preferred title of Scottish Rifles - had taken an active, and at times tragic part in the Campaign, I was anxious that the Regiment should receive full recognition for its deeds, along with those of many other regiments. Both Battalions were involved in an epic assault in their first action on 28th June 1915. Considerable preliminary research was undertaken in regimental and other museums in preparation for the recce; among these was the Regimental Museum. It soon became clear from sketch maps in the archives, that the location, near Gully Ravine at Cape Helles, should be identifiable without much difficulty. This proved to be the case.

The attack of 2nd Battalion Scottish Rifles at Neuve Chapelle on the Western Front in March 1915, probably is the best known of the many heroic but tragic assaults of the Regiment in World War I. Sometimes, it tends to overshadow other Regimental actions of a similar nature which took place around the same time. Such is the case with the Gallipoli attack of June 28th 1915. The two actions have many similarities. Both at Neuve Chapelle and Gully Spur (the site of the Gallipoli attack) assaults were made with negligible artillery support, leaving the enemy trenches virtually undamaged. In the case of Neuve Chapelle there had been insufficient time for the guns to be adequately registered, while at Gully Spur there was no noticeable support at all. Both

were made over open ground against well dug in positions. For each it was their first attack of the war.

156 Brigade (of which the two Battalions formed part) was attached to the 29th Division for an attack at Gully Spur. The Divisional Commander, because of the shortage of both suitable guns and ammunition, had allocated all but a derisory portion of the barrage to fall on a different sector to the Brigade front. Both there and at Neuve Chapelle, the advance took place in the face of withering machine gun fire - with the same predictable result. 7th and 8th Battalions suffered grievous casualties as 7th was ordered to attack over the ground on which the dead and wounded of its sister battalion were already strewn. Thereafter they were able to operate only as a composite unit, and could muster only sufficient rifles to form a weak single battalion. In the 28th June action the 8th lost 15 Officers and 234 Other Ranks killed and 10 Officers and 114 other ranks wounded, while before its back up attack was halted, 7th lost 10 Officers and 158 Other Ranks killed and 4 Officers and 100 ranks wounded - a shattering blow. Despite the fact that at the time of the final withdrawal from Cape Helles on 9th January 1916 it could muster only about 150 effective rifles, 7/8th was accorded the honour of being one of the last Regiments to perform the nerve wracking duty of manning the front line as cover for the retreat.

Our reconnaissance, made by the producer, his assistant and myself, covered all the major battle sites of the Gallipoli campaign. In addition to walking the battlefields, it included visits to the Turkish National Army Museums at Istanbul and at the Gallipoli Peninsula, as well as several of the Turkish forts and other defence positions at the Narrows of the Dardanelles in connection with the Naval actions preceding the altered landings. The site of the Scottish Rifles'

June attack appeared little altered, save for most of it now being under cultivation. whereas in 1915 the area had been largely covered in scrubby growth. It was obvious that the location would be ideal for filming, and I was able to suggest to the producer Ed Skelding, that it was a suitable candidate for inclusion in the appropriate section of the programme. On returning to U.K., I mentioned this likelihood to Colonel Hugh MacKay. This resulted in the germination of a proposal to attempt to persuade Ed

Skelding to prepare a special Cameronian film about 7th and 8th Battalions at Gallipoli for the forthcoming opening of the Museum.

The first step was to consult the Local Authority through the responsible officer - at that time Bob Clark. The Museum had no moving footage available for display, and subject to cost, he embraced the possibility with enthusiasm. That issue naturally took prime place on the agenda. It is not generally appreciated in documentary film making how vital is the expense factor. Allowances must be made for administration, proper preparation and research, for hire of camera crews, scripting, as well as the hire of editing suites, sound dubbing and voice recording studios. Most important of all is correct budgeting for on-site filming, bearing in mind that in a foreign location there can be no question of a return to retake unsatisfactory footage.

Several meetings took place at Hamilton with Bob Clark and other Council representatives, Colonel Hugh, Ed Skelding and myself to discuss the financial implications, the optimum running time for the proposed video and its content and presentation. It was agreed that the background from which the two Battalions were drawn, their training and heritage would be part and parcel of the film. It would then lead up to the Gallipoli Campaign. The requirements of a film designed to be shown live as a permanent exhibit are different to that for a film made for more lengthy TV programmes or for historical research. Live viewing in the body of a museum requires - expense apart - strict limitations on viewing time. The average visitor to a museum does not wish to be overloaded with facts, or to be fixed to one exhibit for an inordinate length of time. Viewing time therefore was settled at about eight minutes. maximum. It was intended that an explanatory display fixed to the surrounding boarding beside the video screen, together with a composite photograph of the battle site, would guide a viewer interested in further research to the Museum's archives.

Ed Skelding had considered it feasible in addition to the schedule for the main programme, to fit some extra filming at Gallipoli appropriate to the Museum's requirements. After careful consideration, the project was approved. There is available at the Regimental Museum an excellent series of contemporary photographs of

the Battalions sojourn on the peninsula, presumably taken by a member of the Scottish Rifles, that portray the extreme conditions under which they soldiered. There was no difficulty in obtaining contemporary photographs of the areas from which the men of 7th and 8th Battalions were recruited. These were copied onto studio rostrum camera.

The script was drawn on the basis of several identifiable potentially suitable sites for filming at Gallipoli, with presenter at times in vision. The duration of the film being only about eight minutes, the script also had to be written as a synopsis in which only the salient facts could be included. Filming at the selected points, of necessity, had to take place subject to incorporating the work into the main schedule for the main programme. Sometimes it is not appreciated that sequences are not shot in the order in which they appear in the completed film. One of the main purposes of a recce is to establish not just where, but when it would be best to film at a particular location. The probable weather, the position of the sun at certain times of day and the shadows that would be cast by it, surrounding noise from machines, and accessibility for the camera crews all must be considered. A strict timetable must be compiled. Once it falls behind schedule it can prove very hard to remedy. It is quite normal for several shots of the same sequence to be taken, sometimes because of presenter or camera crew error. Allowance must also be made for the fact that technical problems could occur, or that the presenter might forget lines or use a form of inflection that is unsatisfactory to the producer. At times, it becomes necessary to alter the camera position to suit changing light, and should the schedule fall into arrears, to abandon some shots altogether. Often it is impossible to proceed in an orderly progression from one site to the next; in order to capture the right conditions. Frequently it is necessary to crisscross the countryside in an apparently time wasting and arbitrary manner.

7/8th Scottish Rifles spent from mid June 1915 until January 1916 in the Cape Helles Sector, during which the climate changed from summer temperatures of at times 110 degrees Fahrenheit to the depths of winter sometimes at 20 degrees below freezing. Torrential rain caused flash flooding. One visit only to Gallipoli for filming was possible, so that black and white archive

photographs were relied upon to depict the winter experience. It is normal for only about one quarter of film shot to be actually used in the final product, and so it proved in the Cameronian video. Considerable time and skill is required by the producer to adjust this to the script, with variations always necessary in both directions. This is where the expertise of the director/producer can be decisive. Ed Skelding (a Glaswegian by birth and a graduate of Stirling University) had many years of experience in the art, as well a natural empathy with his subject. The penultimate stage is the dubbing of the background music and sound track, and the final steps rests with the presenter to 'voice over' in the studio those parts of the footage which were not recorded previously when sound filming took place simultaneously on location.

The completed version of the video was shown to the Regimental Trustees and Council Officers shortly before the date fixed for the reopening of the Museum and approved. The Museum now has in its possession onsite footage of the Gallipoli battlefields unique to the Regiment. So far as I am aware, no other regiment holds a similar film that is devoted exclusively to its own regiment. It preserves a visual record of the dauntless courage of Cameronians who, far from home, under trained for their task, ill equipped, physically drained by several weeks aboard ship and by the onset of the scourge of dysentery, richly deserve an honoured place in Regimental History.

Cliff Pettit

## The Outbreak of Malaria in Italy in 1944

It is possible that in 1944 that Jerry Dawson and the other 100,000 who caught malaria were the first casualties of biological warfare. This information was broadcast on BBC Radio 4 on the 8th September 2003.

After the Allies landed at Salerno on the 9th September 1943, the retreating Germans decided to flood the Tiber Delta and the former Pontino marshes in the Latima area to hold up the Allied advance. As October to February is the rainy season in this part of Italy, the area could have become flooded with fresh water if the Germans had turned off the pumps. Instead they decided to reverse the action of the pumps, destroy the tidal gates and pumped salt water inland to mix with the fresh water. This mixture

of salt with fresh created in the spring the correct breeding environment for malaria carrying mosquitoes. This was a cruel act, for thousands of local people, and many Allied troops, caught malaria.

It was during the Fascist rule of Mussolini that it was decided to drain the Pontino marshes and reclaim the land. It was by the use of flood barriers and pumps that an area, hitherto affected by malaria was turned into one of normal living. The project was largely successful, for by 1940 the annual malaria rate had dropped to 550. The result of the German action in September 1943 brought the return of malaria to thousands of people. The programme stated there is evidence for this cruel act by the Germans. At the moment the evidence is being assembled to confirm what is strongly believed and if the legal investigation becomes a reality, the case will be presented to the Germans. No doubt we will learn more: the finding of the truth when so many people suffered is essential.

Are there any Cameronians of the Italian campaign who remember the unexpected, and perhaps unexplained, outbreak of malaria in the spring of 1944?

Bill Coughlan

## Robert Owen and Lanark

In my article last year I was expressing my surprise that Robert Owen was not known in Lanark either by a statue or any other means of recognition.

The New Lanark Conservation Trust has provided me with the reason why Robert Owen was disapproved of in Lanark. I shall quote from the letter I received from the Trust.

'I have to say that I am not in the least surprised by the lack of awareness of Robert Owen in Lanark wither in the 1940's or indeed at any time. There is a long-standing antipathy, if not hostility, to Owen in the Ancient and Royal Burgh of Lanark, which had some difficulty with the industrial new town that sprang up on its doorstep in 1785, and, even more so with its radical owner, whose unorthodox views on religion among other things did not endear him to the Lanark establishment.' Robert Owen should have the last word:

'I know that society may be formed so as to exist without crime, without poverty, with health greatly improved, with little if any misery, and intelligence and happiness

improved a hundredfold; and no obstacle whatsoever intervenes at this moment expect ignorance to prevent such a state of society from becoming universal.' Robert Owen 1816.

Bill Coughlan.

## The Wearing of The Green, and The Khaki, and The Black.

Readers will indulge me, I hope, if I take a rather circuitous route to arrive at my start-point. But bear with me: you may yet find something of interest hidden here.

All of you will have heard of the great World War II leader Field Marshal Lord Wavell. Some of you may have read his biography and a few may even be aware that it has a second volume completed after the death of the original biographer (John Connell) and covering Wavell's years in India and beyond. Some of you will have read Wavell's wonderful collection of poetry, *Other Men's Flowers*, put together during the war and, by all accounts, almost entirely from memory. Not for nothing was volume one of his biography (published by Collins in 1964) called *Scholar and Soldier*.

Some also may know that Wavell wrote another book during the war: a biography of Field Marshal Lord Allenby. I confess I had forgotten this entirely until just a few months ago when I lit upon and bought a first edition of it. Now pause for a moment and think about the man who could write on that scale and to that quality while holding some of the most onerous offices of war.

I read the biography of Wavell shortly after it was published. At that time I was acting as the Arena Officer for the Edinburgh Military Tattoo. As such I had a room in the Castle Mess. I was much amused to read that Wavell, as a Black Watch subaltern, had joined in a competition with a friend to see if they could drive a golf ball from the roof of the Mess into Princess Street Gardens! That pales by comparison though with an escapade of the 1960's when some soldiers of the \*\*\*\* and \*\*\*\* Highlanders, on duty in the Castle, bombarded the citizenry of the the Grass Market with snooker balls!

Wavell tells us that Allenby spent many of his early years as a cavalry officer in South Africa in the late 1800's. He saw a lot of action at every level of regimental command. It was while I was reading this

part of Wavell's narrative that a reference set me off on the trail of the origins of khaki uniforms. And here I must confess my ignorance. I had at the back of my mind the idea that khaki had been conceived for use by the army in South Africa at about this time. (That's what comes from sleeping through many of the lectures at Sandhurst.) Of course I was wrong. It first appeared in India half a century earlier. and this is how.

In 1846 a new Guide Corps was formed for service on the North West Frontier of India. Its commandant was a Lieutenant Lumsden and his adjutant (who was also effectively second-in-command) was Lieutenant WSR Hodson. One of the duties assigned to Hodson was responsibility for equipping the new regiment. This also necessitated his choosing the regiment's uniform. Accordingly in May 1848 he liaised with his brother in England, The Rev George Hodson, to send all of the cloth, rifles, and Prussian-style helmet required. With Lumsden's approval Hodson decided upon a lightweight uniform of "khaki" colour - or "drab" as it was then called. This would be comfortable to wear and "make them invisible in a land of dust". Khaki is the Urdu (and Persian) word for dusty.

William Hodson was an interesting character. There can have been few cavalry subalterns in those days (and not many now) with a Cambridge degree as well as a facility for and an interest in languages. He joined the Indian Army in 1845 and served with the 2nd Grenadiers before joining the new Guide Corp two years later. After a period as an assistant district commissioner he returned to command the Guides from 1852 to '54. Later, during the Indian Mutiny, he was given a commission to raise his own regiment, Hodson's Horse. In 1858 he was shot and killed in action. Hodson's Horse have the distinction of having had khaki chosen as their own and only uniform.

It was not until 1885 that the entire army in India adopted khaki. It then took a further fifteen years before the British army as a whole adopted the uniform, referred to as khaki drill, to fight the Boer War. (So I was at least right about that bit.) The only references to be found in the Regimental History (volume one, page 292) are:

*"At the end of 1909 the 1st battalion left Bombay for South Africa... equipment is being brought into line with the needs of modern warfare; at Bloemfontein the black greatcoats*

of the battalion were replaced with khaki.”

There were many earlier occasions when a lighter and more practical uniform would have been a wise choice. In 1828 Private McGregor is quoted as having written:

*“We had to mount guard at first with shakos and red coats as in Europe till many men dropt with sunstroke, then the Colonel found out we were not in Europe. He would soon have killed us all.”* (Ibid p 230.)

By 1833 the 26th were in China. One of the surgeons of the garrison at Chusan wrote about the amount of disease and illness exacerbated by the fact that:

*“Under a sun hotter than that ever in India, the men were buckled up to the throat in their full-dress coatees...”*

And soldiers of the 90th fared no better. They were in the Cape Colony (South Africa) in January 1847. One resident there, a Mrs Harriet Ward, wrote:

*“Under every disadvantage of fatigue, privation, and a residence under canvas in the height of an African summer, with the thermometer at times 157F [78C] in the open air, the 90th, on their march from Graham’s Town to the coast, presented a perfect picture of a regiment of British veterans.”*

Mrs Ward says nothing of the men’s uniforms, but an earlier observer, while praising the soldiers’ physique, pointed out that

*“...the once bright scarlet of Britain’s blood-red garb was sadly sobered down to a dark dingy maroon, while the nether garments, well patched and strapped with leather, bore evidence to the hard service they had undergone...”* (Ibid p 252)

It was 62 years before khaki made its appearance in South Africa to replace the, by then, black greatcoats of the Scottish Rifles. But this is not quite the whole story. Both battalions served in India before that. The 1st Battalion landed in Bombay on 1 January 1895 and stayed there till the end of 1909 when it moved to South Africa. During this time they certainly wore khaki and there is a good photograph, reprinted here, which I saw first in Major Brian Leishman’s excellent album, *300 Years of Service*, published as part of the 300th celebrations in May 1989 [and still available from the Museum.]

This photograph, of the Military Band, shows two other details of interest. On close examination it is possible to verify that they were of course wearing their puttees “Cameronian style”, ie they were wound from the outside to the inside (rather that

the conventional way which is vice versa). The other is that the officers are wearing black armbands which would have been because of official mourning on the death, on 22 January 1901, of Queen Victoria. This places the photograph almost certainly in the month following her death.

The 2nd Battalion was in India in 1881 at the time of the amalgamation and the founding of the Scottish Rifles and was to remain there until January 1895 when it embarked for home. They were in India then at the time when we are told that khaki became the usual dress (1885) though there is no reference to this that I can find in the Regimental History and there is no photographic clue from The Album. They were to remain in UK from 1895 until sailing for South Africa in the autumn of 1899 on the outbreak of the South African war. There they would certainly have made the change from rifle green to khaki.

Let me return now for a moment to the subject of puttees and the way they are / were worn. I made the point about what I believe is the unique way in which the Cameronians wore them. Is there a myth to be exploded here as well? My understanding was that the tradition came from the time of service in South Africa. It seems clear



that puttees (the word is Hindu) originated in India and came into service with khaki battledress uniforms. Both battalions saw service there after its introduction in 1885 and before they went to South Africa. Can we therefore assume that the puttee tradition stems from India instead? I think so. But did both battalions wind them the same way? I wonder.

While reading some note on Hodson’s Horse I came across a comment to the effect that “Many view it [khaki] as the precursor of modern camouflage uniform.” Not so, of course, as any rifleman will tell you. That distinction goes to the original rifle regiments of the Peninsular War a further



half century (or so) earlier. They had sought to disguise their whereabouts by adopting dark green (as opposed to scarlet) uniforms and black (as opposed to brass) buttons.

But this is not the whole story either. The very reference to green uniforms is in the history of the 60th (The King's Royal Rifle Corps). Their roots were in North America, where they were formed, and where they had been issued with uniforms of green, and rifles as opposed to muskets.

The 95th (The Rifle Brigade) were first formed as an Experimental Corps in 1800 and they were given rifles and green uniforms too. In 1803 they were to be joined by the 43rd & 52nd (The Ox and Bucks) to form the Light Brigade. Later, in 1808 they joined the 60th to form the Brigade of Riflemen. These then are the units to which we can trace back the green roots of the Scottish Rifles. But the wearing of green uniforms, "the precursor of modern camouflage" actually goes back to the 18th century and not just to the Peninsular War. Another myth demolished!

With the formation of The Scotch (later Scottish) Rifles in 1881 the combined Cameronians and Perthshire Light Infantry took on rifle green for their tunics. But how many people remember that it was not until 1890 that Douglas tartan was authorised for their trews? The same strikingly good combination can still be seen today, worn by the Pipes and Drums of the Royal Gurkha Regiment, the successors to (and incorporating) the 7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles, the affiliated regiment of The Cameronians.

I have for some time wondered why, when the Lowland Band of the Scottish Infantry was formed a few years ago, the opportunity was not taken to adopt Douglas trews. It would have been a signal way of continuing the traditions of wearing the tartan of that great Lowland Scottish family and a fitting way to show that the wider memory of the Scottish Rifles had not been lost, or is betrayed too strong a word? Alas memories are short and the history of the uniforms adopted in recent years is sprinkled with self-serving solecisms.

But back now to the black greatcoats. One of the smartest items of uniform in use at the time of the 1st Battalion's disbandment was the officers' black patrol jacket. This was worn in the evening by the Orderly Officer and on other occasions as an alternative to Mess Dress or the dark green Lowland pattern doublet then

called Number 1 Dress but originally called Review Order. From the very first day I wore it I wondered why it was also sometimes referred to as a "Black Jumper". I wondered if by any chance it had started life as an item of dress worn by mounted officers. The custom of wearing the black lanyard (with its hangman's noose knot) round the neck, under the epaulettes, and with the end tucked into the right breast pocket certainly harked back to a time when the lanyard was the safety cord for the officer's shako.

The answer is, of course not. It is a typical soldier's corruption. The word "jumper" has been mangled from the word "jump" which means a short coat or jacket. It comes from the French, *juppe*.

Jump (for a garment, as opposed to what you did on orders) would not have been in common use, whereas reference to a sweater/pullover/jumper would have been; hence the corruption to a word which at least sounded familiar. Though they stem from the same French word, jump and jumper have completely different meanings, the latter being defined as a loose fitting garment pulled over the head.

The Black Jumper was a unique garment. Its apparent plainness belied the fact that it had some delightful detail. The cuffs were double and a row of black cuff buttons was hidden under a pointed fly. In the small of the back was a diamond shaped mini-belt held in place by two more buttons. When a sword was worn then the cross-belt was worn too and the sword was suspended on long straps (the scabbard being held in the left hand) the sword belt being hidden under the coat. It could be worn with a small thin white collar showing a millimetre above the inside of the stand-up black collar. It could be worn with strapped trews and Wellington boots or dress trews and George boots. Its most unusual feature, and one of its most attractive, was that the front was cut straight down without any cutaway, unique (I believe) for a short coat worn with trews or kilt.

I can find no reference as to when the Black Jump came into use. My supposition is that it must have been the "undress" coat used when the dress item (Levée Order?) was a frock coat complete with all its ribbons and froggings. I am at a loss to think of another item of non-mess uniform worn in recent memory which was black (as opposed to green or navy blue). That applies to all regiments in the British army too. Perhaps some buff (no pun intended)

will come to my rescue.

And so, by way of many diversions, back to khaki. Khaki was the colour familiar to all who served in the Regiment from the late 1800's through the two world wars



and until battledress was phased out. This took place fully when the 1st Battalion moved from Minden, Germany, to Redford Barracks, Edinburgh, to take up public duties in the spring of 1964. Khaki was then confined to the No 2 Dress coat and greatcoat only. Plain olive green had replaced it for what was called Combat Dress. Disrupted Pattern Material (DPM), a true camouflage, was little known then and seen only on the smocks worn by the Parachute Regiment (Or should they have been called not smocks but jumpers?) Khaki made its reappearance when the Battalion kitted out to go to Aden in 1966 where khaki drill was the only dress worn.

I remember the visit there of the then Colonel of the Regiment, Lt Gen Sir George Collingwood (the "Wicked Uncle"). He came to visit the 1st Battalion when it was up-country in and around Habilayn. I recall him saying how similar the landscape there was to the North West Frontier (where he had served as a subaltern in the 1st Battalion exactly 30 years earlier). *Plus ca change....* No surprise then that we were back in the khaki which had been thought of first by William Hodson for just that terrain. And we were lucky in more ways than one. We could rely on our excellent Quartermaster, George Soper, for our equipment and not on a vicar in England.

PRG

## Section XI Music

- (a) Customs in connection with Pipe, Bugle, and Military Bands.
- (b) Pipe Airs,
- (c) Bugle Calls

### (a) CUSTOMS IN CONNECTION WITH PIPE, BUGLE, AND MILITARY BANDS.

**840** In both 1st and 2nd Battalions the



UP COUNTRY at Habilayn, General Collingwood meets some members of the Federal National Guard, with the political Officer, Mr Tambling, and Lieutenant-Colonel Dow.

Orderly Bugler sounds the Reveille, which is followed immediately by the Orderly Piper playing "Johnnie Cope."

Once a week in both 1st and 2nd Battalions Reveille is sounded by full Bugle and Pipe Bands.

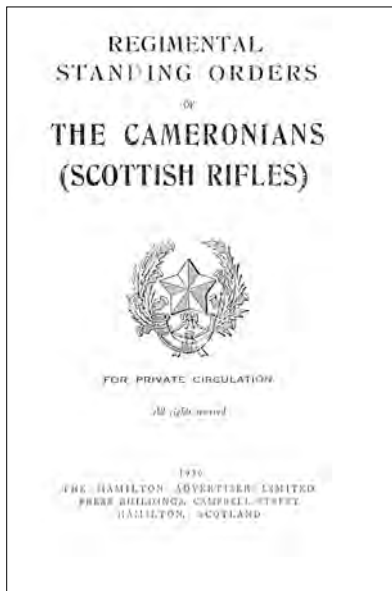
**841** (a) In the 1st Battalion Bands do not play on Church Parade. The Military Band plays during the Church Service, if required.

(b) In the 2nd Battalion the Pipe and Bugle Bands play on Church Parade. The Military Band plays during the Church Service, if required.

**842** (a) "The Black Bear" is played by the Pipe Band of the 1st Battalion when entering barracks, camp, etc.,

The men cheer on the pause that follows the double beat on the big drum.

(b) In the 2nd Battalion the same procedure is adopted when entering barracks, camp, etc., except that the Bugle Band sounds the Battalion call immediately the "Black Bear"



is finished and before the Battalion March Past is commenced.

**(b) PIPE AIRS.**

*Note* - In the 2nd Battalion the Bugle Band always sounds the Battalion Call before the Battalion March Past is played. The Battalion Call is preceded and followed by two three-pace rolls on the drums.

**843** Should the Pipe Band not be available and a March Past be required, the Military Band of the 1st Battalion plays "Within a Mile of Edinboro' Toun."

Under similar circumstances the Military Band of the 2nd Battalion plays "The Gathering of the Grahams."

**844** (a) The 1st Battalion Military Band always finishes a programme of music by playing the "Cameronian Rant," followed by the National Anthem.

(The music of the "Cameronian Rant" is given in Sir Herbert Maxwell's "Lowland Scottish Regiments." Its origin is unknown, but it is believed to date from about 1700-1720.)

(b) The 2nd Battalion Military Band always finishes a programme of music by playing the following in the order given below:- "The Garb of Old Gaul."

The Battalion March Past ("The Gathering of the Grahams").

The National Anthem.

**845** The 5th/8th, 6th (Lanarkshire), and 7th Battalions follow the customs observed in the 1st Battalion, except that their Bands play on Church Parade.

**846 to 850** Spare

**(b) PIPE AIRS.**

**851** The following table gives the pipe airs

in use in the 1st and 2nd Battalions. These airs are played after the Orderly Bugler has sounded off, except in the case of the 1st Battalion Officers' Mess Call, when the Orderly Piper plays first.

**1st Battalion**

- Reveille* - Johnnie Cope
- Breakfast* - Brose and Butter
- Dinner* - Brose and Butter
- Tea* - Brose and Butter
- Officer's Mess - First Call* - The Drunken Piper
- Officer's Mess - Second Call* - The MacDonald's March to War.
- Last Post* - The Highland Soldier
- Lights Out* - Alone I Weary
- Guard Mounting* - Pibroach o' Donald Dhu
- Half-hour Dress* - The Earl of Mansfield
- Quarter Dress* - The Muckin' O' Geordie's Byre
- Advance* - Kenmair's On an' Awa'.
- Retreat* - On the Banks of Allan Water

**2nd Battalion**

- Reveille* - Johnnie Cope
- Breakfast* - Bundle & go. Brose and Butter
- Dinner* - Bundle & go. Brose and Butter
- Tea* - Nil
- Officer's Mess - First Call* - Not Played
- Officer's Mess - Second Call* - Not Played except on Band nights, when all Pipers parade and play "Highland Laddie."
- Last Post* - Lochaber No More
- Lights Out* - (a) Sleep, Darling
- Guard Mounting* - The Gathering of the Grahams.
- Half-hour Dress* - Not Played
- Quarter Dress* - Not Played
- Advance* - The Gathering of the Grahams
- Retreat* - No particular Air
- (a) This is also known as "Soldier lie down on your wee pickle straw."
- (b) The Airs are selected by the Pipe President.

**852** The Regimental Depot uses the Airs of the Home Battalion, the 5th/8th and 7th Battalions those of the 1st Battalion, and the 6th (Lanarkshire) Battalion those of the 2nd Battalion.

**853 to 855** Spare

**(c) BUGLE CALLS**

**856** The various Bugle Calls in use are given hereafter. Remaining calls are laid down for the Army. The Regimental Depot uses the calls of the Home Battalion.

**857** In the 2nd Battalion the Officers' Mess first and second calls are sounded on the bugle only, except on band nights, when all

pipers play “Highland Laddie” immediately after the second mess call has been sounded by the Orderly Bugler.

**858** In the 2nd Battalion the “Half-Hour and “Quarter Dress” Calls are sounded on the bugle only.

**859 to 860** Spare

## The Solitary Side Drum

Until recently in Chelmsford there was a double fronted military surplus shop displaying the expected uniforms, cap badges, imitation weapons and other items we used in service life. Someone more soldierly than myself might well have reverted to their conditioning and saluted either to the right or to the left.

Earlier this year I saw a Cameronian side drum looking smart and small beside the uniforms. I was told that the drum was obtained from the MOD: the price was £350. It was in mint condition and may have never contributed to the sound of the Pipe Band of the Cameronians. In exchange for giving the shop a short written history of the Cameronians to help sell the drum, I was allowed to photograph it.

I told the Editor that I was no longer the sole Cameronian living in Chelmsford and now had to compete with the circular object, which had been designed to make much more noise. He must have passed on the information because the drum was sold to either an ex-Cameronian or someone very interested in the regiment. The buyer told the shop that the news of the drum's existence had come from an ex-bandsman.

The sight of the drum connected my memory to the poem ‘The Burial of Sir John Moore at Corunna.’ by Charles Wolfe because I believed that it had a direct connection with Cameronians. I will quote the first verse.

“Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,  
As his corpse to the ramparts we hurried;  
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot  
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.”

On boy service we were told that those of sergeant and above wore black lanyards because the 26th Cameronian Regt assisted with the burial of Sir John Moore at Corunna in 1809. Although the Cameronians fought at Corunna, and were awarded the name as a battle honour in 1823, they had nothing to do with the burial of John Moore. A grape shot had shattered Moore's shoulder (he

had been wounded before in other battles). Two soldiers of the Black Watch carried



him to his quarters in the citadel; he died of his wounds. The Norfolk Regiment dug his grave under fire: he was quietly buried ‘with his martial cloak around him’ by a Guards chaplain while the attacking French artillery unintentionally disturbed a solemn occasion. But as Napier wrote: ‘The guns of the enemy paid his funeral honours.’

The death of Sir John Moore took place at the end of a 250-mile retreat by a small British army of 29,000. The tired troops, marching in winter weather and short of food, were being persuaded by Napoleon's army of 300,000 to avoid taking in one of the battles of the Peninsula campaigns of 1808 and 1809. The incident was like an earlier version of Dunkirk because of the rear guard action and the post-battle evacuation by sea. Before their embarkation, the British troops at Corunna held up the French. Correlli Barnett in his ‘British and her Army’ wrote the following on p 259: ‘... by drawing away Napoleon away from his main objective and causing fatal delay and dislocation in French plans, Moore saved the Spanish cause from immediate extinction.’ Before and during this battle the 26th Cameronians suffered 25% casualties: they

arrived in Spain with 866 privates and arrived back in Portsmouth with 622. The losses were 204 killed in action and those who died on the long, almost foodless march in severe cold conditions.

Apart from his friendship with Colonel Thomas of the 90th, John Moore is very much associated with the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in other ways. He is one of the creators of fast moving light infantry troops and the regiments using the new rifle whose use was based on a German idea of 1798 contained in 'The Regulations for the Exercise of Riflemen and Light Infantry.' These British regiments also used the German Jaeger green cloth for their uniforms, a precursor to khaki.

Sir Thomas Moore, the son of a Glasgow physician, is not forgotten, for in George Square there stands a bronze statue to his memory. It cost £3,000.

Terry Mackenzie, the museums' officer at Hamilton stated the following: 'I guess that the black uniform accessories have a lot to do with The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) being a Rifle Regiment.'

Bill Coughlan.

**Editors Note: Black lanyard - safety cord officers shako!**

## Letters To The Editor

Sir,

I read with sorrow the passing of RSM Sneddon in the Ed Boyle's Aden photos. "Big Jake" was a really colourful character.

When I was in Minden I fainted during one of the Saturday morning parades and landed nose first - a text book fall now practiced by many in the Guards Brigade! Jake came forward and started prodding me with his pace-stick, first asking if I had been out drinking the night before, then telling me to get up and stop getting blood on his parade ground. Fortunately the adjutant came to my rescue and told Jake to get me assisted to my bed. If he hadn't jumped in I think Jake would still have me standing there today as punishment. Each morning when I look in the mirror I see the result of that memorable occasion, and quite frequently hear Jake's words.

Fortunately the event comes with a sort of fondness - I survived Jake and he gave me a good story to tell gatherings. I loved to watch him teach drill to the new subalterns. If the new riflemen lived in fear of upsetting

Jake, their fear was no match to the young lieutenants. Most probably had nightmares throughout their life, expecting Jake to pop up at any moment and berate them for something they hadn't done perfectly. Overall, I doubt if there is one person that was not positively affected by Jake's teachings. He knew the mission and made sure that we were all prepared to implement it properly and maintain the Regiment's fine name and traditions.

To RSM Sneddon's family, Jake will live in many people's memories with fondness. He was the epitome of a British regimental sergeant major and was greatly RSM admired by all in the Regiment.

David W. Burns

Ex-1st Bn 1962-1968 Ex-6/7th Btn, D Coy (Wishaw), 1961-1962

Sir,

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

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

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

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

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

yours etc,

Richard Fowler  
7 Muirside Place,  
Pennyburn,  
Kilwinning  
Ayrshire  
KA13 6HH

P.S.

Re my letter concerning Captain Kennedy's unpublished memoir of Neuve Chapelle: it is in the Imperial War Museum. If the



Regimental Trustees would arrange to have it published, I would certainly want to purchase a copy. I don't know how easy it would be to obtain it for serialisation in The Covenanter: but I have a feeling that many would find it of interest. Sgt. Eddie Wallace told me that in the 1960's Capt. Kennedy addressed the 1st Bn. in Redford Barracks, Edinburgh. He said that Capt. Kennedy held the men rapt for some three hours and that everyone who heard him that day was very moved by his words.

yours etc,

Richard Fowler

Sir,

As I think you know, I've been having Regimental Golf Umbrellas made for most regiments for some 16 years, so production is not a problem - but there is a minimum quantity of 10. I therefore called the Museum this morning, who have very kindly said they will take the other 8, whereupon I promised I would write to you to tell you that they will be holding them. They are, of course, 4 panels Black, and 2 opposing panels each Navy Blue and Jaguar Green, with Black turned wood handle - exceptionally smart!!

yours etc,

Regimental Replicas  
Clearwater,  
Bourton,

Dorset,  
SP8 5DB

Sir,

I thought this picture would bring back memories to some ex-members of the 9th Btn. We were stationed in Keighley for 10 months during 1943/44. this building was Battalion H.Q. the C.O.'s office, orderly room and signal office were on the same floor, the pipe band were billeted on the top floor and the basement was the dining room for H.Q. and A Coy. A Coy were in a building about 50 yards up the street on the left opposite the public baths where we went every week. The baths were closed a few years ago and turned into flats when a new pool was opened. The other rifle companies were stationed in a 3 storey mill which was burned down several years ago. B.H.Q. was the local dance hall which was also burned down years ago and a new one built in Victoria Park.

Hoping this will be of some interest to our members

yours etc,

J Borthwick

Sir,

I enclose a copy of an article that appeared in the Spring/Summer 2003 edition of 'Everyone's War', The Journal of the Second World War Experience Centre, Leeds, which you might think worth replicating in the 2003 edition of The Covenanter? I have obtained the consent to its publication of Dr. Peter Liddle, the Editor (whom I have known for many years).

Hugh McKay thinks that it might be worthwhile collating some of Fyffe Christies' works on loan from the Imperial War Museum and the Scottish National War Museum, as well as those at Leeds, to form a temporary exhibition at Hamilton at some future time. Peter Liddle has already offered



the loan of any of his Centre's drawings and watercolours.

It could well be that some former 9th Battalion members might remember Christie and could provide further information?

yours etc,  
Cliff Pettit

## Fyffe Christie: Scottish Soldier and Artist

by Ted Allan

*The Centre's collection of artwork has recently been enriched by the donation of 37 drawings and watercolours by Fyffe William George Christie made during the 1944-1945 campaign in NW Europe. He served in the 9th Bn. Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), on active service from Normandy to Northern Germany. Some of his work is in the Imperial War Museum and in the Scottish National War Memorial; but most of it, gifted by the artist's widow, is now in the custodianship of the Second World War Experience Centre: a record of places and events as seen through the eyes of a sensitive and accomplished artists who in later life went on to become a talented painter whose work has been exhibited in a number of galleries.*

*This personal comment on Fyffe Christie was prepared by Dr Ted Allan CBE, Friend and donor to the Centre who sadly passed on before publication of this issue. We are mindful of Ted's generous contributions towards the work of the Centre and regret the loss of a good friend.*

Returning to academic studies - or starting - with the help of government grants, was an uneasy experience for the many ex-service personnel who gathered in September 1946 fresh from campaigns in many parts of the world to begin a new life. Such men and women dominated the classes. In a scene being repeated at universities and colleges nationwide, we ex-servicemen eyed each other dressed in a motley collection of demob clothing and cast-off uniforms. We were a secretive and subdued group, little given then or later to talk about wartime experiences - in retrospect, it might have been of benefit to have done so. I remember many whose memories must have been indelibly imprinted on their minds.

It was at enrolment that I had my first encounter with Fyffe Christie who had been on active service in Northern Germany, a quiet and gentle fellow of studious

disposition and already a fine artist for whom I formed an early friendship that was to last until his death in 1979. He believed firmly in traditional art skills, and developed into a fine draughtsman. His admiration for the work of artists of the Italian Renaissance soon directed his skills into mural painting and stained glass. His was an honesty that continued throughout his career and led to the production of many fine paintings - although he was a retiring chap without the commercial acumen of many of today's fine art fraternity.

Friendship with Christie was a quiet and satisfying experience. We were much given to philosophical debate about art and life, and it took time to get to know him. He was fond of walking in the Highlands (always with sketch-book) but in student activities he tended to be an observer rather than a participant. He seemed, I recall, to exist on a diet of kippers, and in a brief insight into his private life, I recall his amusement at his landlady's disapproval of his attempts at home beer-making in his student digs (she never discovered his tobacco-growing trials in her window boxes). So it was a matter of some surprise that he volunteered to play the bagpipes at a student party and then did so with complete skill. This was a side of his character which had lain undiscovered, and led me to an understanding of how his war experience had affected his attitude to life.

*Fyffe Christie playing the pipes, front line centre*

Fyffe Christie was already a trained piper when he was called to the colours early in the war. As such, he was a desirable recruit for a Scottish regiment which regarded good pipers much as other regiments regarded good soccer players. Being a piper was not a cushy number, as Bill Millen, a recent visitor to the Centre and Lord Lovat's personal piper in 1 Commando Brigade would agree. The Pipes and Drums were the custodian of Regimental tradition, and the Pipe-Major the authority on ceremonial. The fine film 'Tunes of glory' in which the Pipe-Major of a Highland battalion was played by the actor Duncan Macrae, demonstrates the role of these NCO's in such matters as compulsory Highland dancing for the officers - usually before breakfast. But 'Pipey' as he was known was also a composer of pipe music to commemorate events in regimental history. There are many of these, from the '79th Farewell to Gibraltar'

to the more recent Argyll and Sutherland 'Entry to the Crater' which remembers post-war service in troubled Aden. Although the long tradition of piping the infantry into action was abandoned, after a rise in casualty rates, the pipes still accompanied their troops up to the line of battle, striking fear into the enemy, as happened with the Highland Division at El Alamein and elsewhere. It was the pipers who normally took on the dangerous task of providing stretcher-bearers as Fyffe Christie was to discover. After training and a much valued course at the Army School of Piping in Edinburgh Castle, he was posted to the 9th



Battalion the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). Joining them would have suited Christie's interest in Scottish history and religion at that time; it was the only regiment in the British army to have a religious origin, formed from the Covenanters in 1689. On Church Parades it mounted armed sentries and troops carried sidearms. It was the only Scottish Rifle Regiment, and sported the black uniform buttons and details of such corps. Strongly individual, rather than accept amalgamation in 1968 as did others during the painful process of army reorganisation, it decided to opt for disbandment and a final march into oblivion.

The early years of the war was a frustrating period for the 9th Battalion. They trained hard, but the boredom of seemingly endless shuffles from one hutted encampment to yet another took its toll, and was a challenge to its leaders. The Pipes and Drums were much in demand for such events as War-Weapons Weeks, which Christie remembered as all spit and polish. There were many who cast an envious eye at the other battalions of the Regiment earning new laurels in North Africa, Sicily, Italy and Burma.

However, by the summer of 1943 when the 9th Battalion moved to Alnmouth in Northumberland, it was clear that the invasion of Europe was in preparation, and

that the 46 (Highland) Infantry Brigade of the 15 Scottish Division was to be a part of the invading force. The training of the 9th Cameronians, with its Brigade sister regiments and its armoured support regiment, now intensified, culminating in exercises at corps level in Yorkshire.

In May 1944 the Battalion moved to Hove in Sussex in final preparation for Operation Overlord where, in Cameronian tradition, they held their last 'Conventicle' - an outdoor service of dedication. The Battalion was to take part in heavier and more continuous fighting than their comrades, and suffered far higher casualties. They landed at Arromanches, their heavy equipment delayed by the storm which damaged the newly-assembled and 'fixed' Mulberry harbour. When the equipment caught up with them on 23 June the Battalion had already been committed to battle. It was to be a brutal baptism of fire for unbloodied troops. In the successful attack on the village of Haut Du Bosq the Battalion had suffered a hundred-and-twenty killed and wounded by 27 June. The stretcher-bearers had a dangerous task, in minefields and hedgerows behind which the enemy lurked, making the deployment of armoured support vehicles difficult. As Christie was to recall, no amount of training could equip sight of the brutal effects of high-explosives on the human body.

*'Behind the Lines', Normandy 5th July 1944.*

The most feared weapon was the mortar with which the Germans were particularly skilled, and which accounted for many of the casualties. An insidious enemy was fatigue, for sleep became difficult even during the few periods of quiet; the heightened senses of danger were alerted by bizarre battlefield noises such as the gas escaping from the corpses of dairy cattle littering the Normandy farmland. In the ensuing days hand to hand fighting took yet further toll. By 30 June casualties were so numerous that the Battalion had to be withdrawn to the rear of Le Mesnil Patry for a nine-day respite, to allow new reinforcements of men and equipment. The first essential was sleep. That satisfied, the troops were left to seek their own form of therapy to put into perspective their first blooding in action, and to prepare themselves for the next battle. There being nowhere to go, some kicked a ball about, some read, some drank. For Fyffe Christie it was a formative few days. With his sketchbook, he started to



record the scenes around him in which he found a needed tranquillity and diversion from military matters. It was a practice he was to continue for the rest of the war. Whenever the Battalion was pulled back from the battle line he would draw and paint in watercolour. By the time he reached the Baltic coast he had recorded a personal visual history of places and people in a remarkable series of images, many of which are now in Leeds. They reveal a sensitive and skilled draughtsman who found solace during a gruelling campaign.

The 9th Cameronians were to suffer further punishing casualties: only twenty-



four hours after their first rest one hundred-and-fifty-nine officers and other Ranks were killed, wounded or missing in bitter fighting in the orchards round Eterville, during a determined German counter-attack. When the enemy was finally repulsed, over a hundred German dead were left behind. A further rest period was deserved, and the Battalion, with many new faces to fill out their depleted strength, returned to the fray. Now they were moved West to the American sector of operations to participate in the breakout from Normandy which culminated in what became known as the Battle of the Falaise Gap. Christie remembers the carnage as the Cameronians advanced along a single track road of either of which German armour, transport, dead horses and men had been 'bulldozed' in thousands. By 28 July the Seine was crossed and for the first time the Battalion was to enjoy their welcome as liberators: in the advance to the Mass, in towns and villages many of which were unscarred, flowers were thrown and bottles of wine handed to the troops. In Lille this reached embarrassing proportions as crowds brought progress to a standstill. The Pipes and Drums were much

appreciated, as they were to be again and again in Belgium and Holland. In particular the Scots were to form a lasting bond with the people of Tilburg, who never forgot their liberators. Visits are still exchanged and as elsewhere in Holland, the war graves are meticulously maintained.

However, as Autumn and the German border approached, resistance stiffened to fanatical levels, and casualties mounted, a particular hatred being felt by the Cameronians for the anti-personnel mines. The weather and the terrain caused further problems: German defensive flooding was made worse by three weeks of heavy rain in November, and the dyke country before the River Maas turned into a quagmire. Supplies were delivered by amphibious vehicles, and digging in became impossible, so that fire cover had to be built above ground. It was a miserable location, long remembered as the most trying of the whole campaign. The Battalion was to remain here until the end of January, when it was thrown in to 'Operation Veritable' - the approach to the Rhine and the Siegfried Line. In atrocious weather (the combat gear of the period was far from adequate) hand to hand fighting extracted a heavy price, notably in the battle for Moyland Woods, which was considered by some with wide experience, the most unpleasant of the European War.

*Pencil drawing of musician.*

Flooding, frost, fog, and vigorous German attacks stretched morale and endurance to the limit over four days, when re-supply of ammunition and food was difficult, and at times impossible. The high number of killed and wounded meant, too, that the Unit became seriously under strength. The tenacity of the Scots eventually succeeded in forcing an enemy withdrawal: an unusual incident was the negotiated surrender of some Germans to stretcher-bearers of the Cameronians on the basis that their wounded be extracted across a minefield.

After the Rhine was crossed, on 24 March 1945, the nature of the fighting changed. Gone were the cheering crowds welcoming the liberators, replaced by the sullen inhabitants of the villages and towns - many in ruins - through which the Cameronians leapfrogged in their advance to the Elbe. And each farm and wood was fanatically defended not only by the German 7th Parachute Division - regarded by the Scots as perhaps their toughest adversaries of the campaign - but by newly thrown-together

infantry battalions formed of U-boat crews and Luftwaffe personnel. Christie was saddened, as he recalled, by the bodies of the boy-soldiers of the Hitler Youth and the old men of the Volksturm: there was no denying their courage and tenacity, but the tragic waste of human life was disturbing, particularly to anyone as sensitive as he was. Two other factors affected the Cameronian Battalion and indeed all the Allied troops. The first was the awareness that the final German collapse and surrender was inevitable, possibly only a few weeks away. It was a situation in which the battle-weary soldiers were increasingly unwilling to take unnecessary risks - although the



Cameronians continued to take punishing casualties as they crossed the River Elbe. To replace them, the reinforcements were no longer veteran Scots but a mixture of troops from other regiments, notably anti-aircraft gunners who had previously been defending British cities. As infantry, they fought bravely, but the family structure of the Battalion which had stood them in good stead in past engagements was weakened; Christie remembered wryly that many of the new intake were not greatly pleased when the pipers got some needed practice during the infrequent rest periods out of the line. The second factor which

caused much anguish was the increasing contact with the horrifying spectacle of the Concentration Camps, coupled with the flood of weakened refugees, many of them deportee labour to escape South and hoping for an eventual return to their homeland. And increasingly, as the war drew to an end, Allied POWs struggled to safety through the lines. It was all stark evidence of the brutality of war. With limited resources there was little a fighting unit could do to assist these victims; it was a depressing experience. By early May, they were assisting in the clearing of pockets of SS troops from the Sachsenwald Forest, when VE Day arrived.

For eleven bitter months, from the Normandy beaches to the Baltic, the 9th Cameronians had fought, almost without pause, an experience which left its scars on the minds of many. Fyffe Christie always maintained that the drawings he made at any opportunity during the campaign were not just art but a defence mechanism, a therapy, which helped him maintain his sanity. Prior to the First World War few painters of note showed the horrors of war; the nation's galleries are stuffed with vast canvasses seeking to glorify the battlefield, painted long after the events they claim to portray. From the Great War onwards, 'official' and servicemen artists began to reflect the reality of war, often focussing on its horror. This collection in the Centre, of Fyffe Christie's work is of a different ilk, a compelling record of one man's war: these, for the most part, carefully observed landscapes are remarkable for their artistic skill; and they are particularly remarkable for their trying circumstances in which this gentle and shy fellow produced them. That is how I remembered him."

*(Thanks are due to a number of sources which helped in the factual details of his writing. In particular to Mr Terry McKenzie, Museums Collection Officer of the Leisure Services Unit at South Lanarkshire Council, who, after the closure of the Cameronians Museum has taken on the task of maintaining historical records of a fine regiment.)*

## Eleanor Christie-Chatterly

I am very grateful to Ted Allan for his research and for his kind comments about Fyffe Christie. To me Fyffe was a charming and generous husband, an interesting and amusing companion whose good nature and cheerful disposition carried us through

the ups and downs of life in twenty seven years of very happy marriage.

He never spoke of his war experience to me except to tell of outings on special piping duties at various functions, or to mention 'the chaps' with whom, I gather, he got on rather well. Some of them had little formal education - he wrote their letters home for them, and felt moreover that they had a genuine respect for his art.

In the light of what was going on around him it seems strange that these drawings contain none of the shocking images usually associated with 'War Art'. Shortly after we were married Fyffe worked on a panel some twelve feet long in our studio/living room depicting the field of battle with dead and dying soldiers, all painted in grim grey/brown colours. I remember it as being very expressive, upsetting and eerie. A short time after it was finished he destroyed it and never repeated the theme. This was the only attempt at direct 'catharsis': his reflection on the human condition found fuller expression in his later work. Undoubtedly the concentration required to draw and paint landscape, turning away from these terrible scenes of suffering and devastation, was his salvation. He described to me how he stood on a disused railway line in Germany towards the end of the war gazing at the countryside and decided there and then to become an artist. His lifelong interest in landscape painting was more than just a joy and relaxation from the more serious business of mural painting and teaching; it answered a deep-felt need to reaffirm his belief in the solid reality of the world and its ability to regenerate itself and beauty.

I am delighted that these early examples of his work are now with the Second World War Experience Centre and am grateful to Dr Peter Liddle and his staff for their appreciation of them.

Sir,

I was so pleased to receive The Covenanter. It is nearly three years since my husband's death but I always read the Covenanter as I had met quite a few of the names mentioned therein. Unfortunately the list grows smaller each year.

In Saturday's Daily Express there was an item about the Dickin Medal and included was "KHAN" and as Dan was a participant in the Walcheren episode it was of special interest to me and has been added to my memorabilia of The Cameronians, especially

as we have always had a pet dog. Five months after Dan's death I had a phone call asking for Dan from the M.O.D. wanting to speak to him personally about his service with the regiment. It was such a pity as Dan was fortunate enough to be present at the trials of Nuremburg and somewhere around the house are the handouts he received.

If I am ever in the Hamilton area I will certainly visit the Museum. We have no relatives in the area now unfortunately.

yours etc,

Effie Watson (Mrs)

Sir,

I trust by now you have received my cheque for two copies of 'The Covenanter', I look forward to receipt of the second copy for despatch to my Comrade in America.

I write to you on another matter which I feel may be of interest to our fellow readers, I will elucidate.

I recently received a copy of an American publication called 'The Highlander' subtitled 'The Magazine of Scottish Heritage', for the months Jan/Feb 2003. Contained therein is as 'Article' by Colonel David Murray, (Regiment or Country of origin, unstated) **Editors Note: late Cameron Highlanders - Scotland** entitled, 'The 51st Highland Division at the Battle of El Alamein.'

Included with the 'Article' were two 'photographs, .

a)'Pipe Majors and Drum Majors of the Scottish Regiments, about 1923.

b)'Pipes, Drums and Bugles of the 2nd Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) 1935. The third Piper from the left, front row has a marked similarity to my old Platoon Commander in the 9th Bn. later, Major A. Quinn, who I believe was originally a Piper before taking a Commission. Am I mistaken?

yours etc,

Nat Gormley

33 Greenhill Avenue

Kidderminster

Worcestershire

DY10 2QU

Sir,

First of all I must say how I'm sorry to hear of the death of Bendix Page.

I was a mechanic attached to M.T. Section H.Q. Coy. 1st Bn Cameronians served with the Battalion in Bahrain, Kenya, Aden and Jordan.

While in Kenya first time, I was stationed in Gil Gil, as was Sgt. Page

and its from there came these thoughts quite amusing at the time, (I thought)

I was going to Nairobi for spares this morning and Sgt. Page asked for a lift as he had to go in for Band spares etc.

Off we go in my 3 Ton Bedford and those days Bendix smoked cigars. Going into Nairobi, I had to stop at traffic lights. They turned to green and I proceeded through the lights when a car sped across the lights at red.

I slammed my brakes on and Bendix with cigar in mouth slammed into the windscreen, splattering his cigar all over his face.

He was cross, but I couldn't stop laughing and he eventually saw the funny side of the situation.

The reason I am only just writing this, is because in my search for M.T. Section Cameronians I have just found another, and he forwarded The Covenanter 2001. Hopefully I will get up to date.

I just thought I would share this humorous situation with you and your readers.

yours etc,  
Bryan Mead

Sir,  
I thought you would like to know that Jimmy's memorial service went very well, with over 200 people in attendance.

Unfortunately Col. Campbell was not able to attend, on doctors orders, but three ex-members of the regiment did manage to get there, and the wreath which Col. Campbell paid for on behalf of the Regiment, was laid by Tom Gore, who had joined the 9th Battalion in Normandy, about a month after the landings. The other two men were Harry Butler and Mr M. Hall (I didn't catch his first name.) Credit should be given to John Fitzgerald who made the original proposal handing over to Clr Lowndes when he had to go off to Canada for a couple of months.

Thank you for your interest in Jimmy.

yours etc,  
Carolyn Devine

He is probably the city's best known war hero and on Sunday well-wishers from all over the country will visit Central Park in Peterborough to see his newly restored grave stone unveiled. But who was this brave hero from the trenches? Jimmy the Donkey, of course!

### "Our Jimmy"

At 7.30am on July 1st 1916, as the sun blazed down, the shrilling of officers' whistles signalled the start of the bloody battle of the Somme. As the fighting raged, men of the 1st Battalion the Scottish Rifles over-ran a German position, where they found a frightened baby donkey, braying piteously beside his mother's body. The soldiers took pity of the little orphan and adopted him as their mascot, naming him Jimmy and weaning him on tinned milk. They taught him to beg on his hindlegs for biscuits spread with jam, his favourite food, and legend has it that he would stand outside the trenches and greet each soldier by raising a hoof in salute. There is no doubt that lavishing attention on the little fellow described as, 'An engaging little creature, almost black in colour, full of fun

and the high spirits common to most you animals,' provided the men with a much-



needed antidote to the unremitting carnage that surrounded them.

As well as entertaining his soldier pals, though, Jimmy served his adoptive country faithfully, carrying ammunition and other essential supplies around the battlefields.

In 1919 Jimmy was demobbed and sent to the military depot at Swathey in the South of England where the Army was auctioning



the hundreds of horses that had survived war service. A Peterborough dealer bought him and he was sold to Mrs Heath, the Secretary of the Peterborough branch of the RSPCA, who started a public subscription fund for his upkeep. Jimmy was introduced to the citizens of Peterborough onstage at the Hippodrome Theatre, and they took him to their hearts, enthusiastically contributing to the subscription fund.

Over the years, Jimmy became a well-loved local celebrity. His home was in a field near the town centre, so he was plentifully supplied with carrots and other titbits by passers-by, and he used to stand and wait for the children to come and pet him. On charity flag-days he would pull a little cart and give rides to children, and during the peacetime career he helped to raise thousands of pounds for the RSPCA and other charities.

## Hundreds pay tribute to Jimmy

*(with acknowledgements and thanks to The Evening Telegraph - Peterborough)*

More than 200 people turned up at the city's Central Park yesterday to pay tribute to the late Jimmy the Donkey.

At a special ceremony to commemorate the refurbishment of Jimmy's headstone, residents and dignitaries stood around the grave of the donkey, which was born during a battle at the Somme in 1916, and died in Peterborough 27 years later.

Jimmy was remembered for being a mascot of the 1st Scottish Rifles, which later became the Cameronians, during the First World War.

Jimmy became a local celebrity after the war when he was bought by city woman Mrs Heath.

He starred in a stage production at the local Embassy Theatre, and would entertain children while helping collect money for charity.

He grazed in a paddock in Burghley Square, and passers by would give him a sugar lump.

Jimmy's headstone was cleaned up and repaired as it had become unreadable through weather damage

A standard bearer for the Royal British Legion and one for the Combined Cadet Force honoured Jimmy, while wreaths were laid and cards were put out.

Residents, who had been invited to bring their pets to the ceremony, sang All Things Bright and Beautiful, and curate of St Mary's Church, in Eastfield Road, Bob Bates, gave a sermon eulogising donkeys by remembering the story of the prophet Balaar and how his donkey saved his life.

Yvonne Lowndes, who campaigned to refurbish Jimmy's grave when the park was renovated, laid one of the wreaths.

She said: 'This is part of the history of the city. Jimmy's is a lovely story - so many people came because they love animals.'

Sir,

I am most pleased to have received the 2002 Edition of The Covenanter, regimental journal of The Cameronians, Scottish Rifles.

I enlisted in the regiment and joined the regiment at R.H.Q. on 30th October 1939. Having a strong wish to join the regiment of which I had some knowledge pre war.

Being a very active man I enjoyed army life from the beginning. I am now 86 years of age and remain very fit - I suppose I am lucky?

I still train - marathon and cross-country on the local fells in the dales.

My loyalty and interest in The Cameronians (SR) remains.

The journal provides a special source of news and information of happenings within the enthusiasm of those providing material for valued articles. Both from long past events, and interesting up to date reminding reports of proof that The Cameronians (SR) do not lose heart.

I also take the annual journal - mind, body and spirit - of the army physical training corps - to whom I was posted from the 'Scottish Rifles' and joined the airborne forces, but didn't so many require to change?

The 12th Battalion my 'First Posting' developed into a good holding unit.

'Once a Cameronian always a Cameronian.'

Thank you for the copy - 'A Short History' - pleased me very much

yours etc,

Tom Weatherhead

3248650 Cpl 12th Battalion Cameronians (SR)

P.S.

I enjoyed attending 12th Battalion re-union for quite a few reunions in Lanarkshire - great gatherings - usual regimental standards.

Sir,

I have been given your name as the regimental magazine for the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and wonder how I can obtain a copy?

I am trying to get information regarding the regiment and my father's service from 1936 until just after WW2. His name was Richard Ward and he has the army no. of 3245275 and enlisted in Hamilton 30.1.1936. I am his only son.

Any help you can give will be gratefully received.

yours etc,

Tony Ward

P.S. Are there any websites available to research?

Sir,

This is to confirm our telephone conversation with reference to Mr Charles Gundrill, who served with the Cameronians. (My great uncle) Charlie was born on 28th May 1871 in a little village in Hertfordshire called Weston. He joined the Army on 7/2/1888 in the Bedfordshire Regiment. He served with them, at home and in India, until the 20/3/1895. On this date he was transferred to the Army Reserves, into the Second Scottish Rifles as a Bandsman.

As far as we know, the next big step was to be recalled and sent with the Scottish Rifles to South Africa to fight in the war. The date given for the start of his service in South Africa in the 23/10/1899.

I managed to find in the National Archives at Kew a catalogue reference (P/N 71/2978) which turned out to be the whole medical discharge papers from 1900 up to the time of his death on 8/7/1942. I also found his medal citation for the South Africa war which quotes "2nd Battalion Scottish Rifles No. 2629 Lance Corporal C. Gundrill with Bars for the medal of Tugela, Heights and The Relief of Ladysmith, with a note 'Time expired'.

It is interesting that his number quoted is his Bedfordshire Regiment number, and not the number 4151 which he was given by the Scottish Rifles.

In the Records at Kew that I note he

was a Lance Corporal in the Scottish Rifles and was wounded and was shot in the left humourous, lower third, at Colenso at the end of January 1900.

As far as I understand this battle at the end of January was the Battle of Spion Kop where the Scottish Rifles had three officers and 23 men killed and 7 officers and 54 men wounded.

Can anyone confirm that my great uncle is one of these 54 wounded? Charlie was discharged from the Army medically unfit due to this wound, which gave him his war pension.

Also can anyone confirm that if he was a Bandsman this would give him a position as a stretcher bearer, which meant that he worked in the battle with a famous stretcher bearer called Ghandi.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours etc,  
Simon Izzard  
49 Chester Road  
Stevenage  
Herts  
SG1 4JY

P.S. Do you know where his medals are?

Sir,  
I have been trying since March to find out from the Cameronians Museum, Hamilton if they had a copy of the film that was taken just before, the Regiment came back from Malaya in May 1953, I was in 'C' coy and we did drill for the Camera and I would like a copy to show my family before it is too late. I am now almost 72 years old and time is not on my side.

Maybe an appeal in the Covenanter could be made to see if I could get the film so I could make a video of it and return the original to whoever has it now or get a copy of the video if anyone has it on video.

I would pay any expenses incurred.

yours etc,  
Ronald Henderson (Ex Cameronian)

Sir,  
Some time ago I purchased a piece of Regimental Silver namely 'The Dykes Loudon Cup 1937'. The inscription reads '*Presented to 6th (Lanarkshire) Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) by Major W Dykes Loudon & Mrs Dykes Loudon in memory of their sons Robin & Kenneth*'

I would very much like to make contact

with any member of the Dykes Loudon family.

yours etc,  
Alastair JC Hewat OBE

Sir,  
I have often been asked why the 1st Battalion wore a Black Hackle in their caps TOS during the war. The answer is a very simple one. On our return to India to refit after the Burma Campaign of 1942, I was informed by Ordnance that no caps TOS were available in India and that we would have to wear forage caps. However we had a considerable stock of suitable cloth in the Tailor's Shop and a tailor who could make caps TOS, but it would be rather an expensive item. I was feeling a bit disgruntled at the time, as one is apt to after an unsuccessful campaign and considered that as the only Scottish Unit in the Burma Army we had done nothing to merit being deprived of our head-dress.

I therefore wrote to the Army Commander (General Beresford Peirse) explaining the situation and asked him to represent it to the C-in-C General Wavell. I felt on fairly firm ground here, as I knew that a Battalion of the Black Watch had recently arrived in India. General Beresford-Peirse replied that he would bring the matter up at the next Army Commanders Conference, but in the meantime to get on with making caps TOS and that the cost would be met.

The next snag was that the supply of cap badges in India had run out. Specimen 'bazaar made' products were too awful to contemplate but again we had a considerable stock of small black plumes for wearing in the (then obsolete) pith helmet. I understood that the wearing of a hackle with caps TOS was the prerogative of the Black Watch, so I wrote to the C-in-C asking for permission for the Battalion to wear a black hackle. This was granted, I think, by return of post.

Yours etc,  
Colonel WB Thomas  
(taken from The Covenanter June 1963)

Sir,  
It is a great pity that 'The Covenanter' only has one edition a year. This means that I will have to wait a year to read what other readers think of my personal opinion.

I joined up in 1951, and left the Army in 1986. During the years 70-73 I was RSM at

the Scottish Infantry Depot at Glencorse. This helped me to learn about dress and customs of other Scottish Regiments, to add what I already knew about The Scottish Rifles. I know there is a recognised form of civilian dress to be worn with the kilt, but at no time during my service was a recruit or soldier allowed to walk out in a blazer and tartan trews;- known as mixed-dress. I doubt if any of them would have wanted to anyway? After the battle-dress tunic was withdrawn, if they wished to walk out in uniform in the UK, they would wear No 2 dress.

This is why I now find it difficult to agree with the practice which has recently cropped up of ex-servicemen wearing blazers and tartan trews.

I attended a funeral of an Ex-Royal Scots Fusilier in 2003, and except for the piper in his kilt, all the RSF and RHF wore suits or blazers and slacks with regimental ties. There was no unnecessary marching about or flag waving.

That is my other point; - Colours! Being a Rifle Regiment, The Cameronians Scottish Rifles did not carry Colours. It was against tradition to have a Colour Party.

Never in any parade that I took part in, ranging from Selarang Barracks, to Redford Barracks, to Douglas did we carry Colours.

This permits me to state that Ex-Cameronians are completely wrong in carrying Colours. Especially at funerals! I am sorry to upset some people, but I am determined to say what I think.

Yours etc,  
T Anderson

Sir,  
I enjoyed the nostalgic trip provided by Philip Grant in the last edition, 'The Regiment's Links with Oman'.

I remember well all that he describes of those days at Lanark and in Minden.

During our last term at Sandhurst I went into breakfast one morning to find that some of our junior division, for whom I was responsible, had considerably decided to bring me up-to-date with the latest world news. There, writ large across the front page of some nameless tabloid was the Regiment's name and the cap badge! I was comforted, however, by the sure knowledge that I was the right size to qualify as a Poison Dwarf, although I did have some concern on Philip Grant's behalf in that regard!

It was not until I left the army and started

in the commercial world that I became acquainted with the ubiquitous business card. Had I had such a thing in those days I am sure that I would have made good use of it. 2nd Lieutenant Bin Said was my next-door neighbour on the top floor of the Officers' Mess in Elizabeth Barracks and I could have done worse than by slipping him a card for his use at a later time. Unfortunately another member of Intake 29, who was also in Marne Company with Philip Grant, pipped us both to the post. Consequently, neither of us owns a grouse moor.

The time-honoured way for subalterns to keep out of trouble and score Charlie George points was to be seen frequently by those in authority jogging around the barracks in tracksuit carrying a millboard. I can confirm Philip Grant's assertion, however, that 2nd Lieutenant Bin Said perfected the art by managing to be in no-one's company so no company commander had responsibility for him. Philip Grant maintains that he was in B Company. But I was in B Company and was certain that he was in A Company. I feel sure that enquiries of others present at the time would show that the D Company officers knew that he was in HQ Company, while HQ Company only saw him to issue him with his socks, grey, officers for the use of, and were convinced that he was actually in D Company.

But I do remember seeing him in Minden, so I suppose that he must have been there - !

By way of postscript, I visited Oman from Dubai several years ago. This was shortly after the death in Oman of Bob Brown. Philip Grant and I arrived in Elizabeth Barracks on the day before Bob departed to take up his post as a Desert Intelligence Officer in Oman. I only saw him again once: on Disbandment Day in 1968. I spoke to the Anglican priest in Oman who had wanted to find someone to represent Bob's family at his interment. However, as Bob's local friends were determined that he should be buried as a Muslim, his burial had to be held immediately after his death and there had not been time to contact anyone to attend. Bob had lived for some time in a grace and favour residence provided for him by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said.

yours etc,  
MD Sixsmith (Major)

Sir,



On my recent visit to Bahrain in July, to visit my family, we once again went to pay our respects of the young Cameronians, 2 Lt. Ronald Graham Boyd died of exposure 25/8/57, and RFMN J. McLain Sunter died of accidental gunshot wounds. 1/3/1957.

The Christian cemetery is at the moment being upgraded. Many of the graves had been vandalised, stones broken etc. also the intense heat of the sun, many stones are now impossible to read.

As this cemetery is not cared for by the War Graves Commission, all the work done there is by the Christian Community,

Mr Herman, the caretaker, and his team of workers have taken great care of this cemetery, and it is a pleasure to visit, they are dedicated to their work. I hope that this article shows that British Servicemen are buried in small cemeteries, throughout the world, that have no official War Graves recognition.

yours etc,  
Mrs A Winkley

**Editors Note:** Readers may be interested in the following response from the MOD and an extract from the November 1957 Covenanter.

On the 19th September 1957, a ceremony was held near Hafit, a small village in Muscat near to Buraimi Oasis, at which the Commanding Officer presented a rifle, suitably inscribed on a silver plate, to the Sheikh of Hafit, as a token of the thanks of the battalion for the efforts of himself and his people on the occasion when one of our platoons got into difficulties on the hills near Hafit and during which 2/Lt RG Boyd, much to everybody's regret, lost his life. At this ceremony the Commanding Officer said:- 'A few weeks ago some of the men of this Regiment, The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), suffered from misfortune up on the hills here and one of our officers tragically lost his life.

We all know that at that time you and many of your people rendered great assistance to our men. Indeed it might well have been that our misfortunes had been greater but for this swift and willing help which you brought to us. For this we are deeply grateful.

Sooner or later we shall move to some other part of the world and we may never again have the opportunity to visit Hafit. But as long as any of the officers and men at present serving with the Regiment are alive,

so long will your name be remembered by the Regiment with gratitude and admiration.

I am very glad to be able to meet you on this occasion and to express to you personally on behalf of all our officers, non commissioned officers and men, our feelings of deep and lasting gratitude for the generous and noble efforts you made to help us at our time of need when



Lieutenant Boyd so tragically lost his life. If ever we find ourselves in a position to help others who are in distress, then I know that your great and generous actions on that sad occasion will serve as an example.

It is now my very great pleasure to ask you to accept this rifle as a lasting and visible token of the deep gratitude and esteem which is felt towards you by the officers and men of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)

We pray that God will prosper you and your people.'

*Letter from General Sir James Castles GCB KBE DSO to Lieutenant General Sir George Collingwood KBE CB DSO*

I enclose a copy of a letter I have had from John Willoughby which I know you will find very good reading.

I saw your Battalion in Aden in January, and everywhere I went there was nothing but praise for the way all the men had behaved and acted. I should therefore like to add my most grateful thanks and congratulations for the splendid work that they did.

I am sending a copy of Willoughby's letter to Leslie Dow and of course will add my congratulations to him.

With all best wishes.

Headquarters  
Middle East Command  
BFPO 90

Lilburn Tower,  
Alnwick,  
Northumberland

My dear General

Yesterday, Leslie Dow, Commanding 1st Battalion the Cameronians, left on the completion of his Battalions tour of duty here in Aden. I would like therefore to now put on record how this Regiment has completed its difficult and exacting duties.

The men arrived in the heat of the summer with all the appearances and bearing of troops seasoned in this kind of half-war we wage here.

They went straight on patrols and escorts; and from the day of their first appearance they looked like business. They have never looked otherwise.

And in many ways a much less easy reputation to earn under these trying conditions, they have won a name for exceptional courtesy.

They will ever be remembered by the families of servicemen and of civilians with affection, not only for their qualities but in the crowning of their association with the Pipes in the open streets. And in the telling of this day by the ordinary words of ordinary families bearing the strains of tension magnificently, I have seen tears of gratitude and of pride.

They are second to none, and I am as proud of having had these men under my command as they have reason to be of their record and reputation so well and firmly earned in Aden, and in the Hills of Southern Austria.

Yours very sincerely

Major General Sir John Willoughby KBE CB  
General Office Commanding Middle East  
Land Forces, Headquarters, Middle East  
Command, BFPO 69

Sir,

I was a national servicemen with The Cameronians (23343098) from October '56 to 58. My draft was sent on embarkation in mid December '56' - destination Bahrain but a few days into my leave I received a letter from Major Dunbar asking if instead of proceeding abroad with the draft - would I like to remain at the depot and join training wing. Having got married only 5 days previously I jumped at the opportunity. Little did I know that that in later civilian life I would be visiting Bahrain twice with my globetrotting with the Ford

Motor Company.

Back at the depot and with my first stripe - Both Ian Collinson and I were (invited?) By Major A.C.A. Mackinnon - the C.O. To become Role models for a new handbook on The Cameronians

What took place then was about two weeks of set piece photographs showing any interested young man what he could expect if he joined our regiment.

Creative licence must have been taken with our shots - and I wonder what present day trading standards would have said. The service in the N.A.A.F.I. for instance with Jock (Me), Sandy (Ian Collinson) relaxing with a cup of tea and a cake. Major Mackinnon had ordered the cakes but as soon as the camera clicked - the cake was taken back! We kept and drank the tea, however!

I finished my service as provost corporal - but Ian went onto much greater things in his regular career. Certainly I now feel myself more of a Cameronian than ever and although I have enjoyed many other events in my life, Director of Scotlands largest Ford main dealer, President of Rotary, Members of trades house - Glasgow and now President of the Brighton Burns Club the biggest burns club in the world - I can never forget my Cameronian life or forty four years ago. Next January 25th Burns night - I will be presiding over a dinner with 700 men - I could be tempted to ask the piper to play in my top table of 16 to the 'Gathering of the Grahams' I could have the fastest arriving top table in history!

I can only hope that the enclosed might form a story for 'The Covenanter'

Bill Thomson

(Taken from the 'Handbook Of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)'

## Enquiring Minds

Two young men, Sandy and Jock, call at the Depot for information as to the prospects of advancement in the Army. The Recruiting Sergeant has little difficulty in interesting young men who are really anxious to improve their position in life.

Jock looks very serious about it all. No doubt the Recruiting Sergeant has told him about his own personal Army experience, and the prospects offered him when he enlisted, and how he advanced through Army life to his present position.

Apart from seeing that the Recruit is kept

healthy, well fed and well dressed, the Army also sees to it that the ambitious Recruit can get on in his profession, i.e. gain promotion by educating and training him to the fullest extent of his capabilities and his desires. There is no limit to the advancement of the really ambitious Recruit.

### Being Attested

The Recruiting Sergeant has done his job well. He has convinced Sandy and Jock that the Army does offer opportunity of advancement to young men. Here we are privileged to see Sandy and Jock taking the Oath of Allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen.

How about you? Sandy and Jock will be glad to have you as a comrade.

When the Recruit takes the 'Oath of Allegiance' he gains a new feeling of Loyalty which makes him throw out his chest and discover a strength he never had before.

If he is ambitious and of the right type, he has nothing to be afraid of and everything he could wish for - lots of 'real pals,' plenty of sport and amusements, well dressed, with ample food and pocket money combined with the opportunity to advance in his chosen profession.

### Soldier Comforts

Every recruit on being accepted into the Regiment is made to 'feel at home.' This is important, especially in the case of young recruits, many of whom have probably left home for the first time. You will note that Sandy and Jock have soon 'made themselves at home,' and, with the other recruits, certainly seem to be enjoying a joke.

The Regiment offers each recruit the free use of the Reading Room and Library.

Apart from the Library and Reading Room a recruit can always find something that will interest him during the evening and he will quickly find that many of his comrades will be only too pleased to accommodate him in a game of chess, dominoes, darts or other indoor games.



Should he want to relax there is a canteen where he can enjoy a sing-song and a cup of coffee or some other refreshment, all at very moderate cost.

### Properly Dressed

Recruits must have uniforms and a complete kit. That often keeps the Regimental Tailor busy. Here you see Sandy and Jock being fitted out with clothing. Note how they already appear to be proud of their uniform. The plain buttons of their battledress blouses have already been exchanged for the Regimental black crested buttons. Their trews are of Douglas tartan. Not only does the recruit receive his uniform and kit free of cost, he also receives an allowance (apart from his pay) which enables him to be 'properly dressed.' His kit includes working dress for drills, etc. and when he 'goes to town' he can always have that spruce feeling which smart well-fitting and well-cared-for clothes give.



Naturally every recruit looks forward to the day when he can wear his Regimental uniform, especially if he has enlisted in one of the Scottish Regiments.

### Getting Down To It

Recruits on joining the Regiment receive their early training at the Regimental Depot. They are formed into squads of 20 to 30 men and their training at the Depot lasts for 10 weeks. The squads are named 'Angus' and 'Douglas' after the Earl of Angus who raised the 26th Regiment, and 'Graham' and 'Lynedoch' after Thomas Graham, Lord Lynedoch, who raised the 90th.

Here you see 'Lynedoch' Squad, which Sandy and Jock have joined, doing some of their training. You will notice that they have already learned to carry their rifles at the 'trail,' instead of at the 'slope.' This is the custom of all Rifle Regiments. Join this famous Regiment and you too will feel proud to carry on its ancient traditions. More that that you will have an *esprit de corps* for your own squad or platoon which



will add zest to your work.

The platoon system is the equivalent of the House system of famous public schools and colleges and makes comradeships which last a lifetime.

### Physical Training

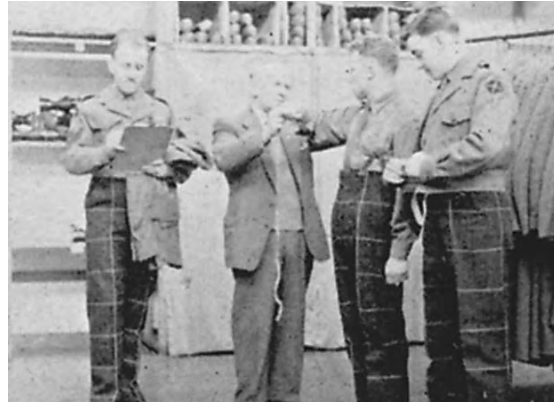
Recruits receive much healthful benefit when in the hands of the Physical Training Instructor, and it is very noticeable the physical improvement made in them within a month of their joining the Regiment. Round shoulders soon disappear and there is a buoyancy in their step.

Physical fitness also means mental alertness, with the result that the soldier makes light of his tasks and is more capable

of enjoying his leisure time.

In turn, this mental alertness makes it easier for the soldier to obtain promotion, increased rates of pay, and a larger share of the good things of life.

Why not call at the nearest recruiting office and ask for full particulars of the



many opportunities which the Army offers to a man of spirit?

### Interesting Facts

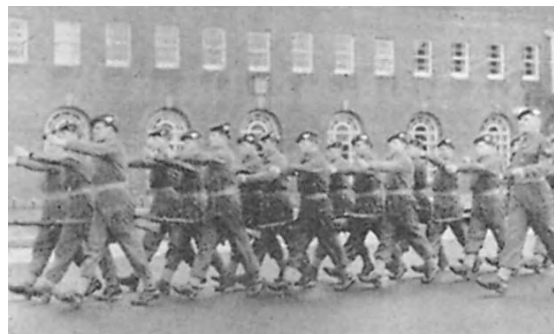
Sandy and Jock with their comrades listen to a discourse from the schoolmaster, for they must attend school, as laid down in Army regulations. This means that recruits will receive an education that should help them considerably when they return to civilian life.

Through this education recruits are able to secure the 3rd and 2nd class certificates which qualifies them for promotion and for higher rates of pay.

To the really ambitious recruit this is only the first rung of the ladder.

Whilst a 2nd class certificate of education is sufficient for promotion to Colour Sergeant, a 1st Class certificate must be obtained if a further advancement is aimed at.

It is possible for a soldier of 19 up to the age of 23 to become a cadet at one of the Military Colleges and undergo 18 month's



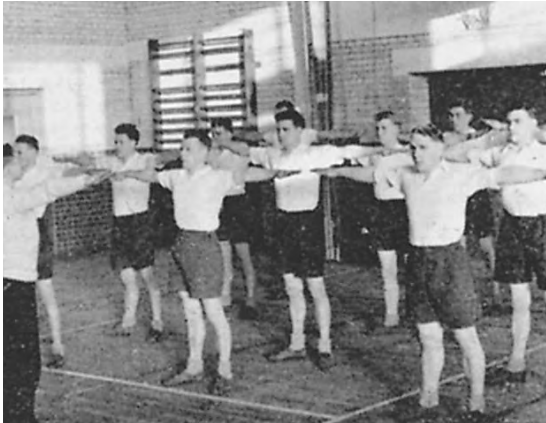
training with a view to being granted a commission in the Army.

### Playing the game

Recruits are given ample opportunity to enjoy their favourite games, and matches are arranged between the various squads at the Depot, also with other nearby Regiments and local teams. Even though they don't make the team they can always get a good 'kick' out of it. The 'amateur' is the man who really enjoys his sport. Nowhere in civil life does sport - Football (Association and Rugby), Hockey, Cricket, Boxing, Tennis, etc., play such an important part as in the Army.

The Army makes it part of its scheme to teach its soldiers to play these games so that the novice need not fear that he will be out of it.

The Army teaches every recruit to 'play the game' for his Battalion. So every recruit



is encouraged to do his best not for himself but for his team and the individual who does this quickly becomes a candidate for higher honours in Army Sport.

### True Eye - Steady Nerve

After they have done a certain amount of Drills recruits are trained to shoot with the rifle - first on the miniature range and then in the open.

The ability to shoot well is one of the highest qualifications required of a good Infantry soldier. Some are born good shots others acquire the skill by practice.

In addition to normal training on the Range there are competitions, both Regimental and those organised by the Army Rifle Association, where a Rifleman has the pleasure of shooting both for himself and the Regiment.

There is not a finer or more sociable sport

than Rifle Shooting. Join Scotland's only Rifle Regiment.

### Weapon Training



Here the Sergeant Instructor is giving some very definite instructions to Sandy and Jock on the correct way to manipulate the Bren Gun which is one of the Infantrymen's weapons. This is a most interesting item in the recruit's training and one which they all enjoy, especially those with a mechanical turn of mind.

The Army of to-day is becoming an army of experts and those who show proficiency reap the benefit of extra pay and extra privileges. The Infantryman has to be very much of an expert at his job.

The question of promotion is intimately



bound up with efficiency so that a man who works hard at his job is soon singled out.

If a soldier likes the life there is no need for him to re-turn to civilian life at the end of third, sixth, or ninth year of service. He can, if he wishes, continue to serve for twenty-two years and qualify for a pension.

### The Inner Man

Constant and regular 'P.T.' and military training in the open-air naturally increases the appetite of already hungry men and

'the inner man' therefore must be looked after. Take a look at the week's menu of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) at Winston Barracks. Sandy and Jock along with their comrades lose no time in getting down to



'serious business' when the 'cookhouse' is sounded. Clean plates and smiling faces denote contentment and that is what Army life means to-day.

*Regimental Note* The Menu shown in this Brochure is not a special 'Show Piece' but was taken at random from the Weekly Bill of Fare and there is no dubiety about the quality and quantity served. Four good wholesome meals a day are served.

It is interesting to note that during the last two years the average increase in weight per recruit during his ten weeks training at the Depot has been just over 4 ½ lbs.

## Basketball

You may not like football, and cricket may bore you. Here are our two friends, Sandy and Jock, in the Gymnasium playing basketball.

There is no end to the facilities offered in the Army for sport, so if basketball does not interest you, what about boxing, hockey or field events.



The civilian has to worry where to go for his sport when it is wet. Not so the recruit. He has a splendidly equipped Gymnasium at his disposal, where he can also play Badminton or 'Fives' or he can have a round of the 'Gloves'.

Should none of these appeal and he can suggest something else, the Sports Committee will welcome his suggestions.

## Our Mechanised Army

The British Army is daily becoming more mechanised but Infantry soldiers must still learn how to march and how to care for themselves properly, when it is necessary to do so.

Many movements are now carried out in vehicles which 20 years ago, before the Army became mechanised, necessitated many miles of marching.

A very considerable number of men are trained to drive motor vehicles each year, as it will be realised that a reserve of drivers has to be maintained by every battalion.

Training includes cross-country driving as well as driving on the road, and the maintenance of the vehicle under all conditions at home and abroad.

This certainly will be helpful to a recruit when he returns to civil life after he has completed his term or service in the Army.

## Free and Easy

It is not all work in the Army to-day. Here you see some of the recruits at the Depot



enjoying a cup of tea and resting between duties.

Note how spick and span the canteen is - gone are the old stools and white-topped tables. Refinement has entered into Army life to-day; and the recruit can have his 'at home' days whenever he likes at a minimum cost.

## Depot Canteen

### Fish

Fried Fillet per portion 8d

### Grills and Entrees

Beef Steak 1/9  
 Ox Liver 1/2  
 Pork Chops 1/9  
 Mutton Chops 1/9  
 Lamb Chops 1/9



Grilled Bacon See daily Menu  
 Grilled Ham See daily Menu  
 Steak and Kidney Pie 1/-  
 Steak Pie 1/-  
 Pork Sausage each 7d.  
 Beef Sausage each 5½d  
 Cornish Pasty 6d.  
 Pork Meat Patty 6d.  
 Meat and Potato Roll 4½d.

### Cold Dishes

Ham-per portion 1/4  
 Tongue - per portion 1/7  
 Brisket of Beef 1/3  
 Luncheon Meat 1/-  
 Corned Beef 10d.  
 Veal, Ham and Egg Pie 1/4  
 Pork Pie 8½d.

### Sweets

Cakes and Pastries each 2d. to 4½d.  
 Special Fancy Pastries 4d. to 6d.



Continental Gateaux 6d.  
 Apple Tart 6d.  
 Apricot Tart 6d.  
 Blackcurrant Tart 6d.  
 Lemon Meringue Pie 6d.  
 Custard Pie 5d.  
 Fruit Jellies 6d.  
 Fruit Trifle 6d.  
 Custard Sauce 1½d.  
 Ice Cream, various 3d. and 4d.

### Savouries



Welsh Rarebit-per portion 6d.  
 Baked Beans on Toast 5½d.  
 Sardines on Toast 6d.

### Sundries

Sandwiches, various, per round 6d.  
 Sausage Rolls, each 4½d.  
 Cheese Pasty, each 5d.  
 Ham Roll, each 7d.  
 Egg and Salad Roll 6d.  
 Luncheon Meat Roll 5d.  
 Salmon Roll 6d.  
 Hot Dogs 7d.  
 Roll and Butter 2½d.  
 Biscuits 3d.

### Beverages

Tea, per cup 3d.  
 Coffee, per cup 4d.  
 Ovaltine, per cup 5d.  
 Horlicks, per cup 7d.  
 Bovril, per cup 4d.  
 Oxo, per cup 4d.  
 Milk, per glass - see daily menus  
 Squashes and Cordials per glass 3d. to 4d.

## A Nice Break

The day's work is done, so naturally our two friends, Sandy and Jock, will enjoy to the full their game of billiards. Here you see Sandy showing Jock how to enjoy 'the break' by knocking up a good score.

Just as all recruits are able to use the Regimental library and read the daily and weekly papers free of charge, so Sandy and

Jock enjoy their billiards, especially as there is only a very small charge made for the game per hour.

The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) offer you these facilities at their Depot at Lanark.

All tastes are catered for, and the Recruit need not have a dull minute.

If you are a devotee of snooker, cribbage or dominoes you will find someone willing to take you on.

For the serious minded or lover of history the Library will supply his wants.

## What a Life

Sandy and Jock are off for the evening. Here you see them making for 'the wide open spaces.' It must, by now, be clear to every reader of this booklet that it is not all work and little play in the Army of today.

Ample opportunity is given to every recruit to enjoy his hobbies and pleasures to the full and it must also be clear to you that when you do join the Army you still retain your individuality, combined with a freedom from all worries.

You have seen the Menu and the Rates of Pay and read how you are catered for in the way of Recreation and Sport.

Weigh it all up. Has civilian life anything better to offer you?

Here is a star to cling to - it is possible to join the Army at the age of 19 and retire at the age of 47 years with a pension of £5 10s - or more per week for life, and a cash grant of £490.

Can civilian life offer YOU that?

## Goodbye to the Depot

Here you see Lynedoch Squad and of course our friends Sandy and Jock. They are parading for their Passing out parade. This is the culmination of their recruit training and is an important day in their lives. After the parade is over they will attend a short farewell service in the Kirk on the barrack square and then go on well-deserved leave.



Soon after that they and their fellow recruits of Lynedoch Squad will be leaving the Regiment Depot at Lanark and joining the 1st Battalion.

There, after further training, they will soon settle down as trained soldiers. During their service they are sure to spend some of their time abroad with the Battalion. They will see the World, enlarge their circle of friends and complete their service to Queen and country.

To travel and see foreign countries and overseas territories of the British Commonwealth is to broaden the mind. Have you ever wished you could go abroad? Most old soldiers will tell you that without a doubt their days of soldiering overseas were the best ones.

Sandy and Jock have nearly finished their time at the Depot but the best days of their service still lie ahead. Ahead also lies the promotion which both of them are keen to get as soon as they can qualify for it.

Will you not come and join them in this fine career which they have just started?

Join the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), Scotland's only Rifle Regiment.

## A Cameronian Upbringing

When I called Major Leishman with the sad news that my mother, Biddy Henderson, had died aged 91 on 25th February 2003, he asked me to describe, as far as possible, the influence of the Cameronians on our



family over the years.

My father, Hugh Henderson, was commissioned into the Regiment in 1935 aged 21, and spent his early years in India. He had previously met my mother when they were both up at Oxford and they married in January 1940, after he returned from India and at the beginning of the



war.

I was born in March 1941 and my brother, Nicholas, was born in January 1943, both in Edinburgh. Much of my father's war was spent in Burma.

One of my most vivid childhood memories is of his return in 1946 when, standing on the stairs of Grandfather's house aged 5, saying like thousands of other children of that age, 'Are you my Daddy?'

In the late 40's my father studied Romanian and Bulgarian in London and Paris, becoming interpreter (First Class) in both languages. After a spell in Hong Kong, he re-joined the Regiment in time for a posting to Barnard Castle and subsequently moved in command of Dog Company to Buxtehude.

These are the moments of regimental life that my brother and I remember best. We spent all our school holidays in Barney and Buxte and quickly developed a sense of pride in the Cams. Our memories include attendance at many sporting events, social activities of many different sorts, initiation into the game of Canasta with the Brycesons, shopping in the NAAFI (paying in BAFVS (?)) and going to the pictures at Buxte Barracks under the auspices of the Army Kinema Corporation.



Friendly family activities such as playing 'Are you there, Moriarty' chez Henry and Maribel Alexander with their children and others including the young Stormonth-Darlings, Laws and our neighbour and great friend, John Quinn, son Alec and Maisy.

I learned to ride on Gentle Moir under the expert supervision of John Baynes (on Tarquin, a challenging mount even for a rider of his ability), Christine Riddel-Webster and Molly Boddington. We also participated in getting-to-know-you sessions with German families, including the Weils. My brother and I knew the husband as

'Herr Absolutely Vile', a good example of schoolboy humour.

Wives and children often travelled in the Regimental bus on excursions to Hamburg, its pretty suburb of Blankanese, Luneburg and other destinations. The excellent German driver had one of the most mournful faces imaginable and was known, inevitably, as 'Happy'.

My father used to say, 'a major's work is never done' which became a well-worn family catchphrase. The same applied to the major's wife, as they were both totally involved in the life of the Regiment and transmitted a strong sense of loyalty and duty to both of us.

Following service in Edinburgh and the Persian Gulf (during which we remained at home) my parents moved to Bulgaria, where my father was military attache for three years in the middle of the cold war. We will never forget the pride he (and we) took in wearing his Cameronians dress uniform, which was truly distinctive on official occasions in the rather grim environments of Sofia at that time.

In 1961, my father retired as Lt Colonel and worked at The War Office as a retired officer until his premature death in 1973. During this final period of his life, both my parents spent a lot of time with the British Legion and my mother continued to support this work actively until her 88th birthday, when she handed over Poppy Day collections to a younger friend.

Saddened, as we all were, by the disbanding of the 1st Battalion in 1968, my brother and I have a continuing sense of loyalty to the Regiment which was so much at the heart of our parents' lives.

Nearly 50 years on from our direct involvement, we would like to recall some 'wonderful giants of old', such as Gen. Henry Alexander, Col. Sir John Baynes, Major Bill Boddington, Major Peter Bryceson, Col. Duncan Carter-Campbell, Major Johnny Gausson, Col. David Jebb, Major John Law, Gen. Eric Sixsmith, Col. Moir Stormonth-Darling and Major (QM) Alec Quinn who marked, with many others, our association with the Cameronians and influenced our upbringing.

With warmest good wished to all former Cameronians and their wives and children.

yours etc,  
Michael Henderson

## Major AT Quinn

Having heard only recently of the death of Alex Quinn I thought a few words on my personal experiences with him might be of interest to your readers.

Plans were afoot to carry the war to the enemy forces in Europe, to this end, many troops were to undergo training of an intensive nature, included in that number was the 9th battalion of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) part of the 46 (Highland Brigade), within the 15th Scottish Division, at that time commanded by Lt. Col Villiers (later to become Brigadier Villiers DSO

In company with several other very raw recruits I joined Charlie company having been greeted (do C.S.M's, greet raw recruits?) at the railway station by 'Trigger' Muir

I cannot now remember actually meeting Major Quinn (then a humble Lieutenant) at Alnmouth, in fact I think it was not



until we travelled down to Keighley, West Yorkshire that I remember him as our Platoon Commander

First impressions - Here was a soldier by his very appearance, that was obvious. A picture of soldiery sartorial elegance, to be emulated at every opportunity, (well we tried!)

Now it was time for serious training, with the enthusiastic assistance of Sgts. Finnagin and Page, Cpl. Garlick and C.Q.M.S. 'Sammy Newall', to name but a few. Under the watchful eye of Major Quinn we moved from raw recruits to able soldiers as events later proved

When time permitted, Major Quinn showed a lighter side of his personality. His favourite subject being of his time in India's sunny climes, the wicked habits of the inhabitants of the North West frontier scared the Hell out of us 18 year olds. I was later to meet those very people.

Of Major Quinn's personal life I knew very little during the time I knew him as our commanding officer. It was not until many year later, when I called upon him that we were able to chat less formally.

As I close this short obituary I have thought, had it not been for the War I would not have had the privilege of meeting this exceptional man and it saddens me that, Military formality forbade greater understanding between him and those who served under him.

May He Rest In Peace

yours etc,

Nat Gormley

## Memory Lane



**Albert Galloway** in days of yore



**Tina and Albert Galloway** cruising in the sun, down under



**HM The King of Sweden** lends a helping hand observed by Quartermaster Captain George Soper, Commanding Officer Lt. Col David Riddell-Webster, Cook Warrant Officer WO11 George Winkley, Rfn AN Other (*Name Please*)



**Regimental Cook, Rfn Jim Ballantyne** meets General Jolly on his visit to Aden Land Forces with the late Lt Col Leslie Dow, Commanding Officer, in the left background ("They were all telling me to salute the General - I was so nervous I didn't do it. I must have been the only rifleman that got away with it")



**Captain David Eydes and Rebecca Rotherham** tie the knot, 9 August 2003



**Muthaiga Reunion** - John Muir, Nick Daglish, Ian Farquharson, Brian Leishman, Colin Lindsay, David Nisbet, Bill Rodger, 12 October 2003

## In Memoriam

*To those they leave behind may their memories be happy ones*

**Detective-Inspector David Anderson** It was in April that I learnt the sad news that 'Andy' David Anderson had died at the age of seventy-two. Andy had been out for a curry meal with his son, returned home for a couple of drams before bed, seemed to doze, and died peacefully.

Andy, originally a National Serviceman, joined the band in Malaya in 1952 and left after three years in Buxtehude. An already trained musician, he successfully filled the vacant post of solo cornet. His fine musicianship, relaxed cheerful personality meant he was appreciated from his first day in the band.

Roy Swiffen, St Andrews, has spoken of Andy as someone who mucked in immediately. Roddy Munroe, writing from Canada, saw Andy as 'a real nice guy - always funny.' I remember Andy for his lyrical singing of 'My love is like a red, red rose.' His brass band origin was recognised by the sweet vibrato of his tone. We all enjoyed his solo playing. He is best remembered for his sensitive playing of the mezzo-soprano aria 'Softly Awakes My Heart' from Samson and Delia by Saint-Seans. His performance, as a musician would say, was truly cantabile.

In civilian life, Andy continued playing his cornet at championship level with the Scottish (CWS) Band. Soon he was wearing his Malayan and Coronation ribbons on the blue uniform of the Glasgow Police. In 1965, he found himself taking a course in English law to transfer to the Metropolitan Police. He was eventually out of uniform on becoming a member of the CID and the Flying Squad. After thirty years of police service, he retired with the rank of detective-inspector.

After his police days Andy carried out investigations for an insurance company. The desire to be among his 'ain folk' again led him to settling in Anstruther, Fife, an area where he had spent many happy holidays with his parents.

His fellow bandsmen will always think of Andy as a happy, sociable friend. We send our condolences to his family and his friends.

**Lt Col Alan Campbell** on 23 Dec 2003 - an obituary will appear in the next issue of The Covenanter.

**Mr Jim Carey** - 15 Nov 2003 at Gretna

**Mr John Davidson** on 9 May 2003 of Dunkeld Perthshire. A loyal Cameronian who served with the Regiment 1942-46 and continued to support the Regiment through the years. He attended many Annual Dinner Dances at Hamilton and was present at the disbandment in May 1968. He was a very active member of the Dunkeld and Birnam British Legion Scotland. Serving latterly as President of the Branch, having also served as Vice Chairman. He took a very active part in all things to do the Royal British Legion Scotland and the Earl Haig Fund. At his funeral attended by over 500 people a piper played 'Flowers of the Forest', 'The Gathering of the Grahames' and 'Kenmuirs On and Awa' as well as other tunes with Cameronian and Lanarkshire links. A collection was taken in lieu of flowers for the Erskine Hospital Memorial Fund, over £700 was raised.

**Mr Theo Dekker** on 18 February 2003 at Tilburg

Dear Liberator,

My dear Theo died on the 18th February. The British Legion Eindhoven attended the funeral service attended by 400 people. All is over for me, No Scotland, No England and my liberators. I am very sad, but I hope if any of my liberators come to Holland for the 60th Celebrations of the Liberation of Tilburg they will think of me



**Captain Jerry Dawson** It was with great sadness that I learnt of the death of Jerry Dawson, Jerry, after being very ill for a few years, died at the age of 89 on the 17th August 2003. Having enlisted as band boy in Hamilton in 1930, his connection with the Cameronians lasted for over seventy years.

I first became aware of Jerry in 1962 when a letter from him invited me to support his idea for the first band reunion. Jerry, helped by his wife Connie, ran the reunion club for twenty years. In addition to the annual gatherings, Jerry sent out regular newsletters, Christmas cards telephoned us for news to pass on to others and was always concerned about our welfare.

At the London Reunions we were always



greeted with the maximum warmth by Jerry and Connie. I thought of them as the 'smiling couple.' Such meetings made it possible for bandsmen of many generations, hitherto unknown to one another, to meet and compare notes. Other Cameronians were welcome to come to the reunions and ex-officers, such as General Murray, came as guest speakers.

Our final reunion took place in 1982. Jerry was happy to hand over to another bandsman. Although a few showed interest, nobody took it on. All the bandsmen were very appreciative of the work of Jerry and Connie, for we all realised their tireless work had ensured that we remained in touch with one another. I know Jerry gladly did this for us, but his years of effort deserve our recognition. Connie said that being a Cameronian was such an important part of Jerry's life. In the War he had served in other regiments; so it would not be an exaggeration to state: 'But in spite of all temptations to belong to other regiments he remained a Cameronian man...'

Before and after the band reunions Jerry was involved with the organisation of the annual regimental reunion in London. Connie and Jerry enjoyed going to the reunions in Scotland. From 1979, as the London Convener, he organised the Regimental plot outside Westminster Abbey before Remembrance Sunday. He saw the Chelsea Pensioners belonging to the Cameronians, visited those who were sick and, in fact, worked for the regiment as long as he was able to do so.

In the 2000 edition, Jerry explained how and why he left Strathaven to join the Cameronians. He admitted his enlistment was more one of desperation than of inspiration. His words are applicable to many other ranks, who for decades have chosen to be servicemen in preference to the bleak prospect of years of unemployment. Jerry, being sixteen, was too young to be a soldier but had the advantage of being taught the cornet by the Salvation Army; this fact made it easy for him to enlist as a band boy.

Jerry joined the 2nd Bn Band at Bordon under the baton of Leslie Seymour. In every way possible, he distinguished himself as a boy. In 1932, he was awarded the Vanderleur Trophy as the best boy in the regiment. In 1933, having gained his Army 3rd and 2nd, he passed his Army First, a certificate of education that cleared the way in one important respect for eventual promotion to warrant officer and a QM commission. In common with most bandsmen, Jerry was good at sport: he represented his battalion at football and hockey. In 1936, he experienced his first period of active service in Palestine and gained his first medal ribbon.

It was in 1934 while playing with the band in Southend that Jerry met Connie.

Romance and marriage followed and Jerry decided to buy himself out of the army in 1938: the battalion posting to Catterick was just too far away from Connie. Neville Chamberlain's speech on the 3rd September 1939 shortened Jerry's return to civilian life. His call up came in 1940. Although he asked to return to the Cameronians, he could see the humour, and no doubt was also surprised, to find himself, as a Scot living in London, travelling to Wales to join an Irish regiment, the Royal Ulster Rifles: he was later transferred to the R.A. to see service in the Middle East and Italy.

In Italy in 1944, he served with the 2nd Bn of the Rifle Brigade. While engaged in carrying ammunition by mule train, he took a wrong track and ended up in the German lines, which saved him from being wiped out with his battalion. All did not go well for Jerry, for he had the misfortune to catch malaria. After a spell in hospital in Naples, he returned to duty with the 7th Bn of the R.B: he completed his war service with the 1st KRRC.

In the 1950's the Home Guard was re-created for domestic service in response to the growing threat from the Soviet Union. Jerry was once more in uniform. On the 11th May 1953 he was commissioned as a 2/Lt in the Middlesex Regt: later he was promoted to captain.

In 1946 Jerry was demobbed. He worked as a bus conductor and then as a driver for London Transport: he played with their band. A change of work came as a caretaker at the Education Offices in Tottenham, which was followed by a similar job at a medical centre. In 1987 Jerry and Connie left Tottenham to live in north Watford. In 2001, they left Watford to be near their daughter in Seaford in Sussex.

We send our condolences to Connie, his daughter Margaret, his sons John and Peter, his four grandchildren and his other friends.

Bill Coughlan.

**Major Laurence Norman Dunn M.B.E. T.D. A.RCM.** Laurie Dunn died peacefully at the age of 101 years on Maundy Thursday, 17th April 2003. A Service of Remembrance for Laurie took place on Friday 2nd May at the Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin, East Preston, Sussex. The service was conducted by the Revd. David Farrant, who reminded the large congregation of family, friends and neighbours that Laurie had a strong faith and had worshipped regularly at the church.

Acknowledging that Laurie enjoyed literature, the Rector quoted John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress: 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' He went on to say that Laurie had used his God given gifts to the full and had enjoyed a happy, fulfilled life. He ended by saying that Laurie would want us to smile.

It was appropriate that the service should also remind us of Laurie's military career: the coffin was draped in the Union flag on which his medals were placed: the Last Post and Reveille were played by Staff Sergeant Howard Garner of the Corps of Army Musicians.

During his long life Laurie Dunn



spent more than fifty continuous years of service in army uniform from 1916 to 1969. Starting as a fourteen-year-old bandboy in the Seaforth Highlanders, he eventually became the bandmaster of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and director of music of the Royal Engineers (Aldershot). In his retirement, he accepted a similar post with the Bermuda Regiment. His military past, too, was recognised at the service by the presence of Colonel Dudley Lucas, Lt-Col Dick Walton, Sgt Bill Coughlan and WO11 Johnny McEwan, formerly of the Cameronians, Lt-Col. George Evans, Lt-Col Geoffrey Kingston, the past and present directors of music at Kneller Hall and Student-Bandmaster Dwight Robinson of the Bermuda Regiment.

Just after his 100th Birthday Laurie gave an interview to Band International in which he explained why he decided to become a Cameronian in 1929. He said: "Out of my class there were only five of us at the end who were considered qualified to be bandmasters. When it came to me, the Commandant, Colonel Lancelot Gregson, explained to me that there were two vacancies for bandmasters and that I'd have to make a choice." He said: "First of all there's the Manchester Regiment, who I know nothing about. And then there are the Cameronians, the Scottish Rifles, and I know this regiment - they lay next to us in France, in the trenches, and they're a very fine regiment. Unfortunately, from your point of view, they're due to go overseas, but can be very nice." "He was all for the Cameronians, so I took them."

Laurie, a fine clarinettist, had a deep appreciation of serious music. He loved orchestral music, opera and chamber music and introduced such works to his bands. His favourite composer was Gustav Mahler.

The occasion was a fitting tribute to the memory of Laurie Dunn. He was liked and respected by his musicians, who in turn became loyal to him. His love of his own family extended to his concern for the welfare of his bandsmen and all others who knew him.

Bill Coughlan

**Colonel Norman Gourlay Jardine**  
ICD,OBE, TD Norman Gourlay Jardine was born at Barrack Hall, Dumbreck on January 15, 1921; the son of Robert Gourlay Jardine (1875-1971), stockbroker, and Annie Logan Stevenson Downie (1885 - 1979).

He was educated at Craigholme School and Glasgow Academy where in 1936 he got his first taste of the army in the Junior Officers Training Corps. This began a life-long commitment to military service which, when taking a commission as 2nd Lieut. In the 7th Bn. The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), he was 'Saved from a career in the Royal Bank of Scotland' by the onset of the Second World War. He was sent to France with his unit in June 1940 and evacuated in the same month back to UK with the British Expeditionary Forces at Dunkirk.

This followed a period of deployments throughout Scotland with the 7th Battalion as part of the Highland Mountain Division and attachment to the 52nd Division Battle School as an instructor. The highlights of this period being guard duty while the King, Queen and Royal Princesses were in residence at Balmoral Castle in October 1942.

Norman's unpublished memoirs recorded his absolute fascination and respect for the Royal Family, Princess Elizabeth's incredible knowledge of military history and Princess Margaret who never missed a chance to test the officers' resolve and stamina during



hide and seek games with her mischievous antics. 'There I was, an officer in a mountain regiment, perching like a pair of bellows - more hectic than mountain warfare'.

Norman returned to France in 1944 with the 9th Bn. The Cameronians with the 'D' Day invasion in Normandy where he was wounded and evacuated to England to recuperate. This followed various secondments including the War Office Selection Boards in UK and the British Army of the Rhine 55WOSB (OCTU) for a tour of duty in Germany. In 1947 he was released and posted back to 7th Bn. The Cameronians as a Territorial Army Officer in Glasgow with the rank of Captain.

In 1948 Norman emigrated to Rhodesia to join his cousin, Rachel Semple and her husband Ebbie, to help manage their farm in Banket where he met his wife Rosamund Bowker and was married in May 1949.

In 1951, Norman started his career in the tobacco industry when he joined Gallaher Limited. This spanned a period of 45 years to include senior production, warehousing and shipping management position with Elia Salzman, the Tobacco Corporation and Universal Tobacco and as a specialist warehousing and tobacco consultant to Bridge Shipping.

In May 1952 his eldest son, Douglas was born followed by his second son Hamish in 1954.

In tandem with his civilian in tobacco Norman joined the 1st Bn. Royal Rhodesia Regiment (1RRR) (Territorial Force) in 1951 as a Lieutenant and was promoted to Captain (Company Commander) in 1954 and Major (Second in Command) in 1955. The 'Winds of Change' in Southern Africa and the rise of African Nationalism saw numerous states of emergency declared by the governments of the day and Norman serving in all countries of the then Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. This included the 1RRR being urgently dispatched to Nyasaland during a period of unrest in 1959. Norman was tasked to stabilise the situation, arrest Dr Hastings Banda and return with the Battalion to Salisbury. This was accomplished. Later Dr Banda went on to lead Malawi into independence after the break-up of the Federation. In 1962 Norman was promoted to Lt Col and took command of the 1RRR and was instrumental in taking the Battalion to a full war footing with a counter-insurgency operational focus.

November 1965 saw the Rhodesia Government's Unilateral Declaration of Independence with the Rhodesia Army including 1RRR under Norman's command

in full support. UDI also had an effect of his civilian career when he was seconded to the Tobacco Corporation; involved in the



co-ordination of the production, storage and shipping of excess tobacco stock accumulating as a result of international economic sanctions placed on Rhodesia.

Norman's medals and decorations epitomise apparent diametric contradictions of this turbulent era through to independence in 1980. Granted an OBE for services to colonial Rhodesia as Officer Commanding 1RRR, this was followed by the granting of an independence Commemorative Decoration for valuable services to the so called 'rebel state' of Rhodesia post UDI. Zimbabwean independence culminated in the awarding of the Zimbabwe Independence Medal. Norman's allegiance to 'Queen and Country' remained absolutely steadfast in line with the stated allegiance in the Independence Declaration; his issue was with the British Government. In his redesigning the Regimental badge after Rhodesia became a republic the retention of the crown in the centre of the badge was pertinent example of this allegiance.

In 1967 Norman handed over command of the Battalion but continued his involvement with the now Rhodesia Regiment as Honourary Colonel of the 1st, 5th and 8th Battalions. He continued to provide the benefit of his operational



experience and council to the Rhodesia Regiment, the Army and the Government until Zimbabwean Independence in 1980.

Norman Jardine was, in all instances, an officer and a gentleman with a great capacity to motivate people in his roles in the military, company management and as mentor to friends and family. He led by example.

His passion for regimental discipline, order and tradition endured to the end through the study of military history.

Norman Jardine passed away at home in Chisipiti, Harare on November 26, 2003 and leaves his sister, Lady Moy Bayly, sons Douglas and Hamish and grandsons Daniel, Saul, Robert and Anthony.

**Mr Oliver James Kelly** - on 27 Feb 2002, at the Royal Hospital Chelsea

**Col Charles E. Michie OBE., TD** Born in Hertfordshire 24 July 1914 10 days before outbreak of WW1 claims not responsible! Went to school at St. Peters, Seaford and St. Edwards, Oxford.

Left school during the depression in the 30's and grandfather who was manager of RBS in Glasgow had a great friend who was Chief Cashier of Bank of England and as a result Charles went to work in the bank in London at £150 per year. A lot of money in those days.

About this time in 1934 he joined London Scottish Regiment in London and reckoned that apart from marrying his wife it was the best thing he ever did. He and Peggy were married in 1939 and later that year he attended OCTU (Officer Cadet Training Unit) and was commissioned as a 2nd Lieut. into the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). In August 1940 at the height of the Battle of Britain Ian was born. The Cameronians were part of the 52nd Lowland Division who went to France 10 days after Dunkirk and a short time later along with 150,000 troops managed to return from Cherbourg back to England.

In 1942 training started in the Cairngorms in mountain warfare with the possible destination being Norway but after various changes they finished up in action below sea level in Holland. At the end of the war in Europe he was on the River Elbe opposite and in contact with the Russian Army not far from Luneberg Heath

In December 1945 Charles demobbed and returned to London with Ian now 5 and Jane 1 years old. The Bank of England asked him where he would like to work and as the bank had opened a branch in

Glasgow in 1940 he thought that it would be a good place to be with sailing and skiing for the family being readily available and of course all his army friends local to the area. When his colleagues heard of the proposed location to some of them it was rather like being sent to Spitzbergen!

Gillian was born in 1946 and Charles rejoined the TA a year later and finally finished up commanding the 6/7th Bn. Cameronians and was awarded an OBE and also the Order of the Star from the King Gustav of Sweden and his final posting was Deputy Brigade commander to Brig. Frank Coutts who as a former rugby player for Scotland made sure that there was never any army training on an international weekend!!

In between all his army work he was an elder for many years in Pollokshields West Church and as Chairman of the Earl Haig Fund in Glasgow recruited a gathering of very attractive ladies who each year collected money for the Poppy Fund and were known locally as 'Charlies Angles'!

During his time in Scotland he lived in Glasgow, Loch Melfort, Errol and finally in Bearsden, in all places they had many friends and a special thanks to those in Roman Court who laterly have been so helpful.

Charles had a great love of rugby, mountains and the Covenantors.

**Mr George Murray** - on 26 Apr 2003, at Erskine Hospital

**Edward William Giles** on 6 Jan 2004 at West Bromwich

**Mr Andrew Lawrie** - on 29 Jun 2003, at Erskine Hospital

**David Logan** at Douglas on 8 Jan 2004 at Douglas

**Major Alexander (Alec) Thomson Quinn** at Milton Grange Nursing Home on 6 Sep 2003. Alec was well known to many and a character to boot. He joined up on 3rd February 1931 declaring his age to be 19 although, that was a wee fib, he was in fact 17 at the time. He was posted to India in 1932 as a Rifleman to join the 1st Battalion returning in 1939 as a Corporal to join 2nd Battalion. By June 1940 he had been promoted to WOII whilst serving with the battalion. A short interlude at OCTU in the United Kingdom preceded a posting to the 9th Battalion as Lieutenant AT Quinn in February 1943. He remained with the 9th Battalion until he rejoined the 2nd Battalion in 1946. In March 1945, during

his time with the 9th Battalion he was Mentioned in Despatches.

Until his retirement, in 1979 Alec held a variety of posts not least in Pakistan in 1949. He was with the Regiment in Gibraltar, Germany, The Persian Gulf and East Africa. In all he served Queen and



Country for all 50 years and will be greatly missed. He is survived by his daughters Jean and Leanna and his son John, to whom we extend our deepest sympathy.

**Mr John Moncur Ramsay** at Perth Royal Infirmary 20 Dec 2003. A proud Cameronian who served with the 1st Bn. in Malaya.

**Donald Matheson Sinclair** St. John's Episcopal Church, Perth, 25th August  
Before I speak about Donald on behalf of the family, I want to read something to you. There was one person whom we all thought would have been right to have given a tribute today. Unfortunately, Hugh Mackay flew off to Canada on the day of Donald's death. I know that Hugh and Jeps are upset that they cannot be here to share in this day. There are others too, who are not able to be here (Douglas Sinclair, Rina), but we know that they are thinking of this gathering now. By the wonder of e-mail, Hugh has sent a message and I want to read it for you now.

*'Donald was my first and easily my best friend; a friendship which lasted over 55 years and one which survived many knocks and bumps which only served to strengthen and reinforce our trust and confidence in each other. Gaps of a year or so only meant that we had all the more to say to each other or indeed to laugh about together and in the very small hours of the morning we would hear Jean or Jennifer*

*in severe exasperation order us to bed. We would go happy and content knowing that our confidence in each other and that our common views remained and were strong and sure.*

*Thinking back on those many years I now realise that Donald had many, many long, good and happy relationships with others, indeed all of your who are here today were Donald's best friends. How come? Well, I think it was because of his wonderful, generous and mature nature. He was essentially a giver who enjoyed good company. He was happiest with people and in particular, with his children and grandchildren who would refer to their Grandpa as 'grumpus' or 'grubby'. One even asked on one occasion 'where on earth did we get Grandpa from?'*

*He was a fine and brave soldier, a wonderful games player and a super farmer Following a career, which has been his bedrock and his given him so much enjoyment. He was a patient giver of himself and someone who cared far more about those whom he was responsible for than the awful ostentation and minutiae of life. I remember him with his wonderful modesty being elected Chairman of 11 Platoon Football Committee, for him only to realise that the post was confined to buying the beer for the Committee. But he so enjoyed telling this story against himself.*

*We are all going to miss him so much but we can find good comfort in the knowledge that he is back again with his dear Jean. How much they will have to bring each other up to date and share life again. He is safe, at peace and we have the sure knowledge that his record is one which will make this so. Even now I think I can hear that call 'Oh for goodness sake, Donald, come up to bed!'*

That was of course Hugh, one of Donald's Cameronian friends and one of the many friends with whom he sat up late with a glass of whisky to put the world to rights!

The Cameronian Regiment owes its existence to a period of profound religious fervour in Scotland's history. Apparently a Cameronian soldier was expected to be of 'upright life and sober conversation!' Well, I am not sure about the sober conversation! I remember sitting up late with Donald on many occasions and once in particular we watched a crackly old black and white film on his video machine. There were endless shots of ranks of soldiers standing in line, marching at an astonishing rate and lowering flags. It was a recording of the ceremony to disband the regiment that took place in the mid-1960's. (Isn't there a former Cameronian whose nickname is Healeyaxtus, a reference to the then Defence Secretary, Dennis Healy?) **(Editors Note: nome de plume of the late Lt**

Col Leslie Dow) This was a film Donald watched from time to time and imposed on unsuspecting friends in a late night, maudlin and sentimental mood.

Donald was, of course, a proud soldier. His army colleagues were Donald and Jean's firmest friends. Things might have been very different for all of us as Donald was only an inch away from death when a soldier's gun went off by accident and blew a gash in the side of his cheek and removed a part of his ear lobe. Studying Grubby's scar was a source of fascination to our children.

In many ways what made Donald a good and successful soldier was his fair-minded character. He was a true gentleman; never over bearing, he gave all around him the space to be themselves. I think that these qualities were the key to the character of Donald and Jean's marriage. What a pair they were! In their life together, Jean was able to be her 'planny', exuberant, hospitable self, organising everyone, shouting at the dogs and sometimes at Donald, making their home a hub that drew friends and family from around the globe. Donald quietly grinning, waiting for the next party or invasion of visitors. Theirs was a wonderful partnership.

It was Donald's idea some 30 years ago to move the family to Balmalcolm. There is probably not a farm in Scotland that could better it for location. It was that move and his love for the hill that infected everyone else. Donald became synonymous with Balmalcolm and Dunsinnan Hill to the extent that an article appeared once in the New Yorker magazine on the legends surrounding Dunsinnan Hill and its associations with Macbeth. Donald was described as the craggy farmer who seemed to have been quarried from its stones, a true successor to Macbeth? Well, perhaps not!

Donald loved the land, he loved the hill and he loved his productive garden (and his Orangery). He was a hugely successful gardener always producing copious quantities of vegetables. He was not a 'tycoon' sort of farmer. He was an individual, enjoying a sense of place, the productivity of the soil, the banter with the men and his neighbours, the cattle on the hill. He was the sort of farmer who, when ploughing, would leap from his cab and move an oyster catcher's nest, then put it back when the plough had passed. He was one who lived in scale to his environment; a quality much needed in agriculture today. He engendered a similar love and appreciation for the land in his children. A sense of place was

so important to him and we all know how much Findhorn meant to Donald, a place he knew and loved from an early age and continued to visit until his illness.

We all know of the difficulties of these last two years. During that time Donald may have been diminished but he never lost his grin and his, by now, often alarmingly wheezy chuckle! Sometimes we thought in the last years or so that laughter would be the end of him. When he started to giggle there would be long, long gaps between breaths. His humour stayed with him too. Just recently he and Karen were discussing whether Jeanie might have inherited her indecisiveness from Jean. 'Was Jean ever indecisive', asked Karen? There ensued a long pause, and then, 'she never did make her mind up!' In her final illness, Jean kept a little book of thoughts that delighted her. In it she wrote, 'Happiness is, seeing Donald giggle'.

I want to pay tribute to Jeanie, Jamie and Kate now, because in their devotion to their Dad they have been an inspiration and an example to us all. I don't suppose Jamie missed a day visiting his Dad, who was his mentor and his hero. Jeanie and Kate's lives revolved around visits to the cottage where Donald spent his last couple of years. It is a tribute to Donald and Jean's qualities as parents that they are the close, loving, harmonious and amazing people they are.

It wouldn't do to forget those who nursed Donald these last two years. His carers made it possible for Donald to stay out of hospital. They did more than tend to him: they befriended him and the family. The family is particularly grateful to Margaret and to Barbara and to all the team for all they have done.

Last night we had a party at our wee cottage up at Collace. All the family were there and a few good friends. It was a loud, jolly event, one of several 'good' events we have enjoyed at this sad time. A lot of people were saying that Donald and Jean would have approved. Maybe (her green slime at bay (I'll explain that to anyone who asks later)), they were watching, together once more.

On a very personal note, I want to say that I was very proud to call Donald my father-in-law. Over the years I have come to know some of the reasons why Jeanie, Jamie and Kate were so proud of their Dad. He welcomed me into the family and supported me in ways that I will always be grateful for. He was a presence, his personality brooded over that part of Scotland I have come to love and to call

my home and I will miss him profoundly when we come as a family to Collace. And so, I can only begin to imagine the sense of loss felt by his children. I know I speak for everyone here when I say that we have lost a rich personality who added something special to the lives of those who knew him.

Perhaps, in conclusion, I can say something on behalf of his grandchildren. Donald was not the most physical of Grandpas, but his 'nitches' was a special bond. Maybe this is how we should all remember Donald: One of his grandchildren said this the other day, 'I remember Grubby's holy jumpers. He always seemed to wear torn up clothes!' 'Yes', responded another grandchild, 'but he wore slightly smarter, scruffy clothes to go to Perth and church!'

We all loved Donald, in his day quite possibly the scruffiest farmer in Scotland and someone who put pepper on his strawberries!

Thanks be to God for Donald Sinclair.

Robert Frazer

**Major Alastair Tomkins** - on 18 September 2003, it's true Cameronians do not whimper. He was very proud of his Regimental connection and always talked of his experience with the 6/7th Bn. with great enthusiasm.

**RSM John (Jake) Sneddon** John was from Boness and volunteered as a regular soldier in 1944 age 17 ½ years. After basic training in Holyrood N.Ireland he joined the 6th Btn. Cameronians(SR) and served with them for the rest of the war in 1945 he went to Senna Larga II on a boxing course, and met Joyce his future wife also on a P.T. course.

1946 John was posted to the 2nd Btn in Knook camp Warminster. 1947 posted again to the 1st Btn. in Gibraltar. He boxed for all three battalions.

From Gibraltar the Btn. moved to Trieste by Sea.

John was given leave to marry Joyce Jan 1949 six months later the Btn. moved to Honk Kong after Patrolling the New Territories, The Btn. moved again to Malaya and took part in many Jungle Sorties.

John came home due to illness and trained recruits at Dreghorn Camp 1951-53 both children born in this period.

John rejoined regt. at Barnard Castle as provest Sgt. (his least Favourite Job) from then John was with the Btn. in Buxtehude Bahreen, Shasha, Aden, Winson Bks, Kenya, Minden, Redford Bks. Aden on

disbandment.

His last year was spent at G.H.Q. Scotland John was a keen Sportsman athletics, hockey, rugby. He loved the Regt. and took great pride in Training the Royal Guards for Edinburgh Castle, Holyrood Palace, Buckingham Palace, Tower of London, and Balmoral not forgetting the opening of the Forth Road Bridge.

John expected the troops to do well and they certainly did.

John became a BK. Accountant and retired in 1981.

He enjoyed many years cycling, swimming, & camping with his grand children Roy, Carolyne & Stuart.

John is sadly missed by close & extended



family, most of all by his wife Joyce but 54 years of good memories will keep him in their hearts.

**The Cameronians (SR) and friends acknowledge with gratitude and thanks the following donations following the memorial services for: Major Lawrence (Lawrie) Dunn £436.00  
Mr John Moncur Ramsay £423.86**



## 35 Years On - Where are you now? We would like to hear from you.

### Future Destinations of Personnel from our ex-1st Battalion

#### Leaving the Army

No.	Rank	Name	Coy./Dept.
	Major	Cameron, D.E.N	
	"	Godsman, A.	
	Capt.	Christie, D.O	
	"	Farquharson, I.D.	
	"	Gordon-Smith, P.G.	
	Lieut.	Croft, R.O.G.	
		Williams, J.R.	
21052461	W.O.I.	Andrews, R.	Bn. H.Q.
5683324	"	Charlton, C.	Mil. Band
14184258	W.O.II	Burns, J.	Q.M.'s Staff
2548517	"	McEwan, J.	Mil. Band
14184735	"	Robertson, S.M.	B Coy.
22771678	"	Todd, W.	D Coy.
21071396	"	Yuill, G.	H.Q. Coy. H.Q.
23549765	C/Sjt.	Laverick, G.	Officers' Mess
22376694	"	McBride, R.E.	B Coy.
3254807	"	Page, E.	H.Q. Coy. H.Q.
22295748	"	Smith, B	Q.M.'s Staff
22458177	"	Tilley, W.	Recruiting Office Glasgow
23049195	Sjt.	Adams, W.K.	D Coy.
21023488	"	Armstrong, J.	M.T. Pl.
22376694	"	Carr J.	B Coy.
22573136	"	Currie, J.	C Coy.
23706351	"	Hamilton, H.	Regt. Police
19044818	"	Hynd, D.	Medic. Sc.
23742183	"	La Roche, T.	D Coy.
23562732	"	Quinn, J.	D Coy.
22215744	"	Ramsay, J.	Q.M.'s Staff
22474735	"	Sheridan, W.	A Coy.
22069886	"	Sorbie, T.	H.Q. Coy. H.Q.
22805812	"	Tait, A.	Bn. H.Q.
22704138	"	Wilson, W	Q.M.'s Staff
23492948	Cpl.	Begley, S.	D Coy.
22959014	"	Hall, A.	Sjts' Mess
22308426	"	Middler, S.	Pipes and Drums
22134658	"	Mellon, W.	Regt. Police
23664917	"	Lennon, F.	M.T. Pl.
23684525	"	McAlpine, J.	D Coy.
23742005	"	Rogerson, D.E.	B Coy.
23736940	"	Salisbury, J.	B Coy.
22563898	"	Simpson, R.	B Coy.
23220658	"	Solway, W.A.	D Coy.
23510921	L/Cpl.	Ross, J.	Mil. Band
23914044	"	Tomlinson, G.	B Coy.
23549640	Bdsm.	Kane, S.	Mil. Band
23828251	"	Law, I.	Mil. Band
23909394	Rfn.	Bell, M	D Coy.
23732594	"	Middleton, J.	B Coy.
23531847	"	Porteous, D.L.	Pipes and Drums

## Going to the Royal Scots

	Major	Brown, R.J.F., M.B.E.	
	"	Clarke, S.D.	
	"	Lucas, J.N.D.	
	"	Soper, G.A.M. (Q.M.)	
	"	Walton, R.N.	
	Capt.	Brotherton, R.A.	
	"	Burns, J. (Q.M.)	
	"	Paterson, R.H.	
	Lieut	Browne, C.J.W.	
	"	Critchell, E.G.T. (Q.M.)	
	"	Mason, R.P.	
23428132	C/Sjt.	Morrison, W.	D Coy.
23959214	Sjt.	Findlater, R.	D Coy.
23833765	"	Irons, R.M.	B Coy.
23863228	Cpl.	Donnelly, H.	Sig. Pl.
23898635	"	Hogg, J.	D Coy.
23885083	"	Hunter, W.J.	M.T. Pl.
23904250	"	Murdoch, J.	Q.M.'s Staff
23716979	"	O'Connor, J.	D Coy.
23871702	"	Pollock, W.J.M.	Bn. H.Q.
23889083	"	Russell, A.R.	A Coy.
23909623	"	Stewart, J.J.	B Coy.
7928963	Cpl.	Sutherland, B.	Q.M.'s Staff
23833643	"	Walsh, L	B Coy.
23930593	"	Wilson, H.S.	Sig Pl.
23750831	L Cpl.	Adams, W.	D Coy.
24040189	"	Brenan, P.	B Coy.
23863601	"	Caddell, W.C.	Sig. Pl.
23681823	"	Dell, R. D.	Sig. Pl.
24019548	"	Durkin, M.	B Coy.
23909204	"	Keane, A.J.	Pipes and Drums
23908060	"	Linton, J.D.A.	B Coy.
23992802	"	Morrison, N.C.	D Coy.
23769148	"	Perrie J.	Q.M.'s Staff
23977977	"	Swanson, G.S.	A Coy.
23863399	Rfn.	Allan, R	M.T. Pl.
24081315	"	Anderson, A.	A Coy.
24017439	"	Baigan, G.	D Coy.
24084647	"	Bain, R.	A Coy.
24042436	"	Bruce, D	M.T. Pl.
24054773	"	Byrce, R	Pipes and Drums
23950994	"	Buchanan, P	Sig. Pl.
24081701	"	Carney, T.H.	A Coy.
23828063	"	Crawford, G.	D Coy.
24026175	"	Cunningham, A	A Coy.
23857361	"	Dickson, V.	M.T. Pl.
24081934	"	Dickson, C.J.	B Coy.
24054699	"	Innes. M.B.	Officers' Mess
23930842	"	Fay, D.J.	Sig. Pl.
24074797	"	Fraser, J	A Coy.
24111323	"	Gallagher, T.	Pipes and Drums
23930737	"	Garrett, D.	Pipers and Drums
23930588	"	Green, A.	Q.M.'s Staff
23853485	"	Green, C.	H.Q. Coy. H.Q.

## Going to the Royal Highland Fusiliers

	Major	Burrell, J.	
	Lieut.	Grant, P.R.	
23700489	Sjt.	Wallace, E.	D Coy.
23568457	C/Sjt.	McKnight, E.	M.T. Pl.
23534906	Cpl.	Dixon, A.H.	A Coy.
23930590	"	McDowell, I.	Pipes and Drums
23904903	"	Mulraney, T.	Regt. Police
23835156	"	Noble, J.	B Coy.
23681063	"	Reid, M. M.	Pipes and Drums
24101912	"	Springett, H.F.	B Coy.
24008870	"	Tait, J.W.	B Coy.
24065935	L. Cpl.	Anderson, R.F.	D Coy.
23943375	"	Bradford, S.B.	D Coy.
23992845	"	Halliday, D.J.	A Coy.
23871787	"	Hannah, H.K.	Sig. Pl.
24065932	"	McGrory, M.	A Coy.
23959440	"	McMunn, A.M.B.	Sjts.' Mess
23863015	"	Morrison, J.	Pipes and Drums
23959489	"	Peat, J.	Officers' Mess
23863504	"	Pender, A.	M.T. Pl.
23785335	"	Rodgers, S.	M.T. Pl.
24122211	Rfn.	Bartleman, J.I.	D Coy.
24084432	"	Boyaln, T.F.	A Coy.
23959541	"	Colville, J.F.	A Coy.
23959369	"	Devoy, T.	B Coy.
24122977	"	Dutty, T.	A Coy.
24054067	"	Dunn, T.	A Coy.
24117877	"	Edgar, J.K.	D Coy.
24081580	"	Furlong, F.J.	A Coy.
23930189	"	Gibson, P.	M.T. Pl.
24095834	"	Gowans, J.W.	D Coy.
24090656	"	Hannah, J.	B Coy.
24008078	"	Hardie, R.B.	Sig. Pl.
24107290	"	Haward, W.	A Coy.
24074142	"	Hughes, A.D.S.	B Coy.
23846789	"	Humphreys, D.G.	B Coy.
24111789	"	Inness, I.	A Coy.
24026700	"	Keating, J.S.D.	Sig Pl.
23863965	"	Love C.	M.T. Pl.
23754358	"	McIntosh, H.D.	M.T. Pl.
24081768	"	McWilliams, T.	B Coy.
24081306	"	Moffat, F.L.	A Coy.
24074028	"	Porter, T.W.W.	B Coy.
24111143	"	Poulton, J.	D Coy.
23681912	"	Robertson, W.B.	Officers' Mess
23750631	"	Rouse, J.	M.T. Pl.
24081641	"	Roy, W.J.	A Coy.
24081307	"	Shaw, A.	A Coy.
23959289	"	Shaw, G.W.D.	Bn. H.Q.
24063166	"	Sloan, T.	D Coy.
22387275	"	Sneddon, H.	Q.M.'s Staff
24065170	"	Storer, A.J.	D Coy.
23533174	"	Taylor, W.J.	A Coy.
24042362	"	Watson, J.A.H.	B Coy.
24065602	"	Welka, W.	D Coy.
23904844	"	Williamson, H.	Sjt.'s Mess



## Going to the King's Own Scottish Borderers

	Major	Gilfilan, T.V.	
	"	Lindsay, A.	
	"	Rodger, W.A.L.	
	Capt.	Cooper, K.M.	
	"	Galloway, A. (Q.M.)	
	"	Leishman, B.A.S.	
	"	Lindsay, C.	
	"	McBain, R.K.	
	Lieut.	Corkerton, D.J.P.	
	"	Eydes, P.W.	
	"	Sixsmith, M.D.	
	"	Thomson, A.R.	
22470411	W.O.I.I.	Anderson, T., B.E.M.	A Coy.
22663251	"	Martin, E.	B Coy.
23513780	Sgt.	Megeary, H.	A Coy.
23828442	Cpl.	Cryans, J.	Pipes and Drums
23871049	"	Hastie, A.K.	Bn. H.Q.
23959195	"	Kay, J.	Officers' Mess
24017025	"	Lewicki, P.	A Coy.
23243490	"	McMinn, D.J.	Regt. Police
23697045	"	Mitchell, A.	A Coy.
23733036	"	Murray, J.E.	D Coy.
23871668	"	Shields, J.W.	A Coy.
24074585	"	Smith, A.	B Coy.
23537824	"	Watt, A.	C Coy.
24081063	L/Cpl.	Bennett, R.M.L.	D Coy.
23930954	"	Gibson, R.	D Coy.
24074871	"	McColm, P.J.	Regt. Police
23871375	"	Smith, J.	M.T. Pl.
23930240	"	Spence, J.	Q.M.'s Staff
24081428	Rfn.	Aitchinson, W.D.	A Coy.
23959036	"	Armstrong, A.J.	H.Q. Coy H.Q.
24065021	"	Blair, N.G.	A Coy.
24017976	"	Campbell, B.	A Coy.
23980671	"	Dickson, C.J.	B Coy.
23909207	"	Frew, N.M.	D Coy.
24081007	"	Gibson, A.	D Coy.
23959357	"	Harker, J.W.	A Coy.
24084122	"	Hay, M.	B Coy.
24101599	"	Houston, D.	B Coy.
22324568	"	Hughes, D.	Bn. H.Q.
24017501	"	Hunter, M.F.	A Coy.
23750023	"	Jack, P.	Pipes and Drums
24074097	"	Manson, D.A.B.	A Coy.
24111946	"	McBride, A.	D Coy.
23863333	"	McCull, W.	D Coy.
23549867	"	McCormack, J.W.	Pipes and Drums
23743643	"	McGinlay, J.F.	A Coy.
24101926	"	McHarg, P.	B Coy.
24008033	"	Mohammed, R.J.S.	B Coy.
23871776	"	Morrison, N.C.	Q.M.'s Staff
24095973	"	Muir, A.P.	A Coy.
23909093	"	Newman, R.V.H.	Officers' Mess
23716471	"	O'Halloran, R.	Pipes and Drums
24095515	"	Paton, A.	D Coy.
23968645	"	Russell, R.	A Coy.
24107421	"	Sweeney, E.	A Coy.

23930931	"	Thompson, R.	D Coy.
24084123	"	Thompson, B.	D Coy.
24090780	"	Ullman, A.W.	D Coy.
23997547	"	Watson, F.	H.Q. Coy. H.Q.
24095366	"	Webster, W.	B Coy.
23863637	"	Welsh, D.P.W.	D Coy.
23930489	"	White, F.	B Coy.
24101009	"	Williamson, R.	A Coy.
23909030	"	Wilson, J.M.	A Coy.
24084688	"	Young, P.	B Coy.

## Going to the Black Watch

23784231	Cpl.	Noble, J.	B Coy.
23549430	"	Rushbury, H.	B Coy.
23904904	L/Cpl.	Crawford, E.	H.Q. Coy. H.Q.
24057472	"	Dudds, J.	A Coy.
24022325	Rfn.	Alexander, W.	A Coy.
23909664	"	Bowie, D.	M.T. Pl.
23871789	"	Brown, J.	D Coy.
24084433	"	Bryce, R.	A Coy.
23836466	Bdsm.	Carr, T.	Mil. Band
23930627	"	Cuthbertson, J.	Pipes and Drums
23930816	"	Duncan, A.	A Coy
23959519	"	Hamilton, J.	M.T. Pl.
24074342	"	Holland, J.	D Coy.
23716498	"	La Roche, J.	Mil. Band
23871044	"	Latta, R.	B Coy.
23904801	"	Laughland, A.	B Coy.
23930592	"	Malcolm, A.	B Coy.
23930293	"	Manclark, K.	A Coy.
23871550	"	McGeachy, W.	D Coy.
23909465	"	McMahon, J.	B Coy.
23959490	"	Moses, J.	A Coy.
24081602	"	Nairn, R.	A Coy.
23744369	"	Shearer, R.	A Coy.

## Going to the Queen's Own Highlanders

	Major	Baynes, J.C.M.	
	"	Campbell, A.	
	Lieut.	Grant, R.A.U.	
23904338	Cpl.	Anderson, J.	A Coy.
23741676	"	Brankin, W.J.	B Coy.
23930863	"	Dawson, A.	Q.M.'s Staff
22531774	"	Gibson, J.R.S.	Pipes and Drums
23783271	"	Innes, J.A.	B Coy.
23846533	"	McAteer, G.	D Coy.
23904462	"	Morell, I.	Pipes and Drums
23909201	L/Cpl.	Balloch, T.	B Coy.
23904683	"	Burns, D.W.	Sig. Pl.
23201531	"	Henry, W.	Q.M.'s Staff
23899644	"	Houston, E.	A Coy.
24084101	"	Laidlaw, J.S.K.	A Coy.
23930318	"	McDevitt, H.P.	M.T. Pl.
23959260	"	McLeod, D.M.C.	B Coy.
23863519	"	McManus, G.	Q.M.'s Staff
23769186	"	O'Donnell, J.W.	Q.M.'s Staff
24117368	Rfn.	Alexander, ??	Bn. H.Q.

19037983	“	Robinson, D.	Medic. Sec.
24026396	“	Wilson, J.M.	A Coy.
24095117	“	Boyd, J.S.M.	A Coy.
23959300	“	Christie, R.	B Coy.
24090987	“	Christie, B.J.	D Coy.
24095487	“	Clark, A.	B Coy.
23863367	“	Clements, P.J.	Sig. Pl.
23959019	“	Coady, J.M.C.	B Coy.
23982848	“	Dennett, R.	A Coy.
24026841	“	Devlin, P.	A Coy.
23959038	“	Dowdles, S.	Q.M.'s Staff
23909397	“	Elliot, H.	B Coy.
23930716	“	Galbraith, A.	B Coy.
24074062	“	Gallagher, A.E.	Cpls.' Mess
23959391	“	Gilbert, R.J.	A Coy.
23930841	“	Gillan, J.	Officers' Mess
24081784	“	Halliday, A.E.	B Coy.
24074296	“	Hunter, A.	B Coy.
24040210	“	Kerr, J.S.	B Coy.
24101077	“	Kerr, J.	D Coy.
23977894	“	Levell, R.W.	M.T. Pl.
23959318	“	McEwan, G.	D Coy.
23930587	“	McFarlane, G.N.	B Coy.
24074870	“	McGeachy, J.	A Coy.
24095984	“	McGhee, J.	A Coy.
23904032	“	McGill, J.	Sjts.' Mess
23909986	“	McGowan, M.J.	Pipes and Drums
23863499	“	McGregor, W.K.	Q.M.'s Staff
23909415	“	McLaren, W.	B Coy.
23743428	“	McLaughlin, W.	B Coy.
23784397	“	McMoran, R.	A Coy.
24074190	“	McNeil, J.	Sig Pl.
23930396	“	Mair, I.	Sig Pl.
24074798	“	O'Donnell, J.	Sjts.' Mess
24080036	“	Paterson, G.	D Coy.
23871648	“	Ross, A.C.	M.T. Pl.
23861416	“	Russel, A.H.W.	H.Q. Coy. H.Q.
23930740	“	Smith, J.T	D Coy.
24074372	“	Weir, G.H.S.	B Coy.
24117822	“	White, J.I.	B Coy.
24122212	“	Wright, J.	H.Q. Coy. H.Q.
23930791	“	Yardley, H.D.	A Coy.
23980239	“	Yates, B.H.	A Coy.

## Going To The Gordon Highlanders

	Major	Dunbar, M.L., M.B.E.	
	Capt.	Gibson, R.E.B.C.	
3254848	C/Sjt.	Thurlow, A.	Bn. H.Q.
23503909	Sjt.	O'Neil, G.A.	A Coy.
23869544	Cpl.	Carrick, W.	H.Q. Coy. H.Q.
23847545	“	Colville, A.B.	A Coy.
23716067	“	Fox, J.	Pipes and Drums
23959508	“	Gibson, L.V.	D Coy.
23784036	“	Gilfillan, D.C.	Regt. Police
23930535	“	McDade, J.	Regt. Police
23904070	“	McDairmid, J.L.	D Coy.
23904462	“	Morrell, I.	Pipes and Drums
23909046	“	Proctor, J.H.	Sig. Pl.

23832822	"	Thomson, J.	A Coy.
23904906	"	Topping, J.	Cpls.' Mess
24008029	L/Cpl.	Curran, I.A.	M.T. Pl.
23716404	"	Groome, T.G.	B Coy.
23909482	"	Harding, W.	D Coy.
23928926	"	Martin, J.I.	Regt. Police
23863451	"	Murray, E.	Q.M.'s Staff
23783251	"	Wilkie, D.	Regt. Police
23930287	"	Young, J.	Sig. Pl.
23930397	Rfn.	Alexander, S.	Pipes and Drums
23846209	"	Allison, A.	B Coy.
23909316	"	Baillie, M.	M.T. Pl.
24084448	"	Black, D.T.	D Coy.
23959252	"	Bogan, D.	H.Q. Coy H.Q.
24117116	"	Bogan, J.M.	D Coy.
23736911	"	Bradley, H.	Q.M.'s Staff
24101600	"	Bratchell, A.A.	D Coy.
24041307	"	Brown, J.	D Coy.
23909949	"	Cairns, W.	Q.M.'s Staff
23863257	"	Campbell, T.L.	A Coy.
23930173	"	Clark, J.T.	B Coy.
24026756	"	Cleland, W.C.	M.T. Pl.
23930973	"	Connelly, J.	A Coy.
23959569	"	Coullie, W.M.	Sig. Pl.
24035784	"	Cullivan, D.J.	B Coy.
24044178	"	Currie, J.E.	Q.M.'s Staff
23909948	"	Dickson, K.K.	B Coy.
24074592	"	Donnelly, E.	Pipes and Drums
24026938	"	Flynn, M.T.	M.T. Pl.
23871248	"	Gibson, C.	M.T. Pl.
23930929	"	Grennough, J.A.	Officers' Mess
23959048	"	Hastie, T.	D Coy.
24065023	"	Hay, A.B.	O.M.'s Staff
23863332	"	Hunstone, J.	B Coy.
23109016	"	Kilbride, M.	M.T. Pl.
23871728	"	McCull, E.	B Coy.
23009455	"	McIntyre, A.	D Coy.
23959843	"	McKenzie, W.	D Coy.
23871159	"	Moore, S.A.	B Coy.
23863764	"	Munn, W.	D Coy.
23820843	"	Oliver, J.	A Coy.
23780134	"	Peters, G.P.	Pipes and Drums
24065225	"	Pringle, F.	D Coy.
24100745	"	Reid, H.	D Coy.
23950624	"	Robertson, R.	D Coy.
23960516	"	Scanlin, J.	Sig. Pl.
23959964	"	Scott, G.F.	D Coy.
23107546	"	Shuff, A.G.F.	D Coy.
24095539	"	Smith, S.R.	D Coy.
24074112	"	Sneddon, A.G.	A Coy.
23871967	"	Sweeney, B.	A Coy.
24095661	"	Taylor, I.K.	Q.M.'s Staff
23750947	"	Townsley, H.H.	A Coy.
24081620	"	Welsh, J.D.	A Coy.
24074821	"	Wilson, T.B.N.	D Coy.
23009485	"	Winters, T.	B Coy.

## Going to the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders

22835420	Capt.	Park Weir, I.C.	
23701105	C/Sjt.	Kilbride, R.	A Coy.
23722488	Sjt.	McDonald, A.G.	A Coy.
23798025		McSween, K.	Mil. Band
23797990	Cpl.	Boyd, J.	Mil. Band
23871617	"	Carey, J.	Q.M.'s Staff
23909848	"	Cunningham, J.M.	D Coy.
23834533	"	Dearrie, G.H.	Sig. Pl.
23954983	"	McConnachie, P.V.	Sig. Pl.
23863325	L/Cpl.	Burns, W.	Sig. Pl.
23904865	"	Burrows, J.L.	M.T. Pl.
23207935	"	Campbell, A.	D Coy.
23828020	"	Donnelly, J.	Mil. Band
23479243	"	Gillespie, K.	Mil. Band
23930651	Rfn.	Sneddon, D.	H.Q. Coy. H.Q.
23930900	Bdsm.	Alexander, R.T.	M.T. Pl.
23207957	Rfn.	Blackwood, J.	Mil. Band
23904339	"	Bollan, R.A.B.	B Coy.
23904251	"	Brady, J.	B Coy.
24074061	"	Chambers, A.	Sjts.' Mess
24095428	"	Christie, R.	A Coy.
23930630	"	Erskine, H.B.	M.T. Pl.
24122736	"	Gallagher, J.	B Coy.
24026085	"	Geddes, F.S.	B Coy.
23980206	"	Goldie, J.P.	Sig. Pl.
23659625	"	Gough, W.D.	A Coy.
23930209	"	Imrie, T.C.D.	B Coy.
23983272	"	Kennedy, M.C.	Pipes and Drums
24111160	"	Lang, W.	B Coy.
24074144	"	Lockhart, A.	A Coy.
23871371	"	Lloyd, H.E.	Sig. Pl.
24061330	"	Lyons, D.P.	D Coy.
24107503	"	Malcolm, R.	A Coy.
24035359	"	Martin, R.C.	A Coy.
23980205	"	McCormick, J.	A Coy.
23681808	Bdsm.	McCrae, W.	Sig. Pl.
24111846	Rfn.	McCrum, G.	Mil. Band
24065412	"	McGhee, G.	A Coy.
23909457	"	McIntyre, D.	A Coy.
24111305	"	McIntyre, G.C.B.	D Coy.
23959011	"	McLeish, T.A.	B Coy.
23959030	"	McLeod, J.K.T.	A Coy.
23828592	"	McNamara, A.B.	A Coy.
23716749	"	McWilliams, A.R.	Sig. Pl.
23930594	Rfn.	Meechan, T.	Q.M.'s Staff
24026561	Bdsm.	Milroy, J.	Pipes and Drums
23863646	"	Munro, S.	Mil. Band
23122343	Rfn.	Murdoch, A.	Mil. Band
24017999	"	Murray, J.D.	B Coy.
23730360	"	Nelson, R.S.	A Coy.
23930104	"	Peattie, W.	H.Q. Coy. H.Q.
24035718	"	Roberts, J.H.	H.Q. Coy. H.Q.
24017570	Bdsm.	Russell, W.D.	Officers' Mess
24122076	Rfn.	Rooney, E.T.	Mil. Band
24017528	"	Samson, G.	D Coy.
24081430	"	Stevenson, T.H.	Sig. Pl.
		Watson, A.C.	D Coy.

24111406 Bdsm. Young, D. Mil. Band

### Going to Corps or Regiments outside the Lowland and Highland Brigades

No.	Rank	Name	Coy./Dept.	Posting
	Capt.	Buchanan Dunlop, R.D.		Scots Guards
	"	Hathorn, D. McF.		A.C.C.
	"	Orr, J.A.		Para. Regt.
	"	Nisbet, A.D.I.		R.A.O.C.
	"	Murray, J.		D.A.L.S.
	"	Stephens, G. McL.		Royal Scots Greys
	Lieut.	Cox, J.J.D.		Scots Guards
	"	Matthews, F.C.		R.C.T.
23549603	Sjt.	DalGLISH, J.	Mil. Band	Royal Scots Greys
23758949	Cpl.	Ferns, J.	Mil. Band	R.E.M.E.
23549823	"	Paton, J.	Mil. Band	R.A.
24040215	"	Sutherland, D.M.	H.Q. Coy. H.Q.	R.A.O.C.
23742789	"	Ward, J.S.	Sig. Pl.	R.P.C.
24074898	L/Cpl.	Bauchope, D.	Bn. H.Q.	Q.D.G.
23858186	"	Cleland, J.	Pipes and Drums	R.A.
23786903	"	Currie, R.	M.T. Pl.	52 Low. Div. Dis.
23959339	"	Dick, J.	B Coy.	R.A.
24035954	"	Gibson, J.	B Coy.	Para. Regt.
23982850	"	Kerr, D.	A Coy.	R.A.
24065617	"	McDonald, J.	A Coy.	R.T.R.
24074897	"	McNeil, W.A.	D Coy.	R. Sigs.
24081132	"	Maley, M.J.	D Coy.	Para. Regt.
23716377	"	Sproul, J.	Mil. Band	R.A.
23863017	"	Stewart, A.	Mil. Band	R.A.
24026732	"	Sweeney, R.	D Coy.	Para. Regt.
24111977	Rfn.	Adams, J.	D Coy.	R.A.C.
24095548	"	Belk, J. T.	Sig. Pl.	R.A.O.C.
23608886	"	Blake, P.	Q.M.'s Staff	A.C.C.
24035605	"	Caddell, T.	B Coy.	R.A.
24017076	"	Craney, T.	B Coy.	Green Howards
24101993	"	Cochran, D.	D Coy.	R.T.R.
24065474	"	Cruden, H.C.	D Coy.	R.A.
23986964	"	Clark, A.	Sig. Pl.	R. Sigs.
24049067	"	Clements, A.J.	Sig. Pl.	R.T.R.
24008603	"	Cooper, D.	D Coy	Para. Regt.
24022451	"	Corbally, T.I.	Off'rs. Mess	R.A.M.C.
23959460	"	Doran, T.F.	H.Q. Coy. H.Q.	R.A.M.C.
24081774	"	Douglas, W.	Cpls. Mess	P.W.O.
24074297	"	Ferguson, A.	M.T. Pl.	R.A.V.C.
23959353	"	Gardener, I.	B Coy.	R.C.T.
24042440	"	Gillies, R.G.	M.T. Pl.	R.A.C.
24111486	Bdsm.	Hamilton, T.	Mil. Band	R.A.C.
24081935	Rfn.	Hampton, G.	D Coy.	R. Sigs.
23871725	"	Harper, A.	Q.M.'s Staff	A.C.C.
23251725	"	Hathorn, N.M.	B Coy.	R.C.T.
23980580	"	Hyndman, D.	M.T. Pl.	R.C.T.
24101218	"	McEwan, J.G.	B Coy.	R.A.V.C.
24042953	"	McAndrew, R.	Sig. Pl.	Para. Regt.

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24008104	"	McPherson, A	Q.M.'s Staff	A.C.C.
24065957	"	Millar, D.	Sig. Pl.	R.E.M.E.
24026217	"	Mallaghan, J.	B Coy.	R.T.R.
23828634	"	Masterton, J.	Pipes and Drums	R.T.R.
23459878	"	Milroy, D.M.	Pipes and Drums	R.A.
23871268	"	Muir, W.	Pipes and Drums	R.A.
24026176	"	Milroy, J.M.	Mil. Band	R.A.C.
24084272	"	Mitchell, G.	D Coy,	R.A.C.
24074860	"	Pearce, J.	Off'rs Mess	R.N.F
23966532	"	Pettifer, J.A.T.	D Coy.	R.A.M.C.
24008075	"	Preistley, J.	A Coy.	R.A.
24026776	"	Promrose, R.M.	Bn. H.Q.	R.A.
24017124	Bdsm.	Randalls, A.	Mil. Band	R.A.O.C.
23542184	"	Robertson, A.	Pipes and Drums	R.T.R.
23090657	"	Smith, J.	D Coy.	R.E.M.E.
24042452	"	Steel, J.M.	M.T. Pl.	R.C.T
23909705	"	Stannage, J.R.B.	Bn. H.Q.	R.A.P.C.
24026779	"	Telfer, A.	M.T. Pl.	R.C.T.
24074063	"	Tennent, J.C.	D Coy.	R.C.T.
24084687	"	Walker, J.	B Coy.	K.O.Y.L.I.
24081836	"	Weston, R.T.	B Coy.	Para. Regt.
23909393	"	Wood, H.S.	Sig. Pl.	R.T.R.

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





# THE COVENANTER



THE REGIMENTAL JOURNAL OF  
THE CAMERONIANS (SCOTTISH RIFLES)

2004

## ***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

# NOTICES

## "THE COVENANTER"

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**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:*

Colonel J.G. d'Inverno TD ADC, (0131) 662 9792

*Hon. Secretary/Treasurer*

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

## Regimental Club

The Cameronian Memorial Club -  
9 Holyrood Crescent, Glasgow.

## Museum:

Low Parks Museum  
129 Muir Street, Hamilton ML3 6BJ  
Tel: 01698 328 232

# 2005 DIARY OF REGIMENTAL EVENTS 2005

## APRIL

Friday 1st April -

### Cameronian Officers Dinner Club -

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



## MAY

Sunday 15th May -

### Cameronian Sunday -

The Douglas Valley Church - St Bride's, Douglas  
10.00a.m.

Friday 20th May -

### Officers Luncheon -

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

## OCTOBER

Friday 7th October -

### Officers' Luncheon -

Officers Mess Craigiehall, Edinburgh  
Contact is Lt Col I.K. McBain.  
Tel: (0131) 445 2953 (H). (It has not been possible to arrange this on a Saturday)

## Cameronian Pin Brooch

4 x 3 cms

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

## Last Friday of the Month Meeting (Not December)

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

Any Cameronian who finds himself in Edinburgh on the last Friday of any month (except December) should meet from 12 noon onwards.

## Regimental Curling

2004 proved a successful curling season in spite of our perennial problems in finding enough curlers. We just managed to provide the necessary curlers for the Lowland Brigade Bonspiel and for the Lowland Brigade matches against The Highland Brigade. However, we could only find one curler for the Mixed Rink for these matches.

The Lowland Brigade Bonspiel took place at Murrayfield on Wednesday 4th February, and resulted in The Cameronians regaining the Lowland Brigade Curling Cup. The Regimental Rink comprised Jim Orr (Skip) Hugh Mackay, Ian McBain and David Scott. In the morning match we managed to hold on and defeat the Royal Scots 9-6, and in the afternoon we beat the KOSB, who were the holders, 10-5.

The home leg of the Lowland v Highland Brigade match took place at Murrayfield on Friday 27th February, and the Regimental Rink of Malcolm Macneill (Skip), Fred Prain, Jim Orr and Hugh Mackay, went down 10-3 to the Highland Brigade Mixed Rink. David Scott switched rinks to aid the KOSB, in the return leg at Perth the Regimental Rink comprised Malcolm Macneil (Skip) Jim Orr, Hugh Mackay and John McMyn (a National Service Cameronian stalwart from Dumfries and Galloway who was persuaded to help us out). Unfortunately we were up against the strong BW 'A' Rink who soundly beat us 12-3. David Scott again switched to help the KOSB.

In 2005 the Lowland Brigade Bonspiel takes place at Murrayfield on Wednesday 2nd February, and we hope to be able to find the necessary 4 curlers for the Regimental Rink and 2 curlers for the Mixed Rink. The format for the Inter Brigade Matches is changing. There will be just one match versus Highland, with a morning and afternoon session at Perth. This decision was taken at the AGM with the aim of helping the pressure on serving Officers (and others!) who may have difficulty in being available for two days. For the inaugural 2005 match the Highland Brigade will be hosts, and will alternate annually with the Lowland Brigade as hosts at Murrayfield.

My grateful thanks to the small but happy band of stalwart curlers. We shall miss Hugh Mackay very much, but Midhurst to Murrayfield/Perth is a wee bit far for the day!

Jim Orr

## Letter from London

Early in May, I received a small package from the Ministry of Defence. With bated breath and trembling fingers I managed to open it, whereupon a small lump of white metal landed on my dressing table with the inscription "Canal Zone". This set me thinking, and asking, Canal Zone? Could it be the Caledonian Canal? The Manchester Ship Canal? Oh! I know. It must be the Panama Canal, but then I realised that I had never been near any of these waterways in my life. At last the penny dropped. Just over fifty years earlier I had spent two of the most miserable years of my life in the Suez Canal Zone. This, then, was the reward I and thousands of other servicemen and women received after all those years, a clasp to be attached to my General Service Medal ribbon (Malaya), a clasp that, in my opinion, is incorrectly worded. Surely, it should have been inscribed Suez Canal. Will they ever learn?

On 27th June, I attended a memorial service for the late Lt. Col. Alan Campbell. This service was held in St Pauls Church in Covent Garden, here in London.

The church is known as The Actors Church and, fittingly, as you sit there, the faces of many famous actors and actresses from generations past gaze down on you. The service was conducted brilliantly, with various members of Alan's family and friends delivering tributes which, at times, were extremely witty and humorous. This was followed by a piper from the 1st Bn The Highlanders playing a lament.

Prior to the commencement of the service, I was pleasantly surprised and delighted to meet up once again with several officers from the regiment with whom I had served. Alan Campbell and I served in 'C' Company in the 1st Bn, in Hong Kong and Malaya during the emergency there. Alan was a first class platoon commander, and a very popular officer.

As you will recall from last year's issue of The Covenanter, I wrote that the British Legion ground staff were now setting out our plot at Westminster Abbey, and a good job they were making of it. For the past four years I have stood at the foot of our plot representing the regiment, and have thoroughly enjoyed the experience. However, this year, and I hope for many years to come, we can have a different volunteer to carry out this pleasant and

revered task. Towards this end, I invited an old Cameronian to stand this year. He is Tom Gore who accepted my invitation with alacrity. Tom served in our 9th Bn during World War Two, taking part in some of the heaviest fighting in N.W. Europe. He is thoroughly delighted at the prospect. I will be attending to see that all is well with our plot, and to meet and greet any ex-Cameronians who turn up.

Since starting this feature, I have received word from the Royal British Legion that Her Majesty the Queen will be attending this years ceremony, accompanied by H.R.H. Prince Philip.

Throughout the years, I have been a keen and supportive member of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and Families Association. Like any other organisation, it has had its ups and downs from time to time, but always managed to sort things out. Currently, the Association seems to be enjoying a very good spell, and I have no doubt this is due to the hard work and dedication of our committee, ably led by Mr Andy Berry (Chairman) and our long-serving Secretary, Jim Ballantyne.

Whilst on the subject of our Association, I would like to pay tribute to a staunch patron of our Association, namely Col. Hugh Mackay OBE. Col. Hugh left Scotland recently to take up residence in southern England. During his long sojourn in Scotland, Col. Hugh had a very close affinity with our organisation. He did sterling work in many areas, looking after our interests, thus endearing himself to all our members. I'm sure everyone will join me in wishing Col. Hugh and his family all the very best for the future.

Early in the new year I had a visit from Mr Peter Hart who is an archivist at the

Imperial War Museum. As a consequence of this visit, I completed a ten and a half hour interview on tape tracing my army career from day one. The recordings were conducted by ten separate interviews and, on completion, I received a copy of the ten disks of the whole exercise. The original disks will be held in the War Museum archives with several photographs of myself taken during relevant periods of my service. Ah! Fame at last!

Once again, we were back at the Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey; poignantly, on the eleventh hour, of the eleventh day, of the eleventh month. Needless to say, the whole Ceremony of Remembrance was carried out in the usual brilliant manner, with the weather equal to the occasion. Our regimental representative, Tom Gore, did a splendid job, resplendent in Glengarry and campaign medals. Her Majesty stopped briefly at our plot and chatted to Tom. Then H.R.H. Prince Philip also spoke a few words to Tom, at the same time showing interest in Tom's cap badge. At the end of it all, an Old Cameronian and his good lady, Dorothy, walked away from the Abbey a proud and happy couple, with a memory they will cherish for years to come.

Finally, I had a bit of a heart-stopping moment when I arrived at our plot. Although the plot was laid out as per specification, our regimental crests were missing. I contacted the R.B.L. first thing the next morning, and they were most apologetic and assured me our crests would be in place that very morning.

So, dear fellow Cameronians, that's it for another year from the Metropolis. 'Lang may yer lums reek.'

Eddie Clark



*Tom Gore talking with Her Majesty - Westminster Abbey November 2004*

## Museum Report Year 2004

### New Acquisitions to The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)

#### Purchases

In 2004, the Trustees and South Lanarkshire Council jointly bought at auction an important medal collection that once was awarded to an Indian Mutiny VC winner, John Guise. The group includes Guise's miniature Victoria Cross.

Below is U Gen Sir John Guise's biography from the Crimean War exhibition at Low Parks Museum biography. The Trustees provided funds to enable the museums to commission a researcher to visit The National Archives at Kew. The resultant report was redesigned by volunteer Katie Barclay.

#### **Captain John Christopher Guise, VC 90th (Perthshire Volunteers - Light Infantry) Regiment (Later Lieutenant-General Sir John Christopher Guise, V.C. C.B.)**

John Christopher Guise was born on 27 July 1826 in Gloucestershire. His father was Lt. General Sir John Wright Guise Bart KCB. John was first placed on the list of candidates for Ensign 'By Purchase' in June 1840 as he was about to go to The Military College, Sandhurst. In his letter to Lord Hill at Horse Guards applying to have his son on the list, Sir John also added that if there was any possibility for a Colonelcy of a regiment for himself he hoped that favourable consideration would be taken of his services in Egypt, the Continent and the Peninsular. However, this apparently came to nought.

John Christopher was eventually awarded an Ensigncy 'By Purchase' in the 90th Regiment in June 1845 after his father had again written to Lord Somerset from an address in Belgrave Square, London. He wrote to say that John had been complimented with a prize from Sandhurst for good conduct and for Military Drawing and that he would like to introduce him to Somerset as he was now anxious regarding the award of a commission.

After purchasing a Lieutenantcy in 1848 John was appointed Captain 'Without Purchase' in June 1854, shortly before the Crimean War. However, he soon suffered ill health and left to return to England on 1 January 1855 on 'Unlimited Leave'. He nevertheless qualified for the campaign **Crimea War Medal with Sebastopol Clasp** and, presumably, the **Turkish Medal**.

He was a Major when he was engaged in further actions during the Indian Mutiny that resulted in him being awarded the **Victoria Cross**. The particular event occurred on the 16 and 17 November 1857 whilst fighting at Lucknow when Major Guise, together with Sergeant Samuel Hill saved the life of a captain at the storming of the Secundrabagh and also went in under heavy fire to help two wounded men. He is recorded as having acted with gallantry throughout the entire Crimean War and the operations for the Relief of the Lucknow Garrison. The award of his VC was recorded in the London Gazette on the 24 December 1858. He was also awarded the campaign **Indian Mutiny Medal with Relief of Lucknow and Lucknow clasps**.

He attained Lieutenant Colonel 'By Purchase' in January 1860 (an incremental cost of £1,300) when Lieutenant Colonel Purnell retired and finally commanded the regiment from November 1861 to June of 1864. He went on to become a Lieutenant General in the British Army after having been awarded the C.B. From 1890 he was the Colonel of the Leicestershire Regiment.

Additional research showed that John Christopher Guise was reputedly born at Highnam, Gloucestershire on the 27 July 1828 being the son of General Sir John Wright Guise, Bart. G.C.B., a hero of the Peninsula Campaign. However, the 1881 Population Census Returns taken at the home of his brother in law, John W Stratford, a JP and Farmer, records him as married and a Major General aged 55 years born at Little Dean in Gloucester. He reputedly died on the 5 February 1895 at Gorey, County Wexford, Ireland and was buried in the Gorey Churchyard His daughter, Mary Ann, married Frederick Charles Ulick Vernon-Wentworth during August 1899.

#### **Medals and Badges**

Medals (plus photos and letters) of Rfn. Gray

Bar of 6 medals from WW' including Royal Swedish Order in original case. 3 WW1 medals of W. Bernard

British Armies in France (Cpl Wheeler)

Medals etc of Pte P Telfer

#### **Uniform accessories and equipment**

,Cameronian cap, bonnet and tunic of Frank Picken (plus photos)

#### **Photographs**

'D' Coy. Tug of War team 1909

5 photos 'B' Coy.

3 photos 1955-1957 including Bahrain and Germany  
7 photos of Cameronian gravestones WW2 in Burma  
Photo of 1st Service Coy 7 Battalion

28 photos of Stendal POW camp Germany WW1

### Archive

9 items of Cpl Osborne (DoW 25/01/1916)

Officers' message book from WW1

Gallipoli 1915 diary of Maj. C P Will (1881-1970)

### War Diaries Project - 'Increasing public access to the collections without 'increasing the staff workload'

The team of dedicated volunteers from the Lanarkshire Family History Society have continued to work tirelessly on transcribing the hand-written Commanders' War Diaries into an easy-to-use computer package. They have transcribed over 200,000 words and have entered into a database the names of over 4,000 Officers and Other Ranks.

With a few clicks of the computer mouse, staff can find if there is any mention of any known person, place, ship, weapon, etc. Previously to do such a search in hundreds of un-indexed hand-written pages was so time-consuming as to be almost impossible.

The team has almost finished transcribing the 10th Battalion. 18th Battalion and the 1st, Garrison Battalion of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in the First World War 1914-18. These will be added to the completed First World War 1914-18 War Diaries of:

- 1st Battalion
- 2nd Battalion
- 6th Battalion
- 7th Battalion
- 8th/7th Composite Battalion
- 8th Battalion
- 11 Battalion

We are very grateful to the volunteers for their continued hard work and enthusiasm that has resulted in a major new asset for the public at Low Parks Museum and worldwide through our public enquiries service.

### Storyboards

The Storyboard unit at LPM goes from strength to strength. As part of a regular expansion programme, the first three Cameronians Storyboards are now live at Low Parks Museum, Hamilton. The stories of Jordan 1957, Oman 1958 and the Band and regimental music can be seen on the

unit that also houses the Digital Collections gallery. If you've not seen the Storyboards yet, it's well worth a visit. You can follow the story of the operation written by one who took part, illustrated by photographs, many from private collections. There's Regimental music to accompany the start of each Storyboard.

### SCRAN

This is not food or eatables, but the acronym for Scottish Cultural Resources Access Network. It began as a millennium project with the objective of creating an enormous database of all museum collections in Scotland. Over the last 18 months or so, South Lanarkshire Council museums took part in a total of 7 projects, four of which featured objects from the collection of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). In the Health project we offered many sketches illustrating the health hazards of Army service abroad in the Zulu War 1879 with the 90th Perthshire Light Infantry. Henry Hope Crealock (1831-1891) had a project all to himself as we featured 28 sketches and watercolours from his Crimean War album. The five striking and unique Lanarkshire Covenanter banners were featured for the first time in a new project.

Recently, a new project has gone online at SCRAN. 'Trench life and War Memorials in South Lanarkshire'. You can see 30 photographs of the 1st and 2nd Battalions The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in France and Belgium in the winter of 1914-1915. The photographs were taken by Captain Robert Money Cotton (later Maj Gen Sir Robert Cotton Money CB MC). In addition as part of this project, there are more than 20 close up views of the names plaques on several South Lanarkshire War Memorials of the Great War. The detail is such that you can read the individual names.

We are grateful to Volunteer Molly Magee, who carried out much of the background research and wrote supporting text for 5 of the trench scenes. We thank Volunteer Katie Barclay for a large part of the work of this project. Katie took a joint share in the final selection of the trench scene images, and scanned all 30 of the final group. In addition she wrote the supporting text for 5 of the trench scene images.

Terry F Mackenzie and Doug MacBeath came up with the project concepts and Terry secured the funding from SCRAN and managed the project.



What's special about all this? Simply this - anyone anywhere in the world with access to the Internet can see these objects from the collection of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) together with a brief description of them. Those with full access, mainly in education (in Scotland, that means every school pupil) can see in addition to a full screen image of the object, 120 words of description of the significance of the object with full references to every associated person or place.

How to find it: [www.scran.ac.uk](http://www.scran.ac.uk)

In the new-look homepage you'll find a window: 'Free scan search service' type in what you want to look for e.g. 'cameronians' and the system will find all the records with any reference to The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). Good hunting!

### Enquiries

As ever, the public enquiry service continues to be an important part of our work. Each year, we receive about 400 enquiries that require research. 70% (last year 62%) of these research enquiries are about The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in the current financial year beginning 1 April 2004. Enquiries came from all over the UK, France, Eire, Denmark, Gibraltar and Germany, as well as Canada, USA (including Gettysburg, PA), New Zealand, Hong Kong and Australia. Such diverse bodies as the Universities of Glasgow and Aberdeen, Historic Scotland, RHQ The Sherwood Foresters and the National Museums joined individuals who wished to know about their ancestors time in The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). A number of serving British service personnel have made enquires from various BFPOs.

### **The Cameronian Exhibition 2005-2006 60th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War 1939-1945 The History of the 6th Battalion The Cameronians**

We have been awarded lottery funding for a number of projects designed to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War 1939-1945. One of these is our Cameronian exhibition for 2005-2006. Terry Mackenzie made the successful Lottery bid.

### **'The Crimean War - a Mad and Murderous Enterprise'**

This exhibition has attracted much favourable comment from visitors.

'The Crimean War - a Mad and

Murderous Enterprise' is the title of the exhibition that will continue its run until the summer of 2005 on the Mezzanine Floor at Low Parks Museum.

The exhibition commemorates the 150th anniversary of the 90th Perthshire Light Infantry's involvement in the Crimean War (1854-1856).

A first for an exhibition on a Cameronian theme is the inclusion of 33 biographies with individual photographs of 33 Officers and Other Ranks who served with the 90th Perthshire Light Infantry in the Crimean War. The Trustees generously provided funds to pay for a researcher to work at The National Archives at Kew, London to investigate a number of sources to put together a report on each individual selected.

A feature of the exhibition is the unique Roger Fenton and James Robertson photographs of the 90th at war in the Crimea. The images are from the collection of Henry Hope Crealock who served with the 90th in the Crimea. Crealock added handwritten notes to the photographs listing most of the individuals shown.

### Medals Display

Medals fans rest easy! The medal cases will be remaining on the Mezzanine.

In a new initiative, we have an associated virtual presence on South Lanarkshire Council's Intranet. Thousands of Council workers have been able to access this Intranet from their desks since early in 2004. The new facility will give an insight into work in progress on the exhibition behind the scenes at the museum. After the exhibition finishes its run on the Mezzanine Gallery at Low Parks Museum, we plan to have in due course a virtual exhibition using text and images from the main exhibition on the Intranet also. This facility has been developed by a student from Bell College, Hamilton. This virtual exhibition can remain long after the real exhibition has been dismantled.

In a major new departure, in consultation with the Regimental Trustees, we plan to have a basic Website on The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) as a taster to see what the public would like us to provide on behalf of the Cameronian family worldwide. The work for this has been complete for some time and we await a South Lanarkshire Council decision on funding.

## Constitution and Rules of the The Cameronian (Scottish Rifles) and Family Members

The Organisation shall be called The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and Family Members', herein referred to as The Organisation' and shall be Non-Political and Non-Sectarian.

### 1. OBJECT

Principal object of the Organisation shall be to enter into and carry out, or co-operate in any schemes for the benefit of Members, including visiting Sick, Housebound and, or Hospitalised Members.

1.2 It shall be a Non-Profit making Association and any 'Surplus' of Income remaining after all Stationery, or other essential financial charges have been paid, may be transferred to the Organisation's Benevolent Account and to be used for the benefit of all Members of the Organisation, or other benefits, as voted and decided by Members present at the AGM.

1.3 All Officials and Members working on behalf of the Organisation shall do so on a Voluntary and Unpaid basis, when Travel and other expenses may be made payable to them from the Organisation's Benevolent Fund, and only after it has been agreed to be paid, by the General Committee of the Organisation.

### 2. MEMBERSHIP

2.1 Membership of the Organisation shall consist of:-

- a) All Regular and National Servicemen who served in the Regiment as Cameronians, of any Rank, at any time.
- b) All T.A. and T & A VR Soldiers who served as Cameronians part time, at any time.
- c) Members of Second World War Home Guard, who were badged as Cameronians.
- d) All attached personnel of other Arms and Corps who served with the Regiment, or T.A., or T & A VR, at any time.
- e) All Adult Family Members, of Any Generation, of Cameronians, Regular or National Service, T.A., or T & A VR, Attached personnel, or the Second World War Home Guard.

(All of whom must prove their relationship with the Regiment, to the General Committee).

Any Reader wishing to join or to receive further details (including a Programme of Events) should contact the Secretary Jim Ballantyne Tel 0131 555 4066

## The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Association (2004)

This is a new organisation set up in October 2004 to promote an interest in the history and achievements of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). It is open to all who have a genuine interest in the history and traditions of the Regiment.

The plan is to have six meetings a year, at which talks will be given by people on the history of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). These will be held in a Central Scotland location, possibly in Hamilton or Motherwell. Arrangements are still being made at the time of writing, but will be published in the local press in Lanarkshire in due course. We also plan to have two Dinners, one to commemorate Neuve Chapelle and one to commemorate the formation of the Cameronian Regiment.

Since our objectives are very different, there should be no clash at all with The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and Family Members, and we hope that any members of that Organisation who are interested in the history of the Regiment will come and join us, where they will find a warm welcome. It would be good if some of the Cameronian Officers would also join us, because their perspective on events is important if future generations are to build up a true picture of the Regiment.

Membership for 2005 is £5 and is open to anyone, whether or not they served in the Regiment, as long as they are interested in the history of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). Any reader wishing to join us should send a cheque for £5 to the Hon. Treasurer, the Rev. J. Strachan, L. Th., Dip. Th., 50, Glenbervie Drive, Whitehirst Park, Kilwinning, Ayrshire, KA13 6QR; while anyone wishing further details of our programme for the year should contact myself, Richard Fowler, 'Cameronian Cottage', 7, Muirside Place, Pennyburn, Kilwinning, Ayrshire, KA13 6HH,

Any man should be proud to say, 'I served with the Cameronians'

We want future generations to know why.

## Remembrance Day Service: St. Columba's Church, Helensburgh

On Sunday, November 14, 2004, members of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Association (2004) took part in a very moving Remembrance Day Service at St. Columba's Church, Helensburgh. The Service was conducted by the minister, the Rev. Fred Booth, L.Th.

At the beginning of the service, Jim Strachan marched to the front of the Church and saluted the minister, reporting to him with the traditional words: 'Reverend Sir, the pickets have been posted. There is no enemy in sight. The service may begin.' Later, Jim read the Legion Prayer. Richard Fowler read the Scripture Lesson, which was Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3, verses 1-8, with a reprise of verses 1-2.

The Rev. Mr. Booth has made it his practice to take one name each year from the war memorial in the Church and to focus on that person's unit. This year, he chose Lance Corporal Alex Anderson, of the 9th Cameronians, who was killed during the Liberation of North-West Europe.

Mr. Booth gave background information on The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and their part in and after the Normandy Landings. He also spoke of L/C Anderson and explained that the battalion had been trying to cross a canal in Holland on October 31, 1944. L/C Anderson and his platoon had known that the enemy were on the other side of the canal, but not that there was also an enemy unit near them. L/C Anderson was killed giving covering fire. Just before he left to go into Europe, his wife told him that she was expecting a baby. The baby, born in January, 1945, was actually twin girls. They never knew their father, but a treasured possession of the family, along with his cap badge, is a letter written by Mr. Anderson's CQMS, Sergeant Tom Ferguson.

After the war, Mrs. Anderson tried to find out about her husband's grave and eventually made contact with a Dutch family, who told her where the grave was and said that their young daughter, Nellie, tended the grave regularly. A firm friendship was established between the

Dutch family and the Andersons, and still, 57 years after his death, Nellie (now 67) tends the grave of the brave Cameronian who gave his life in the liberation of her village.

Another link between the Dutch people and St. Columba's Church is that Marcella Paterson, a member of the Congregation, is herself Dutch. She decorated the Church for Remembrance Sunday and made a banner in which she incorporated a Cameronian marker pennant, which is owned by Richard Fowler.

St. Columba's Church can trace its roots back to the days of the Cameronian Covenanters.

Attending this Service was a privilege. It was good to worship there; to hear the sermon; and to join the congregation in remembering their very own Cameronian.

Richard Fowler

## Service of Commemoration, Kilwinning.

On Sunday, May 16, 2004, a Service of Thanksgiving for The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) was held in the Congregational Church, Woodwynd, Kilwinning. The minister, the Rev. Jim Strachan, L.Th, Dip Th, conducted the service. The service was preceded by a parade through the town centre, at which many branches of the Ayrshire and Glasgow areas of the Royal British Legion (Scotland) took part. The Lord Lieutenant of Ayrshire, Major Richard Henderson, and Captain James McCulloch, formerly of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), the Cameronian Home Guard and the Lanarkshire ACF, took the salute. They also read the Scripture Lessons during the service. Mr. Richard Fowler gave the address to the children. Mr. Strachan spoke of the Regiment and its proud history and its covenanting origins and said that Christians to-day could learn from the example set by the Cameronians and their covenanter forebears.

After the service, the Congregation enjoyed a lunch and entertainment in the Church Hall.

It is planned to have another Commemoration of the Regiment at 2.00p.m on Sunday, May 22, 2005, to which all Cameronians are invited.

Richard Fowler

## Thoughts inspired by looking at the Cap Badge of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)

The Cap Badge of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) consists of the five-pointed star, or mullet, of the Douglas Family, above a hunting horn with a lovers' knot; and the whole is surrounded by a wreath of thistles. Looking at this one day, I was struck by the thought that not only was the Regiment formed by Covenanters - the Regimental Cap Badge contains a sermon in itself.

The star is a five-pointed star. There are five continents on this planet and the Regiment has served in each of them - Africa, America, Asia, Australasia and Europe. Moreover, the star is a very important image in the Bible - for instance, a star shone over the Bethlehem stable where the infant Jesus was born, and in the Book of Revelation we learn that 'To him that overcometh I will give the Morning Star.'

The horn and lovers' knot are the symbols of light infantry regiments - the HLI had the same emblems in their badge, although they never went at Cameronian pace. But the horn is a hunting horn, used to call the huntsmen together, and it is a reminder that God is calling His people to serve Him and we should answer His call. The lovers' knot cannot be untied and symbolises for me the fact that God's love is always there for us - nothing can separate the Christian from the love of God.

The thistles indicate that The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) is a Scottish Regiment. There are ten thistles, one for each letter in the word 'Cameronian'. The thistle became the emblem of Scotland after the Scots won a night battle with the Danes. The Danes mounted an attack on the Scots under cover of darkness and in an attempt to make less noise a Danish soldier removed his footwear. However, the element of surprise was lost when he trod on a thistle. His resultant howl of pain alerted the Scots, who beat off the enemy. To me, the thistles on the Cameronian cap badge are a reminder that God's protection is always there for us. He will always sustain us and he will never let us be tried beyond what we can endure.

Richard Fowler

## The Forgotten Battles Of Normandy - August 1944

When we went to France on holiday last August we had little inclination that our holiday was going to include a trip to Bayeux and start researching my Father's war time experiences in Normandy. We had left a day earlier from Montpellier due to the forecast of bad storms - we did not want to pack up wet camping equipment, so we headed home, albeit very sad after a really good holiday. For many years I had wanted to see Bayeux and the tapestry. Dad had always told me about the circular Cathedral and how beautiful the tapestry was. Little did I know that this 'slight diversion' via Bayeux on our route home was going to put a mere 400 miles on our journey home!

Bayeux is simply beautiful- peaceful, picturesque, tranquil and simply stunning.



We went into the Cathedral on a sunlit early Sunday morning - at 8.am. It was a unique feeling when we entered this magnificent building . We went through the door on the side, the door which Dad would have gone through according to my research. It was difficult to envisage what it would have been like in war time, but I understand that it would have been bare, with a basic stone altar and a few candles.



Our next visit was to the famous Bayeux tapestry - simply wonderful with so much intricate detail. We were virtually the only visitors in it at 9.am. We ambled - Dad had seen this and it was better than we had ever expected - I had never expected to see Haley's comet on it or for that matter for it to be so large and well preserved.

As we had a small amount of time to spare before we headed back to Calais, Alex our youngest Son asked if we could visit the D Day Museum - I must admit that I was not over keen on the idea at looking around memorabilia and uniforms, but reluctantly agreed. How wrong I was in my initial judgment - for whilst our Sons were looking at uniforms I spotted the wartime maps - Knowing that Dad was injured on 6 August 1944 at a place near Bayeux beginning, he claimed with V - it could only have been Vire. Mustering my best French I asked the Curator how long it would take to drive to Vire - I was told about 40 minutes and that it was on minor roads - knowing the way the French drive I decided that doubling it would be a more realistic time - a trip of 3 hours was out of the question with a ferry to catch, but on our way home we decided that we would research Dad's wartime experiences and return.

Without the internet and many wonderful people along the way we would have never achieved this. My knowledge was sketchy to say the least based on childhood memories of Dad's accounts. I knew that he had served with the Devonshire Regiment, was a signaller, had done training in Ireland, on the South Coast of England, and Burnham on Crouch. He had been drafted to France through fate as he had been on an intensive signallers course at Catterick - The War Office had over estimated a draft of men - all those who could return to their Units and courses did, those who could not were drafted accordingly. In Dad's case this meant France.

A wonderful Lt. Col from The Gordon's replied to my email for help, and sent me copies of the Regimental histories. Dad had always said that he had fought alongside the Gordon Highlanders. He gave me some helpful advice on how to pursue my research further. At this time I was still under the misapprehension that Dad was injured whilst serving with the Devonshire Regiment - I was wrong again! It was going to be difficult, although not impossible to get his records from Glasgow without a

service number.

Knowing that Dad had been a member of BLESMA, [British Limbless ExServicemen's Association], I contacted them, who gave me the vitally important service number, date of enlistment and discharge together with details of how Dad came to have his leg amputated. I was surprised to find out that Dad had been a rifleman in the Cameronians - although on reflection, one of his favourite sayings was 'Go and tell that to the Cameronians'.

For many years I had suspected that Dad had decided to have his leg amputated above the knee due to chronic osteomyelitis - a chronic infection of the bone. He had said that he had had to have 33 operations, with 2 major operations during the first week and was not expected to live. He decided that it was best to have his leg amputated, as he would have had a permanently stiff leg, which he felt would be more disabling than an artificial leg, - a decision which he never regretted. This was done on 10 March 1947, 2 days prior to his thirtieth birthday.

Streptomycin, a very powerful antibiotic which could have caused deafness and renal failure had been offered, as this might have helped with the osteomyelitis, but Dad declined this. Dad underwent bone grafting and had been in plaster from his waist down for 6 months, having both legs grown together for skin grafting at East Grinstead Hospital under Professor Beard, whom he later saw again and kept in regular contact.

During this time he learnt embroidery and became very accomplished at this, as well as making stuffed toys during this period. In fact Dad taught me how to do embroidery. Guinness was put on Dad's prescription, but as he strictly abstained from drinking alcohol, he declined this. This made him somewhat popular with the other patients as they gladly drank his prescription!

Today we treat osteomyelitis with antibiotics, bone grafting and Ilizarov frames, and unfortunately, we still have to amputate limbs due to this condition. Dad was always willing to allay peoples fears of having amputations, and yes, we could have done with his expertise and counselling today.

Now that we had this additional information we requested his papers from Glasgow which confirmed the information, most of which we knew. Our next step was the Public Records Office at Kew - where

their knowledgeable and helpful staff pointed us in the right directions. We looked at the Regimental Diaries - and maps but were slightly unsure where the battle took place - further investigation was needed. To my surprise I saw Dad's name in one of the training exercises in May 1944 as Lance Corporal Archer signaller. Dad was very proud that he could send Morse at the maximum words per minute required and of the fact that he was an assistant radio operator.

In the meantime a lady had seen my plea for help for information on the Devon Regiment and gave me some useful background information about the Devon Regiment and kindly offered to take a photo of Dad to the Regimental Reunion.

A gentleman from Edinburgh had seen a request for help via the web on the BBC People's War page and offered to do some research for me in the libraries in Edinburgh - up until now I thought the area Dad had been injured near Estray, but I was slightly in the wrong place. Copies of the Cameronian Regimental histories and other supporting information were sent to me, which gave the exact location.

We were having difficulty in correlating the army battle maps with present day maps. However, through a French internet site, a French historian sent us maps of the local area produced in 1944, which enabled us to define the area on present day maps.

A telephone call from a Major (the Editor) in the Cameronians one afternoon confirmed that Bois des Monts [literally translated meaning High Woods], at Point Saffery as shown on the Regimental Diary maps was indeed the battle site.

Dad landed somewhere in Normandy on 29 July 1944 after a very rough crossing in a flat bottomed boat. On board the troops were gambling the little French currency they had been given. Dad went through Bayeux and Caen, but exact information is somewhat non-existent, except that is for an entry in Dad's paybook showing a posting to the 9th Cameronians on the 3rd August 1944. From the Cameronians history I know that on the 5th August the regiment moved to Au Cornu in preparation for a battle the following day. I am going to try and research this further, although I have my doubts that there is much more information. Dad told me that the troops were so hungry that they raided the farms for cheese which stank and apples. Dad never did like French cheese

after the War. Tea was an important commodity and was dried and re-used on several occasions. - Something which I tend to do, in so much as I will use my herbal tea bags twice!

On 5th August 1944 at Au Cornu the Cameronians were joined by the 2nd Gordon Highlanders and 2nd Glasgow Highlanders, the night being spent at Au Cornu, which is opposite to Chapple Le Cornu. Today, Chapple Le Cornu is farmland, with Au Cornu being partially wooded with the odd farm.

On 6 August a pre-Battle service was conducted I understand by either Padre Sam Cook [Cameronians] or Padre Alexander Dunlop [Gordon's]. One of the things that I always remember Dad saying was that the Padre spoke of forgiveness and 'love thy neighbour', but had a shovel and gun slung over his shoulder. According to my research Padre Cook had previously been a Curate at Porlingland and Surlington, was subsequently wounded, received the Military Cross, and became Rector of Pleasley, Derby. He died in the late 1950's. Rev Dunlop received an Emergency Commission as a Padre, and after the war served with the Territorial Army, where he was awarded the Territorial Decoration. He had previously been mentioned in despatches.

At about 9.30a.m., the men ran over the hill of Bois des Monts, a distance of some one and a half miles from Au Cornu. The Waffen SS were laying wait for them on high ground opposite. Bois des Monts; there is a meadow which is surrounded by trees and high woodland above. This runs to a valley at Pont Saffrey, opposite is a steep wooded hill described as the Grouney feature. At the crest of this feature the Germans waited. Around Pont Saffrey many men were killed and injured in a short time around midday on the 6th of August. They stood no chance of getting out unscathed as Mortars would have rained down on them striking and exploding in the trees above, and heavy machine gun fire from the sides. Dad said there was only one shovel between 3 men, and he very quickly dug a fox hole.

When Dad was injured he had a tobacco tin in his breast pocket covering his heart containing a pair of scissors, which in the force of the explosion bent in half. A Mortar bomb, referred to by Dad as a Moaning Minnie had landed in his fox hole and severely injured Dad's left lower leg. Dad also had shrapnel embedded all over his

face, A comrade either side of him and within touching distance had both disappeared having been blown up, another comrade survived but later died of his injuries. At 3.p.m. on what was a blazing hot day either Padre Cook or Dunlop offered Dad a cup of sweet tea, which he promptly refused and asked for one without sugar! By then Dad had been stacked on an ambulance for just on 2 hours.



Today there are cows in the meadow across from Pont Saffrey, a small bridge over a stream which is little more than a ditch. The objective had been to capture the Grouney feature, which is a high hill on which the Germans were waiting and then proceed to Estry. On one side of Bois des Monts there is farmland and the only way to access it is via a small track.. There is no memorial despite this Battle being one of the bloodiest in Normandy. The Regiments retreated and re-grouped at Au Cornu late in the afternoon on 6 August, where they remained for 5 days; and then went on to fight for the Falaise Road, [literally translated Cliff Road which was one of the many Battle Honours shown on the Cameronians Colours. The Germans left Grouney of their own accord some days later.

We laid a British Legion poppy posy at the war memorial of St. John le Blanc, which is a small village consisting of a church, Marie, general store and a few stone houses. Dad would have been able to have seen the distinctive spire of the church of St Jean le Blanc from Bois des Monts and surrounding area.

A short distance away is the small village of Estry, which consists of a church, Marie, boulangerie, garage, one general store and a few stone houses. Also on 6 August 1944 between 9a.m.-11a.m. many men of the 2nd Gordon Highlanders along with the

supporting tanks of the Guards and other units lost 11 tanks within sight of the Estry church, with many men killed or injured by Mortars, machine guns and a German tank which was dug in by the church. The tank by the church, being eventually blown up by our shell-fire. Today, within the churchyard, there is a pit where dead flowers are put this could well have been the site of the German tank. Even today, this track about 300 yards long still exists and has blue bells, primroses and cowslips growing. There is a new farmhouse opposite the church with childrens play equipment in the garden. The wood to the side of the



village which had Mortars and heavy machine guns has now gone being replaced by several new houses. It hardly seems possible a battle happened here.

Dad never spoke about what really happened at the Battlesite, telling us the briefest of details, nor of his journey to Bois des Monts. He was always proud of the fact that he served with the Scottish Regiments, and that the Germans were extremely frightened of the Scottish Regiments.

Despite the fact that a close friend had offered to accompany him to return to the Battlesite and the places he had been in France, he never wanted to return. Dad suffered severely from what we would call today post-traumatic shock, which was unheard of during the immediate post war years. Dad was a deeply religious man and regular church goer, and was always in church for 6th August and on Remembrance Sunday.

I feel very privileged to have had the opportunity to visit the Battlesite and take the opportunity of thanking all those who have helped me with my research. I still have further research to do regarding where the Casualty Clearing Station and Field

Hospital was and of Dad's pre-battle whereabouts. It is my intention to return to the Battlesite again and maybe to walk up the hill at Bois des Monts, which at present I am unsure whether is private ground, and is guarded by extremely large dogs.

I shall never forget Bois des Monts, Estray, Montchamp, Monthchauvel and all the other little hamlets and villages that I have seen, nor of the utter sacrifice so many men made. I have never experienced the utter horrors of the last war, of how many men died in such a short time and space. If anyone does have any further information, however, small I should be grateful if you would be kind enough to contact me please. It hardly seemed possible to have happened in such a quite and tranquil place. In the meantime I thank you for reading this article, and the many people that assisted me and provided guidance and information along the way.

Marian Damen April 2004.

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## **May 1945 6th Cameronians VE Day Before and After Celebration or Shock?**

Let me make it clear at the outset; this largely is a personal account. It is seen through the immature but impressionable eyes of a subaltern of nineteen years and eight months, having been commissioned in September 1944, immediately after my nineteenth birthday. In early 1945, thanks to the machinations of Hitler and Nazi Germany, instead of being in what might have been my freshman's year at university, I found myself in command of No 11 Platoon of B Company 6th Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in Holland, The Company Commander was Major Stanley Storm M.C., with Captain M.T. MacNeil as his deputy, both of whom watchfully took me under their wing, doing their utmost to compensate for the many shortcomings of my inexperienced youth. In retrospect, and with sixty years to reflect, my impressions remain fresh of the tumultuous days that preceded and followed 8th May 1945. My opinions might well have mellowed in the ensuing years, but the factual events of that time, and my reactions to them, still stay indelibly imprinted on my mind. I believe they were

similar to that of most of my fellow Cameronians. I am aided by the recent discovery of many letters written by me to my parents in 1945 during my service with the Regiment.

As April drew to a close, so did the intensity of fighting in parts of North West Germany. While the drive to reach the Baltic to forestall the advance of the Soviets along the Baltic Coastline continued apace, 6th Cameronians as part of 52nd (Lowland) Division, had been deployed in the approach to, the assault on, and the ultimate capture of Bremen - a comparatively bloodless final attack against a defeated enemy that offered stubborn resistance only in pockets. On the night of 26th April, the Battalion captured Hemmelingen on the outskirts of the city. After a further incursion into the city centre, Bremen fell the following day, and the Battalion was withdrawn to rest, once again in that suburb.

It was a pleasant area, and for the first time for many months the Battalion settled into comfortable houses that clearly belonged to some of the more affluent citizens. Rest was needed, not so much to recover from heavy casualties - throughout the whole assault on Bremen itself, they had been mercifully light - but from exhaustion, the result of lack of sleep and constant forward movement both by day and night into attacks that nevertheless presented considerable risks had they run into trouble. It seemed unlikely that at that stage of the campaign the Division would be called on to fight again. Rumours circulated about preparations for a Victory Parade through the centre of Bremen, and a general clean up of ourselves and of our dishevelled uniforms and equipment had begun.

For the 6th, it was not be. Suddenly on 1st May, Major Storm called a Company 'O' Group. At immediate notice, the Battalion was placed under orders to be detached from the Division, and to proceed North to a destination that was vaguely referred to as a Prison Camp - our mission unclear, at least to us lower mortals. It could be said that there was a certain amount of relief in some quarters that we were to be spared the ordeal of the Victory Parade. Marching at Rifle Brigade pace preceded by heavy infantry battalions proceeding at their more deliberate pace, with which the bands were keeping time, was never easy - especially when some two hundred reinforcements



had joined from various non- Rifle Regiments after March's Alpon battle.

With mixed feelings the Battalion embussed once more. - regretful at being summarily ousted from its 'cushiest'billets for many months, but thankful for the benefit of missing drill and rehearsals for the Parade. It was to be an eventful journey through recently captured countryside and villages where at times, to our astonishment, we were received almost as liberators. The German fear of the approaching Russian hoards, retribution bent, heralded a fate far worse than defeat and occupation by British and U.S Forces. That this was fully justified, we were soon to learn. After a short halt at a German Prison camp for British Troops (I think this was Fallingbostel?) where the inmates patiently awaited the arrival of administrative troops to process them for repatriation, the Battalion was debussed a little short of our destination - Sandbostel, a name that haunts me to this day.

The History of 6th (Lanarkshire) Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in World War II sets the scene admirably ... *'information was received that a Concentration and Prisoner of War Camp had been uncovered at a place called Sandbostel, mid-way between Bremen and Bremerhaven, and the Battalion was ordered North immediately to deal with it. At first it was not fully realised what the nature of the duties would be, but when after a day-long drive up the cratered autobahn, they eventually arrived, it became painfully obvious. By now the world is familiar with the details of Belsen and Buchenwald, but at this time all that was known of the Concentration Camp was gleaned from "sensation" stories which seemed too horrible to be true. In any case, no one could have been prepared for the sight, which greeted 6th Cameronians when they debussed. All around was a flat desolate plain, bounded only by downcast skies, and in the centre, a vast cage, wherein seemed to be confined all the bestialities that even the most fertile imagination could conjure up, ...'*

As we neared the location, we were joined by a distressed Jock from B Company, who had preceded the Battalion in a hastily assembled advance party. His account of what had been found almost defied belief. At this stage in the war, all of us had witnessed and taken part in events that perforce included extreme violence and carnage. Nevertheless the halting and garbled warning of what we were to find seemed quite incredible. His report of

chaos, emaciated camp inmates, and of cannibalism forced on the survivors through starvation, brought to an abrupt halt any illusions that we might have held about a pleasant few day's detachment from the Division. In addition, an increasingly all pervading and rancorous odour began to overwhelm what up to then had been a fresh rural atmosphere,

No precise orders yet had been given about our duties, and I am sure that it was only on arrival these began to be apparent. The German camp guards had fled, the only German civilians to be seen were several dead bodies close to some of the looted farm houses and cottages in the immediate vicinity - all males, and all with throats slit from ear to ear. There did not appear to be other British units in the area, and we soon learned that the front had moved on some miles to the North. In the Camp, typhus was rife, food supplies were non-existent, and indeed sadly, the horrific description of conditions given by the highly emotional Jock of the advance party proved, if anything, to be understated. An examination of the Camp revealed that it had served a dual purpose: about one third comprised political prisoners of various nationalities held in an enclave, while the remainder contained Russian prisoners (I use the term loosely as in addition, I seem to recollect there were other nationalities of Eastern European origin). It was essential that the situation both outside and inside the Camp had to be brought under control at once - failure could result in the spread of disease, even wholesale slaughter of the civilian population by the unguarded prisoners. Urgent action by the military to clear the camp was a first priority.

The Battalion History once more... *'Everywhere there was filth and stench and disease and hordes of dehumanised creatures, with sunken features cloaking their emaciated bodies in the dirty rags of their prison uniform...'* Word of the appalling conditions had filtered back to higher authority, and unannounced, the Commander of 30 Corps, the redoubtable Lieut. Gen. Brian Horrocks arrived. It provided the only glimmer of humour that could be salvaged from this grim scenario. No one was sure that all resistance in the area had been quelled, and that isolated pockets might not still remain. Several roadblocks accompanied by slit trench defences were established for this reason, as well as for health purposes, to control entry by non-

essential military personnel. The General arrived with his usual panache, shot past the first checkpoint in his battlegon, screeched to a halt, ordered his driver to reverse, and proceeded to administer an almighty 'bollocking' to three startled entrenched Jocks for failing to salute as he sped past! Obviously he had not heard about the reluctance of Cameronians to acknowledge officers not sporting the Cameronian cap badge.<sup>1</sup> He recalls his entry to the Camp in his memoirs<sup>2</sup> ...*'We uncovered Sandbostel one of those horror camps which are now common knowledge, but which came to us as a great shock. When General Adair and I entered we came across the most ghastly picture I had ever seen. The floor of the first hut we visited was covered with emaciated figures, clad in the most horrible striped pyjamas. Many were too weak to walk, but on seeing us they heaved themselves up and gave a pathetic cheer. Most of them had some form of chronic dysentery and the stench was so bad that I disgraced myself by being sick in the corner. I was so angry that I ordered the Burgomaster of every one of the surrounding towns and villages to supply a quota of German women to clean up the camp and look after these unfortunate prisoners who were dying daily at an alarming rate. When the women arrived we expected some indication of horror or remorse when they saw what their fellow countrymen had been doing. Not a bit of it - I never saw a tear or heard one expression of pity from any of them. I also brought one of our own hospitals into the camp...'*

A letter postmarked 6th May 1945 sent by me to my parents, supports the General's concern and anger: ...*'Since capturing Bremen we have not been doing any fighting, but have been given a task to which I prefer fighting every time. This job is to guard one of these concentration camps on the Belsen style. Although the conditions were not as bad as Belsen they were bad enough, and previous to the British capturing the camp, there had been two hundred people dying per day. These pictures which you have seen of emaciated bodies piled on top of each other are entirely true... The German civilian population in the area has been rounded up and they are being made to do all the cleaning and burying the dead. I must say that they do it with as little concern as if they were sweeping their own houses and burying a few old tin cans...'*

Access to the Camp was forbidden except to authorised personnel, especially after the arrival of the Medical Units. Before entry, without exception, all were obliged to suffer

the indignity of the attentions of a medical orderly who shot liberal doses of DDT antilouse powder between one's clothing and body at the vulnerable spots. The Cameronians principally were assigned to gathering together the German work force, ensuring that the prisoners remained behind the wire until evacuated, and assisting in facilitating the evacuation of the inmates. It was a harrowing task. Even after the camp clearance had begun - there were reputedly over thirty thousand prisoners in all - providing immediate help was next to impossible. Sanitation was non-existent, the only available latrines consisted of deep pits to which those who were able managed to stumble or crawl. It was heartrending to see skeletons of skin and bone attempting to retain self respect by making a superhuman effort to reach them, despite the fact that the squalor inside the huts where excreta festooned from the tiered wooden slats that passed for beds to the floor below made little difference to whether nor not they had made the effort. Several were seen to fall into the pits, too weak to support themselves. There was not one man who was not sickened by the sight. The British soldier has a record second to none for compassion, but at that time the attitude of us all towards our enemy underwent a drastic reassessment. Given that civil order obviously had broken down in the wake of defeat, and that the food supply chain at that time was completely disrupted, no excuse could be found for the despicable conditions that clearly had obtained for some considerable period prior to the arrival of our troops. The complete intransigence of the surrounding population, some of whom denied knowledge of the Camp's existence - despite that its presence was obvious to all some distance away when the wind was blowing from its direction - was the final straw that bred a new hardened attitude towards, and a lack of respect for our enemy that we now regarded less of a Nazi dominated people, but more clearly as a national entity. Belsen had not been discovered until shortly before our arrival at Sandbostel. We only began to learn of its horrors in the ensuing days. The Official War Department photographers were fully occupied at that location. It was only after Sandbostel had been partially cleared of the dead and some of the chronically ill and terminal cases that photographic records were made.



*Sandbostel 1945 (Imperial War Museum)*



It was impossible to ensure the security of a camp of this size - I estimate that each side of the square compound measured at least five hundred yards. At night, escapes were inevitable unless security of the kind exercised by the Nazis was enforced. Some attempt at securing the surrounding area was necessary once control of the immediate environments of the camp had been regained. There was still the possibility that pockets of enemy resistance remained in the neighbourhood. I was detailed to lead a patrol to visit three of the small nearby villages. On the evening of the 5th May, I left Sandbostel with a section of eight Jocks. Trouble was not expected, but the usual patrol precautions were observed as if in action. Although no enemy troops were flushed out - clearly they had long surrendered or fled what we discovered was even more surprising. I quote from a letter to my parents in which I tempered my descriptions so as not to make the picture too upsetting: *'...There is a very large percentage of Russians who are creating havoc in the surrounding countryside. They say that we are far too soft with the Germans, and they are quite right. They go into a village and simply turn everything upside down and take what they want. The civil population are dead scared of the 'Ruskies' and are constantly begging for protection from them. If they can't protect themselves that's just too bad because we haven't troops to spare to do the job, and besides we haven't the sympathy. After the frightful conditions which the Russians have had to put up with in that camp, they are entitled to have a 'bit of their own back' on the people who must have known about and at the very least acquiesced in their treatment. The plight of the political prisoners was the worst. Some of them hadn't the strength to get to the latrines, while others just managed to crawl out of the huts to die. It is a most revolting job that we have and I shall be very glad to be relieved of it. The way in which I found out about the cessation of hostilities was almost on the storybook side. This camp was pretty close to the line, and nobody had been forward of our actual positions. Consequently last night I was sent out on a patrol at about five o'clock. We went forward to our objective and finding no enemy there I decided to push forward to the next village, which was about four miles from where we had started the patrol. This we did, and again we could find no enemy...'*

As we entered each village, we encountered a deadly eerie silence - the house doors were open, some of the

contents were strewn outside and in the streets. Nothing stirred; to even the most inexperienced infantryman, this usually meant imminent trouble. A cautious and stressful search of the village brought no reaction. Finally, we tried the village church which was locked and barred. I heard the sound of voices from inside, and after a warning that we would assault the building if the doors were not opened, a thoroughly terrified civilian gingerly appeared. I do not recall catching sight of the village priest, but in the hiatus of our welcome, he could well have been present. Strangely, I cannot recall seeing many of the local men. Official photographs show numbers to be present among the local population that we rounded up to clear the Camp. It could well be that most were members of the Volksturm (the German equivalent of our Home Guard), and had been taken prisoner when the advancing troops had captured the village. I still make no apology that we showed no sympathy, and indeed, no offer of immediate help - our feelings had been numbed by the horror of what we had left only a matter of minutes before. I maintain it was understandable in the circumstances. It seemed the height of cynicism to me that a religious institution should be sought as the source of protection for a nation that as an entity had benefited from barbarity, and yet could still profess to hold such moral scruples.

*'... The civilians fell on our necks and wept for joy, because they thought that we had come to protect them from the Russians. I took a quick look into a few of the houses to find the reason for this outburst. Every house had been ransacked Clothing furniture, food, coal and any household articles were all scattered over every room of the house. The whole village was in an indescribable shambles. It took us quite a time to get away and back to our own lines...'*

I had not included in my letter the numerous allegations of murder that on the evidence of our own eyes were fully substantiated, and of rape. My letter concluded... .. *'On the way back a very black cloud passed directly above us and began to pour down rain. The time was about half past eight and although dusk should not have been until much later, the thunderstorm produced a similar effect. Suddenly from every side, very lights began to shoot up in great clusters. Everybody seemed to be 'letting loose' and for an hour or so this impromptu firework display continued in a spate of red, green, blue and white lights.*

*When I got back to the Company soaked to the skin from the thunderstorm, but sensing that something unusual was in the air, I found all the Officers and N.C.O.'s having a drink together. There was no need to enquire what had happened. I cursed - fancy going out looking for the 'Moffe'<sup>3</sup> and 'the big angry man' when he had agreed to stop fighting! However it was worth it, even if only to see that firework display!...*

The Battalion's tour of duty finished soon after as the Camp was cleared of the worst cases and the dead buried. We returned to the Division to reflect on an experience that I am certain affected the outlook of all ranks for many years to come, and which on one hand we would rather have missed in the hope that no such place had ever existed. On the other, it silenced the doubters about the justification for the conflict - the necessity had been demonstrated to us in manner that brooked no denial.

General Horrocks was in no doubt. At the ceremony on 5th May, where he received the surrender of the enemy forces in Northern Germany, he concluded his address to the defeated German Generals... *'These Orders must be obeyed scrupulously. I warn you that we will show no mercy if they are not. Having seen one of your horror camps, my whole attitude towards Germany has changed...The world will never forgive Germany for those camps.'*<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps the last word should rest with the Divisional Historian? I have no doubt whatsoever that he spoke for every member Battalion when he concluded his brief account of Sanbostel with the following words *'...No one who did not see and smell and feel the horror of this embodied nightmare could ever believe it. And no one who did see it and smell it and feel it could ever forget it. It was perhaps appropriate that it should be here, with the evils of the system against which we had been fighting so unforgettably displayed before our eyes, that the crusade should end...'*

The 6th occupied a former Wehrmacht Barracks at Delmenhorst south of Bremen for a brief return to a first post-hostilities taste of normal Regimental duty. Regimental Messes were established for the first time in Germany, with formal dinners (less Mess Kit) and full Battalion parades were held on the spacious barrack square. For some, the return to normal Regimental formality was not particularly well received - the expression 'demob happy' became commonplace among some of the long

serving 'civilian'soldiers. After the defeat of Germany they could see no point in prolonging their time in the Forces. The prospect of further service in the Far East was hardly an entrancing prospect, but remained a distinct possibility in view of the Division's previous training in mountain, air-portable and combined operations warfare. Rumours abounded; these varied from a posting to Canada or the United States for more mountain and air portable training in preparation for the invasion of Japan, to the more credible and acceptable assignment to fly into Norway in the Division's former air portable role to deal with the disposal of German forces still in that country. It came as a disappointment when 6th Airborne Division was handed the Norway mission.

However the 6th Battalion's days with the dismantling of the Nazi Regime were not over - a further novel and memorable experience awaited it at Magdeburg, opposite the Red Army that faced the Western Allies across the River Elbe.

In early June, the 52nd Division was allotted a new task. For the Battalion, it proved to be the antithesis of its duties at Sandbostel. There, the primary objective had been to contain the revengeful excesses of prisoners both military and political, against the German population, by holding them in a secure camp. Now, the Battalion was ordered to take part in the repatriation of foreign labour that had been shipped either voluntarily or compulsorily to Germany as slave labour.

Again my account of this episode must be largely based on personal recollection. Most will recall that at the cessation of hostilities, the Allied Armies of the West had met with the Allied armies of the East roughly at a point that made the river Elbe a convenient dividing line. The city of Magdeburg lay astride that river. That city was to be the location of the 6th's next posting. It had been captured by the U.S. Army, from which the Division was to take over. While at a higher level, both sides seemed to regard each other with growing suspicion, there still existed an atmosphere of goodwill and camaraderie between the men on the ground from both the East and West.

Much of the imported slave labour had been concentrated near factory sites, and accommodated in primitive camps. Others had been used as agricultural workers, who were equally bitter about their lot. Several

of these camps were to be used as concentration points from which the liberated workers would be processed for repatriation. The Division was to take over the area from a U.S. Infantry Division with responsibility for arranging the repatriation of all non - German nationals to their countries of origin.

I was ordered to take control of one these camps and to prepare it for the reception of the first batch of repatriates. The entire camp consisted of wooden huts of the barrack room type. It had been vacated only recently, and was then under the control of the Americans. Apart from a fleeting contact with the American forces in the Rhineland battles, we knew little of how they operated at regimental level and what to expect. At Magdeburg station I was met by an American jeep driver who was to take me and a small advance party to prepare for the hand over to us of responsibility for the camp. Four of us, plus equipment, piled into the vehicle '*...The town of Magdeburg had taken a pasting of even worse proportions than Bremen. The centre of the town is burnt to a cinder, and only the main streets are useable for traffic. The side streets are only about two yards wide and great walls of rubble are on either side of the narrow pathways. They reckon that 47,000 people were killed in one raid...*'

After a knuckle-biting drive through the city, we arrived at the camp and were driven to a wooden hut that served as the U.S. Company's HQ. There was little sign of activity. An American soldier lounged against the doorpost at the entrance. Our driver leapt out of the jeep and walked straight over to what I assumed was a very casual sentry. He whipped off the sentry's cap, ruffled his hair over his face, admired his handiwork and announced "Gee Cap'n you sure need a haircut!" In fact, this was the officer whom I was to relieve. He did not turn a hair (an expression I cannot resist in this context); but calmly rearranged his coiffure, gave no remonstrance to the driver, and greeted me as if nothing had happened. I looked at the Jocks and they looked at me in astonishment. Our exchanged glances were sufficient understanding that none of us envisaged a Cameronian repetition of the performance! The take over proceeded in the same informal way and the Americans departed after we shared a meal attended by all ranks. The camp was in a disgusting state. That it was no reflection on the Americans soon became clear.

Each morning, I was allocated a group of former German Army personnel - now themselves prisoners of war - who arrived under escort from their own camp, the guards being provided by men of the 6th. They were handed over to me in a formal parade. This was made into an occasion in its own right, as over three hundred Germans under the command of a Hauptman and an Unter Lieutenant were called to attention and formally reported to me for duty by the Hauptman. I then called my own men to attention, allocated each Jock to escort a specified group to their respective duties, and then dismissed the parade. Both sides were thoroughly on their mettle, the drill of a high standard, the Jocks anxious not be outdone. The task of the Germans was to clear the camp of all the detritus that had been left behind by the former occupants. Fresh from the horrors of Sandbostel, there was a general desire to provide as good conditions as were possible for the incoming freed detainees, if only as some form of inadequate recognition of their ordeal; also, as a mark of our understanding of it. The Jocks saw to it that there was no slacking. A sense of outrage born of their recent experience, ensured there was no question of extending any sympathy. The German troops were allowed a one-hour break for lunch which had to be provided from their own prison camp food. The German Officers were instructed that each Jock must be addressed as 'Sir', and that every occasion on which I appeared all must stand to attention. Many of the Germans still were truculent, and any display of dissatisfaction at being made to carry out the distasteful task of cleaning up some of the worst parts of the camp, such as the latrines which overflowed with excreta, were dealt with by insistence on completion of the task in a manner far more meticulously than really was necessary.

It took about three days of hard work to make the camp fit to receive the first batch of what then were designated 'Displaced Persons'. The majority were destined for the Eastern European countries within the Soviet sphere of influence. The matter had become political. A Russian Police Staff, over whom I had no control, was allocated to the camp. It, and a Communist Party Official dealt with all matters of discipline relating to the Displaced Persons, subject to my responsibility to ensure that no trouble broke out between them and any German troops or civilians in the camp. The Party

Official's duty, I suspect, was to vet the returning displacees - presumably to seek out collaborators or opponents to the Communist regime? He told me that he had been an official (presumably KGB?) at the Russian State Radio station in Moscow. What action the Police ever took against any internal offender was a matter for them. At times it was a delicate situation. *'...I have a Russian Police staff who are pretty good, although some of them have spent a considerable time in Internment Camps while a few have done spells in Concentration Camps. You cannot expect them to treat the German soldiers well after what they have been put through. We have to keep a careful watch on them all the time to stop 'them having a go at the prisoners.*

*The Russians are quite a good lot, but my interpreter says that people cannot do and say as they like. Stalin is certainly very popular with most of the people, but he ruthlessly suppresses any rival political beliefs...'*

In effect, the camp was to be used purely for transit purposes. It held upwards of one thousand at any one time. After the initial cleansing of the camp, a very mixed batch of Displaced Persons arrived by rail, and was brought under escort to the camp. My staff and I then processed them. Those destined for countries in the Soviet control were dealt with by the Russians, while others were documented and forwarded to the West. All had been living in conditions that had reduced them to being accustomed to a primitive existence. Many of the Russians, mainly of peasant extraction, never had seen flush toilets - either in Russia or Germany. Within hours of their arrival, the toilets were blocked. Piles of excreta littered the camp that in the hot summer quickly became a health hazard if not promptly cleansed. So far as I can recall, each group stayed only a matter of two days. Each day German prisoners were brought in to clear up the mess. Both they and we knew that the unpleasant task would have to be repeated daily - an event that caused us considerable satisfaction. I suspect that the Russian Staff might well have encouraged the inmates to create as much chaos as possible, simply to give them the pleasure of seeing German troops perform similar unsavoury and unpleasant tasks to those they themselves had been forced to carry out during their subjugation to Germany. Each time a draft vacated the camp, the prisoners were made to return it to the same relatively spotless condition that obtained

prior to the arrival of the last draft. *'...There is a constant flow of people going in and out of the camp, and it is very difficult to keep track of them all. For the last three or four nights, I have been up until half past eleven and half past twelve, so you will see that we have plenty of work to do. There are only seven of us in the camp as staff, and two of us have to handle most of the administration between us...'* Being on detachment had its advantages *'...We live in a house of our own about a mile from the company and consequently we enjoy a good deal of freedom from spit and polish. The Yanks were in the house before us, and they had ripped all the furniture with knives and had made the customary mess of the place before they left. Consequently the people of the house were pleased to see us, since we keep the place in pretty good condition. The housefrau does all my washing and darning, which saves my batman a good deal of work...'*

For a subaltern of my age and relative inexperience, sharing accommodation with the men was difficult. The detachment, led by my newly appointed Platoon Sergeant was all older than I. There was little option other than to eat with them, as there was no room for use as a Mess. While in action, of course this had been the norm. Here the situation was entirely different. Living cheek by jowl in the same house, there was a fine line to be drawn between spending too much time in the men's company at meals and in the little leisure time available, and yet remaining apart. The only free time available perforce had to be spent largely on my own.

After dealing with several drafts, we soon established a routine; the Russian Staff became extremely friendly. *'...I have my own personal car (an Opel), a driver and as much petrol as I require. Of course the car cannot be used for anything but duty purposes. The work is much more easy now that we have got things going. In my camp there has been almost every European nationality. We have had French, Belgian, Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish, Finns, Estonian, Latvian, Hungarian, Rumanian, Austrian, Italian, Czechoslovakian, Bulgarian, Yugoslavian and Russian. Not bad eh? Fortunately the majority speak German, Polish or Russian, so that the interpreter can deal with most of them. The German 'population is very windy of the 'Rusky' and several people among the Europeans in the camp are considering 'getting off their mark' when and if the Russians come into the area. The food at the moment is almost too good to believe. Almost every night we have strawberries and cream or*

cherries. I am detached from the Company and am able to wangle one or two delicacies on the QT. The people give the stuff to us because they know that while we are living in the area the Russian Displaced Personnel will not come there to loot....

The Russian Police: '... we are getting to know them very well, but they are hard and callous to Germans while at the same time very friendly towards us. They treat the Germans in a much harder way than we do, although I hear that the Russian Army are slightly lax in this respect. The Chief of Russian Police is 'Ivan' who was in the Russian International Circus. His strength is amazing - he can pick up a man of thirteen stone with his teeth, as well as perform several very difficult strength exercises. '... German prisoners here are now being demobbed at a great rate back into civvy street, and are still wearing their uniform devoid of all badges etc., as a sort of utility suit. They certainly are very dishevelled and scruffy, but there seems to be precious little regret about starting the war. I'm pretty sure that they'll have another 'go' at the first opportunity. "... there is still a bit of arrogance in the German Army, and it will take a deal of watching...' I recall an occasion during an inspection of a German working party. I heard the tramp of what sounded like marching feet at the rear of one of the huts. I walked quietly to the end of the building and peered around the corner to find the two German officers goose-stepping to and fro under the cover of the building. I watched unobserved for a short time, and then moved into the open. Both stopped the moment they realised they had been caught, but neither seemed one whit abashed. They were made to recommence their marching display until both were so exhausted they could not lift one foot ahead of the other. Had the Russians seen this display, I do not think that they would have been as considerate. Knowing the mood of all at the time, with hindsight, I ought to have asked the Russian Police to join the audience and then have left the scene before its probable conclusion.

My interpreter was Estonian, and covertly deeply anti-Communist. She was very careful to 'toe the line', save when the Russians were out of earshot. Her hope was that she could accompany us for a posting in the Western part of the British occupied sector when the Battalion left. By this time, amid great apprehension amongst the German population, rumours began to circulate that the district was to form part of



*Lt to Rt - Ivan (Chief of Police) and Camp Lager Fuehrer*

the Russian Occupied Sector. Our presence became even more welcome. Soon these speculations became an established fact. Panic broke out amongst the inhabitants of Magdeburg. As we departed westwards in a Battalion convoy, we passed mile after mile of Germans trekking in the same direction. It was a replication of the march of the refugees who attempted to flee the oncoming Wehrmacht during the invasion of France and the Low Countries in 1940. Again, we had little sympathy. My personal regret related solely to the loss of my chauffeur-driven Opel limousine, which ill considerably suffered a puncture on the autobahn. Rather than be left behind the Battalion convoy, I was ordered to abandon it, and transfer to the less salubrious cab of a three-ton truck for the rest of the journey to Belgium - our next destination. After being the envy of the junior officers, my ego was severely deflated!



*Back Row - Lieut CS Pettit, Sgt Anderson, CQMS Johnston\*, CSM Beattie  
Front Row - L/Cpl Tanner, Cpl Main, Rfn Johnson, L/Cpl Nelson (\*Motherwell and then current Scottish International)*



Our departure had been an emotionally charged occasion. The interpreter had not been successful in obtaining permission to accompany the Battalion Westwards, Ivan the strong man was in tears - even the Political Official was moved to drink a toast to Allied solidarity in the future. We were careful to avoid the potato gin/vodka that the Russian camp staff brewed on a regular basis. Literally, it was lethal. A single mouthful set one's tongue on fire and the palette in danger of permanent destruction. The Americans had warned us of the dire effect it had upon some of their ranks who had been hospitalised after an attempt to out-drink some of the Russians. Reportedly one of their number subsequently had died.

Later in the year when next I passed through Magdeburg, en route for Berlin, the city was deep in the Russian sector. Times had changed. To stop for any reason in Russian occupied territory that lay between the boundary of the British Sector and the British Enclave in Berlin, meant immediate arrest. Imprisonment followed, usually for about six weeks -- the normal period it took for diplomatic representation to secure one's release.

Glad as we were to be away, there was a great deal of apprehension for the future of the returning Eastern European nationals who had been processed through the camp, and then had been marshalled across Friendship Bridge into the hands of the Soviets. I had it on good authority that the voluntary labourers were sorted from the slave labourers on the Russian side of the bridge. One can only speculate on their fate.

Perhaps it is time to move on? Nazism as a force, hopefully is a spectre from the past. That may well be, and thankfully the European political climate has changed for the better -- a Regimental Journal is an inappropriate forum for philosophising. Nevertheless, what occurred in Nazi Germany remains an ominous warning to all, and if vigilance is not maintained, could well re-occur, albeit in a different context and in different environment anywhere in today's troubled world. Those of us who were brought face to face with its reality, can only be left to ponder on ones'fate had its doctrines prevailed.

Cliff Pettit

1. See my article on 'The Camerונים (Scottish Rifles), For The Avoidance of Doubt' - The Covenanter 1988 page 11 Editors Note: see also 'A Historical Coincidence - The Battle of Alpon' by Cliff Pettit - Covenanter 1997 pages 31 - 40.  
2&4 Corps Commander - Sir Brian Horrocks with Versley Belfield & Maj Gen Essame - Sidgwick & Jackson 1997 by kind permission of Sidgwick & Jackson  
3. This expression was picked up by the Camerונים during the Division's service in Holland. It is a variant of the Dutch term 'Mofin', derivative of Germans; the equivalent of 'Kraut' in English  
Footnote: Full post war details of Sandbostel are to be found at [www.dokumentationsstaette-sandbostel.de](http://www.dokumentationsstaette-sandbostel.de)

## Battle of the Sloe Nederlands November 1944

*'Having just returned from Holland where I took a party of 50 King's Own Scottish Borderers to the 60th Liberation Ceremonies on the Island of Walcheren I thought your readers might like to read about the part played by your 6th and 7th Battalions of the Cameronian (Scottish Rifles) during the Battle of the Sloe.'*

*I have a letter written by Brigadier Ian Buchanan-Dunlop, who was Commanding Officer of the 6th Battalion during that time, recalling his memories of that period in your History, which he gave to my good Dutch friend 'Frans De Nooijer' MBE who very kindly allowed me to print this.*

### Battalion movements

2nd November S Herrenhoek.

3rd to 4th November Attack across the Sloe.

5th November Marched back across the Causeway.

7th November Moved to Arnemuiden.

13th November Moved to Flushing.

One Company Detached to Antwerp for Guard Duties.

20th November Moved to Goes South Beveland.

27th November Moved to S Hertogenbosch.

There are no photographs that we know of that were taken during the operation. There was no war correspondent with my Battalion. There were, of course, air photographs, taken for Intelligence, of the Sloe and environs.

Concerning your query about a Dutchman who joined in the fighting on our side in the neighbourhood of an orchard: we have not heard of one (those of us who survived). Sadly, my two Company Commanders, Major Petrie and Major McKellar, who covered that particular terrain in the action, and so might have been able to help us, are now both dead. But I should be not at all surprised if the story were true. You come of a brave people; we found that to be so, throughout the campaign. The Dutch Underground Organisation was of invaluable help to us. I have always deeply regretted having to shell villages with our artillery fire to dislodge the enemy before we attacked and liberated them, but we were invariably given a tremendous welcome by your people.

You ask me for any further information

concerning the battle in the east of Walcheren Island. Perhaps if I were to give you a brief account of the action in which my Battalion took part, together with my own remembered impressions (now becoming, naturally, somewhat dim, as I am getting on for 80 years of age) it might possibly be of help to you.

At the time of the action our 52nd Division had gained a foothold at Flushing and a smaller one at Westkapelle, but the Germans were putting up a stubborn resistance to a thrust across the Causeway leading from Beveland to Walcheren, and the higher command decided that the way to Walcheren from the east must be prised open by some other route, an essential step if the deadlock on the Causeway was to be broken. My Battalion was chosen for this role. The first news of the part we were to play was made known by me to my Company Commanders at a conference held at 12.30 hours on 2nd November. The plan was simple yet bold in conception. We were to strike a blow at the enemy's right flank by a river crossing of the Sloe, made in assault boats and carried out under cover of darkness, when the tides were favourable. The place chosen for the assault must have been regarded by the enemy as a most unlikely approach, since in addition to crossing the Sloe it entailed negotiation of treacherous mudflats, extending some three quarters of a mile, followed by a frontal attack upon the enemy's sea-dyke positions.

Company Commanders immediately set to work and made a reconnaissance of the ground, so far as they were able, from the east side of the Sloe. The Battalion plan was roughly as follows: A Company and B Company were to cross first and secure the objective, the sea-dyke known in the plan as Derby, with A Company on the right and B Company on the left. Advanced Battalion Headquarters and the Regimental aid post were to follow B Company: and C and D Company were then to pass through 'Derby right and Derby left' respectively and secure the next objective, known by the code-word 'Leger'. A fact that has stuck in my gullet ever since is that I was personally forbidden by the Divisional Commander (Major General Hakewill-Smith, an old friend formerly in my own Regiment) to cross with Advanced Headquarters, and bidden to control operations from a Main Headquarters on the east side of the Sloe until our first objectives were secured. I expostulated vehemently at this edict, since

in my view a commander's place is in the battle with his men; but I was twice overruled and had to accept my orders. Major Southward my second-in-command, was allowed to cross with Advanced Headquarters, so that there should be some overall control on the spot.

At last the plans were completed and the Battalion moved off by march route to the forming-up area near the chosen point of embarkation, south of the harbour which then lay just south of Nieudorf. Before the embarkation, a small party of Royal Engineers, led by Captain Turner R E, made a crossing and laid a tape indicating a mine-free path under cover of darkness, up to a point about 200 yards from the dyke.

A prearranged light signal was agreed, to indicate that the Royal Engineers task had been completed, but owing to the nature of the terrain their work was more intricate and difficult than had been expected, and in consequence our first Company could not embark until 03.30 hours, about an hour behind the planned timetable. I remember my reaction of some impatience and anxiety to the delay, because when the signal was not sent at the expected time we had of course no idea when it would be sent-or indeed if it would be sent at all-and the attack relied heavily for its chance of success on being made under cover of the hours of darkness. However, it was fortunate that we waited: the whole area was heavily mined, and if mines had been encountered in quantity before reaching the first objective the results might have been devastating.

The crossing itself was achieved in some ten minutes of vigorous paddling, and then came the arduous task, very gruelling, of negotiating the mud flats, which extended virtually up to the sea dyke. For the whole time my men were kneedeep, often waist deep, in tenuous, sucking mud, which made every step an effort, and some idea of the difficulties may be gained from the fact that it took a full hour for the Companies to cover the three-quarters of a mile. Moreover, everyone knew that at the end of this dreadful journey there was still the enemy to meet. But in spite of all this, such was the temper of my splendid 'Jocks' that when they reached the dyke they were still fully equal to the task of putting in a spirited attack and forcing the enemy's positions at the point of the bayonet.

On 'Derby Right' A Company's attack brought in 25 prisoners at a cost of 2

wounded. The objective was quickly secured and consolidated, and at about 07.00 hours C Company were able to pass through and move forward to 'Leger Right'. At 10.00 hours A Company moved forward to the right of C Company prior to making an advance on to the road-dyke junction at Gronenburg, known by the code-name of 'Oaks Right', but on forming up, enemy positions were observed in the area of Rapenburgh and also on the dyke to the east of the Company. As these constituted a menace, not only to the projected attack but also to the whole of our right flank, the Company immediately attacked, and as a result took a further 477 prisoners. Meanwhile B Company had embarked at 0400 hours as left-hand assault Company. They crossed the river and the mudflats and made immediately for the dyke at the farm known as 'Derby Left'. There were some casualties from Schu-mines embedded in the dyke, but the Company swept on into the farm buildings, and at 08.00 hours D Company passed through to take up position on 'Leger Left'. Almost immediately they met strong and determined opposition. 18 Platoon were pinned down on the dyke by shell-fire and small arms fire from the left flank, but 17 Platoon managed to push on and take up positions in empty German slit-trenches some 200 yards beyond the dyke. Shortly afterwards D Company Headquarters and their reserve Platoon came under heavy shell and mortar fire and sustained some casualties. By this time B Company was approaching in an attempt to push through D Company's positions, but about the area of 'Leger Left' both Companies were pinned down by a veritable hail of fire from Finnish mortars, high velocity guns, heavy machine guns and snipers operating from a position on the left flank. You may wonder what the Commanding Officer of the Battalion had been doing all this time! To answer that it is necessary to go back to the first crossings at 03.30 and 04.00 hours. As soon as the news came back to me of the unexpectedly dreadful conditions on the mud-flats between the river and the first sea-dyke objective, I realised that something must be done at once if we were not to get bogged down, with movement from rear to front and supplies of ammunition and subsequently food becoming impossible; also the movement back from the front of our casualties and German prisoners of war. Accordingly I got in touch with Brigade

Headquarters by wireless and asked them to get Division to send us forward with the greatest urgency at least two miles of Kapok Bridging material. This material was a simple affair of stout duckboards mounted on floats filled with Kapok (a buoyant material) normally used to bridge small streams for the passage of men on foot and manhandled weapons and supplies. It was the best solution I could think of at the time to the problem of the mud. It came to us in surprisingly short time and it worked, successfully. By this time A and B Company had gained their first positions on 'Derby' and Advanced Battalion Headquarters, following B Company, along with the Regimental aid post had set up in farm buildings at 'Derby Left'. I therefore decided to cross over and go forward myself to Advanced Headquarters, leaving Main Battalion Headquarters in charge of my Adjutant in touch with Brigade on the east bank in its original position. I took with me some extra signal personnel and our two battalion dog-handlers with their dogs, since it seemed that they might prove useful in detecting the Schu-mines, which were causing trouble ahead. I remember that the tide was swirling on the Sloe, and our rubber boats made erratic progress. One of the dog-handlers fell over board and his dog named Red an Alsatian sprang in after him and towed him back to safety. Later we gave the story to the newspapers, which resulted eventually in Red being awarded a dog's medal for bravery, which we all thought he had earned, as his handler could not swim. Having reached Advanced Headquarters, I took over from Major Southward. On reaching the sea-dyke I found that he, with his small Headquarters, was operating in the open on 'Derby Left', the only intact building having been given over to the Regimental Aid Post. By this time the German resistance had hardened in front of us, as described above, and the greatest credit is due to Major Southward and his personnel for their cool handling of an extremely delicate situation under the most intense fire. As soon as I had been given the situation I visited the Regimental Aid Post in its barn, where I found the Regimental Medical Officer and our Chaplain in charge of the Medical Section, which was performing wonderful work. Due to the difficulties of evacuation across the mudflats, despite the invaluable help of the Kapok Bridging, which were enormous from the very beginning, the Regimental

Aid Post was crowded with casualties, some with terrible wounds which they did not long survive, throughout the action. This problem of evacuation and supply stayed with us. The ferry and mud-flats were under fire from enemy guns the whole time, and since portage by manpower was unavoidable, there were many casualties here as well as on the front, including some among German prisoners awaiting transport to the east bank. At 12.00 hours some elements of B Company penetrated into some farm buildings to their front, but had to be withdrawn under a protective smoke screen, laid down by the Company's own 2 inch mortars. D Company, meanwhile, were suffering heavy casualties. The Company Commander, Major Sixsmith, was killed, the Company Sergeant Major was wounded together with most of the other senior NCOs and control became extremely difficult. At 13.00 hours D Company began an orderly withdrawal and attempted to organise on the eastern side of the first objective. As you can imagine, Major Sixsmith was a sad loss. He was killed while out in front of his Company position helping personally to carry his wounded men into safety. He had done the same thing at the end of several attacks made by the Battalion during our advance through Beveland. He was an extremely gallant Officer and, being a regular soldier, one of my best Company Commanders. I was pleased and interested to hear from you on his burial arrangements, and I have no doubt that his grave at Bergen op Zoom has been visited by his elder brother, a distinguished officer who is amongst my friends, and by his widow, with whom my wife and I have always kept in touch since the war, and his son, now of course in middle age and doing well

B Company had also found its position untenable, especially in view of the fact that their wireless communications had broken down completely. This being so it was necessary to make personal contact with them, and I managed to crawl forward to their front positions on the left flank. They were under a crippling enfilade fire, directly from their left, chiefly from 88 millimetre guns, and having seen the situation I ordered them, too, to withdraw to their original positions on 'Derby Left'. They suffered many casualties; but their stubborn protection of the left flank during a critical period had enabled a firm consolidation in their rear, and I subsequently recommended

their Company Commander, Major Storm, for an 'immediate' Military Cross, which I am glad to say he received. Re-established on 'Derby Left' they continued to be subjected to heavy artillery and mortar fire, but the fire was now unobserved by the enemy, and consequently comparatively inaccurate, and they were no longer menaced in their new position by the constant threat of small-arms and 88 millimetre gun fire in enfilade. It was not until after darkness had fallen on the 3rd November that the supply situation began to improve, aided by the fact that our weight of artillery support and the evening activities of some rocket-firing Typhoon aircraft had done a good deal towards quietening the enemy guns. I have comparatively clear memories of that night, spent in a slit trench dug into the sea-dyke, with my Headquarters, and the breaking of first light- with a cup of hot tea administered by my intrepid batman, which tasted like nectar. Throughout the campaign, from start to finish of my time in it, from Belgium and Holland into Germany, I recall vividly that the greatest personal problem, by far, to be overcome was lack of sleep. Orders for actions in daylight had to be planned and given in the middle of the night. Attacks at night also, of course, precluded rest. No doubt during periods of 'rest' in reserve, time was found from many essential administrative duties to sleep like a log! But I cannot recall such respite. From VE and VJ Day onwards I have thanked God, sincerely, for the opportunity to sleep. With the lives of 1000 or so splendid 'Jocks' in your hands, you just cannot do it! At dawn on the 4th November I gave orders to A Company (under Major McKellar) still in position on 'Leger Right', to attack 'York Right', the code-name given to the farm and buildings at Grieneburgh. At first the fighting was rather confused, but after a short time the Company was on its objective, and by 16.30 hours was consolidating its position. Simultaneously I ordered C Company under Major Petrie to swing left across the front in a flank attack on to 'Leger Left'. They went in at 14.30 hours, behind heavy artillery concentrations. About 30 prisoners were taken without much fighting, but a good deal of mortar fire was directed on to the position from enemy mortars in the rear, and the Company was subjected to sporadic mortar and shell fire from the time they consolidated until dusk fell about three

hours later. After 'Leger Left' had at last been secured, a Company of the 5th Highland Light Infantry, with the relief of other Companies following the next morning, relieved B Company in their positions. By early afternoon the Battalion, weary but satisfied, was marching back behind our Pipers over the Causeway to s Herrenshoek. Our Brigade Commander, Brigadier Barclay, was waiting for us with his staff at the eastern end of the Causeway, with words of welcome and praise. Seeing him in the distance I had the Battalion 'march to attention' and we gave him 'eyes right' as we went by. My tired 'Jocks' put on a splendid spurt, perfect in their drill, and went swaggering by. It is a moment I shall never forget. If I may say so, next to my own fellow countrymen I admire yours above any other in Europe, and therefore the world. That opinion is based on my experiences during World War II. Winston Churchill once described you as: 'the valiant and stout hearted Dutch'. Those were true words.

*'For readers curious why this Article was submitted by a KOSB, I was a former Boy Soldier at Lanark in 1958 then went on to serve 26 years with the Kings Own Scottish Borderers, My father was SGT James Armour Mcfadyen a regular soldier in the 6th Battalion Cameronian Scottish Rifles, killed in action on 18 January 1945 and buried in Sittard War Cemetery. I help the Dutch War Graves Commission in Sittard, and should any readers of this article have a relative buried there, please contact me as we invite 2 close relatives of these soldiers to visit Sittard each November at our expense. Major Sixsmith was my fathers Company Commander and his son Mike joined the KOSB when the Cameronians disbanded and became my Company Commander.'*

John Malcolm Nichol Mcfadyen  
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## Walcheren 60 Years On November 2004

*The torch; be yours to hold it high,  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders' Fields*

In Flanders' Fields. John McCrae, 1915

## Cameronians in Walcheren

This time they came in cars and coaches not DUKWs and Buffaloes. Sixty years after the battle of 1944 Veterans of 156 Bde, 157 Bde and 4 (Special Service) Cdo Bde returned to the flat polders of Holland in Zeeland to remember the battle they fought in and the sacrifice of their comrades who were left behind.

Cameronians were no strangers to Walcheren - in 1809 they were part of an ill-fated expedition the object of which was 'to obtain possession of the islands at the mouth of the Scheldt, and to destroy the French ships in that river with docks and arsenals of Antwerp'. [Carter's Historical record of the Twenty Sixth or Cameronian Regiment]

The Battle of Walcheren in 1944 has been overshadowed by other events; perhaps being considered a backwater as it involved a westwards movement at a time when allied troops were intent on moving east towards the heartland of Germany; but it was typical of many feats of arms of British troops over the centuries and was a significant, although un-remarked, success.

All regiments claim to be 'second to none'. The 1st Bn Order of the Day, 16th March 1945, has an unsolicited testimonial to the abilities of the Regiment provided by Brigadier Lentaigne, Chindit Penetration Bde Comd: Field Marshall William Slim, unquestionably one the most successful British generals of World War II, selected the 1st Battalion to join Lentaigne's brigade because it was 'the hardest fighting British battalion under his command in the 1942 Burma campaign'. [The battalion also provided Slim's personal guard and, according to the Field Marshall in his memoirs, what ever else they might have been short of it was never the rum!]

## Antwerp

The Scheldt estuary formed part of Hitler's 'Atlantic Wall'. The German 1st Army, under General von Zanger, opposed the Canadian 1st Army with the 70th Infantry Division in Walcheren and South Beveland. As in 1809, the strategic significance of Antwerp was paramount. for the allies in October 1944, due to its capacity and strategic location.

The defeat of the Allies at Arnhem led to a series of 'soldiers' battles' across the Low Countries. These culminated in the slog of the Reichwald, before the Allies were able to force the River Rhine, six months after Market Garden on 8th March 1945, and attack the heartland of Germany.



The German soldier invariably fought well, and often tenaciously. Some 'would never surrender and they ...Gunned down ... Comrades who tried.'

Had Operation Market Garden been successful, this campaign, and significant loss of life, would almost certainly have been avoided. The German formations in Holland and Belgium would have been in a hopeless position with the Allies pouring forces across the Rhine via the Bridge at Arnhem.

Montgomery's brilliant record had been tarnished by the failure at Arnhem. Montgomery by disposition was a cautious general. Witness his determination not to commit to battle against Rommel at El Alamein until he was certain that he had sufficient force to deal the Germans a 'knock-out blow', despite the pressure exerted on him by an impatient Churchill. Arnhem would have been acclaimed as a decisive battle had it been successful. But in war, as often in life, the difference between success and failure is small. Kipling summed up the reality; 'if you can ... treat these two impostors [triumph and disaster] just the same, you'll be a Man my son!'

Cameronians will appreciate the link between the Regiment and Arnhem in the person of Lieutenant Colonel (later Major General) Johnny Frost, who commanded with outstanding élan the only parachute battalion to reach the bridge.

'It is an historical oversight that so little

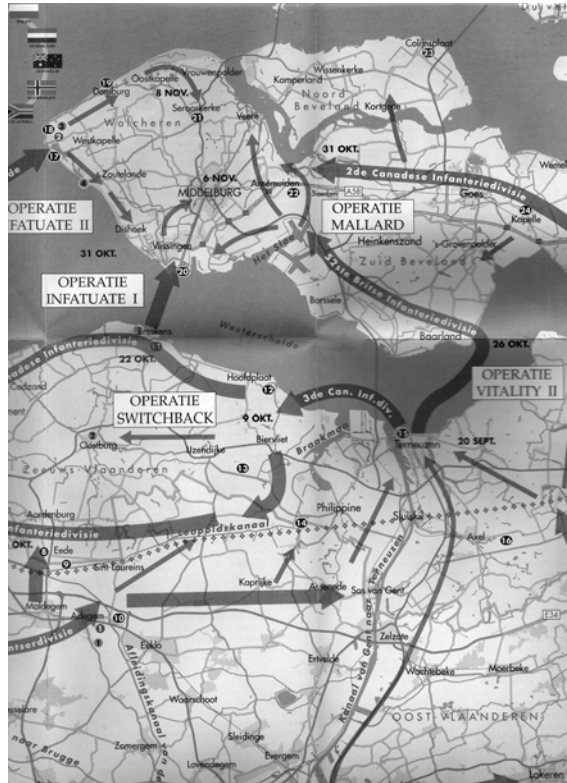
attention has been paid to the battle of the Scheidt estuary. ....With hindsight Eisenhower should not have given in to Montgomery's demands over Market Garden, by which time the German 15th Army had been allowed the opportunity to organize the defence of the Scheldt estuary. The fierce battle and the clearing of the Scheldt of mines took almost three months....and so there was a hold-up in the supply to the Allied forces and their march to Berlin came to a halt. Because of this the Germans were able to launch the Ardennes offensive. Not without reason, Antwerp was the main goal of this German attack in December.'

Its significance lies in the fact that the allies' forward momentum, slowed by the set back of Arnhem, was further threatened by supply shortages. By October 1944 the leading Allied formations had reached Aachen but were still dependant for their logistic support on the Normandy ports and the Mulberry harbour. These did not have the capacity to handle the tonnages now required and, moreover, were some 350 miles behind the frontline. It was essential for the allies, therefore, to be able to use the Port of Antwerp. However, the Germans still held both banks of the Scheldt in some strength. The task of clearing the area was given to the Canadian 1st Army, which included the 52nd Lowland Division. Two territorial battalions of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), the 6th and 7th

Cameronians, were brigaded with 5th HLI in 156 Infantry Brigade.

While the British 2nd Army followed a more easterly route towards Antwerp, the Canadian 1st Army quickly conquered the Channel ports northwards as far as Gent, Le Havre, Boulogne and Calais were also captured, although not without difficulty. But Antwerp was still of essential

who were there: 'for the first time [the Cameronians] were introduced to a number of strange amphibious craft; known as 'Buffaloes'. These remarkable vehicles can travel in water or on land ... they carry 30 fully armed men ... 'Initially, the crossing from Teurneuzen was scheduled for 25th October, which would have given only a day's training for this new role; 'fortunately,



importance to the Allies.

The Canadians reached Teurneuzen on 6th September but it was not until 22nd October that the south bank of the river was cleared (Operation Switchback). By 24th October Bergen op Zoom had been taken thus entirely isolating the German garrison on Walcheren. Then, after only two days preparation, 156 Bde undertook an assault river crossing from Teurneuzen, landing successfully at Baarland in Walcheren (Operation Infatuate I).

Ironically, 52nd Lowland had spent most of the war in Scotland, training extensively for a mountain warfare role. After D Day, the Division was hastily re-trained in an air landing role and earmarked to take part in Operation Market Garden. However, in the unpredictable nature of warfare, their first major engagement found them in an assault river crossing role.

At Teurneuzen, in the words of some

bad weather .... made it necessary to delay the operation for 24 hours. This additional time was invaluable and by the evening of 25th October everything was ready for the assault crossing ... 'It was a most thrilling experience to waddle off the shore in these big vehicles and plunge slowly into the water. One could hardly believe that we were going into battle... The landing was successful, despite some opposition. By 17:00 hours that evening the bridgehead had been secured except for one small area.' 'The landing ... has resolved itself into an eerie assortment of impressions - of grotesque machines, nightmarish in the half-light, waddling out of the sea over the almost perpendicular dyke into the flatness beyond; of sadly shaken Herrenvolk trundling down the road with a particularly diminutive Jock trotting happily in rear.'

From Baarland the brigade fought its way eastwards through South Beveland,

reaching Nieuudorp on 2nd November. The War Diary of 6 Cameronians records one particularly hard battle en route:

'0800 - Bn passed through 7 Cams to advance west of Ellenwoutsdijk....

1300 - D Coy began advance on 'Point 77' (2519 ?) - Held up by strong opposition 300 yards short of objective. Found to be heavily defended (Permanent Coastal Fortress). Coy forced to withdraw. 10 men killed, 28 wounded.'

'[D Company] were sent to attack a most strong held position on the coast. They attacked to within 200 yards and then got held up by water. The Boche was in a strong position, concrete and surrounded by minefields, and very unfortunately [the company] was out of range of support by medium or field artillery. Then the Boche opened up with everything he had and [the company] got a pretty terrible pasting ... next day... when one looked at it from the enemy's point of view one realised what ideal country is for defence, and how difficult for manoeuvre, even minor tactics.'

The Veterans started their commemorations by attending a reception at the Burgerzaal in the marketplace in Middelburg on Sunday 31st October. Throughout the whole of the following week a variety of events had been organised by the authorities of Walcheren and the local communities, which included much generous hospitality. Some of the events were attended by Veterans from all of the allied units which had taken part in the fighting in 1944. Other events were arranged for specific units; and some were very personal reunions between life-long Dutch and British friends. Ceremonies were held at Uncle Beach in Vlissingen, where 157 Bde landed; at Baarland where the Cameronians landed with 156 Bde; at the Causeway, where so many lives were lost; and at the British War Cemetery at Bergen op Zoom, where many of those who made the supreme sacrifice were eventually laid to rest. All followed the same familiar remembrance format but each was, in its own special way, intensely moving. The Vlissingen Pipe Band provided the music and Royal Marine buglers sounded the poignant calls of mourning. The British Government was represented by the Ambassador Sir Colin Budd, KCMG or one of his staff

*'They shall grow not old, as we that are left  
grow old.  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.*

*At the going of the sun, and in the morning  
We will remember them'*

The time-honoured words were reiterated at each commemorative event during the week. Most moving for us, when uttered in a firm voice by Duncan McArthur, 4th/5th Royal Scots Fusiliers at the memorials on the causeway to the French (who defended Beveland against the onslaught of Hitler's rampaging Panzer divisions in 1940); the Canadian 1st Army; and to 52nd Lowland Division.

The week reached its climax for the Cameronian party on the following Saturday night with a private party given by the people of Baarland, held in the community hall, which is named after the Regiment.

The official ceremonies concluded with a final service of commemoration and thanksgiving at the Catharina church Zoutelande on Sunday 7th November leaving the Cameronian party with some final hours with their Dutch hosts before beginning the journey back to Britain on the following day. Inevitably, there will be very few Veterans able to attend any 70th anniversary commemoration. And there may not be any more formal commemorations. However, there seems little doubt that for the foreseeable future British and Dutch friends will continue to maintain the strong bond between them by visits to Holland and Scotland on alternate years as long as health and breath permit. And the local authorities in South Beveland will continue to hold annual remembrance services too.

The author and his family were privileged to meet this sturdy band of Veterans, some wearied by age, some still bearing the scars of that far-off conflict, some as sprightly as men half their age. They had opened the Scheldt estuary but, more important for us, they had been on the battlefield at the time of my father's death. As when I had gone with my mother some years ago, it seemed as if we had known these men for all our lives, yet my family met them for the first time, forging an immediate bond. An uncanny experience.

It is invidious to mention names, as so many people were involved in all the arrangements. However, from our family perspective some people do deserve special mention: Mr. Leon Dewitte, Chairman of the Liberation Support Walcheren committee and Madam Nelleke Jeremaisse-



Platschorre along with Frans de Nooijer MBE undertook the burden of organisation before and during the events. In the middle of a hectic schedule, Frans found time to take us on a battlefield tour. Rene Hoebeke has written a substantial history of the battles; and has also been responsible for the erection of notice boards at the causeway which explain the significance of the memorials for visitors.

### 156 Brigade Association

Charles Frostick, Rfn 17 Platoon, D Coy was the original co-ordinator of 156 Bde Association formed, appropriately, in 1989 when invited by local people to visit Borsele (the equivalent of our Parish Council). The Dutch made a return visit to Hamilton in 1990. This started a series of reciprocal visits which has continued to this day. While most of the Veterans attending the 60th anniversary events stayed in hotels, the Cameronian party were housed, as in every alternate year, with their Dutch friends.

For the Dutch inhabitants, the arrival of the Allied forces in 1944 was a mixed blessing. Yearning to be free of their occupiers, the joining of battle in the midst of their community disrupted the status quo and resulted in considerable fear, destruction and hardship, not to mention numerous casualties. Forty-six civilians were killed by allied shelling when sheltering in Arnimuieden, where they had been moved to facilitate 52nd Division operations. Despite all the horrors they experienced, what shines out to this day is the eternal and heartfelt gratitude of the local people. Not only of those who were themselves 'Veterans' of the battle but also of succeeding generations. One telling aspect of the various ceremonies was the involvement of young boys and girls, jointly laying wreaths with grizzled Scottish Veterans; and doing it in a totally un-self conscious manner because they have been brought up to be aware of the price of freedom and to appreciate that it cannot be taken for granted.

A policeman, Thijs Way, records how in 1944: *'on the night of 25/26 October I was rudely awakened by the howling of aeroplanes followed by the striking of grenades in Baarland ... as a police officer it goes without saying that I would see if I could be of any assistance. Fully dressed in uniform, I opened the door to step outside when suddenly two [Scottish] soldiers with camouflaged faces yelled to me, "hands up" and "who are you?"*

Way was then interrogated, asked to

verify his position in the Dutch resistance and taken to the British commanding officer, 'who introduced himself as Colonel Leg thereby pointing at his leg! I was requested to accompany a patrol to persuade ... people to leave their houses in order for the British troops to advance unhampered. It wasn't an easy job, we met a lot of opposition, people yelled at us and reacted furiously but we also experienced relief and gratitude.'

Later, Way 'learned of the decision to evacuate all the inhabitants of Oudelande and Baarland to Dutch Flanders ... The misery that was hereby brought on is almost impossible to describe: all kinds of vehicles coming from everywhere packed with adults and children at the crack of dawn.

Prms and wheelbarrows, bicycles with elderly people who had to be supported on either side by their relatives, almost unbelievable! At the foot of the dyke DUKWs were lying where the wretched things [people] were driven in like cattle because there weren't enough seats by far. It was awfully cold in those DUKWs because they were open and there was no shelter whatsoever.'

Way had to persuade his wife to leave with their two children as he *'had to stay and assist this evacuation, which did not pass speckless (sic) lots of panic and anxiety. After the boats left, fear gripped me by the throat ... how will the Germans react, will they let the boats go to ...? This having told, I would have loved to shake the hands of all present Veterans to tell them how happy I am to see and greet them again and to express how grateful we are for their devotion at that time. And, of course, we understand how difficult it will be to stand still in remembrance of all the comrades who gave their lives here for us. ...Finally, our grateful thanks for our liberation .... Adieu Cameronians!'*

### The Battle for Walcheren - November 1944

By 29th November 'only Walcheren remained to be liberated. On this peninsula the Germans had a series of artillery batteries, concrete bunkers, machine gun nests and other enforcements. With the aim of limiting German manoeuvre, the Allied Forces decided to flood Walcheren before the attack ... the sea embankments of Vlissingen and Veere were also bombed as well forcing the Germans to withdraw to higher ground ..., but their heavy artillery was situated in the dunes area. The RAF was

not able to silence the German artillery before the battle began’.

During this time, the battle on the causeway, which began on 29th October, continued with heavy casualties but no progress. The 5th Canadian Brigade had been given the task of attacking Walcheren from the east. Reconnaissance concluded that ‘there was only one way over and that was on this damned causeway ... a raised embankment standing some seven metres above the high water line, ... dead straight, about twelve hundred metres long and forty metres wide. The familiar poplars,... Bordered an elevated rail line, a two-lane highway and the inevitable cycle path. The Germans, their backs to the sea, were far from beaten, they had prepared a monstrous reception for their ... enemies ... The German guns were sighted squarely down this narrow strip of raised roadway that they knew the Canadians would be forced to cross. There was, they believed, no alternative. In 1940, as pursuers this time of a French armoured division, the Germans themselves had attempted to cross the Sloe and had seen 150 of their comrades drown.’

The conditions under which the Allied forces fought in Walcheren are vividly described in the words of a Canadian officer, Roger Mathen: *‘Imagine a black night, the rain pouring down, and a muddy road with holes of one or two metres deep. If you fall into a hole you are muddy, deadbeat and without your gun or ammunition. The road is ten metres wide, without trees to take cover. Imagine a dyke leading to nowhere, enemy soldiers on both sides with heavy machine guns and light cannons. Then let start a barrage of 296 shells over the Germans, then observe a counterattack with 88mm and 105 mm mortars coming from the other side. Now send to the other side of the dyke some hundred men, platoon after platoon, the men following the edge of the water, with their faces into the unknown.’*

‘Near the Sloe dam the attackers found themselves in an extremely difficult position.’ Between 31st October and 3rd November a severe battle took place. Three separate battalion strength assaults were made on the Causeway; a fourth battalion, 1st Glasgow Highlanders, relieved the third of these battalions on the morning of 2nd November, by which time the Canadian 5th Brigade were ‘completely disorganized and only a few remained.’ In three days of fighting on the Causeway the Canadian 2nd Army lost over 1,000 men killed, wounded or taken prisoner.

At this point Walcheren operations became the responsibility of 52nd Lowland Division. The Divisional Commander, Major General Sir Edmund Hakewill Smith, opposed the concept of frontal assaults on the causeway. ‘In the early hours of 1st November, Foulkes [GOC 2nd Canadian Corps] appeared at 52nd Div HQ inciting a head-on clash [with Hakewill Smith]. Foulkes ordered Hakewill Smith to send his division across the causeway ... Hakewill Smith demanded that Foulkes issue the order in writing. A blank piece of paper was passed across the table.’ In the words of Hakewill Smith, *‘The Canadian Corps Commander said that there was no other route and that we had to go in at dawn the next morning. I again protested that it was not a viable military operation ... after further argument he departed, saying that if we did not put in this attack there would be a new commander of the 52nd (L) Division immediately.’* However, ‘Hakewill Smith had won a reprieve of sorts. Foulkes grudgingly gave him forty-eight hours to come up with an alternative plan ... Or look for a new job.’

After reconnaissance, a possible route across the Sloe, south of the Causeway, was identified. There is some uncertainty surrounding the identification of this route. A member of the Dutch resistance, Pieter Kloosterman, reportedly knew about it and passed the details to 52nd Lowland. The Divisional commander records that it was discovered independently. The CO of 6th Cameronians said that ‘I should not be surprised if the story [that Kloosterman provided the information] were true. You come of a brave people; we found that ... The Dutch Underground Organisation was of invaluable help to us.’

*‘My battalion [6th Cameronians] was chosen for this role.’ ‘It was clear that this operation (Operation Mallard) would be a hazardous one. A few days earlier another formation had reconnoitered a crossing place and reported it to be impracticable.’*

However, the Allied forces managed to form a bridgehead, thanks to a crossing through the Sloe area.’ This attack was carried out by 6th Cameronians. It was a bold plan, crossing at a place that ‘must have been considered by the enemy as a most unlikely approach, since in addition to crossing the Sloe, it entailed negotiating treacherous mudflats, extending some three quarters of a mile, followed by a frontal attack up the enemy’s sea-dyke positions.’

On the night of 2nd/3rd November, 6th

Cameronians embarked in assault boats at the small harbour of Zuid Kraaijert near Nieudorp in preparation for crossing the Sloe. *'It was the task of the 6th Cameronians to follow the rapidly muddily ribbon of white tape [laid out by] 'just two lonely, apprehensive but skilled and watchful men [Sappers from 202 Field Company RE].'* The Commanding Officer later described the crossing: *'The water crossing took only some ten minutes, My men were knee-deep, often waist deep, in tenuous, sucking mud.'* Several members of the Battalion drowned and *'we had seven chaps stuck in the mud for four hours before we could pull them out...'* *'It took an hour to cover the three-quarters of a mile to the dyke, at the end of this dreadful journey there was still the enemy to meet ... Such was the temper of my splendid Jocks that, when they reached the dyke... They put in a spirited attack forcing the enemy's position at the point of the bayonet'*

During the crossing. Rfn Muldoon, who could not swim fell overboard. He was saved by one of the Regiment's dogs, an Alsatian called at the time Rusty but later re-christened, when he hit the headlines, as Rifleman Khan. The dog was subsequently awarded the Dickens medal, the animal equivalent of the Victoria Cross.

*'The assault achieved surprise, and gained a foot-hold on the bund, but attempts to push through a follow-up encountered very strong resistance particularly on the left flank where we got a bloody nose':*

*'08:00 D Coy passed through B Coy - advanced towards Land-en-Zeezicht - met heavy small-arms, heavy machine gun and mortar fire. Many casualties - soon in difficulties and forced to withdraw. Could no longer be considered a fighting unit.'*

My father, Charles Sixsmith, was killed on Binnen Dyke about 10:00 by a sniper. He was buried on the dyke along with several others.

The dyke was subsequently moved about 30 meters to the north after the war to make room for a new road. And the remains of those killed were recovered and interred in the beautifully maintained British War cemetery in Bergen op Zoom.

*'Although pushed back, the other company on that [the left] flank managed to hang on to its original position and withstand counterattack and shot and shell until a two-company attack could be put in ... to win the battle.'* *'The next afternoon, the Highland Light Infantry (157 Bde) passed through the position the Cameronians had so sorely won. It was their Private McGregor who,*



Major Charles Sixsmith

rushing a machine gun post and killing six Germans, eliminated the last obstacle before reaching the Glasgow Highlanders still holding a bridgehead on the Causeway.

On 31 October 1944, while the battle for the Causeway raged, 157 Bde had landed at Vlissingen (Uncle Beach). This brigade included 4th KOSB. In 2004, a 50-strong party led by Malcolm (Nicky) Nichol, Secretary of the Berwick Branch, KOSB Association, attended the commemorations. It was good to see Brigadier Frank Coutts on parade. Also present was a KOSB Territorial officer, Torquil Corkerton, who is the son of David Corkerton, the last officer to be commissioned into the Regiment. We were privileged to be invited to the KOSB Band Night on Wednesday 3rd November. Playing that night and at each of the week's ceremonies were the Dutch drummers and pipers of the Inter Scaldis Pipe Band from Vlissingen. The band has been adopted by the KOSB. They were a fine sight in their Leslie tartan kilts and regimental regalia. Corkerton showed himself to be an accomplished piper, joining the band in some impromptu numbers.

Malcolm Nichol was with the KOSB when I joined them in Osnabruck after our

1st Battalion's disbandment in 1968. He subsequently discovered that his father, whose name was McFadyen and who had been a Cameronian, had been killed on the same day as my own father. On further investigation it transpired that his father was in D Coy, 6th Cameronians along with my father. I have my father's company notebook, returned to my mother with his belongings. In this is the name of 3053920 L/Sgt J McFadyen of 16 Platoon. He is buried in the War Cemetery at Sittard

'On 28th November [1944], with some ceremony, the first convoy of Liberty ships was welcomed into Antwerp. On 1st December more than 10,000 tons of supplies could be safely landed.' It is possible to speculate that, had Antwerp been captured earlier, the western Allies would have been successful in reaching Berlin before the Russians, with significant implications for post-war history.

A Canadian officer, who took part in the Causeway battle, summed up the battle: *The Limeys [Scottish!], on the other hand, when they assaulted Walcheren, they did it with class - not as a sort of spur-of-the-moment thing.'*

The feelings of the survivors of Walcheren were summed up in the Covenanter of March 1945: *'Now it's all over we're all glad we were in it, but it had its unpleasant moments and - it was wet, beastly, dirtily, hopelessly wet. Not only that but George, the 105mm man, and Egbert, the comedian with the mortar, seemed to take a dislike to the company, which over-stepped the bounds of objectivity, and vented their spleen in no uncertain manner. Still, it had its light relief we shall laugh for along time at the 'Its no bloody Santa Claus anyway' given by a wetly exasperated Jock to the persistent high-pitched 'Who's there?' yelled by some optimistic German sentry when we landed.'*

The Regiment can be justly proud of the pages added to its illustrious history by the 6th and 7th Battalions in the Cameronians' second Walcheren campaign.

Mike Sixsmith

Sources:

- i. The Cameronians in the BLA, The Covenanter, March 1945
- ii. The Cameronians in Walcheren, The Covenanter, September 1945
- iii. War Diary, 6th Cameronians, October/November 1944
- iv. Tug of War by W Denis Whitaker, DSO & Shelagh Whitaker

v. History of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), Vol III Brig C N Barclay CBE, DSO

vi. Brig. A I Buchanan Dunlop CBE DSO, letter written on Armistice Day 1985

vii. The Battle of the Scheidt Estuary, 1980 Handbook van de tweede Wereldoorlog, Uitgeverij Het Spectrum (Translated by Annelies Verkerk, British Embassy)

viii. 'As if it happened yesterday' Thijs & Marie Way, November 2004

ix. If -. by Rudyard Kipling

The following Cameronian Veterans and others are known to have attended the commemoration events under the auspices of the 156 brigade Association (with apologies for any errors or omissions):

#### 6th Cameronians

Bill Millar, Sgt (& son) B Coy,

James Marler

Tommy Mackle B Coy 6th Bn

Joe Dunn (& niece)

Mrs Robertson (& sister) *Cousin of Thomas Beglin, the first Cameronian to be killed during Baarland landing*

#### 7th Cameronians

James Nightingale (& wife)

Bill Bourse (& wife)

Alex Adam (& wife)

John Kelly

John Stevenson (& wife)

John Fenn (& son)

Bill Morris

Glynis Grant, Mrs

Len Horn

#### 5th HLI

John Deuchars

John Regan

#### 4th/5th Royal Scots Fusiliers

Jim Munro (& son)

Duncan McArthur

Bill Forsyth

Sam Hinchliff (& wife)

John Withers (& son)

Mary Schofield (Mrs)

#### 243 Fd Pk Coy RE

James Anderson MBE JP

Ken Hosie

## The Forces Pension Society

The aims of the Society are to secure equitable and justified conditions in the Armed Forces Pension Scheme for all ranks of all three Services, both serving and retired and for their widows, widowers and dependants that recognise the unique commitment they make and have made to their country and which are in line with modern practice and to advise and assist members of the Society on pension problems and related issues.

The Society promotes these aims, in co-operation with other Service and civilian organisations and lobbies Government, Parliament, the MoD and the Armed Forces leadership responsible and by all reasonable means to secure improvements. Members are kept informed of the Society's activities through its Journal **Pennant**.

The Society is funded by its members and is wholly independent. It is not a charity, but it is a not-for-profit company. It has a small charitable arm in its Widows' Fund from which agreed activities, such as fighting widows - cases, can be funded.

Anyone interested in membership should contact the Membership Secretary, Mr AG Hardie Tel 0207 820 9988

## New Book

### The Thin Red Line

*War, Empire and Visions of Scotland*  
Stuart Allen and Allan Carswell

Allan Carswell and Stuart Allen are curators of Military History at the National Museums of Scotland.

War and military service have shaped the way the world sees Scotland and the way the Scots see themselves. Inspired by the collections of the National Museums of Scotland, the authors uncover the historical forces behind this phenomenon, exploring the impact of war on generations of Scots.

Published by NMS Enterprises Limited National Museums of Scotland, Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1JF RRP £12.99

'The National War Museum of Scotland today forms part of the National Museum of Scotland, a body whose collections span the range of human activity in Scotland and reflect Scotland's interaction with the rest of the world. Yet the National War Museum sits a little apart, at home in Edinburgh Castle, an ancient military stronghold perched high on the rock above Scotland's capital city. The Museum's presence there is testament to the fact that the notion of a

Scottish military tradition was once felt to be something absolutely central to our national history, to our national character even.'

## The Aden Veterans Association

The Aden Veterans Association was formed in March 2000 by Mr John Hotston and Mr Ernest Izzard both ex members of the Royal Sussex Regiment. Their aim, as remains the aim of the Association, was to bring together as many as possible of the thousands of ex service and civilian personnel who either served or worked in Aden. Through our database file of members we are managing to put some of those old comrades in touch with each other once again.

Membership figures are constantly increasing and present numbers are in excess of 1000. At the moment there exists a very strong membership in Scotland and readers interested in joining should contact the Membership Secretary Mr Terry Fowler Tel 01945 860819 email: terryfowler@btinternetcom

## In order to Kill the Enemy by Tom Gore

### Home Guard

On reflection, looking back after some fifty-nine to sixty years, my military service started when at the age of fifteen and a half years I volunteered, being accepted at the age of sixteen years.

I use the word military loosely at this stage, though the L.D.V. days were past, (Local Defence Volunteers) - the now so called Dad's Army. We were at this stage, about 1941, well equipped, hobnailed boots, steel helmets and all, with rifle and bayonet, standing guard every fourth night on the cliffs in all weathers and training on Sunday mornings. The young ones too young for military service, then a large gap; of the old ones, most had seen service in the 1914 - 18 war.

Most of the training ended up in the Waterside Arms Hotel. The older ones had their pints, for us a half pint of shandy. This was to go on for two and a half years.

### Employment

At the age of fourteen years in August 1939, a month before the war was declared, I started as a butcher's boy at 11/- ( 55p ) at the local Co-op.

My main job was mornings with my carrier bike with a big basket on the front in all weathers, to collect and deliver the orders, then in the afternoons make the sausages or cook and bag the pounds of dripping etc. As the war years progressed and meat got rationed, the meat in the sausages got less, but we made more with the same amount of meat. Rabbits became a lot more popular to stretch out the rations. Before we went on our rounds we had to skin a load of rabbits, a very cold job on a frosty morning.

After working for one year, my wages were increased to 11/6 (57<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>p). All was taken home and handed over to help the family's poor budget, getting back six pence spending money. But of course, money went a lot further in those days.

### **Food (Or the lack of it)**

There were then during the lean days of the Depression, the 1925 - 30s, six of us kids to feed, with father on the dole and money very scarce. It was the bread and jam days, some times this being the only food in the house. Once and sometimes twice a week, the big bell in the market square rang. We and all the other poor kids answered with our big basins and spoons, lining up outside the Soup Kitchen for our main meal of the week - a basin of thick stew with a hunk of bread.

Rabbits featured a lot in our feeding, which Father and another out of work family man caught with their ferrets and nets. There was a plentiful supply in the surrounding woods and country, so it was rabbit stew, pie or roast, with plenty of cabbage, turnip and potatoes, which most of the time also came from the surrounding countryside.

We managed to survive (without going into too much detail), until 1939 when the war started, there now being eight of us, six brothers, two sisters, we became better off, because when rationing came in, being a large family, we had ten ration books.

### **Clothing**

With money in very short supply and now eight of us kids to be clothed, (the eldest born 1923 to the youngest born 1939), it worked on the hand-me-down system. When the woollen garments got too bad to hand down, they were ripped out, a job that the older of us were given. Mum was always knitting pullovers, stockings, gloves and great big scarves that wrapped around you with a safety pin at the

back. If mother was not knitting, she would be darning or patching. Many of the garments had patches sewn to patches. Mother was never idle. Keeping us all in footwear was another big problem and many a time a hole was patched up with a piece of cardboard.

### **Bath**

We were poor as many a large family was at those times. The saying was cleanliness was next to godliness. We were always made to have a good wash under the cold tap, under supervision everyday. Saturday night was bath night. The big tin bath was placed in front of the kitchen range, the big kettle and saucepans boiling away, the fire aglow, starting with the next one up from the baby to the oldest we were all one at a time washed from top to bottom in carbolic soap. Then we were' all given a large spoon of opening medicine - Syrup of figs.

### **Washday**

Mondays was washday. On Sundays we all had clean clothes, so on Mondays the big stone built copper in the corner of the stone floor kitchen was lit and all the last week's dirty clothes were boiled. It was a full day's job again for the never resting Mum. Boiling, then rinsing twice, then it was the turn of the giant mangle out in the yard, the clothes being squeezed through two big wooden rollers that were turned by a big wheel with a handle on the side, and onto the clothes lines to blowout and dry. If the weather was kind, the next day was ironing with flat irons that were heated up on the kitchen range. The way to test to see if they were hot enough was to spit on them. If the spit bubbled and shot off, it was hot enough, if it stayed, the iron wasn't hot enough.

### **Fuel**

We did have a gaslight in the downstairs rooms in our rented house, which very often popped and dimmed and then went out, telling us that the meter had run out. As very often there was no money to replenish it, it was back to candle power - two candlesticks on the mantelpiece over the kitchen range. All the cooking and heating was done by fuel-fed fires. The coalman called once a week with his horse and cart. The best fuel was coal. This was also the dearest, so this was used to start the fires off, then they were banked up with coke, which was much cheaper. At the weekends and holidays, the oldest of us took an old pram and some string to the

woods outside the town, coming back loaded with wood and pulling a large branch that we cut up into logs with an old rusty saw.

### Education

At the age of five years I started at the Infants School, very basic I remember, more like a nursery - a lot of playtimes. One thing we did learn was discipline. In those days the rule was children were 'seen but not heard'. One thing I do remember learning was how to lace up my shoes and how to tie a bow. If you made too much noise or got up to any mischief, a slap on the top of the legs was permissible.

Then on reaching the age of seven years, I transferred to what we called the 'big boys' school. The discipline here was ruled by the cane, standing out in the front of the class holding your arm at full stretch, palms up, the teacher swiped his bamboo cane down hard on your upturned hand, one, two, or sometimes up to four strokes. A sharp pain and a tingling sensation, clenching the fist and grinding your teeth returning to your desk. The thing was not to express your feelings by crying, with the rest of the class watching. We learnt to read, write with an ink well and a pen with a bent nib. This often resulted in making an ink blot or two. The end product for this, though it was no fault of your own, was two stripes with the cane. Sums we were taught, but we never reached the stage of mathematics.

I did move to a newly built school at the age of thirteen and a half years, teaching us gardening, woodwork and art, which I found more interesting. But we all still got the cane. Very few in those days could say they enjoyed their schooldays.

### Religion

There were many churches and chapels in the smallish town in those days, all very well patronised. Sunday was as preached, 'a day of rest'. We were all brought up as Church of England (C of Es), Father being of a strong Christian family and C of E, but he did turn during the coming war years and after to Spiritualism, and it must be said that some of the things he predicted, through his so called Spirit guide and the tea leaves, left food for thought and were later authenticated.

It was Sunday school on Sunday afternoons for us kids. At a very young age I remember repeating time after time 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil. My rod

and staff will comfort me'. I didn't know then how true it was to become in 1944-45. The only large difference at the time was no rod or staff. My comfort was my rifle, bayonet, steel helmet and spade. It must have resembled the valley of Hell, shrapnel exploding, and tearing limbs from bodies. Fate had thrown us humans together and into the valleys of Hell, because that's the only way to describe what it was like to be an infantryman at the front of the battle, his ranks and comrades decreasing, as the shelling and bullets took their toll. Try to forget it, but I find the only way to express myself is through writing about it. If told verbally it sounds as if you are glorifying, but there is no glory, just the plain facts. The things and sights that entered the mind, some fifty to sixty years ago, are still there and move vividly placed in greater context. Is it right to write this under the heading of Religion? Draw your own conclusion.

## Conscription into the Army. 1943

It was broadcast over the wireless (radio) and in the newspapers that all males born between a certain age group (I being one of them) will register for military service.

At the age of seventeen, nearly eighteen as ordered, I reported to the local Labour Exchange (Job Centre) together with most of the class that had left school with me aged fourteen years in 1939, a month before the outbreak of this war.

We never then thought that we would ever be old enough to fight in it. As for some of them, the names on the local cenotaph now sadly remind us.

Before my eighteenth birthday, 3rd May 1943, I had had my medical at Exeter, surprisingly passing A1. About 12th May 1943, my call-up papers arrived by post. I was to report to Goojerat Barracks, Colchester, Essex, on 20th May.

The war had been going on for about three years and eight months. The Americans (Yanks) had joined us. North Africa had been cleared.

I left my butcher boy's job and my carrier bike, handed in my Home Guard equipment rifle and bayonet that had been my main comfort for the past two years, when every fourth night we stood on the cliffs in all weathers waiting for the expected invasion from across the English Channel that stretched out in front of us.

On clear nights the drone of the enemy planes could be heard as they passed on their way to bomb Plymouth and Exeter, leaving the glow of the fires lighting up the skies, the anti aircraft guns firing at them as they crossed our coast. The air raid warning was blasting its continuous warnings across the country. At dawn the longer blast of the all clear, then it would be home and change, and on my bike to work.

On 20th May 1943, with some Spam sandwiches and a lump of Mum's cocoa cake in my bag, dressed in my Home Guard uniform that I had been instructed to wear, with my railway pass, I said an almost tearful goodbye to my family, Mum, Dad, four brothers and two sisters, my elder brother being already in the Army. I boarded the steam train at my local station at Paignton, Devon, not knowing then that this was to be my life's greatest adventure, never to be forgotten, as this time of writing these memoirs fifty-nine years after shows; not knowing then that this was to last nearly four and a half years.

It worked out one year training, one year actually in combat with the enemy, 'except when I was wounded, the rest of my service keeping the peace.

This was the furthest away from home I had ever travelled, the twenty miles to Exeter for my medical being previously the longest. The journey to London went well until at Paddington with its many platforms, and it was by sheer luck and many enquiries I found my way by Underground across London to Liverpool Street, and got on the right platform and train to Colchester.

As the train puffed on its way, it left a lot of bewildered young men about the same age as myself on the platform. Then the answer came. A lot of corporals from the many barracks in this very military town came to round us up. One of them shouted 'All recruits for Goojerat this way', loading us onto a waiting lorry, telling us to enjoy the ride, 'because you will be walking, marching or doubling everywhere in the next sixteen weeks'. This turned out to be true.

The first view of the barracks did not create a very good impression. It was an old 1914 complex, rows and rows of two storey red brick buildings with iron verandas and stairs, with a large square parade ground in the middle. We 'debussed' from the lorry at the main gate. This was a new word for us, one of the many that we were to learn. You

never got off transport, you always debussed or detained.

The next experience was booking in at the Guard Room, the R.P. (Regimental Police) formed us into an orderly line with the police sergeant sitting at a table. After the first man reported, the sergeant stood up to his full height, with his shoulders back and spoke, glaring at us in true military fashion, 'You will always address non-commissioned officers (N.C.Os) by their proper rank, and officers as Sir.' Some of the more timid amongst us, this being their first taste of military discipline answered too quietly. The sergeant shouted at them, 'Stand to attention and say SERGEANT!

We were soon to learn 'Passive Resistance', meaning to take all the shoutings and orders, stay cool, obey, and not to respond.

A corporal took charge of us and formed us into three lines, a very mixed bunch, some in their best clothes with suitcases, all sorts of dress, some of us in Home Guard uniforms. We were soon told to forget all we'd learnt in the Home Guard and start again.

Then came the order 'Quick march, try to keep in step', and we passed the large barrack square, where soldiers were being drilled, the N.C.Os shouting orders. We came to a halt at our allotted red brick block' with the iron veranda around the upper rooms with the iron stairs. Thirty men with hobnailed boots clanging up and down them was a noise that we were to get used to.

A sergeant, who was to be our tormentor, together with a corporal and the worst one, the acting L/corporal, shouted our names, and we joined the allotted platoons of thirty men. The sergeant gave each of us our 'never to be forgotten' army number, that he advised us to write down - 14610251. I was now known as Pte Gore 251, always the last three numbers.

The barrack room was to be our home for the next six weeks in the General Service Corps, - the first stage in training the mixed bunch of us to become efficient infantrymen. Our barrack rooms, a short passage with eight or so wash basins at the end, all had cold water taps. There was a large room on each side with sixteen wooden bunks, one up one down, to accommodate thirty of us rookies plus a corporal who for some reason had a bunk to himself. The bunks had thick wire straps



with no springs in them. On each bed was a sack, called a palliasse which we had to take and fill with straw. We soon learnt from experience and the hard way that if they were over-filled, you rolled off them or if under-filled, you were sleeping on the hard wire straps. With a pack for a pillow and two rough army blankets, we got so tired we could 'sleep on a clothes line' as they say.

Our first army meal was mashed potatoes, chopped meat, peas and for afters rice, with a tin mug of army tea - hot, sweet and strong, the rice, sometimes with jam or sultanas. We had so much rice it was rumoured that we were being trained for Burma. The rice was now called 'Burma Road'. As it turned out this was to be our diet for the next sixteen weeks, except on Sundays when we got the luxury of two roast potato halves.

The next week was spent getting kitted out, being shown how to put your equipment together etc and the very important taking the two pairs of boots to the 'snobs' to get the right numbers of hob nails in each boot. Though seemingly a small thing, it turned out to be very important. If there was one stud missing or worn down, the snobs was open for an hour after parades. It was an experience to watch, about four of them hammer and shoe iron, at a lightning speed, picking up a handful of nails, putting them in their mouths, dispatching them one at a time. They sometimes had a queue of thirty men with two pairs of boots each, with seventeen studs to each boot, that's two thousand and forty studs. Quite a few mouthfuls.

Inoculations - the first of many to come. In fact as time passed you were afraid to report sick because they always found that you were due for another inoculation.

Dental - Before I got called up you never went to a dentist unless you had a toothache for some time, so I was in need of treatment. In two visits I had four out and some filled. Then it was outside, spit, and back on parade. The dental hut had a row of six dental chairs with a poor recruit being tortured in each, except the one vacant, that was to be for me.

Army haircut - the whole platoon paraded, keeping the four barbers chairs in continuous use. It was wait in line, then 'Next' to a vacant chair, still warm from the previous occupant who had left by a far door. It was short back, sides and on top. You hardly had time to sit before the cry

was 'Next' and you were out the far door, amongst the complaining chaps that before they came in the other door had had curls and waves. Not like me, I looked better. I was always a scrubber head.

In this first week we were all beginning to look the same, all beginning on the same level.

F.F.I (Free from infection) - this was another thing that was to be done many times in the years to come. Standing all in a line, as the M.O. (Medical Officer) came passed, you dropped your trousers for his inspection.

Cleaning our webbing equipment, - with Blanco, a green block of like hard chalk, wetted and put on with a brush, then clean all the many brasses. These things were to be done many times in the four and a half years to come.

'Spit and polish' boots - This is a true army saying. Put the polish on thickly, then with a rag on a finger, spit on the polish and rub it in little circles. Keep spitting and rubbing until a smooth shine comes through. This was called 'BULL', but as we learnt very quickly, it was the best way to keep out of trouble, plenty of 'BULL'.

Then we started a training programme, split up into hourly periods. Early call, the sound of the bugle, the tune sounding to the words 'Charlie, Charlie get out of bed', the next line of which is too rude to print. Then came the shout that could be heard from the orderly sergeant from the iron veranda, which was then taken up by the room corporal ' Rise and shine, rise and shine'! Grabbing your washing kit to get to the eight wash basins first. Because there were two rooms of thirty to share them, time was precious. There was so much to do before first parade.

Breakfast was burgoo (porridge). This I was to have each morning for the next four and a half years, always different, sometimes thick, sometimes thin, too much or not enough milk, depending on the mood of the cooks, quickly learning to eat all that was put in front of you, food. The once a week egg was never sunny side up, always hard centred. Still to be fair to the cooks, they had about one hundred and eight to fry each time! The most constant thing was the tea, the tin mug of army char-hot, strong and sweet.

Back to the barrack room, fold the two blankets square; fold the palliasse back, putting the squared off blankets on top; then the steel helmet on top of that; then in

front the Blanco-ed equipment with the polished brasses, your best pair of boots, sole up showing the right number of hobnails; then (eating irons), knife, fork and spoon; my tin mug, that was to become a part of me for the next four or so years, bent, chipped and dented, but that was to be the receptacle of many a half pint of char army style, hot, sweet and strong. The blankets and bunks all had to be in line, like a line of soldiers on parade.

Each man had an extra job to do before first parade. Mine was to mop the passage between the two rooms. Others had to clean the wash room. One of the hardest was keeping the room's table scrubbed white, together with the brush handle. This was done with a razor blade, scraping down to the wood. There was an empty tin used as an ashtray. This also had to be highly polished. Each man had to sweep his own area to the middle of the room, then it was another man's job to sweep and pick it up. All was very organised, if each one did his job. As time passed, and we got more proficient, we didn't use the ash tin, so it only had to have a quick rub, the table we covered with a blanket. Finding a spare brush that we stole from an empty room, perhaps borrowed sounds better, one for inspection, one for sweeping up. The passage only had a wetting. Having a good wash and shave the night before, then in the morning just a rub over with the wet corner of your towel.

Before muster, the first parade, came the order 'Stand by your beds!'

The sergeant inspected each bed, pushing blankets over if they were not to his satisfaction. Then it was the turn of the room, trying to find some dust, or find somewhere that had not been swept. If he found too many faults, it meant another inspection after parades. Muster parade - Platoons lined up along the parade ground for inspection by the orderly officer, or the R.S.M. (Regimental Sergeant Major), backbone of the British Army.

If they were, not on parade, the sergeant inspected us.

This was worse.....

'Attention! Stand still! Eyes front! Chest out! Shoulders back! Fists clenched! Thumbs to the front! Heels together!' all in one breath. It seemed to come out of his big mouth automatically. Looking at him all you could see was his mouth working. Then up and down the three lines, inspecting each man individually. This is where

'Passive resistance' came in.

Most of us only had to shave twice a week.....

'Have you shaved this morning?'

'Yes sergeant!~'

'Then next time, stand closer to the razor, get that bum fluff off your chin.'

'Am I hurting you?'

'No, sergeant.'

'I should be., I am standing on your hair. Get it cut!'

'Pace forward, do up your button, and put your hat on straight. Don't walk beside it.'

Another of his favourites, when on the march.....

'Stop talking Pte Gore.'

'I am not talking, sergeant.'

'Yes, you are. You're answering me back. Don't be so pugnacious.'

This was a new word for me. It was one of the sergeant's favourite words. It was a long time before I looked it up in a dictionary, and I wasn't.

P.T. - Physical Training. You never marched in P.T. kit, shorts, vest and plimsolls, always at the double or a steady trot, to the gym, to us (the torture chamber). A PT corporal took charge of us. There was a name for these corporals and it begins with a 'B', most were about 5'6' tall and very thick set, super fit, with muscles to match. The PT started off light, then as the weeks passed the progress became harder, up and down ropes, over wooden horses, throwing what they called medicine balls at each other and in groups passing telegraph poles, lifting them above the heads etc.

After the end of our sixteen weeks at Goojerat Barracks we became nearly super fit. In fact it was the fittest I ever was in my life, never been quite that standard since, though there was a lot more PT to come in the next four years.

Unarmed combat - how to take a knife off a person, how to use a knife to kill, keeping the blade flat, where to stick it between the bones or the downward stab, kicking in the privates, or fingers in the eyes or up the nose and twist, an army steel comb scraped across the bottom of the nose, most painful!, the downward chop or across the face, with the side of the hand, a kick in the back of the knee and of course the throat throttle. Always ending with *in order to kill the enemy*.

Square bashing - drill marching up and down, or advancing, about turning, the

N.C.O.'s shouting orders  
 'Swing those arms, thumbs to the front, shoulders back, watch your dressing, by the right'

Arms drill with your rifle.....

'Slope arms, present arms, shoulder arms, for inspection, port arms, ground arms, pick up arms.~

Bayonet practice, in battle order it was about one and a half miles out on a large plain. At one end was the Army Glass House, a detention centre. We were told some grim tales about the goings on inside, most of the inmates deserters, so' we were told to be good soldiers and not end up inside.

Spaced out in lines were rows of sacks filled with straw, some hanging on wooden racks, others on the ground. Then it was 'Fix bayonets', then in lines it was 'Charge and Shout', stabbing each sack. The sergeant shouting orders

'In out, on guard, shout !'

'To the next sack on the ground'

'Put your boot in to withdraw from the straw sack on the ground' 'That's the enemy. Kill him and shout !'

'In, out, on guard.'

'Go mad'

Swimming - with our towels, no trunks or shorts to the open air Garrison swimming pool. Then it was all strip off in the nude, lining around the pool, not allowed to jump in until a blast on the whistle, the non-swimmers in the shallow end. There was a hell of a splash as the thirty of us went in at once. If up the ladder to the higher diving board, you were exposed over the top of the surrounding wall, this turned out to be great fun as the A.T.S. women's quarters were next to the pool. If you waded with any part of your body, they waded. back with squeals of delight. Good job it was hot weather.

Route marching - started off short, then up to fifteen miles in the first six weeks. On the longer ones we took with us haversack rations, the first of many to come. Two thick chunks of bread with 'bunghole' cheese, so called because it was supposed to make you constipated, and another thick jam sandwich; washed down with water from the important, always filled water bottle. But we always had to remember to empty it and fill it with fresh, because the bottom got full up with crumbs and stale water.

Hobnail boots and blisters on your feet - thankfully I never suffered with blisters

because I was used to wearing boots, but some of the others that had been used to wearing shoes suffered badly. Foot inspection came after a march, lying on the ground with your feet up in the air, the sergeant inspecting each foot.

Foot care, was very important for an infantryman. Good tips were passed on by a corporal that slept in our room. The first thing he did each morning at reveille was to inspect his feet, cleaning out between his toes and trimming his nails. He taught us foot care to make sure that your socks were darned properly and he showed how to darn them, making sure that there were no bits of loose wool, because this was what rubbed and caused blisters, a small thing but important to an infantryman. Another being a supply of toilet paper, because it was very uncomfortable if you got a rash in that region.

If you were unlucky to get a rash anywhere learning the hard way, if your equipment wasn't tight enough, it rubbed, causing a rash. Reporting sick, the orderlies painted it with a blue or yellow substance. It was not uncommon to see a squaddie going around with half his neck or half his face painted one of these colours.

The six weeks of primary infantry training were coming to an end. We had learnt first lessons of the infantry weapons - the rifle, Bren machine gun, Sten gun, PIAT (Projectile Infantry Anti Tank), two inch mortar and the Mills hand grenade.

First lessons, aiming, and judging distance. Mechanism mainly gas and spring operated. And of course loading and cleaning, this being drummed into our heads, some thicker than others.

'If cleaned and cared for is capable of a high and accurate rate of fire *in order to kill the enemy*'

About this time we went in front of a so called Selection Board, filling out a form with what unit or regiment we would like to serve in, or to be put in your trade as a Butcher. The selection officer looking up from my form said 'Who do you think is going to do the fighting when you are back cutting up the meat?'

Second choice, I quickly thought, anything but foot slogging, (infantry). Most of us had the same thoughts. I put down as a Tank Gunner. When the time came for us to be posted, all in anticipation of different units and regiments, twenty-nine of us got posted to the three Infantry Training Centres (I.T.C.) in this barracks, the

Devonshire Regiment, that I was posted to, the others the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, or the Dorset Regiment. The one man went to the Pioneers. A nice squaddie, good looking fair clean skin, not like a lot of us with the adolescent acne. Poor chap couldn't read or write.

Another lesson we learnt was from an older corporal, for some a very expensive lesson. Never play cards with an old soldier, because you never come out a winner, especially if it was his own pack of cards.

One of the sergeant's old soldier's sayings was when a break was due. His favourite was to say 'If I had a cigarette we could all have a smoke'. So someone had to give him a fag before he called a halt. There were a lot of old soldiers' tricks we were to learn. The more you soldiered the more you learnt the saying 'don't come the old soldier with me'.

The first six weeks passed, though we had been threatened many times, no one had been put on a charge, army sheet 252, a fizzer or jankers. At the end of the six weeks, some daft so and so came around collecting to give the sergeant a drink. A small group of us declined, well three of us to be exact. He was a big fat old soldier with authority to us.

He came into the room in the evening saying 'I will think of you lads when I'm having a drink tonight.' I thought to be true to our word.

'Don't think of me sergeant because I didn't give you anything.'

He walked towards me, I thought the worst.

He said, 'That's alright Tom, if you couldn't afford it.'

He was human, the first time he had used my Christian name, I didn't even know he knew it.

The six weeks Primary Training came to an end. We were all out of the new recruit period and had learnt the basics of infantry training. But there was more to come in the next ten weeks. As we were to find out in the next four years or so, the training never really stopped except for the obvious reasons, when in battle, wounded or on duty etc or of course if you were one of the unlucky ones that got killed. Partly for what we were being trained for, fate had a big part to play.

So we spent the day packing our kit bags, a long narrow bag about two and a half feet tall, in which all your spare belongings and cleaning material etc was packed. The worst part was the thing you wanted was always

at the bottom of the bag. Cleaning all our equipment and rifles ready for the early call and the big move the next day.

There followed an interesting period of continuing training at No 14 Infantry Training Centre. Then on to the 12th Battalion the Devonshire Regiment, the 6th Battalion the Devonshire Regiment, the 2nd Army Battle School, Llanberis, North Wales until in July 1944 Normandy...

## To Normandy. July 1944

After an early reveille and breakfast, dressed in field marching order, big packs with all our belongings in, best battle dress, spare boots, overcoat, underwear, socks etc., with our steel helmet strapped to it, made it a fair weight to carry. We had a small pack with side straps on our side, containing the very important mess tins and eating irons (knife fork and spoon), though most of the food was eaten with only the spoon. No need for a knife to eat what the cooks did best, stew. Also in the small pack we carried other essential items.

There were no haversack rations from now on. You either got what was called a 24 hour pack, or you got the alternative - nothing, until the next spaced out meal, stew: Then there was the rest of our equipment that seemed less important to us as the before mentioned, but was of course what it was all about - rifle, bayonet and entrenching tool, *in order to kill the enemy*.

The haversack ration-making days were over. The entrenching tool was soon to be swapped for its big brother - a full size spade, to answer the call when the shells started to unexpectedly arrive, 'dig in'. But plenty more about that later.

A draft of about forty of us infantry left Hove and the 6th Battalion the Devonshire Regiment, marching to the station. Leaving behind us the billets in empty houses, with the space on the floor to sleep on in crowded rooms. Most of us were eighteen to nineteen years old. Pte Alder was amongst us, very much alive now, but was to be one of those who got killed in our first action. Some were badly wounded. I suppose the lucky ones, if you can call it that, were the ones with the slight wounds. The ones that survived in these earliest actions sadly went on to catch a packet in the many future battles. About twenty of this draft were to join with the Cameronians Scottish Rifles, 15 Scottish Division. We were to fill their

ranks, to replace some of the many casualties they had had in the past battles in this killing ground of Normandy.

Our destiny was in someone else's hands, a very few got through without a wound, a slight one perhaps, to live to fight another day. As they say 'they laid down their lives for their country'. I can assure you from first hand seeing it happen, that it was they who had their young lives taken from them; getting blown up by shell fire, or a bullet from an enemy sniper, stepping on a hidden mine, or an unexpected burst from an enemy machine gun as you made contact.

A lot of wounds are too grotesque to explain on these pages, but I will give one example, then I will try to avoid any more gory details, but there were plenty of them like this. A young comrade amongst a group of wounded, with his leg blown off and the other with the sole of his boot hanging off, but no foot in it, his life slowly being taken from him, because of something over which he had no choice in life, of being born at the wrong time.

These are my thoughts after the years have passed, and you seem to be able to put things of the past into the right perspective. A lot of these thoughts have been stored for so long in the mind, always there, thought of sometimes, like in the night, if unable to sleep. And as I write they come flooding back, never to be forgotten, and I'm not coming the old soldiers' tales, sometimes exaggerated. This is in its full authenticity.

At the end of our journey, it was always a surprise to find out where the end of the destination was, because in most cases no one ever told you. In this case it was Aldershot. After marching out of town to a massive transit camp, rows and rows of tents and troops on the move, the loud speakers gave out our orders. We were allotted to tents, amongst the jungle, the number to each tent seemed to be impossible to fit in, with all our equipment.

The first night it worked out one man to each panel. We only managed by crawling in under the side flaps, with our feet to the centre pole. The next night a lot of us slept outside in the open, with a ground sheet, one blanket and a gas cape. This was to be good practice for the things to come, only we had to discard our ground sheets and blanket, sleeping most of the time, sitting up in a pit called a slit trench, like a grave. But it was the safest place to be if being shelled or fired on by small arms fire, trying

to sleep and ignoring all that was going on around you, even the shout for stretcher bearers. You never got longer than two or at the most four hours kip. Then it was your turn to stand up for two hours and stay awake staring into the darkness. The enemy was over there and in Normandy most times he let you know it. But there was the quiet spell in the darkness, very eerie, as if something was about to happen, perhaps an enemy patrol. Then the distant sound of a field gun firing, or the scream and wail of the well used six barrelled mortar ('Moaning Minnie'). Then you were on the receiving end again, the whistle of the shell, then the explosion. The whizz of the shrapnel flying through the air, trying to find some ones flesh and bone to kill or maim. So it was down to the bottom of the trench and make yourself so small a target as possible and brave it out. Sometimes if it was really bad, it was a short prayer, 'Oh God'. This always seemed to happen in these situations. I had often called on Him this year, especially 1944 at the age of nineteen. I suppose in retrospect, it was a thing that I very rarely thought of, but now getting prepared, because this was the nearest time you could get to meeting your maker, if the before mentioned fate wasn't on your side.

We spent three days and nights at the transit camp in Aldershot, mostly spent on route marches in full marching order, and kit inspections. Most of us had our hair shaved off. It fitted better under the steel helmet and made us look more aggressive.

One of the last things we had to do, that didn't look too bright for our futures, was to make out a Will on a page from our part two pay books. Not that we had a lot to leave, about two weeks' pay, about £2 2s 0d. Of course there would be no funeral expenses to pay.

On checking the Devonshire Regiment records, it listed fourteen of the drafts from the 6th Battalion to the 9th Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) who had their lives taken from them, buried in military cemeteries from Normandy to the River Elbe, on to the shores of the Baltic.

We left the camp in fine style, marching to the station being led by a red coated band of the Queen's Regiment. As the train left the station, from the safety of the platform they played 'The soldiers of the King, we will fight for England's glory lads' etc., very appropriate for the job in hand.

The train took us right to our

destination, onto the docks of the port of Newhaven, where we de-trained. At a nearby jetty was moored an American I.L.C. (Infantry Landing Craft), that was to take us to our destination. It was late afternoon. On the jetty were cooks with Dixies of our main diet (stew), so we lined up with our mess tin at the ready and spoon in the other hand. We filled up with this farewell meal this side of the English Channel. The Channel that just over a year ago while in the Home Guard, I had on the cliffs of Devon stood looking out across for the enemy coming this way.

Up the steep gang plank boarding the I.L.C., the Yankee sailors sent us below deck to a large cabin with rows of chairs, being ordered to stay below. After some time late in the evening the loud speaker crackled and an American voice announced,

'This is the Captain speaking, you are now under my command. My orders are to land you at the port of Arromanches, Normandy. If this port is under enemy attack, or for some reason we cannot land there, my orders are to land you at the nearest point. This may be a wet or dry landing. Good luck. You may now go up on deck. Do not enter any restricted areas.'

The only troops on board were draft. The I.L.C. was not a very big vessel. As we got further out into the Channel it had to take on the seas and began to toss up and down and sideways. As we got to the point of no return in mid Channel, the sea got rougher. The engines revved and the cabin got warm and stuffy.

A white-faced comrade dashed for the stairs, urging. That started the ball rolling. The soup started to match the rolling sea. Soon there was a continuous dash for the stairs. Sadly some didn't make it which didn't help the ones who were trying to keep the soup down. The cabin got hotter and smelly and it was a great relief to go up on deck in the salty fresh air. As the ship rolled we sat on the deck, with our backs against the superstructure and feet against the rails. As we travelled through the night, other ships passed, flashing messages from winking lights.

As dawn broke, on the horizon there was the coast. As it got closer, in the distance we could make out a mass of barrage balloons, then the concrete blocks and sunken old ships that made up the artificial harbour around the beaches of Arromanches, Normandy. Our craft threaded its way through the large and small ships

unloading their valuable cargo, of which we were a part.

## FIRST ACTION - NORMANDY

We landed on a beach in Normandy, having travelled through the night from Newhaven on the American Infantry Landing Craft. Following markers we moved inland to our first transit camp. Putting us in tents they told us a meal would be ready for us in one hour. After settling in the overcrowded tents, lining up outside, the M.O. (Medical Officer) gave us a Free From Infection (F.F.I.). This meant dropping your trousers as he came down the line.

The quickly prepared meal turned out to be a steak and kidney pudding, still in the tin, hacked in half. (Lucky if you got the 'biggest' half). Plus a packet of hard tack biscuits, this being my first experience (but not my last) of hard tack, all washed down with a half filled mug of tea (char).

The draft of about forty infantrymen from the 6th. battalion The Devonshire Regiment, moved on to the next stage of our transit outside Bayeux.

After a two day stay, half of us were drafted to The 9th Cameronians Scottish Rifles, 46 Brigade, 15th. Scottish Division. That was the end of the comforts. Mostly stew from now on, one blanket each under some trees with the guns rumbling away in the distance. Then on to the 9th. Cameronians 'A' echelon on to 'B' echelon. No blankets now. It was a hole in the ground, called a slit trench, two men in each. The guns sounded much nearer now. After changing our field marching order (big packs) into battle order (small packs) leaving behind our 'bull', blanco, bootpolish, Brasso and brushes. Accompanied by an officer, in single file through endless lanes with high hedges we arrived at the 9th, Cameronians Headquarters (H.Q.) situated on the side of a hill, with two knocked - out British tanks, evidence of a previous 'battle for this high ground.

We were met by the Adjutant who gave us a brief history of the Cameronian Regiment. Telling us to try to keep ourselves clean and smart, which was very near to an impossibility. Being allotted to 7 Platoon A Company with a Canadian Platoon Officer, ended up with my mate in the corner of a field, on a two inch mortar in Platoon H.Q. Not a bad job except for the extra weight to

carry. There was a peculiar smell, in fact a stink when the slight breeze wafted over the hedge. It turned out to be five dead cows, blown up, with thousands of flies buzzing all over them, no doubt enjoying their meal. Better than us as things turned out.

After digging our slit trench we were told that the rations and a meal were coming up. It did, smelling somewhat better than the one over the hedge. But we, the new draft, had turned up too late to be included in the rations, so we just watched the rest of the platoon devour the grub. Luckily I had a tin of Sardines in my pack, so with some hard tack biscuits, my mate and I shared a sparse meal. It turned out that it had to last us until the following evening to our next meal.

Came the darkness - the order - 'get dressed'. Marching through the night, gutted villages and guns blazing away all around us. It was very dark. Turning into a field, the order - 'dig in'. We each scraped a hole in the ground, laid in it covered over with a gas cape. Trying to sleep. An odd shell or two fell in the next field to disturb our slumbers.

Came the dawn, there I was, one infantryman in a long line of shallow trenches like graves in a cemetery. Before the day was out some of these bodies would be in one, others very near.

Sunday, 6th August, 1944. 'Get dressed' was the now familiar order. Falling in in sections, moving off, passing a troop of tanks. On reaching a crossroads on high ground, with some very weary looking infantrymen dug in on the sides. There was a high pitched moaning noise coming towards us, a new sound to me. Bombs landed very near to us. My first experience of 'Moaning Minnie' a six barrelled German mortar. Throwing ourselves to the ground, the smell of cordite, shrapnel buzzing through the air. Yet another sound that I was to get used to. Another, the shout 'stretcher bearers' for the wounded.

The Platoon Sergeant shouted for us to 'move on'. Turning left down a high hedged lane we eventually came to a small deserted village with a very large orchard at the end. We spread out in a line. This was the start of the attack.

Moving off, all was quiet. Out of the orchard into a long grass field. It was a fine sunny day and this could have been a manouvre somewhere in Devon, the terrain being very similar. An automatic weapon fired, breaking the silence, answered by one

of our Bren guns. One dead German soldier slumped in a heap against the hedge, his steel helmet slipped forward covering his face: Evidence that a lot of others had been here, judging by the empty tins, rubbish and smell.

We moved on to the edge of a woods to our front. Then it started. With the swish, whistle and noisy bang of incoming shells, shells and more shells falling amongst us, 'Stretcher Bearers' was the cry. 'Dig in!' It is surprising how quickly you can get below ground level when there are a few, or a lot of shells about. Having dug deep enough to sit in and keep your head down sergeant shouted for myself and the platoon runner to move down the bank into the woods and report back anything we heard or saw. There was a path along the bottom of the steepish bank, the trees thick and dark on the far side. We were sizing up the situation when some shells exploded, hitting the tops of the trees and shrapnel falling like rain. Scraping a hole each in the bank I said the first of quite a few prayers that day. Shells, shells and more shells. Making the hole a bit bigger, dig or die. The roots in the bank didn't make our task any easier. I had no watch. Time meant nothing, except to dig deeper, try to stay on this earth a bit, or hopefully a lot, longer. An officer came down the path from a company over on our right. He passed us with blood pouring through the fingers of his left hand, which was holding a wound on his right arm. We shouted to him to ask if he wanted help, no answer he just passed us by down the path.

There was a lull from the shelling. A wounded Lance Corporal was passed down the bank with a foot wound. We were told to take him down the path to the road. there was no blood so we left his boot on, he couldn't walk. It was a cumbersome job, almost carrying him. After some time we came to a farm with six or so dead cows in the yard that had been caught up in the shelling. There was a wheelbarrow amongst them, So putting our comrade in it, we drove on down the path. On reaching the road there was a lot of activity. It was battalion H.Q. with the radios chattering away. The shells started to arrive - again. We took shelter against the hedge, getting as close as we could, almost asking the hedge to swallow us up. Fortunately the shells crashed onto the other side of the hedge.

Then there was a break in the shelling. A Red Cross jeep came up the road, loaded with wounded, two stretchers with bad

cases on the top, with others with less serious wounds seated on the sides. Plenty of bandages and bloodspots. The jeep stopped and made room for our wounded comrade. It dashed off up the hill, overloaded and swaying from side to side.

The shelling intensified and we dug into the edge of the road, trying to bypass the bigger roots. Another prayer was said in the mind. There were quite a few of us, from different companies. We had no idea what to do next so we stayed put, scraping the holes deeper. The chap in the next hole to me got hit in the neck. He put his hand up to it and ran up the road. Hope he reached the first aid O.K.

Suddenly the shelling stopped. Then a short pause. Three of our rocket firing Typhoon fighter planes circled overhead, then dived into the enemy lines with machine guns blazing, then firing their rockets. Then, three more, followed by three more. Smoke from fires rose up into the sky from across the valley. It was all starting to happen. Three tanks went down the road, around the bend and started firing. Our own guns fired, their shells passing over our heads. From behind us our Vickers machine guns splattered away, firing across to the hills opposite. All hell was let loose. After some time things quietened down. The Red Cross jeeps dashed up and down the hill with the wounded.

We were just about to set out to find the Platoon when, up the road came some of the Platoon with their mess tins. I joined them for a late breakfast from the Company ration truck a mile or so up the road, in a field. Porridge, tinned sausages and a round of white bread. Strangely enough, even though it must have been some twenty hours since the half tin of sardines, I didn't feel that hungry. Life had a different meaning now.

Back down the road, past H.Q., around the bend in the high hedged lane. Two dead comrades stretched out with their camouflaged gas capes covering them. The thing that always struck me was the way their hobnailed boots and gaiters always stuck out at the bottom. True to say - 'they died with their boots on'. Most infantrymen did. Further down the road was one of our tracked brengun carriers, upside down in the ditch with some more gas capes with the boots sticking out. On over a shallow stream by a partially blown bridge with just enough left to walk over. The three tanks were sheltering in the

shallow water, tucked away under the steep banks. Seven Platoon was digging in on the hillside across from the bridge. It was much smaller in number now. There was an odd number, so I had to dig in by myself.

Fixing myself up for a long, dark, lonely night. Just me and my thoughts for company. The Company runner arrived with orders to join the rest of the Company on the road. Forming in sections, it was back over the partially blown bridge and up the hill. No talking, just following the shadow in front. Farm houses burning in the distance lit up the night sky. We reached the crossroads where we started that morning. There must surely have been some purpose for what we had done? We had gained nothing, returning without a lot of our comrades killed or wounded.

After following the leader for some miles we turned off the lane into a field. Dig in again for the fourth or so time on that day of hell. We didn't dig deep, we were too tired. Two hours on, four off was the guard orders. But it all went wrong. No one woke me for my tour of duty. If Jerry had come over he would probably have found us all asleep. The Sergeant's watch which was passed on to keep the time was found between two trenches in the earth. Still, we had a good night's sleep (kip). After stand down at dawn it was breakfast. Porridge with salt (the way that the Scots eat it), tinned bacon and hard tack biscuits and the welcome tin mug, of strong, sweet char. We felt good that we were still in one piece.

The Platoon moved to another field. A better position. Only digging in once that day, Enemy mortar shells landed every so often to keep us on our toes, sitting on top of the slits, then diving in again.

The Battalion was a pivot to the rest of the Brigade, so we were told that we stayed put whilst the rest went forward. We could hear the battle going on to our left. As we were stationary a church service had been laid on for so many from each Platoon, I being one of those attending. The Service was held in a small field on a hill, with tall hedges of trees around it. The Congregation, us and others from other Companies, spread out under the trees, with a hymn book in one hand and a rifle in the other. With a fifty round bandolier of 303 ammunition and two live Mills bombs in our pouches, our steel helmets firmly on our heads.

The Padre arrived in the middle of the sloping field, opened his wooden box and



took out a Cross and two Chalices. He put them on the top of the wooden box, forming a sort of Altar. Putting his purple scarf around his neck he commenced with the Service. We started singing a hymn, the only one singing in tune, the Padre, isolated in the middle of the field with his Altar, with the Cross, standing out as if in defiance to all that was going on around us.

The Good Lord could not have been very pleased (or it could have been the other one, the Devil), because the shelling was getting too close for comfort, or Prayer. The Padre made a quick sign of the Cross and packed up his Altar. Without being told we all made for the partial safety of our slit trenches. A short Service, but one to remember. I can't remember the hymn, but it wasn't 'ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS'.

We had a sanitary pit (for want of a better word). Perhaps fly pit would have been a better one. It had a box on top with a hole cut in it. Only a problem if, in the middle of a 'session' the mortaring started again.

A road about half a mile behind us drew enemy fire because of the vehicles driving too fast, sending up the dust. So a notice was put up.

## DUST MEANS SHELLS !!!

One rifleman from our Platoon had to serve as a sentry to force the vehicles to slow down at this point. It was my turn. A shell landed up the road and I caught some shrapnel in my arm and shoulder. It turned out to be what was called a 'Blighty' wound. Just enough to be evacuated back to England.

After rides in ambulances, through dressing stations, we reached 106 British General Hospital in large marquees just outside Bayeux. The best part - to be sleeping in a proper bed, the first time for months.

Three days later things hadn't improved so, to my surprise, I was marked down as 'evacuate by air'. This did not go too smoothly. Driven to a freshly laid airfield I saw the Dakota transport plane parked in a ditch for easier loading this meant that the wing was lower to the ground. An ambulance backing up to the door backed into the wing, buckling the end of the port wing. It had a few creases about six inches, or so, apart.

Everything stopped. A mechanic arrived, a Flight Sergeant. He climbed onto the wing, jumped up and down three times, tried to pull a bit of the buckled end off,

without success. He asked the pilot to work the flaps and gave the thumbs up.

The plane was overloaded. Stretcher cases two and three high around the sides, with us, walking wounded sitting on the floor in the gangway. It was a fine August day flying over the Isle of Wight. Those of us who could see the wing kept a close eye on it for most of the journey.

Landing on the edge of a large airfield, with a last look at the bent wing, we were taken to the marquee tent by pleasant WAAF's. We were served a good roast meal on proper plates. We were then taken by train to Neath in Wales. To a small ward in the work house. The old folks who lived there did us proud, washing, darning and making sure that we had plenty of hot water. Medical care was first class with local doctors and nurses. The Mayor and other local organisations came round the wards with everything we needed including soap, toothbrushes, writing 'paper and many other things to help make life easier. The front row in the local cinema was reserved for us. The town people invited us to tea and concerts.

After treatment and some leave, it was now back to reality, To Edinburgh to be passed fit. Then on to Banbridge in Northern Ireland for two weeks infantry training. More leave, taking with us all of our field marching order - plus a blanket. Now another long journey to come. The only difference was that I now knew what was waiting for us at the other end.

(to be continued)

## Tom Gore - November 2005 Westminster



## Heroes Remembered at St. Peter's Church,

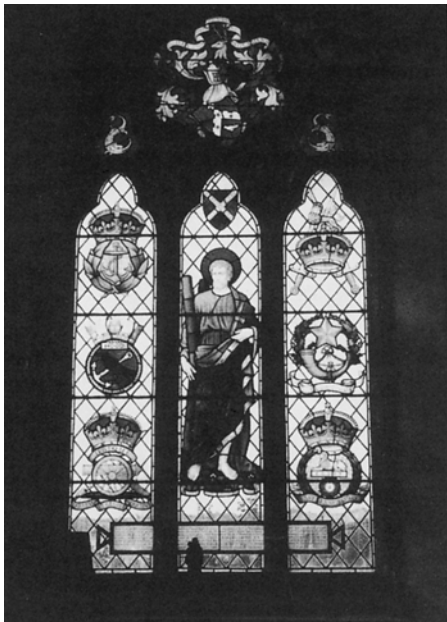
Newnham-on-Severn - Gloucestershire

Approximately eleven miles south-west of Gloucester, on the western bank of the River Severn, lies the village of Newnham. Its church, St. Peter's, stands on a promontory overlooking the river, across the Vale of Berkeley and on to the



Cotswolds. On the wall of the south aisle of St Peter's, below a Royal British Legion Standard, two hand-written Rolls of Honour commemorate those who fell in the two world wars. The frame to the left records, below the dates 1914-1918, twenty-two names of Great War casualties.

In the Lady Chapel is a memorial window to four members of the Kerr Family. Dr. William Charles Kerr was left property in Newnham ('The Haie') by his cousin,



Lady Davy, widow of Sir Humphrey Davy, inventor of the miners' safety lamp. Installed in 1946, the window is illustrated by naval and military devices, and provides a fine record of military service. One member of the family, William Kerr, died from wounds received in the Crimea, and two others, Royal Navy and Royal Artillery officers, fell during the Second World War.

Shown above the badge of the East Lancashire Regiment is the mullet (star) and stringed bugle-horn of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). Born in 1890, William John Kerr was a regular soldier. He received his Commission in September 1909, after attending the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, and travelled with the 2nd Cameronians to Malta two years later. The battalion remained here until it sailed for England on 15 September 1914. The Cameronians spent a few weeks in camp at Hursley Park near Winchester, then, having received orders to move overseas, landed in France on 5 November. The battalion had reached La Flinque by 18 November, and on the 21st took over trenches in the Chapigny sector. Here, on 1 February 1915, records the Battalion War Diary, one man was killed, and another, Lt W.J. Kerr, was wounded. Kerr died in England on 10 March 1915, the day that more than 450 members of his battalion would become casualties at Neuve Chapelle. He was buried in a family plot overlooking the Severn in the churchyard at St.Peter's.

Ray Westlake

## Who is the Cameronian?



This photograph of a Russian soldier and a Cameronian corporal was possibly taken after VE Day in May 1945. The Cameronian was probably either serving with the 6th Bn

or the 7th Bn, which were part of the 52nd (Lowland) Division. They were in east Germany and may have been standing near the Elbe?

The flash, above the corporal's stripes, confirms that the 52nd Division had been trained for mountain warfare by Norwegian units in the Highlands; they had learnt to ski, wear snowshoes, live in igloos and believed they would be part of the liberation of Norway? A former artillery officer of the 52nd told me that they had been trained as part of a successful hoax to tie up German divisions in Norway, which might well have been transferred to France to await the D Day invasion.

This photograph was printed in The Guardian on the 16th June 2003 alongside three other pictures of Leo Tolstoy; authors Maxim Gorky and HG. Wells; Tsar Nicholas 11, King George V and King Albert of the Belgians. The pictures, owned by the Russian Information Agency-Novosti, were part of a photographic exhibition at the Guildhall in London to mark the banquet given by the Corporation of London in honour of President Vladimir Putin. This was the first official state visit by Russia since 1874, when Tsar Alexander II dined at the Guildhall.

The exhibition called Russia/Britain Past and Present was held between the 21st June and the 6th July 2003. The Cameronian and his Russian comrade, displayed among the historical figures of the past, looked down upon President Putin, the Lord Mayor of London and many others who are making history today.

Bill Coughlan.

Capt. Cliff Petit, ex-6th Bn, wrote the following: 'Your initial paragraph is not simply a 'possibility' - it is a fact.' He goes on to reveal that the photograph was taken on the Friendship Bridge in Magdeburg, which joined the British and Russian sectors over the Elbe. The Friendship Bridge was a temporary replacement for the destroyed Adolph Hitler Bridge.

Can anybody identify the corporal? If we receive his side of the story, we might be able to learn something about the Russian as well.

Terry Mackenzie, the museum officer, states that, although there are snapshots of Cameronians meeting Russians in the 1945 editions of the Covenanter, he believes that the Novosti picture is the only press agency photograph of such meetings between

Cameronians and Russians.

Bill Coughlan.

## Tribute to John Terraine

Anyone privileged to compose a piece for inclusion in a Tribute to John Terraine will no doubt have a particular example of his work, perhaps a book written or edited by him, or a television series he has produced, which we hold in special esteem. While I greatly admire *Douglas Haig: the Educated Soldier*, and have enjoyed *The Smoke and the Fire*, as well as the television series *The Mighty Continent* and *The Life and Times of Lord Mountbatten*, for me *General Jack's Diary 1914-1918* must have pride of place. There are two reasons for this: first, my personal connections with the General, and second, the manner in which John drew attention to his fine qualities at a time when the ideals which had inspired him were mostly forgotten, or mocked if remembered.

My father served with James Jack between 1910 and 1912 in the 1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), the same battalion as I joined in 1948, and of which I was Second-in-Command on the sad day of its disbandment, 14 May 1968. Just before my father arrived in India in 1910, Jack had been made adjutant, although only a 2nd Lieutenant in those days of slow promotion. In his memoirs, my father recalled that it was a time when drill was held to be all-important, and Jack 'was a real addict'. The significance of this preoccupation with what some might consider an almost pointless aspect of military training should not be missed. It was an essential part of the make-up of the pre-1914 regular officer, about whom John Terraine makes important observations in his introduction to the *Diary*.

He starts by mentioning two main sources of information about the war. There are the brilliant books which he describes as the 'testimonies of Britain's Citizen Army', and include works by Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves, Charles Edmunds and others. There are also the records of the generals 'who committed millions of words to paper'. But what of the reactions of the regular soldier at the regimental level? John asks. Having posed several questions on this subject, ending with 'What was it that sustained them?', he finishes as follows:

*These are the questions which General Jack's diary helps to answer. His narrative fills in (deliberately) much of the detail of a soldier's life at war which alone can provide true*

answers to the great inquest into 1914-1918. This is not literature, as such; the language is the language of the mess, the orderly room, Standing Orders, 'reports in writing'. Men do not 'go', they proceed '; things do not 'begin' they commence'. So much the better; this creates a stiff strait-jacket for emotion and passion. If they can break through it, they must be powerful indeed. And, in my submission, they do break through it. With them go other qualities, not to be overlooked: a stern conception of duty; the keen attention to details at all times; the 'eye for country', sharpened by training - and by hunting; a sense of history, instilled by the Regiment. In short, this is a true chronicle of the British professional soldier, at a time when he was worth his weight in gold.

On behalf of two old regular soldiers, my father and myself, who between us were serving in James Jack's regiment for nearly sixty years, I would like to end my tribute to John Terraine with a personal expression of gratitude for *General Jack's Diary 1914-1918*. Lt Col John Baynes BT

## 'Geez A Shovel, Jimmy' or If Only They Had Known....

B Company were the first there. Trust them to lead the way to the fleshpots of the Hotel Post at Urfeld. But on their first morning there, as they looked out from the dining room south over the frozen waters of Walchensee and up to the pre-Alps which



surround it, little did they know that they were within marching distance of the scene of what has been described in the Guinness Book of Records as 'the largest robbery in the history of the world'. To have two weeks out of barracks was a luxury. The temptation to spend the time bounty hunting might have been too much for more than a few of them if they had known about the gold said to lie buried there still.

In a previous article I have referred to Exercise Snow Queen, the effort ostensibly to teach winter warfare skills to troops serving in BAOR but really a very good way of getting them out of barracks and onto skis. I do not know who thought of it or when it all started. It was certainly going strong when 1 Cameronians were posted to Minden in the early 1960's. It was still going strong when I served with the Army Air Corps in Minden in the early '70's, For all I know it may still go on though I rather doubt that today's army has the time and space for such luxuries.

My understanding is that all of the early 'training' took place in specially designated areas and camps in the British zone of northern Germany in the Arnsbergerwald close to the Möhnesee, the biggest and most famous target of the Dambusters. There was also some skiing in the Harz Mountains on the border with East Germany. But it was much later that the scheme was extended to the Alps which lie many miles to the south and in the American zone. 11 Brigade, of which 1 Cameronians was part, decided to set up an Ex Snow Queen centre close to the biggest and best of all of the German alpine resorts, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, which lies at the foot of the Zugspitz, Germany's highest mountain. This was established at the beginning of January 1963 and was temporarily accommodated at an American Logistics Headquarters at Murnau some 20 miles to the north. It was to this base that I travelled with A Company and where we spent two weeks discovering the delights of Garmisch, Mittenwald, and Oberammergau (of Passion Play fame).

The exercise was run by Captain Ron Gibson, then 2i/c of A Company. Under him he had half a dozen army ski instructors (mostly corporals) and the technical skill was supplied by a local instructor hired for the purpose for the season. Sepp Streidl was a man of volcanic temper and few words, certainly in English. (His most memorable expression, in a mixture of German and soldiers' English was, 'Das Wetter [the weather] ist s\*\*\*f\*\*\*!') He had the complexion of a true countryman - mahogany and was known to everyone everywhere we went. Not altogether surprising when you learn that he had skied in the German national team at the Winter Olympics of 1936. At that time the winter Olympics were comparatively new. There had been only three previous ones: 1924 at Chamonix, '28

at St Moritz and '32 at Lake Placid. The '36 Games were held at Garmisch-Partenkirchen and were the first to feature downhill (otherwise known as alpine) skiing and it was this discipline that Sepp was trying to teach us.

The US Army base was unmemorable except for the PX stores and for a large notice which faced vehicles entering the barrack circuit. It was headed 'Why Your (sic) In Germany'. (No doubt somewhere there is a similar one today: 'Why Your in Iraq.'). Those of us who used the PX soon became adept at mental arithmetic. We were paid in DM and the going rate then was DM 12 to £1.00 (it is now Euro 1.50 or DM 3 to £1.00) there were \$ 4 to £1.00 (it's now about \$1.75) so that meant there must have been DM 3 per \$1.00, right? We soon learned to switch from one to the other with ease. Murnau was also our introduction to the American Forces broadcasting service and their news broadcasts 'from the wires of AP and UPI'. Two programmes stick in the mind: 'The Early Bird Show'~ (sing 'Eaaaaa...rly' with an American accent for the full flavour) and the midday special which was called 'Lunchin' in Munchen'. Enough said: you get the general tone.

During A Company's stay new accommodation was found at a hotel which was used in the summer for elderly and infirm Germans taking the curative airs. The old part was on the site of the original



coaching inn (hence Hotel Post) and was still of a traditional design with lots of typical local wood panelling. The main accommodation was in a 1950's annex next door. Here Ex Snow Queen was to be based for the rest of the winter. Urfeld is at the north end of Walchensee. It is about 15 miles due north of Mittenwald and still within easy reach of all of the resorts

mentioned above. It should be said in passing that the countryside thereabouts is particularly beautiful. The mountains are spectacular and there are many lovely old and unspoiled villages. And this is true even now: it is still a popular destination for holiday makers, especially walkers.

The daily routine was always much the same. There were no parades or military duties of any kind. After breakfast we would collect our skis, shoulder them and walk about half a mile along a track beside the lake to a sloping field which provided our nursery slope. Here the first thing to be done was to pack down the overnight snow with our skis to create some sort of a *piste* on which we could ski. The party was then divided into classes of about a dozen each and allocated to an army instructor. We would then continue with classes until it was time for a break. At that point Sepp would gather all of the instructors to him and form a new class. The instructors were then put through their paces not only to improve their technique but to teach them how to teach. Falls were not at all infrequent and this provided suitable entertainment for the watching pupils. At the end of the morning we would then all walk back to the Hotel Post for lunch.

The pattern in the afternoon was much the same but it was usual then, certainly in the second week, for the whole party to go by truck to one of the resorts. Most of the time then was spent in practicing what had been learned so far. The instruction continued but it was much more a question of trying out our technique. We could also go by ski lift up some of the less demanding slopes and enjoy terrifying ourselves, as well as the few locals out and about, by heading for the bottom, more or less totally out of control. Just think of it: a company of Jocks, shouting to one another, arms flailing! It is worth mentioning the equipment at this stage and remarking on the fact that it is nothing short of a miracle that there were few broken limbs. Our boots were issued to us by the Headquarters of the German army Alpenkorps at Mittenwald and we will return to this establishment shortly. The boots were dual purpose: they could be used for marching up an Alp or attached to skis for sliding down. The skis were of a very old design: wood and with wooden soles. I suppose that in itself was something of a safety feature as one's speed was limited, to a degree.

But it was the bindings which were by far

the most interesting feature. They were what are sometimes called 'suicide' bindings. In other words once your boots were strapped into them there was no way out unless the binding broke, or the ski! Incidentally I can vouch for the quality of the boots. Having been able to purchase mine (I think) I was able to use them as a competitor in the Army Ski Championships in Scotland. Later yet I used them on a Mountain Leadership course also in the Cairngorms. (This course was the sole outcome of my application to go the Jungle Warfare School in Malaysia!) Their last outing was across the 18 desperately inhospitable miles of Rannoch Moor when they had already passed their 30th birthday. And a final word on boots: even Sepp, who sported the latest in boot technology, had lace-up leather boots. Plastic boots or those with clips were still some time in the future.

One bonus of the afternoons away was that when daylight failed and we could pack up skiing there was no need to rush back to the hotel. There was absolutely nothing to do there anyway and the weather precluded any ventures forth without full protection. As a result at least one of the three-tonners would usually be held to allow those who wanted to linger to stay on in the villages a bit longer. There were tea dances in some of the hotels in Garmisch (though few of us availed ourselves of that) but Mittenwald and Oberammergau were pretty villages with lots of shops selling wooden carvings. And did I mention the smoke filled wood lined bars? We also made excursions to Schloss Linderhof, one of the mad King Ludwig's palaces, and to the gorgeously baroque chapel at the Monastery of Ettal. They had a souvenir shop too, selling Benedictine liqueurs of various lurid hues.

So why were we not all out hunting for the booty? What was all that about? The answer of course is very straight-forward: we knew nothing about it. The first I knew of the whole story was exactly 40 years later. On the evening on 31 March 2003 I had settled after work for some not too demanding goofing and decided to watch a programme called Nazi Gold being broadcast on Channel 4. It was a good programme well filmed and with a great story line which went something like this.

In early 1945, as the Allied forces advanced on Berlin, it was decided that much of the gold and foreign currency reserves of the Reichsbank (the German

central bank) should be hidden in a disused potassium mine at Merkers, 200 miles south of Berlin. This was duly done amidst extraordinary secrecy and security. It left still a significant amount for the continuing war effort and in April, as the vice tightened on Berlin, it was decided that this should be taken and hidden in Oberbayern (Upper Bavaria). It was loaded onto a convoy of trucks under the charge of one Georg Netzeband, a highranking Reichsbank official, and this convoy made for Garmisch-Partenkirchen. Once there they sought out the local military commander and asked for his help and directions. His advice was that the Americans were already all too close and he sent them east over the small pass and the short distance to the Headquarters of the Alpenkorps at Mittenwald.

Once there Netzeband reported to the Commandant, Colonel Franz Pfeiffer, and was told, apparently, 'That's fine. Just leave whatever you have with us and we'll look after it for you.' One could understand if he viewed this with some scepticism especially when the Commandant declined to sign a receipt! That said, he had few options open to him and the Commandant had also persuaded him that the latest convoy from Berlin was only part of a larger haul of goodies which the Alpenkorps had to hide. It is thought that the remnants of the Nazi leadership had some idea of retreating to a mountain hideaway to rest and regroup and of course they would need all of the resources they could salvage.

Mystery surrounds what Netzeband did next. He was seen taking a small boat out onto Walchensee at night and to lower over the side a number of items. For sure it was not any part of the treasure. We can only guess at what it was but mine is that he was jettisoning all of the careful records for which the Germans are famous. No doubt they would have given details of the sources of at least some of the haul and it is almost certain that he would not want to have that traced back to him in the event that he were captured and quizzed. The reasons are clear. Much of the gold, silver and other treasure had been taken from the countries overrun by the Nazis. Some had come from the Jewish communities in Germany and in Eastern Europe.

After some delays while mule trains were prepared and men briefed an Alpenkorps party set off for the steeply wooded

mountains which surround Walchensee. The first halt was at a *forsthaus* best described as a barn type of building with some accommodation. How long they spent there is not known but it was presumably to allow for rest and recuperation for men and mules as well as for forward reconnaissance. Thereafter they took to the hills and the loot was buried. Some months later the US Army 10th Armored Division caught up with the Alpenkorps and recovered the bulk of the booty. But there is no doubt that they missed some. The Commandant, Colonel Franz Pfeiffer, left Germany after the war and settled comfortably in Argentina. The suspicion is that he took the precaution of packing his pension with him. There has also been a persistent rumour that there are still alive a few old veterans who know where some remains hidden. There was certainly a significant shortfall in the amount said to have left the Reichsbank and the amount ever recovered, hence 'the largest robbery ever'.

Now if B Company, or if any of the others who followed on, had known... As it was, the closest they got to treasure was when one of them snaffled the petty cash box! Trust B Company.

Philip Grant (prg@blutmail.ch)

## The 90th's man at Rorke's Drift.

Some years ago a famous author and former Soldier by the name of John Prebble, wrote a short article on the action at Rorke's Drift. This article began an unprecedented interest in the battle and indeed the entire Zulu war.

The public's interest in this war, soon led to the making of the historically incorrect 1963 film "Zulu" starring Stanley Baker, and a newcomer Michael Caine. Since then, much research has been done into the leaders, the battles and the Zulu enemy. Many fine books have emerged telling the story of the war and it's combatants including the role of the 90th Perthshire Light Infantry.

The value of Zulu war artefacts, such as medals, badges and weapons went through the roof. Researchers and medal collectors began delving into the service records of the individual soldiers who served during this campaign. From this research an extremely interesting story emerged concerning the

only member of the 90th Regiment present during the battle for Rorke's Drift.

Daniel Sheehan a civilian clerk and a native of Cork Ireland, enlisted in the 6th Regiment (The Warwickshire Regiment) in 1870, Sheehan gave his age as 18 years 6 months and he signed on for the mandatory six years with the colours and six in the reserve. He was allotted the service number 2202 and began his service in the 2nd Battalion of the 6th Foot. During the next six, years his service record shows he obtained the '2nd class certificate' and he rose to the rank of Sergeant by January of 1876. His, thus far impeccable service record, was damaged by his going AWOL for a week in June of the same year.

Sheehan was apprehended and tried. He was sentenced to being reduced in the ranks to Private. No fixed reason for his desertion was ever recorded on his service papers. On the 15th of December 1876 Private Daniel Sheehan passed into the Liverpool District Reserve. Here Sheehan's career takes an almost inexplicable turn. He left behind his reserve commitment, returned to Ireland and re-enlisted at the town of Birr. He changed his name to James Graham, he joined the 90th Light Infantry (Perthshires) giving his birthplace as St. Mary's near Dublin, his occupation as labourer and his height now recorded as 5ft 8 3/4in (an inch taller than his previous enlistment) and lastly he declared he had no previous military service.

Twenty nine days later Army Records caught up, with him. On February 26th 1877 he was arrested and confirmed for two months while awaiting his trial. May 2nd he was tried and convicted of the charge of fraudulent enlistment, he lost his 29 days of pension and good conduct service with the 90th in addition he lost his 6 years of service accumulated for pension and good conduct while serving with the 6th Regiment. He was also imprisoned till the 26th of June 1877.

On release, Private 1123 James Graham returned to the 90th and with the regiment proceeded to South Africa where in January of 1878 the regiment saw service against the Gaiikas and Galekas in the Eastern Cape Frontier.

Graham, despite his previous transgressions. Had been promoted to Lance-Corporal on the 7th of January 1878. He was not with the 90th when the regiment marched to Helpmekaara year later in January of 1879 on it's way to

Dundee and Bemba's Kop as part of No.4 Column commanded by Sir Evelyn Wood V.C.

Lance - Corporal Graham was transferred to the "Payment of the General Depot" on the 1st of November 1878, his years of rapid promotion in both the 6th and 90th Regiments was indicative of a soldier working in orderly rooms where promotion was always accelerated. His transfer also meant he became part of the Central or No.3 Column. The column commanded by Lord Chelmsford

The logistics of transporting a British army in Africa, complete with its Artillery train, provisions for men and beasts, tent's, ammunition etc. must have been a monumental task in 1879. The selection of well qualified clerks from all available units would have been made to facilitate the paperwork required to keep supplies rolling to units in the field.

At the commencement of the campaign against the Zulu nation, Lord Chelmsford and his staff decided a three prong thrust into Zulu-land would be the best initial tactic to find and destroy the bulk of the enemy. The Central or No.3 Column, crossed the Buffalo river at Rorke's Drift. The site was chosen as a supply depot and hospital as the existing buildings were ideal for the purpose, the location was near a ford which the Royal Engineers would bridge over to further the speed of supplies to the army.

L/Cpl. Graham was stationed at Rorke's Drift with Sergeant Milne of the 3rd (Buffs) also transferred to the "Payment of the General Depot" here with Staff Sgt, Mabin of the General Staff and members of the Army Service Corps, all under the command of Commissaries Lt. Dunne and Lt. Dalton.

The service of Graham as a clerk in the supply depot is important, as most published histories wrongly show him on the sick list. His service documents do not reveal any medical problems at this time.

During the battle of Rorke's Drift L/Cpl. Graham would have given a good account of himself. He was a qualified Musketry Instructor from his service with the 6th Regiment. Using the Martini - Henry rifle he was more than capable of knocking down the enemy at any distance the rifle could reach.

After the battle Graham and Sgt, Milne were kept at their duties with the supply depot until the 1st of September 1879. This

meant he was not with the 90th during the battles of Holbane, Khambula and Ulundi.

Returning to the 90th, Graham found the Regiment was being sent to India in October of 1879. While serving in India Graham was promoted to Lance - Sergeant in December of 1879 and further promoted to Sergeant in May of 1880.

In 1881 the 90th L.I. had, with the Cardwell reforms become the 2nd Battalion Scottish Rifles. Graham would have been fully involved in the evolution of the regiment into a Rifle Battalion. Shortly after this Graham was given a restoration of 6 years and 29 days Good Conduct towards pension.

Further promotion to Colour - Sergeant followed on the 19th of March 1887. In February 1885 he married Mary Ann Daly at Bareilly in India. He had also reverted to his original name prior to his marriage.

He was posted to the permanent staff of the 1st Lanark Rifle Volunteers on December 1888, he sailed for home on January 25th 1889. He was finally discharged in Scotland on December 15th 1891.

Alexander Craig.

## HAPPY DAYS

It was the last year of the old TA. In a few short months 6/7 Cameronians, along with the battalions of the other Lowland Regiments, would be pruned down to fit a new role as a company of 52nd Lowland Volunteers with all the prospects which that held, but for the moment we were enjoying our final camp at Thetford to the full.

In our second week a three-day op. in the field was taking place and normal Cameronian training weather, namely cold strong winds and driving rain regardless of season, had given way to a few days of dry, dusty, still, sunlit weather which shows rural England at its balmy best. The climax of this scheme on the third day was going to involve the battalion in a trek of some miles over dusty heathland followed by a sweep through woodland, culminating in a full frontal attack on the enemy - a Midlands para battalion who were rumoured to have dropped into the area in the darkness of the previous night.

Bn. HQ. was in a ruined farmhouse with a duckpond, straight from the set of a Second World War movie and as we all prepared for this final attack by the 6/7th, the C.O. said that, as battalion adjutant, it



would, alas, fall to me to stay behind at Bn H.Q. to organise the Bn transport convoy, which would appear by mid afternoon, to convey the doubtlessly grubby and exhausted, but exhilarated troops back to camp after this landmark in our history.

I looked at the shady trees round the farmhouse and the dragonflies dive-bombing the surface of the little pond, compared all of that with the prospect of a trek across the heath, some hours of prodding paras out of the undergrowth, then the sweaty march back to Bn HQ and hid my disappointment as best I could as we assembled the men and watched as A.B. and C. companies, at full strength, moved off in the late morning sunshine.

The three companies were at full strength because D company had been split up for the day and redistributed to make up the numbers in the other three companies. For the purposes of wireless traffic there was a D company, but it consisted of only one officer, one sergeant major, one radio and one Land Rover.

The battalion having set out on its offensive meant that things were fairly quiet at Bn HQ and the few staff left behind were setting about the preparation of a mid-day meal when all of D Company appeared and parked under a shady tree by the duckpond. Ian Young - for it was he, came across and, seeing our preparations, asked me if I would care to join him and his sergeant major, Niall Ferguson, for lunch. Thinking of our need to share our compositions I asked 'what are you planning to have?' 'Oh said he we thought some cold roast pheasant and champagne would be nice' without any question I replied 'but? 'we've put some bottles in the duck pond to cool them and we've got a hamper for the pheasant and so forth' - and so they had!

CSM Ferguson came over and chatted, before we ate, in a hoarse whisper, which denoted a very good summer camp. Many of you may remember why.

In the days of the T.A., when we were spare-time soldiers rather than part-time civilians, as the TAVR would have us become, summer camp was a fortnight away from civilian life when men who never even ran for a bus at home found the energy for so much more. For senior ranks summer camp called for feats of stamina and endurance, many of them performed not far from the Sergeants Mess bar. CSM Ferguson told me that he usually found he was having a good camp if he was hoarse by

the middle of the first week. This, which was to be our last, was 'a good camp'. Mindful of the need to celebrate it suitably we sat in the shade and fell with relish to eating this memorable lunch.

Suddenly, immediately to our front, nine o'clock from ruined farmhouse, there appeared a cavalcade - well two Land Rovers, bearing it was obvious, the Brigadier and staff, What to do?

The Thetford ranges and miles of training area were awash with game. Rabbit, hare, wood pigeon and, of course, pheasant were all there in abundance but the shooting was all heavily syndicated, so much so that for those without a syndicate licence it was forbidden even to speak sharply to a pheasant much less shoot it if it crossed your path. Added to which in July, although almost in their prime, pheasant were out of season!

The Brigadier alighted, strolled over and, with the formalities and niceties observed, was offered some lunch. Now was the moment! Would he like some champagne? Indeed he would. A little pheasant perhaps? He paused, smiled and took the proffered with a quizzical look, As he ate it with evident enjoyment the thought which troubled him, and all of us, made him ask, 'I trust, Sergeant Major, that none of your people have been shooting the game?'

CSM Ferguson was equal to the moment, his hoarseness adding to the solemnity of his reply 'No sir, of course not, these poor birds died as the result of a road accident'.

Stumped for a reply and with the champagne bubbles tickling his nose as he choked back the laughter the Brigadier finished his lunch, chatted for a few moments, returned our farewell salutes and was gone.

This one small short incident has remained with me all these years because it contains so many of the attributes which made, and make, services life even in the T.A. so fulfilling and memorable - initiative, resourcefulness, understatement, deference, and mutual respect all cemented together with the odd moment of high hilarity - happy days indeed!

George Ferguson

## The Malayan Emergency

In June 1998, Chin Peng, the Secretary-General of the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) gave interviews to the Observer, BBC2, Radio 4 and the BBC World Service to explain the MCP reaction to the

Declaration of the State of Emergency in June 1948. Although the conflict between the British and MCP was inevitable, Chin Peng said he did not want it to happen in 1948 at a time when military help was not available from either China or Russia. Later when the Chinese Communists were fully in power they granted the MCP shelter, medical care, education in China and provided them with funds to operate a radio station.

At the time the 1st Bn arrived in Malaya from Bombay in November 1945 Chin Peng was classified as a hero. He had been awarded the OBE, mentioned in dispatches and given campaign medals, and had been congratulated by Lord Louis Mountbatten for his leadership in continuing the fight against the Japanese after the British defeat and surrender in 1942. When the 1st Bn returned to the Muar area of Malaya in May 1950, Chin Peng was wanted as a number one enemy. Did the 1950 battalion have in their ranks any of the 1945 Battalion?

Historians have waited years for Chin Peng to pen his autobiography. It will be of interest to those Cameronians who served in the Malayan Emergency to know that Media Masters published Chin Peng's book called 'My Side of History' in September 2003. I have read it. It was absorbing to read about the Emergency from the other side and, in particular, to learn the reasons that led to Chin Peng joining the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) before the Second World War. In 1945, having been the leader of the successful guerrilla army against the Japanese, he had the popularity and British approval to become a successful man in politics or business: his life, and those close to him, would have been more comfortable. However, he felt the injustices of British colonial rule and capitalism so strongly that he dedicated his life to bringing both to an end.

Chin Peng was able to use declassified top-secret British documents to back his story. He writes: 'I am not asking the reader to excuse the past. This book is neither a boast nor an apology. It is an invitation to understand how beliefs are formed and how conflicts can start and abate.'

Although the granting of Malayan Independence in 1957 indicates that the MCP was near enough to defeat for the records to state that the Emergency was over in 1960, this is not wholly true. Chin Peng points out that the MCP was still able to attack Malaya frequently from their bases

in Thailand. In fact, so far as the Communists were concerned, the Emergency did not end until Chin Peng negotiated a peace accord with Malaysia in 1989. Not only did he, as he states, obtain 'peace with dignity' but he also gained permission for the old bandits to return home with grants of resettlement money from the Malaysian Government. Chin Peng was not allowed to return home. Now well into his eighties, his one wish is to see again his home village of Sitiawan where he can pay homage to the graves of his family and visit the familiar sites of his childhood. With sad words he writes: 'It is ironic that I should be without the country for which I was more than willing to die.'

Chin Peng reveals there was a possibility that the Emergency could have ended in 1955 when he headed a delegation to meet Malayan politicians and British officials at Baling in northern Kedah. The Chinese and Russians had advised Chin Peng that military imbalance was so great that he should attempt to seek a political settlement. Chin Peng offered the cessation of hostilities if the MCP were allowed to stand as candidates in the election before the granting of independence in 1957. In response the MCP was offered an amnesty if they surrendered. Chin Peng saw such terms as humiliation and said: 'If you demand our surrender, we would prefer to fight to the last man.'

Bill Couglan

## British Army Reorganisations

*In the light of recent events in relation to the re-organisation of the Scottish Division readers will feel that somehow we have been here before. The following extracts from the September 1967 Covenanter taken from a message by the Colonel of the Regiment on the disbandment of the 1st Bn may be of interest -*

'I should like to clarify and fill in some gaps about the Government's decision to disband our Regiment which is causing us all so much distress.

The various Councils of Colonels were called to London in May and were told that cuts were imminent.

We were given a certain time to consult our Regular Battalions and other leading members of our Regiments and were asked to inform the Army Board if in the hypothetical event of a cut in our Brigade we would wish:

- a. to retain as many traditional units as possible; or
- b. to recommend a voluntary amalgamation within the Brigade; or
- c. to form a large Regiment, wherein Regimental Titles would cease to exist

In effect the Lowland Brigade recommended course a, though we naturally hoped that we would be spared and if we were not we had no idea as to which Regiments would go. I, and many of my advisers, though not all, agreed with this recommendation.

Amalgamation is at least, a painful process and means the loss of two old Regiments to make a new one. We of all people, unlike any other Regiment in Scotland or the British Army, with our differences in history, customs, dress and drill, seemed most unsuitable for amalgamation.

Our forbears in the Cameronians and the 90th and then in The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) have written a fine chapter in the History of Scotland, of the British Empire and of the British Army. We all have an immense amount to be proud of.'

*That disbandment should fall to us, not least in the context of a similar situation unfolding in relation to at least one other Scottish Regiment should be seen in the context of the following letter (published with the page 43/44 revision to the 2003 Covenanter) from Major General Sir John Willoughby KBE CB sent to the CGS Lieutenant General Sir James Cassels GCB KBE DSO.*

17th Feb 67

My dear General

Yesterday, Leslie Dow, Commanding 1st Battalion the Cameronians, left on the completion of his Battalions' tour of duty here in Aden. I would like therefore to now put on record how this Regiment has completed its difficult and exacting duties.

The men arrived in the heat of the summer with all the appearances and bearing of troops seasoned in this kind of half-war we wage here.

They went straight on patrols and escorts; and from the day of their first appearance they looked like business. They have never looked otherwise.

And in many ways a much less easy reputation to earn under these trying conditions, they have won a name for exceptional courtesy.

They will ever be remembered by the families of servicemen and of civilians with

affection, not only for their qualities but in the crowning of their association with the Pipes in the open streets. And in the telling of this day by the ordinary words of ordinary families bearing the strains of tension magnificently, I have seen tears of gratitude and of pride.

They are second to none, and I am as proud of having had these men under my command as they have reason to be of their record and reputation so well and firmly earned in Aden, and in the Hills of Southern Arabia.

Yours very sincerely,

Major General Sir John Willoughby KBE CB  
General Officer Commanding Middle East Land Forces, Headquarters, Middle East Command.

*We can take comfort in the words of the Rev Donald McDonald (former chaplain for many years to each of our Regular Battalions in turn) at the disbandment parade in May 1968.*

'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.'

*Major General FCC Graham CB DSO DL (Colonel Commandant of the Scottish Division in his reply to the Colonel of The Regiment at the disbandment parade said '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. 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.'*

## Band Characters.

In the past year I have received surprise calls from two ex-bandsmen. Conk Valente I had last seen in 1965 and Dave Davies I had briefly seen in 1972.

### 'Dave' Ron Davies.

Dave, and his second cousin Johnny Emmins, had joined the band in Trieste in 1949 during Laurie Dunn's final year as BM. Dave remembers him taking and blowing his cornet on the regular route marches through the hilly countryside beyond the city limits of Trieste.

Dave, apart from his training at Kneller Hall in 1950/1, served with the battalion after Trieste in Hong Kong, Malaya and Germany. In 1956 he transferred to the RAPC to return after his training as a pay sergeant with another unit in Germany. After seven years with the Cameronians and fifteen years with the Pay Corps he retired from the army as a W011 in 1971.

Although born in London's East End, his enjoyment of dancing made him a natural choice to become one of the band's Highland Dancers who either performed while the pipe band played a strathspey and reel during tattoos or as part of the military band's concert programme. Alongside his cornet playing Dave used his pleasant tenor voice to good effect in our male voice choir items. We found him a pleasant, easygoing man who made many contributions to band life.

In 1969 I made my first contact with Dave since I left the band in 1954. At the time he headed the pay team of the 1st Bn of the Welsh Guards, I believe at Pirbright. To enhance his popularity he sang with the Welsh Guards Choir: the male voice choir was an important activity of battalion life. Also at this time he had a lucrative sideline selling insurance and, using his prestige and contact in the pay office, had made the Welsh Guards the most insured unit on the Army List. He invited me to go to one of the meetings of his fellow salesmen. It was an atmosphere of sell, sell and commission, commission, with all the excitement of human achievement with each layer of the chain sharing in the commission earned after each sale. To be taken on as salesman one had to memorize a script written in American English called John and Mary. To please Dave I sold one policy without the use of the script but it was something that I disliked and quickly dropped. Dave made a lot of money out of it: he carried the

experience and Pay Corps administrative skills successfully into civilian life after his 22.

Dave went straight into business advertising, creative design, training and the arrangement of conferences in 1971. In 1976, he had enough experience to set up on his own and was not long before he extended his business to the USA, Singapore and Malaysia where he lived until 1998. After three years in the UK his itchy feet took him to Spain where he organized and taught ballroom dancing: I hope not at Cameronian pace. In 2003 Dave returned home to live in Somerset. He is currently training to be a counsellor for the Citizens Advice Bureau while at the same time he is qualifying for his Institute of Advanced Motoring badge. He lives within easy distance of his five children, ten grandchildren and great granddaughter. Dave has and continues to live a full and interesting life.

Bill Coughlan

### 'Conk' Matthew Valente.

Conk, a native of Edinburgh, joined the band as a boy in Lanark in 1948. His name confirms that he came from one of the Italian-Scottish families. His remarks, and the confident way he dealt with people, suggested that his family were worth a bob or two. Thin, likely to grow tall, curly brown hair and an obvious facial feature, which gave him the name 'Conk.'

Not only did he look a bit like Harpo but also had many of the characteristics of the other Marx's Brothers. He was always ready for a joke and to convey a slapstick and chaotic attitude to life. Of course, this was not wholly true, for while still a boy he became the main percussionist for the band, which gave him the responsibility, often alone, for the large percussion family.

Although someone was always detailed to help him to move and set up, there were times when Conk forgot his music. Most of the time he provided the rhythm rather than individual notes. However, his busking was discovered when he provided the BM with the sound of the triangle instead of a clash of the cymbal or silence when there should be a drum roll or some notes on glockenspiel. Whenever he stood in front of the band playing a xylophone solo we had the feeling that the instrument might collapse or Conk might not complete the

exposed solo passages when the band was silent. As a Highland dancer, he looked exhausted and seemed to suggest the foursome reel might suddenly become a threesome one. He enjoyed playing the role of an erratic firework and, rather like Tommy Cooper, this was far more difficult than appearing competent all the time. Conk liked to argue with those who took their ranks seriously. He was popular because he provided humour in our lives.

Conk was always at ease with women. In between concerts on our summer tours I played putting with Conk as a ploy to meet girls. I noticed his Latin charm, the use of the right words to ensure that they walked with us towards the bandstand as we made arrangements to meet after we played off. I recall after we played at a fashion show the models gladly signed his drum.

He rang me in 1965 to say that he was a sergeant in the Band of the King's Regiment doing Royal duties in London. Having served in all overseas postings of the Cameronians from Trieste to Kenya, he decided to re-enlist in the King's to return to Kenya to be with his girlfriend and future wife.

As perhaps the solitary Scot in the King's Regiment, he had to reluctantly get used to being called Jock Valente. I told him other Italian names in the army would likely lead to Paddy Puccini or Geordie Rossini. He served in the King's until he was thirty-five.

In our recent Walter Mitty like telephone conversation, I failed to work out what Conk has done in his post army life. He lives near Bolton, seems happy and is well contented with life.

Bill Coughlan.

## Malaria in Italy in 1944.

I was interested to read Bill Coughlan's article in the 2003 number of *The Covenanter*. He asks, following a BBC programme on the subject, if anyone in the Italian campaign remembers an outbreak of malaria in the spring of 1944.

I commanded D Company of 2/Cameronians for the two years prior to June 1944, during which period we were almost continually in malaria zones. The battalion had many cases of malaria, particularly in Madagascar and in Sicily, often no doubt due to a relapse after a previous infection.

We reached the south bank of the river Tiber on 4th June 1944 and my company HQ happened to have the good fortune to

be quartered in one of the German pumping stations in the flooded Pontine Marshes which they had immobilised.

I described it in an airletter home at the time as 'the best all-round billets I have had since the War started - large buildings, well fly-proofed with gauze, - storerooms, MT parks, a parade ground, a lake a hundred yards away with pedal-paddled skiffs for bathing from.' It had apparently been previously occupied by German troops who no doubt had looted these skiffs from Ostia Lido on the coast three miles to the west. We were just outside the Roman remains of Ostia Antica where the Tiber reached the sea in Roman times; Rome lay 15 miles to the north-east.

We spent about a week here, and frequently bathed in this lake of flooded marshland. The water was clean and fresh, not brackish, and I have no recollection of any mosquitoes, nor of any subsequent occurrence of malaria that could be pinpointed as originating here. Our previous bad spells of malaria had all been some distance from the sea, and nobody suggested that brackish water was more mosquito favourable than stagnant fresh water. From the early spring of 1944 the RAMC carried out extensive spraying of all stagnant water in our sector and this did cut down the malaria risk tremendously.

The suggestion that the flooding of the marshes was an early case of biological warfare seems to me very doubtful. The Germans seemed to have been occupying the pumping station until the beginning of June 1944, and would themselves have suffered from the attention of any mosquitoes at least as much as we did.

Bill Crow

## Bahrain Headstones (Covenanter 2003)

Sir,

On my recent visit to Bahrain in July, to visit my family, we once again went to pay our respects to the young Cameronians, 2 Lt. Ronald Graham Boyd (died of exposure 25/8/57), and Rfn J. McLain Sunter (died of accidental gunshot wounds. 1/3/1957).

The Christian cemetery is at the moment being upgraded. Many of the graves had been vandalised, stones broken etc. also the intense heat of the sun, many stones are now impossible to read.

As this cemetery is not cared for by the War Graves Commission, all the work done

there is by the Christian Community,

Mr Herman, the caretaker, and his team of workers have taken great care of this cemetery, and it is a pleasure to visit, they are dedicated to their work. I hope that this article shows that British Servicemen are buried in small cemeteries, throughout the world, that have no official War Graves recognition.

yours etc,  
Mrs A Winkley

**Editors Note:** Readers will be interested in the following response from the MOD

**Directorate of Personal Services (Army) - Non War Graves**

'Our office has within its remit the administrative oversight of the maintenance of the graves of soldiers who have died in Service since January 1948, who were buried at public expense and whose graves have a military pattern headstone (similar to those of War Graves) (This is only a broad outline since there are some grey areas which have to be resolved on their merits). In the UK each service looks after 'its' own, but overseas the Army has a tri- service responsibility. The day to day responsibility for maintenance varies, according to location, but in Bahrain the oversight is carried out by the Defence Attachés office in the British Embassy and the work is done by local volunteers with local contractors taking on tasks as required.

As you are aware there are some problems with the headstones in Bahrain, but you can rest assured that these problems are being addressed. There are 21 headstones that require immediate replacement, of which 14 are Army and two of those are on the graves of Cameronians, as you know. However it is not yet possible to put a time frame on the programme of works being carried out as we have to liaise with the other services, the Embassy, Stonemasons and not least the Budgets people. That said the process is at least underway.

The process of providing headstones for soldiers who die in service - from whatever the cause - remains one of our prime tasks, whenever or wherever the family request.'

Notification has been received from the MOD Directorate of Personal Services (Army) - Non War Graves as follows:

*'New headstones for Lieutenant Boyd's and Rfn Sunter's graves along with those of 19 other servicemen have arrived safely in Bahrain. The new stones will be made from grey granite rather than the current Portland: it is hoped that these will withstand the vagaries of geography and climate somewhat better. They are awaiting a 'local contractor' to complete installation. Once this has been done photographs will be sent to you. You will note from the illustrations attached that after some research we were able to complete the epitaphs for Rfn Sunter and Lieutenant Boyd.'*



## Saturday 18 December 2004 Save Your Scottish Regiments Edinburgh Rally

Participants assembled in Market Street Edinburgh at 11am and marched off at 1130am to join the rally in Princes Street Gardens. From the newspaper Scotland on Sunday the event was described as follows

*In a parade headed by regimental flags and pipe bands more than 3000 former infantrymen, families of serving soldiers and various supporting campaigners marched down Princes Street, Edinburgh, to a rally in the world famous gardens to prevent the government-forced creation of one Scottish 'super regiment'*

Seventy members of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and Family Members organisation joined the parade together with four officers, former members of the 1st Battalion.

The following letter was sent to the Secretary The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and Family Members by a former King's Own Scottish Borderer Officer:

*Dear Mr Ballantyne,*

*I write to tell you how deeply I and others appreciated the participation of The Cameronian (Scottish Rifles) in yesterdays parade at Edinburgh. I was disappointed you were not invited to be placed immediately behind the KOSB contingent.*

*It was a generous gesture your taking part in the parade and I believe your presence illustrated the wider concern for the preservation of the Regimental system. There was many a comment that you were the best turned out group on the parade.*

*I had the honour to serve with your 1st Battalion in Kenya. It was one of the happiest years of my life.*

*My warm good wishes to you all and never let us forget your wonderful and historically important Regiment. Keep Going!*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Alastair Hewat*

*Major (Retd) AJC Hewat*

### Letter to the Editor:

Sir,

I was pleased to see your letter in the Evening News drawing attention to the participation of ex Cameronians on the Save the Regiment march. I watched the parade and noted the cap badge and rifle green glengarries although I doubt many of the spectators would have known the significance of these.

I served in the army albeit Royal Signals

in the days of the battle dress brasso and blanco and I always thought the Cameronians made the right decision in choosing disbandment rather than amalgamation and all it entails as can be seen today in the current Highlanders Regiment and most of the English Regiments whose history are now just a mixed up confusion.



As you say, there is no necessity to merge the Royal Scots and K.O.S.B. my grandfather and uncles served in the former and if alive today would have been appalled at the proposed merger, I have sympathy also for the K.O.S.B. However, what else can one but expect from a trio of academics such as Hoon, Ingram and Blair who have never served in the forces. As for General Jackson he is making sure his Parachute Regiment survives even though it is junior in age and has never functioned as airborne in action for many years, and one wonders why they are retained as such. The German army ceased using paratroops after ????? in World War 2 realising they were not viable. The French Foreign Legion have only used them twice in recent years in rescue missions in Africa. I suppose it merely is a macho attitude which retains the Paras rather than their operational role as such apart from which they are otherwise Infantry.

yours etc,  
John Thomson



*London March and Rally 9 April 2005 see  
[www.londonrally.info](http://www.londonrally.info) and [www.savethescottishregiments.co.uk](http://www.savethescottishregiments.co.uk)*



**Anti-Tank Platoon**  
 Sgt. Connel, Lt. David McWilliam (2/C), \*Capt Dunbar (o/c), Sgt. Strachan (Pl. Sgt.), Sgt Coutts, Sgt, Clarkston  
 \* Head bandage result of argument with smoke grenade.



**Back Row**  
 Lt. Jock Sawbridge, Lt. James McKay, Lt. Alex Quinn, Lt Fred Welsh, Lt Norman Rhodes (IO), Lt. T. 'Pip' Fairhurst,  
 Lt. William Menzies, Lt. 'Bull' Wirth (Dutch Free Forces)

**Middle Row**  
 Padre, Lt. David McWilliam, Lt André Trombetti, Lt. George Alexander, Lt James Parson, Capt. Dennis Summer-Smith, Capt. J.  
 Campbell Shearer, Capt. Michael Dunbar, Lt. Peter McGregor, M.O., U.S.A. Officer

**Front Row**  
 Capt. Peter Cambell-Black, Maj. Andrew Leggat, Maj. George Tweedale-Holland, Maj. Edward Walker (2/C),  
 Lt. Col Richard Villiers (c.o), Maj John Law, Maj. Thomas Scott, Capt. Willaim Leggat-Smith, Capt John McNair (Adj.)





*Lt Col Sir John Baynes Bt and Major Hugh Worthington-Wilmer at RMAS Sandhurst with 2nd Battalion Centerpiece (1st Intake 1946 55th Anniversary Re-union)*



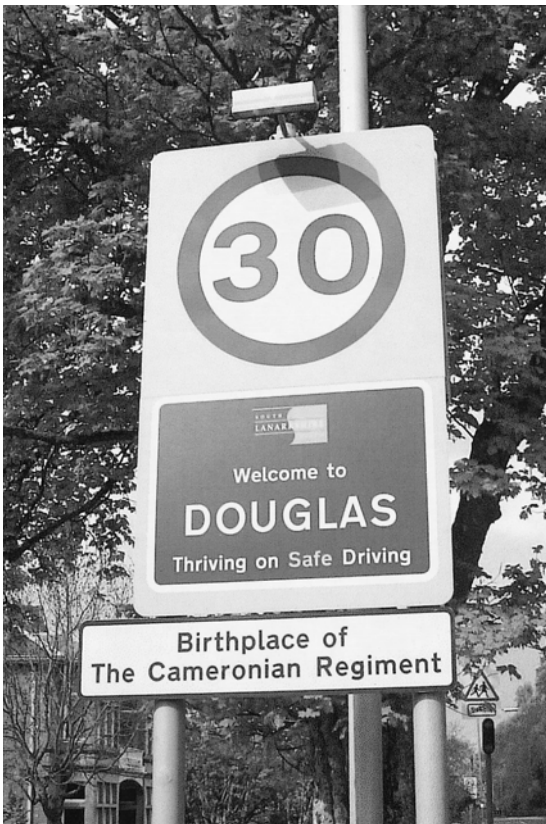
*Lt to Rt Don Turrell, Tom Gore - 15 Div Memorial, Hill 112 Normandy*



*Lt to Rt Bill Gough, Matt Stewart, Andy McArthur, Alan Halliday, Alex Maxwell, Andy Berry, Jim Hamilton, Jack Willis - Lanimer Day, Lanark 17 June 2004*



*'The Douglas Piper' Painting by Kenn Robinson  
(now hanging between two stained glass windows in Douglas Heritage Museum)*



*New Signage - Douglas*



*Memorial Window (see article page 47)*



*Tom Balloch, Sydney Scroggie, Davy Garrett (This is your life 1964 programme)*



*Pipers 1st Bn The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) - The Curragh 1920  
(Both photographs kindly provided by Davy Garrett, Achiltibuie Piping School)*

## Letters to the Editor

### Editors Note

Delighted to welcome back Mr Steve Fairie - so far the only response to 'Where Are You Now' (Covenanter 2003)

Having just received and read the 2003 edition of the Covenanter, particularly the section on where are you now?, I was somewhat disconcerted to find that I have been airbrushed out of regimental history.

I joined the regiment on 10 May 1959 and served until the disbandment on 14 May 1968, leaving to join the Black Watch in the rank of Sergeant.

I did my basic training at Winston Barracks in Lynedoch Squad, made up mainly of National Servicemen with a few regulars such as myself. The squad sergeant was Bill Tilley and the RSM was Jimmy Murray. Other names that come to mind are Sergeant Major McIntosh. ORQMS John Ansdell, Sergeant(?) Winkley ACC and I think the Officer Commanding the depot was Major J.C.M. Baynes and the Adjutant Captain J.N.D. Lucas. I think amongst the subalterns were Second Lieutenants Stephen and Craig. I was retained at the Depot for a year after my training, working in the orderly room, and other names that I remember from that time were the then Major D.B. Riddell-Webster and Second Lieutenant Buchanan-Dunlop who actually did his basic training at about the same time as myself. At some 45 years remove memory can prove faulty but I think the above is reasonably accurate.

I joined the 1st Bn in Minden in May 1960 and once again worked in the Orderly Room for a time. I worked for two ORQMSs during that time, the aforementioned John Ansdell and Eric Critchell (later commissioned). I finished my time in Germany in A Coy, company commander Major R.N. Walton and one of the platoon sergeants was Bill Todd. A couple of years in Edinburgh then followed part of which I spent with the Royal Guard at Victoria Barracks Ballater, company commander Major H. Mackay and CSM Ted Martin. Then followed Radfan Camp Aden in the QMs Department with the unforgettable late Major G.A.M Soper as QM and RQMS (later RSM) Ronnie Andrews. Back then to Edinburgh and eventual disbandment and posting to the Black Watch with whom I served for 14 years retiring in 1982 in the

rank of Warrant Officer Class 1. Many names now come to mind from my service with the Regiment and I won't bore you with all of them save to mention a few more who made an impression on me - Lt-Cols Harper, Kettles and Dow, Warrant Officers Sandy Henderson, "Jake" Sneddon, Johnny Burns and Sammy Robertson.

As I said I served 14 years with the Black Watch being posted to and exercising in various places - Kirknewton, Malaya, Gibraltar, Northern Ireland, Hong Kong and Catterick among others. On one tour in Northern Ireland, dressed in civilian clothes and with my hair grown long and trying to look anonymous I bumped into a gentleman similarly attired and with the same long hair who turned out to be Captain JJD Cox, Scots Guards and ex Cameronian.

For the last 21 years I have worked as a Clerk to an English High Court Judge, based at the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand, London and going out three times a year to various towns in England and Wales helping to dispense justice. It has proved to be a very interesting second career - one which has provided me with a fund of stories to keep me going in free lunches in my retirement (I hope!).

At 63 years of age now I look back on my time with the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) with pride and nostalgia. I hope, as a result of this letter, I may be restored to the list of those who served with a fine Regiment. I also hope, if you see fit to publish this letter, that I might hear from some of the many people with whom I had the privilege to serve.

Yours etc,  
Steve Fairie

Sir,

I would appreciate your help in a quest to trace the descendants of Colonel Robert Holden-Mackenzie.

Throughout his earlier career he was known simply as Robert Holden, and it is my assumption that when in 1902 he was attached to the 4th Bn The Cameronians, in the next few years he unearthed a Scottish side to his ancestry which was important to him, and he took the name Mackenzie and added it to his own.

I would suspect that if he went into retirement from the Honorary Colonelcy of the 4th Bn. in 1917/18, he will have wanted to continue to live thereabouts, where he had held a position of some importance.

Any regimental journal or chronicle of the time would most likely have registered his death and funeral. If I can find out where he ended his days, or was buried, that may give me a lead to his descendants into whose hands portrait of 'Craufurd' may have come. Portraits of Maj Gen Robert 'Black Bob' Crauford from the life are scarce, there is only a miniature done in 1798 as a Lt. Col. Of the 5th Bn. The 60th, and his regiment, now the Royal Green Jackets, would like to have an authentic image of him.

Yours etc,

Michael Howard

Replies to the Editor please

Sir,

I joined the Cameronians at Edinburgh as a REME Fitter.

As an Englishman, myself and others had to do Guard Duty over New Year period so the Scotsmen could have Hogmanay at home.

It was at Guard Mounting that I first met Pipe Major (Pipey). I can't remember his surname, but I'm sure you will.

Inspecting the ranks he spotted my safety catch on my rifle was off. I still remember the words he said to me, although at the time I hadn't a clue what they meant.

'Tak a muckle pace to the rear, laddie and fix the snek on your gun'.

Seeing my bewilderment he explained and did it for me.

The next time I saw him was as we boarded the train at Waverley Station for the first leg of our Middle East posting.

He was marching up and down the platform playing the pipes and as I recall, it wasn't all military music he was playing and I suspect he had been at the whisky.

Anyway we did Bahrain and left for Gil-Gil, Kenya, where I met 'Pipey' again.

The Cameronians were doing guard duty at an Ordnance Dump about a mile or so down the road and 'Pipey' caught an eagle which he brought back to Gil-Gil camp and built a cage for it.

At that time I was the only fitter on camp (apart from my Sergeant) so I was duty fitter every night.

'Pipey' found this out and realised I could get a 'work ticket' for road test easily, so most nights I took Pipey over the hills to shoot something to feed his eagle.

Occasionally I would get a bottle of whisky for my troubles.

He used to say to me 'if anyone is around, then I am Sir. If not, I am 'Pipey'.

He was a lovely person, I often think about him and wonder if he is still alive.

B Mead

ex REME Cfn Att

M.T. Sect. 1st Battalion Cameronians (S/R)

**Editors Note:** Pipey Mathieson I suspect

Sir,

During the past 25 years, there has been many occasions when I have thought about putting pen to paper, but have never made it, until now, what spurred me on is the thought that everybody is going to be dead and there will be no-one left to write to. A photograph was printed in 2003 Covenanter of the Temperance Hall in Keithley, where I was posted to in April 1944 from the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers in Northern Ireland to the 9th Cameronians. Only two of us were sent, myself and a bloke from Burton-on-Trent, S. Booton. Here we met up with Sgt Falkener of A Coy, 9 Platoon and 2nd Lt. MacGregor who was killed in our first attack in Normandy on the 27 June 1944. I was just two feet away from him when he died from a snipers bullet in his neck. I tried to comfort him but he was too far gone for help soon after this the platoon piper was shot and killed on the edge of an orchard and my best mate Midge Freeburn was also killed near by. The Major was wounded and carted off and soon after I received my come uppance but not really serious. A wound in the arm, although bad enough to be brought back to Blighty and sent to Hairmyers Hospital, East Kilbride for 3 weeks and then Redford Barracks for re-equipment.

Then it was back to Normandy. The Cameronians and Major Shearer who was a Captain when I was wounded, who indeed welcomed me back to A Coy 9th battalion when I returned and made me his Company runner - although a very dangerous job I must say. Upon nearing the age of 79, there wont be many Normandy Cams left, I don't suppose so, if there's any bits of info you would like, I would be glad to oblige before its too late.

Yours etc,

G. Moore

Sir,

Recently I visited the Museum in Hamilton hoping to track down members of the 6th Battalion but sadly drew a blank.

I would very much like to make contact

with veterans of the 6th Bn.

Yours etc,  
John McEwan  
Clydebank

## Cameronian Enquiry

I wonder if you could point me in the right direction with regard to the obscure subject of training at Hamilton in the summer of 1940. I realise that we are talking about nearly 65 years ago and that anyone still alive from those days will be in his mid-eighties. However, a letter in the next number of *The Covenanter* might conceivably jog memories.

In 1999 we mounted an exhibition at the Dean Gallery of an artist called John Coplans (b.1920). When Coplans came to install his work, it was his first visit to Scotland since 1940. After the war he went to live in the USA, ending up in New York, where he died last year. Having passed out of Sandhurst in May 1940, Coplans joined the Cameronians (in which one of his uncles had served as a doctor in the Boer War) and was sent to Hamilton for training. 'One of my responsibilities', he later wrote,

*'was to oversee the blocking of a small nearby loch with floating logs. I met a Scottish family who lived in a big house by the loch named Glen. They adopted me and I spent nearly every weekend with them and their children. I adored them. They were like a loving father and mother to me... In autumn 1940 I was seconded to the King's African Rifles and, sad to say, never saw them again'.*

I have been trying to identify the loch and house from 1940 Ordnance Survey maps of Hamilton and its environs, but without success. There are very few lochs (although a number of reservoirs) in that part of Lanarkshire. I can find a Glenbuck Loch and a House of Glenbuck, but they are some distance south of Hamilton, in Cameronian country near Douglas. Coplans's sentence is ambiguous because it could mean that the family not the loch or house - were called Glen.

Replies to the Editor please

## New Years Honours List

*John William Jeffrey MBE* for services to the community in Surrey

## In Memoriam

*To those they leave behind may their memories be happy ones*

### In Memoriam

Captain Archie Sommerville, Lanark, Aug 2004

Mr R Fox, Beconsfield, Bucks, Oct 2004

Mr Hugh McCumisky, Wishaw, April 2004

### Lieutenant Colonel Alan Campbell

Lieutenant Colonel Alan Campbell died suddenly at his home in Northumberland at Christmas time in 2003. His death will be a matter of great sadness to his family and to all who served with him in the Regiment. However the last thing that Alan would want is sadness on his account for he would be far better pleased if all who knew him remembered the happy times they spent together. Alan had not been very well for some time but notwithstanding this fact he continued to fulfil an energetic travel programme keeping in touch with his

family, old friends and Regimental colleagues and in particular those at Chelsea Hospital right to the end.

Alan was born in Maymo close to Mandalay where his Father, a Cameron Highlander was on an overseas tour in Burma. Both he and his older Brother Robin were educated at Eton and Sandhurst. Robin joined The Seaforth Highlanders and Alan joined the Regiment in 1949 in Trieste where he went to 'C' Company. He was a Platoon Commander there and in Hong Kong and Malaya along with Sergeant Willberforce. They, a formidable pair who took 9 Platoon on many hard, difficult but successful patrols through the Muar area of Malaya and in particular the notorious Bakri Swamp Region; a large hide away area for bandits. So successful were these patrols that Alan was awarded a Mention in Despatches for his personal bravery and leadership in that most difficult area.

In mid 1950 having completed the Army

Signals course Alan became our Regimental Signals Officer. He held this appointment with distinction for close on six years in Malaya, Barnard Castle, BAOR and the Persian Gulf. While using a radio in Germany Alan saved two riflemen from being burnt to death in their truck an act of quick thinking bravery which the Commander in Chief ordered should be recorded on his Record of Service.

While in the Gulf Alan was next made 'A' Company commander in Sharjah and took part in our Muscat operations. Indeed due to their Beverley aircraft crashing on take-off (fortunately no casualties but their plane lost its undercarriage) they remained out in the very desert for much longer than anyone else.

When at long last in 1958 the 1st Battalion was able to concentrate in Nairobi (we had for some 18 months been spread out through the Persian Gulf and rural Kenya) Alan handed over 'A' company and was appointed adjutant. His immediate task was to reunite the Battalion but this had scarcely started when we were under orders to move. Firstly to fly to Aden with the vehicles to go by sea via Mombassa next all by sea and this time by HMS Bulwark to the Gulf of Aqaba and finally by anything that moved to Amman in Jordan and to make it more interesting we didn't know why. A tough baptism for Alan but he made it. His appointment continued until 1960 when we were in BAOR.

After some eleven years with the 1st Battalion Alan next found himself undertaking a whole series of Extra Regimental posts which included the following:

- a. A Staff Officer with 2 Division in BAOR.
- b. Training Officer with the 6/7 Battalion in Lanarkshire.
- c. The Army Trials Officer researching the 'Jump Jet' concept.
- d. Second in Command of the Boys Training Battalion in Troon.
- e. Air Support Co-Ordinator during the Borneo confrontation.

Alan's stories about the four or five years he was away were always funny, he undoubtedly gained huge experience but more important he became 'staff qualified' and gained recommendation for promotion.

There was an even more dramatic success during this period for Alan met and married the delightful Sylvia. She with great charm and skill turned this wild bachelor into a

husband and proud Father; even Alan's dogs noticed the change for the better. Very sadly Sylvia predeceased Alan. Their married life was exceptionally happy and it was clearly very special for them both.

At the end of 1966 Alan to his very great pleasure returned to the 1st Battalion and took over as 'B' Company Commander. He took his Company to Aden and as he had shown in Muscat remained overseas rather longer than expected. Just a few hours prior to flying home to join the rest of the Battalion after a hard and tough tour on Active Service his Company nominally the Brigade reserve were called out to support the 3rd Royal Anglians in Sheikh Othman. Needless to say 'B' Company undertook the task quickly and with great skill. They were the last men in the Regiment to be on Active Service.

Alan remained with 'B' Company in Edinburgh during the Battalions final year and of course commanded his Company at our Disbandment Parade. Yes, like all of us desperately sad but also proud that he was able to stand with the Battalion right up to the very end.

He left Edinburgh to join the Queen's Own Highlanders, his Fathers old Regiment.

On leaving the Army he was for many years the Bursar cum Manager of a major Medical Training Centre at Cambridge University.

Alan most enjoyed the time he spent with the 1st Battalion for he was a real Regimental soldier who enjoyed serving and service no matter where or what the task. To serve and be with soldiers gave him great pleasure for he loved training them; looking after them and knowing them. He always found out much more about his soldiers that their Mothers would ever have learnt. He quickly gained their trust, confidence and respect. He had a delightful sense of humour; a man who never raised his voice except to laugh. A reliable and good friend who one always looked forward to seeing and whose company was always enjoyable.

I expect that many who knew him will be sad but we can rejoice that we served with him. We send to his family our sincere condolences but ask that they should rejoice in his memory with us.

Hugh Mackay

## Captain J O Robertson

A son of Colonel Alec Ogilvie Robertson, a pre-war territorial officer in 5/8

Cameronians, who after the war commanded its successor unit at West Princes Street Drill Hall, Glasgow, James Robertson did national service in 1 Cameronians in 1956 and 1957.

He served in Buxtehude, at Redford Barracks and in Bahrain and Kenya. He was a territorial officer in the 6/7 Battalion in the 1960s in the companies based at Coplaw Street and attended Camp regularly.

After agricultural training James became a potato merchant, working for much of his career from Glasgow and Baillieston before moving to premises in Dalkeith. He operated throughout central and southern Scotland and in Fife and was popular and well regarded in his trade. He married Mairead in 1962. For the first years of life together they lived in Glasgow, followed by Bardowie. Then they moved to Edinburgh and finally, some fifteen years ago, to Pencaitland in East Lothian.

James Robertson followed the example of his notably public spirited parents by devoting considerable time and energy to helping others as a Samaritan, as chairman of the Pencaitland community council and as President of the bowling club there, although he himself did not play the game, and in many other ways. Also, he stood as a would-be Tory councillor in East Lothian in 2003, but without success. James was a man of few words who demonstrated his strength of character as a loyal and reliable friend, helper and adviser, particularly in his immediate family where he was a devoted and steadfast husband, father and grandfather. His main recreation was fishing, particularly on Loch Leven.

James took ill suddenly in Kinross where he had moved a few months before and died shortly afterwards in hospital on 9 September 2004 aged 67. A fine and well attended service in Pencaitland Parish Church provided ample evidence of the esteem and affection in which he was held. We send our sympathy at their sad loss to Mairead, to their children Emma, Gail and David and their partners, and to four grandchildren.

William Carnegie

## Rifleman Norman Stander

'Charlie' Company. 9th Battalion  
Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) 46  
(Highland) Brigade 15th  
(Scottish) Division.

Norman did not have an easy time in his

early life living mainly in an Orphanage in North London, then with various relatives until he volunteered for the Army at the age of 17.

Norman, known in the ranks as 'Stan', trained at the I.T.C. in Chester, from there he joined the holding Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment (D.C.O) The 'Diehards', at Hounslow Barracks Middlesex.

When volunteers were called for in 1943 to join a Scottish Regiment he, with several others, (the writer included), travelled off up to the delightful seaside village of Alnmouth in Northumberland, where the 9th Battalion was stationed.

'Stan', who at 5' 10', was a big lad, so when he joined my Section, he had more than his fair share of carrying the Bren Gun. Some of those with whom he served come to mind but, alas, all did not 'make it to the end, some of those who did were, the Platoon Commander, Lieutenant (later Major A. Quinn 'QM'), Corporal Garlick, Rifleman Huxley, Farr Boland, Millburn Duck, Stanton, and big Harry Drury. Alas Sergeant Finnigan was KIA, and C.Q.MS. Newall D.O. W.

On arrival at Keighley, West Yorkshire, I was transferred to 'A' Company, so what follows has come to me by various means.

On the Assault in the Caen area Stan received a 'burst' of machine-gun fire which removed three fingers of his right hand, and severely damaged his lower abdomen.

On De-Mob Stan 'tried his hand' at various enterprises including a stall in Petticoat Lane London, and a hairdressing Salon, in the same area.

But he was looking for better things, so off he went to New Jersey, in the U.S.A. where he had relatives.

It was at this stage that I renewed my friendship with Stan having seen his address in the Covenanter, this was in 1996.

We corresponded and, at the invitation of Eileen (my Wife) and myself he came over to the UK. and we had a great time visiting the places of interest in and around the Midlands. He had become a Part owner of a Real Estate Company (Estate Agent) in partnership with a friend named Van.

Stan retired from active business life about five years ago, but still kept an interest in the day to day running of the office. He made good friends with all the neighbours in the Condominium where he lived in Egg Harbor.

I received a 'phone call from one of his



friends on Tuesday 30th March, telling me he had passed away, he was 79 years of age and died a Widower, his Wife Bette having passed away some years ago. He had children, but these were all from previous marriages.

Nat Gormlay

## Lieutenant Colonel Christopher J W Browne

'He didn't have time to fall over', a phrase used by one of his brother officers who skied with him, is an apt way to describe the whirlwind that was Chris. True in early adulthood, it remained so until the onset of the tumour that struck him down at a premature age and still in the prime of life. Chris was always full of ideas, of energy and consumed with enthusiasm for the moment. He was completely disregarding of anything that could possibly upset his plans and was possessed of a rare capacity not to be set back by the vicissitudes of life. Had he a motto, it would have been *carpe diem*.

Chris Browne - known in his first regiment, The Cameronians, as 'Broon with an e', joined the 1st Battalion in Minden on a short service commission from Mons OTC in January 1961. After some time at Redford Barracks, Edinburgh, he was posted to the Infantry Junior Leaders Battalion in Oswestry and was there when the 1st Battalion learnt that it was to be disbanded. He transferred to the Royal Scots, with whom he served in BOAR and Northern Ireland, before secondments with the Royal Brunei Malay Regiment and the Military Advisory Team in Sharjah.

He left the Army in 1978 and subsequently joined The Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF) in 1982 thus continuing a link with His Majesty the Sultan, Qaboos bin Said, with whom he had served in The Regiment in Minden; proudly wearing the TOS, introduced by the then Sultan after the Regiment's service in Oman in 1957. Posted to the Muscat Regiment as Second-in-Command, he had a very successful three years during which he was awarded the Sultan's Commendation Medal and promoted to Muqaddam (Lieutenant Colonel). He served as MA to the first Omani Commander of the Omani Land Forces (SOLF) and then with Commander Admin & Logistics until leaving SAF in early 1988.

'Chris was a man of boundless energy... Such was the speed with which he would

appear when there was a problem that within HQ SOLF he earned the nickname 'Zebedee' after the character on a spring in a children's TV programme.' [Journal of The Sultan's Armed Forces Association, with appreciation]. Previously, in South Armagh with the Royal Scots, he had been dubbed the Sheriff of Bessbrook.

Back in civilian life Chris worked with British Aerospace travelling to many unstable parts of the world, such as Angola. Latterly he worked as a Defence Consultant assisting a wide variety of clients from countries such as China and Iran.

He was a man of great compassion, who put others before himself in all aspects of life. Chris 'was always looking to see what he could do to help others.' [Ibid] Recently when a former Cameronian officer was detained for a prolonged period in Dubai, Chris ceaselessly bombarded the Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, with letters on his behalf. Christopher John William Browne was born on 2nd May 1941. To his wife Carol and his family we extend our deepest sympathy for their loss.

Mike Sixsmith

## Donald Gow

In March 2004, Lofty Hammond telephoned to tell me that Don had died peacefully in his sleep. His neighbours knew that something was amiss by the barking of his dog.

Don's wife, Margaret, had died a few years ago from an unknown virus. This was a great shock to Don, for she was a fit person who had paid attention to her health. Don met Margaret after he returned from Malaya in 1952 while she was working in the NAFFI in Lanark. After Margaret had finished her posting to the Middle East, they married in 1954.

Don, a native of Crieff, was one of the fifteen band boys who gradually came together to fill the boys' room in Hamilton in 1946. Don, unlike the rest of us, was already in the army. He had transferred from an Army Apprentice School to serve with his younger brother Ian. He began to learn the tenor saxophone. Having the longest service and suitable for the role, he became the senior boy. My most vivid memory of him was his ability to blow smoke rings.

Don and Ian will be remembered as successful members of the depot and battalion hockey teams throughout the 1950s. Early in his service he left the barrack

room to become the band store man with quick promotion direct to corporal. Assisted by another bandsman, he had the responsibility of the care of the instruments, keeping the music library in good order and repair while assisting the bandmaster with secretarial and administrative work.

We send our condolences to his brother Ian, the other members of his family and to his friends.

Bill Coughlan

### **Peter O'Hara**

It is with deep sadness and regret that we report the death of our chairman Peter O'Hara. Peter was a member of both the Wishaw & District Branch later to become the Wishaw & Shotts Branch. In his many years of membership Peter held the positions of Standard Bearer, Treasurer and Chairman carrying out all duties with decorum and dignity. Peter was born in Newmains and lived there with his parents until they relocated to Craigneuk, Wishaw.

When he was called up in the early fifties, he signed up with the Cameronians but completed his service in the Royal Scots. He served in Korea and after one action he was Mentioned in Dispatches for his bravery in protecting his platoon who were under fire, and his actions saved the lives of the men. He never made much of this as he would say he only did what had to be done.

On his return he married Rose and they were blessed with three sons and two daughters. Peter was very much a family man, who loved his garden and horse racing. His greatest pleasure in his latter years was the fact the his daughter and he owned a race horse and this gave Peter much pleasure during many months of the year.

He will be sadly missed by Rose and their three sons two daughters and their granddaughter. All members of the branch send our deepest condolences to the family, and just for Peter, Sionara.

British Legion

### **James (Jim) Morrison**

It is with deep regret that we report the sudden but peaceful passing of our Branch Chairman James Morrison on the 4th of May. Jim was born in 1929, a native of Kilwinning where he was well known. In 1947, he was called up for National Service

which took him to Gibraltar, where in time, among other duties, he became a drummer with the Pipes and Drums of the 1st Bn The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and before demob 1949 in Trieste Italy he transferred over to the concert section of the Regimental Band. This was due to the fact that in Jim's earlier days his father was Bandmaster at the local corps of the Salvation Army. This was to lead him into a love of music after National Service. Apart from playing with the Salvation Army bands in the early 60s he played with the Ayrshire Yoemanry band based in Ayr.

By 1951 he married his sweetheart Cathie and they lived many happy years until her sudden death in 1999. During their time together they had 3 daughters and 2 sons and Jim was always working. It was in the early 60s that it was discovered that due to a road accident some years earlier that he was losing his eyesight. Whilst he came to accept this he became active in working with the local Blind Club. Among the groups he found time for arts and crafts, raising funds for the Guide Dogs, dominoes, bowling where he won several cups. Through out the late eighties he became involved with the local Branch of the Royal British Legion where he was elected to the position of chairman. He is sadly missed.

British Legion

### **Postscript**

**Lieutenant Colonel Sir John Baynes Bt** on 22 January 2005 - an obituary will appear in the next issue of the Covenanter.



# THE QUEEN MOTHER'S MEMORIAL FUND FOR SCOTLAND



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



# THE COVENANTER



THE REGIMENTAL JOURNAL OF  
THE CAMERONIANS (SCOTTISH RIFLES)

2005

## *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

# NOTICES

## "THE COVENANTER"

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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:

Colonel J.G. d'Inverno TD ADC, (0131) 662 9792

### Hon. Secretary/Treasurer

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

## Regimental Club

The Cameronian Memorial Club -  
9 Holyrood Crescent, Glasgow.

## Museum:

Low Parks Museum  
129 Muir Street, Hamilton ML3 6BJ  
Tel: 01698 328 232

# 2006 DIARY OF REGIMENTAL EVENTS 2006

## APRIL

Friday 3rd March -

### Cameronian Officers Dinner Club -

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



## MAY

Sunday 14th May -

### Cameronian Sunday -

The Douglas Valley Church - St Bride's, Douglas  
10.00a.m The Reverend Bryan Kerr BA BD.

Friday 19th May -

### Officers Luncheon -

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

## OCTOBER

Friday 6th October -

### Officers' Luncheon -

Officers Mess Craigiehall, Edinburgh  
Contact is Lt Col I.K. McBain.  
Tel: (0131) 445 2953 (H). (It has not been possible to arrange this on a Saturday)

## Cameronian Pin Brooch

4 x 3 cms

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

## Last Friday of the Month Meeting (Not December)

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

Any Cameronian who finds himself in Edinburgh on the last Friday of any month (except December) should meet from 12 noon onwards.



# REGIMENTAL MATTERS

## Trustee Matters

The trustees have recently made donations to a number of service charities. These charities support ex-servicemen in need including former Cameronians. Regimental Headquarters of the King's Own Scottish Borders continues to handle Cameronian SSAFA cases for whom funds are made available from the Army Benevolent fund to whom the Trustees had previously made a sizeable donation. Donations were also made to Glasgow Cathedral and St Brides Church Douglas, in recognition of the long standing association the Regiment has had with both churches.

Funds have also been made available to support various projects in the Low Parks Museum, Hamilton which involve the Regimental Collection, Regimental Histories, War Diaries and other records. Scottish Veterans Residences have named one of the gates in Whiteford House, which has recently been refurbished, Cameronian Gate. This is in recognition of the donation the Trustees made to the charity. A suitably inscribed plaque will be placed on the gate.

## Regimental Curling

Much to our pleasant surprise the 2005 curling season saw the Regiment retain The Lowland Brigade Cup. In spite of a further reduced pool of curlers we were just able to find a Regimental rink for the Bonspiel on the 2nd February at Murrayfield. However, for the Inter Brigade match at Perth on the 4th March we could only find three curlers on the day. This meant that we were penalised three points in each of our matches.

For the Lowland Brigade Bonspiel the Regimental rink comprised of Malcolm Macneill (Skip) Jim Orr, David Scott and Ian McBain. In the morning match we defeated the RHF 8-5, and in the afternoon we achieved a 7-4 win over the KOSB which meant we had retained the Cup.

The new format for the Inter Brigade match meant that only one day was used, with a morning session followed by lunch then an afternoon session. Unfortunately the Regiment could only find three curlers for Perth on the day. Jim Orr (Skip) David

Scott and John McMyn. In the morning we went down 11-7 to the Highland Brigade President's Rink. This included 3 penalty points against us. In the afternoon we lost narrowly 9-8 to the A&SH. This again included 3 penalty points, which made all the difference between a win and a lose.

We have just been informed that, sadly, due to the current unwelcome regimental reorganisations and related changes 2006 will see the final fixtures for both the Lowland Brigade Bonspiel and the Inter Brigade matches. Thursday 12th January will see the final Bonspiel at Murrayfield and the final curling AGM of the Lowland Brigade Club. The final fixture against the Highland Brigade is to take place at Murrayfield on Thursday 16th February.

J.A.O.

## Museum Report Year 2005

New Acquisitions to The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Collection 2005

One of the highlights of the acquisition year was the gift of the first group of Cameronian archives by The National Archives. More are to follow by the end of 2005. These are particularly valuable as they allow us a clear view of the Rank and File joining and leaving the Regiment in the period between the 2 World Wars of the 20th century. This is in addition to the valuable Cameronian Officers 1689-1968 Card Index which we inherited from the Regiment.

## Medals and badges

Offer of gift of "General Service Medal 1793-1874" awarded to Geo. Campbell of the 90th Reg. Clasp

Group of 4 WW1 medals of Pte W Gordon

## Uniform accessories and equipment

Cameronian cap, bonnet and tunic of Frank Picken (plus photos)

Cameronian summer belt 1960s

## Paintings and Photographs

Painting of Sgt John Tomkins while Chelsea pensioner in 1993

Sgt Tomkins' 22 photographs c WW2 in Bengal 2 images from Novosti Photograph Library; Red Army man and Corporal of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). Both images taken at Friendship Bridge, Magdeburg, Germany 1945. (Used in exhibition to welcome Russian President Putin to UK. Also as cover of Novosti's Jubilee)

Photograph of Capt Gibb RAMC re liberation of Belsen 1945 67 slides of Aden and Disbandment taken by Lt J R Williams

4 photographs re Rfn A Adam WW2

CD-ROM with photographs of Rfn Brennan WW2

## Archive

3 books: 6th Bn WW2, 8Bn, WW1, 5th Bn WW1.

4 documents relating to India 1947 (Sgt Tomkins) 16 military documents relating to Cpl Campbell WW1

Military papers of W Devenney enlisted Omagh 1937

4 boxes of Regimental discharge books 1919-1939 from The National Archives

7 archive items of Rfn A Adam WW2 Campaign map re Rfn Brennan WW2

## Cameronian Book Digitisation

Much concern is felt both in Cameronian circles and by the general public that the excellent histories of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) are now all out of print.

In a major initiative, the Trustees have awarded funding to purchase vital IT hardware and have provided funds to digitise all 4 volumes of Regimental History, many of the Battalion histories as well as the complete run of The Covenanter from the very first issue.

This is being achieved through a three pronged approach:

- Investigating reprinting key volumes
- Having scanning done by an outside company. News is awaited at time of writing of how successful a sample book has been.
- Scanning The Covenanter in-house

We are very grateful to the Trustees for their generous assistance in developing this

important project.

## Friends of Low Parks Museum Society

In August 2005, a group of Volunteers working on the War Dairies project formed a new organisation - the Friends of Low Parks Museum Society. Their objectives are to provide support for the Museum in the form of Volunteering and fundraising. We are delighted with this new development and wish its members every success in the future.

War Diaries Project - "Increasing public access to the collections without increasing the staff workload"

The team of dedicated volunteers from the Lanarkshire Family History Society have continued to work tirelessly on transcribing the hand-written Commanders' War Diaries into an easy-to-use computer package. They have transcribed over 250,000 words and have entered into a database the names of over 4,000 Officers and Other Ranks.

With a few clicks of the computer mouse, staff can find if there is any mention of any known person, place, ship, weapon, etc. Previously to do such a search in hundreds of un-indexed hand-written pages was so time-consuming as to be almost impossible.

The team has finished transcribing nearly all of the identified War Diaries from the First World War 1914-1918 held by South Lanarkshire Council museums. The list is:

- 1st Battalion
- 2nd Battalion
- 6th Battalion
- 7th Battalion
- 8th/7th Composite Battalion
- 8th Battalion
- 9th Battalion
- 11th Battalion

We are very grateful to the Volunteers for their continued hard work and enthusiasm that has resulted in a major new asset for the public at Low Parks Museum and worldwide through our public enquiries service.

The project supported by the Lanarkshire Family History Society (LFHS) was completed at the end of October 2005. We are very grateful to the Society for their support at a time when there are many other projects competing for their attention.

Since August 2005, the Friends of Low Parks Museum Society have phased in their support for this project.

During 2005 the members of the two Lanarkshire Family History Society transcription teams were:

Alan Johnstone (Lanarkshire Family History Society co-ordinator)  
Allan Colthart  
Margaret McKenzie  
Irene Garry  
Marie Cullen  
Ian Wilson  
Charlie Bennett  
Iain MacAusland

We also wish to thank past team members whose new work commitments have obliged them to withdraw from direct transcription work with the teams but whose contribution is gratefully acknowledged.

Terry F Mackenzie acts as project manager for South Lanarkshire Council.

Their Past Your Future (TPYF) Scotland – 60th Anniversary of the end of WW2

“The war changed the people and the landscape of the UK forever”

As The Covenanter went to press last year, South Lanarkshire Council received an award of £46,000.00 to develop six projects linked to celebrating the 60th anniversary of the end of WW2.

Their Past Your Future Scotland, a national project commemorating the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War Their Past Your Future Scotland is funded by the Big Lottery Fund and led in Scotland by the Scottish Museums Council.

It has been a privilege to be involved in these six projects since I first conceived the funding bid to the Scottish Museums Council in the autumn of 2004.

The projects vary greatly:

- Universal Connections East Kilbride art project.
- Museum Exhibition “Home and Away – South Lanarkshire in World War 2”.
- WW2 Discovery Trail in South Lanarkshire.
- Evacuees’ Memories: Reminiscence.
- War on Film Season.
- WW2 Media Supplement.

In additional, South Lanarkshire Council and the Trustees of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) are funding an exhibition at Low Parks Museum - “All the Tomorrows – The Cameronians in WW2, to open in autumn 2005.

My task would have been very much more difficult if it were not for all the enthusiastic support of our project partners

and colleagues.

I wish to record a special thanks to those who inspired and supported me.

War Diaries of the Second World War  
1939-1945

1st Battalion

2nd Battalion work in progress

Other Cameronian War Diaries

1st Battalion Malaya 1951 work in progress

2nd Battalion Iraq 1923 work in progress

## Volunteers

This year the work of our Volunteers outwith the War Diaries project has been slowed due to advances in IT. This seemingly contradictory statement is because the new upgrade of our collections database, Vernon Cataloguing, has advanced to such a level that the PC equipment originally purchased by The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) no longer supported it. Consequently there was no longer a workstation available sufficiently often to permit the many Volunteer projects to progress.

Thanks to funding from the Trustees of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) we now have advanced equipment which can make full use of modern IT. For the information of “computery types” we have a flat screen PC with DVD-RW, an A3 scanner and an A3 colour printer.

Volunteer Katie Barclay MA MPhil, has made a major impact in the short time she has been able to work with us in 2005 in developing two pilot projects for future Volunteers:

- Digitising the ceramics collection including many The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) items
- Entering the Cameronian Officers 1689-1968 Card Index data into Vernon Cataloguing. This will enable us to search very quickly for names, to make family connections, to track awards and honours rapidly, just to name a few.

We are very grateful to Katie for all her hard work.

## Digital Collection Gallery

Originally devised as part of our Cameronians in Camera temporary exhibition (2003/2003) you can browse and order copy prints of almost 200 images of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) serving abroad between 1918 and 1968. The Digital Collection Gallery unit has been moved to the ground floor of the Riding School part

of Low Parks Museum.

## Storyboards

The Storyboard unit at LPM goes from strength to strength. Several storyboards can be seen on the unit that also houses the Digital Collections gallery. If you've not seen the Storyboards yet, it's well worth a visit. You can follow the story of the operation written by one who took part, illustrated by photographs, many from private collections. There's Regimental music to accompany the start of each Storyboard. The Trustees plan that this resource will continue to expand over the years.

## SCRAN

This is not food or eatables, but the acronym for Scottish Cultural Resources Access Network. It began as a millennium project with the objective of creating an enormous database of all museum collections in Scotland. Over the last few years, South Lanarkshire Council museums took part in a total of 7 projects, four of which featured objects from the collection of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). In the Health project we offer many sketches illustrating the health hazards of Army service abroad in the Zulu War 1879 with the 90th Perthshire Light Infantry. Henry Hope Crealock (1831-1891) has a project all to himself as we feature 28 sketches and watercolours from his Crimean War album. The five striking and unique Lanarkshire Covenanter banners are featured for the first time.

Due to the strength and quality of our existing projects, South Lanarkshire Council museums were invited to submit a project.

This most recent project went online at Scottish Cultural Resources Access Network (SCRAN) in 2004. "Trench life and War Memorials in South Lanarkshire". You can see 30 photographs of the 1st and 2nd Battalions the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in France and Belgium in the winter of 1914-1915. The photographs were taken by Captain Robert Cotton Money (later Maj Gen Sir Robert Cotton Money CB MC). In addition as part of this project, there are more than 20 close up views of the names plaques on several South Lanarkshire War Memorials of the Great War. The detail is such that you can read the individual names.

We are grateful to Volunteer Molly Magee,

who carried out much of the background research and wrote supporting text for 5 of the trench scenes. We thank Volunteer Katie Barclay for a large part of the work of this project. Katie took a joint share in the final selection of the trench scene images, and scanned all 30 of the final group. In addition she wrote the supporting text for 5 of the trench scene images.

What's special about all this? Simply this - anyone anywhere in the world with access to the Internet can see these objects from the collection of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) together with a brief description of them. Those with full access, mainly in education (in Scotland, that means every school pupil) can see in addition to a full screen image of the object, 120 words of description of the significance of the object with full references to every associated person or place.

How to find it: [www.scran.ac.uk](http://www.scran.ac.uk)

In the new-look homepage you'll find a window: "Free scran search service" type in what you want to look for e.g. "cameronians" and the system will find all the records with any reference to The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). Good hunting!

Scottish Cultural Resources Access Network (SCRAN) have changed their emphasis and are no longer funding such projects.

## Enquiries

This has been a busy year for enquiries. Between October 2004, to October 2005, museum service received 369 enquiries, of which 248 were about The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) - that's more than two-thirds!

As usual, we have been contacted from all over the world, including Gibraltar, Malta and Bermuda, as well as all over Northern Europe, the British Isles, Australia and North America (including a serving United States Marine looking for a Glengarry and Cap Badge).

Sometimes enquiries can throw up new information. This year we found out more about Daniel Sheehan, the only Cameronian to be present at Rorke's Drift, 1879.

Most of our enquiries are requests for information on individuals who served with the Regiment. Often these are men who served during the two World Wars. This year being the anniversary of the end of the Second World War has brought a renewed

interest in this area, but our enquiries cover the entire timeline of the Regiment. We have had enquiries ranging from the raising of the Regiment, up to and including, the disbandment. All the campaigns of the 19th century have been represented, including the Crimean War, The Boer War, and the South African Wars.

We frequently receive requests for information on Regimental collections. One enquirer wanted to know what information we have on uniforms worn during the American War of Independence.

## **The Cameronian Exhibition 2005-2006**

“All the Tomorrows” – Cameronian Stories from WW2

2005 marks the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War 1939-1945. This exhibition tells the story of some of the men of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) who served in the war.

The following is taken from the 6th Battalion History of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), 1945:

*“The war was over, the battle was won. For the first time for many weary years men could go to their beds without fear that bomb or shell would destroy them as they slept. Men could go to their beds safe in the knowledge that tomorrow, and all the tomorrows, would be theirs.”*

*The War was “...the triumph of Everyman... Of all those men who, in doing ordinarily their ordinary jobs, without thought of honour brought honour to their Regiment, and without thought of greatness brought greatness upon themselves.”*

This is their story.

The exhibition can be seen on the Mezzanine gallery at Low Parks Museum until November 2006.

## **Medals Display**

Medals fans rest easy! The medal cases will be remaining on the Mezzanine.

## **The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Website**

An exciting new venture has been approved by the Trustees of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). The official Website of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) has been discussed for many years. In a recent decision,

the Trustees have voted the funds to make this much needed resource a reality.

Individual Cameronians have provided excellent Websites over the years and we are very grateful to them for their commitment.

The details of the new Website have still to be decided but it will be the only official Website about The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles).

## **Coming Summer 2006!!**

A new social history of the 300-year life span of the Cameronian regiment has been commissioned and should be available to buy at Low Park Museum in summer 2006. While this book is aimed at a non-military audience, it will contain enough new research to interest even the most avid military historian.

It will highlight many of the aspects of military life ignored in traditional regimental histories. In addition to charting the origins and military success (or defeats) of the Cameronians, this booklet will look at the role soldiers' families played in the regiment, soldier's leisure pursuits and advances in weaponry and uniform. It will be illustrated throughout with photographs of people, events, memorabilia as well as sketches drawn by Cameronian soldiers. While some of these images will be familiar, many have not been published before.

This booklet is designed to complement the Cameronian display at Low Park Museum, and is divided into chapters by time period. Each chapter features a miniature biography of an individual soldier and charts their military career and how they combined family, leisure and other pursuits with military life.

This fifty-page booklet will offer a colourful and entertaining history of the many facets of military life in the Cameronian regiment.

TM (Low Parks Museum)

## **Commemorative Events World War Two Horse Guards Parade July 10th 2005 Reflections and Reminiscence**

It certainly had been a week of reflections and reminiscence. At this time, I have the good fortune to be living only an hours

journey from the hub of the activities in London.

With our reserved admission tickets Cameronian Don Farrell and I, with our wives Lily and Dorothy, attended the Commemorative Event in Horse Guards Parade. We were well groomed - the men dressed in lounge suits with decorations and the women in afternoon dresses and hats. The officers wore dress uniforms with no swords.

As we passed through the strict security checks into St James' Park, the flowers were a mass of colour and the ducks were at peace in their ponds. About 2 o'clock (1400hours) we were shown to our seats. Horse Guards Parade had been turned into a massive stadium with steel scaffolding, seats and a large stage. The Royal Box and VIP seats stood out at the rear. Everything was so well organised and everyone was noticeably polite. On each seat was a bag with a souvenir programme, a badge, a bottle of water and a pac a mac. The sun was beating down so the water was appreciated.

A fanfare of trumpets announced the arrival of Her Majesty the Queen and the Royals in full military uniform with plenty of gold braid. The Prime minister together with the VIPs and the large audience stood, facing the Royal Box. The Horse Guard escort with their gleaming breast plates and highly turned out horses added to the occasion, altogether a great display of British heritage. The British Legion Standard Bearers marched in with representatives from other countries as well. Mass bands and choirs took their place on each side of the massive stage. A narrator took us through the 1939-45 years starting off with the air raid warning with well known stars impersonating the likes of Gracie Fields (Sing As You Go) Flanagan and Allen (HomeTown). Vera Lynn the sweetheart of the Forces put in a personal appearance singing 'We'll Meet Again'.

HMS Belfast blasted from the river to start the two minute silence. I am sure there were many reflections and memories good and bad passing through the minds of the Veterans as we stood in silence. It was followed by the Last Post another nostalgic reflection of absent comrades.

The 1939-45 museum off the Mall covered a large area and dealt with all aspects of the war; the Home Front, Rationing, Air Raid shelters, Land Army, Home Guard etc The Far East, Burma, Japan etc, Central Mediterranean forces Egypt, Italy etc. Europe BLA (British Liberation Army) a real walk

down memory lane united with the infantry platoon weapons etc. There was also Field Marshall Montgomery's limousine, the one he had emerged from in Germany after the Armistice in 1945 to inspect 46 Brigade telling us 'we have won the war now we must win the peace.'

On entering the Veterans' Hospitality tent we were given a voucher to purchase a cup of (char and wads) tea and buns from the NAAF tent for 10p. In 1943 it was 1p a cup, half a new pence in today's money.

To sum up, the whole week had been a great tribute to 1939-45. 60 years have passed!

Tom Gore 80 years old.

## Thoughts on War Memorials (letter to the Times)

Sir,

In today's issue Morgan Falconer comments on the memorial in Kelvingrove, Glasgow, to the more than 7,000 members of the 27 battalions of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) killed in World War I (Debt to the Many Redeemed in Precious Bronze). He describes it as a 'depiction of a soldier ... in vengeful fury'.

It is not such thing. It is an outstanding group which captures the fighting spirit and comradeship for which the regiment (1689-1968) was so rightly famous. Aggression and determination are vital in the combatants proud to be part of a good fighting unit, be it an infantry battalion or a Battle of Britain squadron. Vengeance has no place there and is purely in the writer's mind.

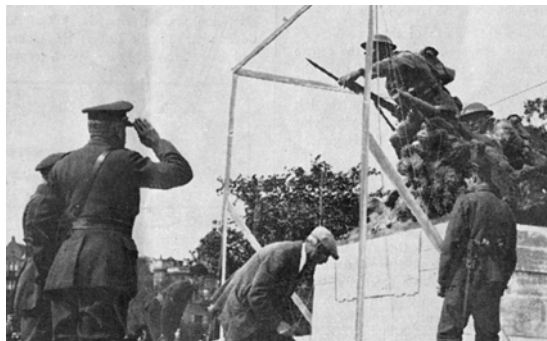
Yours sincerely,

Philip R Grant

Major (Retired)

1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)

(1962-1967)



Earl Haig salutes the memorial (see also page 68)

Earl Haig, speaking from the special platform from which his speech was broadcast, said (9th August 1924):

*As a Lowland Scot, it is with a full heart and deep sense of pride and gratitude that I am here this afternoon to unveil this Memorial to the heroism of more than 7000 men who in the Great War fell in the ranks of your famous Lowland Regiment. The thought of that great number of, brave men, most of them young, many of them only on the threshold of life, yet each lost to home and kindred amid the suffering and tragedy of war, is a sad and terrible one. But with that thought goes another: the thought that, as our fathers in days long past were content to give up all, even life itself, for the sake of the faith that was in them, so in this present generation men of the same old Lowland Scottish stock went out in their thousands and in their thousands gave their lives for their faith in the freedom of nations, and for liberty and justice among men. By this Memorial we know, and generations to come after us will learn, that the spirit of the "Lion of the Covenant" still lives in this corner of Scotland, where he died, and among the Regiment that bears his name. That is indeed a thought of which we may be proud.'*

The long history of this ancient Regiment is full of splendid episodes of courage and devotion. From Dunkeld to Blenheim, from Gibraltar to Corunna, officers and men of the Cameronians have set a high and difficult standard to those to whom they handed on in turn the splendid traditions of the past. But we can feel that (noble as the examples set them may have been) the men whose names this monument commemorates, and their living comrades now amongst us, proudly and triumphantly upheld in the greatest crisis of our country's story the honour of their Regiment.

Mons gives answer to Corunna, and on many a hard fought battlefield in France and Flanders, in Gallipoli, Palestine and Macedonia, the dour and stubborn courage that at Dunkeld changed the fate of nations and at Gibraltar held for Britain the chief gateway of the seas found their living counterparts. The hattle honours of the Cameronians in the Great War are worthy to rank with those older battle honours, on which the glorious reputation of the Regiment was founded and built up. No matter which Battalion you take, the old 26th Regiment of the line, the old 90th

*Perthshire Light Infantry, the Territorial Battalions, or the Service Battalions of the New Army, at Mons, 'Le Cateau, and the Marne, at Neuve Chapelle and Rosieres, at Arras and Epehy, at the breaking of the Drocourt-Queant line, and at the storming of the Canal du Nord, the story is the same, and the splendour of it can never be surpassed. In 'that proud story, and in the thought that those who fought and died so bravely in the making of it did not sacrifice themselves in vain, I trust that consolation may be found by those relations and friends who mourn their loss. No men more truly or more bravely earned the gratitude, affection, and reverence of their fellow-countrymen. It is our duty to keep their memory green among us, and to strive to) preserve and to hand on to those who shall come after us the spirit that inspired them. To that end you have set up this Memorial, that it may speak to the hearts of the living and stir the imagination and awake the generous emulation of generations yet unborn. It has been suggested that as a reverent tribute to their dead and as an acknowledgment of the debt their comrades owe them there should be an annual ceremony at this Memorial at which living members of the Regiment should attend. If such an arrangement is at all possible I hope it will be carried out and will become a part of Cameronian tradition. But though such formal and solemn acts have great value in keeping high ideals before the minds of men there is another and more human influence which should not be forgotten. This Monument and Memorial tablet in .. Cameronian Corner" forms only a part of the Memorial scheme by which it is hoped to commemorate for ever the achievements of the Regiment in the Great War. There is also that part of the scheme which is intended to minister directly to the welfare of ex-Service comrades of the Regiment, men who served with it in all theatres of the war and share its glory.*

The proposal to found a Regimental Memorial Club in Glasgow is a project which I trust will not be allowed to sleep, but which will be aided generously and whole-heartedly by all who can afford to help. I am quite sure that such an institution would be welcomed by the many ex-Service men in this great city, and would give most excellent results. I hope that this remaining part of the scheme will speedily be carried out. One effect I am sure it would have: it would help to stimulate interest

*here, in the heart of the country of the old Scottish Covenanters who followed Richard Cameron, in the famous Regiment which his inspiration founded. If our Lowland Scottish regiments are to preserve their old-time character and renown they must be recruited here in the Lowlands among men of our own kin. We are too proud of the traditions of our regiments to let them rest in other hands than ours. It is for us and for our own children to keep bright the honour and glory of the Lowland regiments of Scotland in which our comrades died.*

## Letter from London

I was saddened early in the new year to learn of the death of Lieut. Col. Sir John Baynes. My abiding memory of Sir John was when he was Adjutant at the Regimental Depot Lanark during the nineteen fifties. I was a Squad Sgt Instructor at the time, and Sir John used to take the inter-squad drill competitions. He demanded a high standard of turnout and performance, and we did our very best to achieve these objectives. As a result of Sir John's policy, a high standard of recruit was produced. I last spoke to Sir John at Alan Campbell's memorial service in Covent Garden last year. We had a nice chat, especially recalling those halcyon Lanark days.

One of my birthday presents this year was a remarkable book entitled *Following the Drum* by Annabel Venning. I recommend this book to anyone who has ever lived in army married quarters. It is a fantastic history of the origins of married quarters, from army wives and children following their menfolk into battle in the Crimea and other campaigns, to the present day. Annabel Venning spent most of her young life in married quarters throughout the world.

During the summer I had a lovely visit from an Old Cameronian, Ex WOII Glen Cowie and his wife Nan. Over a very nice Indian lunch we had a great chin wag about old times dating back to our Gibraltar days. Glen and Nan, who have lived in Spain for many years, came over to the UK and were based in Wiltshire at the home of one of their daughters, from where they carried out a "whistle-stop tour", visiting relatives and friends up and down the country. So Glen and Nan, I hope your trip to the UK was a very happy one.

I am delighted to see that the good work of the Association is still being carried out

and I always look forward to my copy of the minutes of the quarterly meetings. Also, I am in regular contact with Chairman Andy Berry and Jim Ballantyne who keep me up to date. I must congratulate the members who regularly appear on parade at various functions of remembrance. I am informed that their bearing and turnout are a great credit to the regiment they once served.

As I write this feature, I can hardly believe we are into the beginning of November. I was reminded of this when my security pass for Westminster Abbey arrived a few days ago, with a letter confirming the opening of the Field of Remembrance as 10 November. The service and the opening ceremony will be carried out by Her Majesty the Queen, accompanied by H.R.H. Prince Philip. I'm sure the regiment will be represented on the day, if not by me, then someone well qualified.

The 10 November has now arrived, and I entered the Field of Remembrance. Thirty minutes early. As you will no doubt gather, a massive security operation was in place, and the police carried out the whole operation brilliantly. After the service, carried out by a senior member of the clergy and Her Majesty the Queen, a two minute silence was observed. Once again, we had a massive turnout, with the weather overcast, dry and a mild, pleasant breeze coaxing the leaves from the trees where we stood. As usual, Her Majesty looked stunning; as she passed our plot I received a lovely smile. Prince Philip, following behind Her Majesty, stopped in front of me, enquiring which regiment I was representing. On giving him the name of our regiment, he remarked, and I quote, "*There was a lot of history there*". He then asked how long I had served in the army. When I told him, he said, "Well done," and moved on. With H.R.H. using the past tense of our regiment, I got the feeling he did know something of our history, and possibly our demise.

I was delighted by the appearance of our plot. It looked beautiful; I got the impression the Royal British Legion had in effect updated their layouts to a higher standard all round.

Word has just reached me that Major R. B. Parkes has passed away. My association with Major Parkes dates back to the 2nd Bn. in Gibraltar. He was known affectionately by the Jocks as "Larry Parkes" after the film actor who took the part of Al Jolson in the film "The Jolson Story". My memories of Major Parkes are fond.



In view of some of the things that are happening in our army today, I can foresee the day when our troops go into action with a lawyer at their side. I despair!

Well, that's it for another year, and I wish you all a really happy 2006.

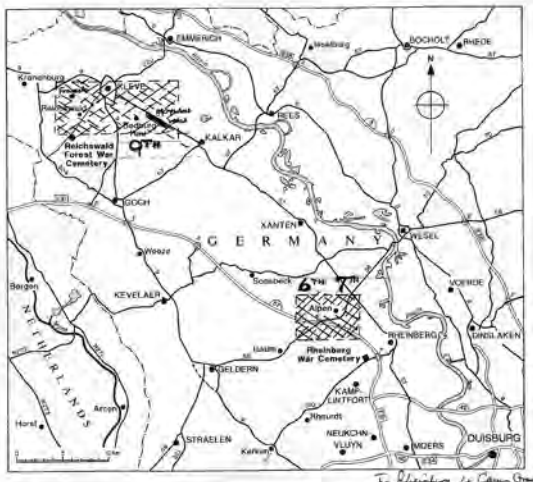
Yours aye,  
Eddie Clark

## OPERATIONS 'VERITABLE' & 'BLOCKBUSTER' February/March 1945: A RETURN TO THE BATTLEFIELDS.

### The Cameronian Connection

In May 2005 Cliff Pettit was invited to accompany a Study Group of Officers and Senior NCOs of 2nd Brigade to take part in an on the ground exposition of some of the actions that comprised these costly battles to clear the South Bank of the Rhine with the object of creating jumping-off locations for the eventual river crossing.

Each year finances permitting-2 Brigade, with Headquarters presently at Folkestone, conducts a study tour of a battlefield either of The Great War or the 1939/45 conflict. So far as the latter is concerned, an attempt is made to receive from participants on-site descriptions of the actions to be studied - although as the years go by, finding men able to do so is becoming increasingly difficult.



'Map of the Rhine/Maas Area.'

The area chosen for 2004 was the battlefields of 'Operations Veritable and Blockbuster' of the European campaign, on the borders of Holland and Germany,

in the period February and March 1945. Operation 'Veritable' a joint British and Canadian attack under command of the Canadian 1st Army, was planned to run in conjunction with an operation by the U.S. 9th Army, the aim of which was to drive enemy out of the area between the Rivers Maas and Rhine. This was to be achieved by the Canadian Army attacking in a parallel direction to those rivers whilst the U.S. 9th Army would, by an assault crossing of the Maas, cut round the enemies' rear. In the initial assault, the Canadian Army comprised 2nd and 3rd Canadian Divisions and five British Divisions. It proved to be one of the hardest fought and most costly battles of the European Campaign fought in conditions akin to the trenches and mud of The Great War. Also, it was the only occasion in the 1939/45 War in which all three of the Scottish Infantry Divisions 15th Scottish, 51st (Highland) and 52nd (Lowland), together were involved in the same battle.

'Operation Veritable' began for the 15th Scottish Division and 51st Highland Divisions with the opening attack on the Reichswald Forest, directly across the Dutch border into Germany itself and along the banks of 'the Maas, on 8th February 1945. The ground had changed virtually overnight immediately before 8th February from being hard frozen to wet thawed land. This naturally made the advance of tanks and other tracked vehicles extremely hazardous. Equally important along and near the banks of the Rhine, the enemy had allowed the Rhine to enter its flood plain, inundating much of the low-lying land to the South. The 52nd (Lowland) Division at that time was in another sector, and entered the battle at a later stage.

In November 2003, through the offices of well known Cameronian Lt.Col. Jim Orr, I was approached by 2 Brigade to assist in walking the locations of actions in which I had taken part as a nineteen and a half year old inexperienced Platoon Commander, posted at the beginning of 1945, to 6th Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) of 52nd (L) Division. 2 Brigade also had been fortunate in securing the assistance of a then former twenty two year old Company Commander of 2nd Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, Major John Graham (now Major General (Retd) CB CBE), and a Canadian Historian and former post-war Regular Soldier, Lt. Col. Brian Reid, a Retired Gunner, who journeyed from

Barbados and Canada respectively. General John had taken part in the first attacks. He would describe these actions, Colonel Brian was then to follow with the second phase, while I was to deal with the final assaults that preceded the final collapse of German resistance South of the river Rhine in what became known as 'The Battle of The Rhine Pocket'.

The "Battlefield Tour was scheduled to take place in June 2004, but after all the preliminary reconnaissance, basic administration and historical preparation had been completed, the Tour was cancelled at the last minute by the War Office due to lack of funding, because, we were given to understand, the cost of the Iraq War! The Study Group comprised members of the Staff of 2 Brigade H.Q., and its Infantry Battalions: 18th Green Howards, 1st Royal Ghurkhas and 2nd Prince of Wales Regiment, the numbers being restricted to one coach. The Tour was planned for three working days on the battlefields, with an hotel in Nijmegen selected as Headquarters. It was led by Lt. Col (Retd) David Storrie OBE RM. Currently he is engaged as a tour guide with an internationally known Battlefield Touring organisation. The administration was undertaken by Major (Retd) Mike Mason of 2 Brigade H.Q., a former paratrooper who had served with Col Orr. Regimental connections continued to surface throughout. Each day, gave particular prominence to the contribution of the three Cameronian Battalions that took part in both Veritable and Blockbuster-9th Cameronians (S.R.) as part of 46th Brigade of 15th Scottish Division in Veritable, and 6th and 7th Battalions in Blockbuster..



L to R Lt Col. Storrie RM Major Mike Mason, Lt Col. Brian Reid, Maj Gen. John Graham, , Cliff Pettit

General John and I met at London and travelled to Folkstone together, during which we were able to discuss the method and style of our proposed presentations. I was left in no doubt about the General's affection for The Cameronians - he is a direct descendant of Thomas Graham of Balgowan who founded The Perthshire Light Infantry the 90th that in the Cardwell reforms of 1881, merged with The Cameronian Regiment to form The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). Both of us were sad to notice the poor state of maintenance and catering of the Mess to which we were assigned - a fact that General John addressed in no uncertain terms at the conclusion of the Tour. One of the purposes of our accompanying the Tour was to spend time discussing the operations in general with members of the Group, as well as our own experiences. In fact, I think I learned a great deal more about the modern British Army than any benefit that members of 2 Brigade would glean from me!

Technical difficulties precluded a visit to the Liberation Museum at Grossbeek, and the general and myself were pressed into service to deliver impromptu lectures in lieu. An opening lecture on both Operations given by the Chief of Staff was followed by General John who delivered a fascinating and forceful exposition on 'A Battalion at War', in which he pointed out that the basic principles of warfare remained unchanged, even if the technology surrounding it had advanced so much. He laid down ten of these principles as guide lines for any Infantry Commander at whatever level might be the case. I was then asked to speak on my V.E. Day experiences with 6th Battalion (Vide: The Covenanter 2005: 'VE Day Celebration or Shock?'). Specific stands had been arranged in the usual way for the delivery of descriptions of various stages in the operations, after which the relevant area would be walked. The Group moved to the first viewpoint - the jumping off line for Operation Veritable, a hillside overlooking the flat tract of ground to be attacked by 15th Scottish, facing the left beyond. General John described the assault, making particular reference to the part of 9th Battalion. Its role was to pass through 2nd Glasgow Highlanders, then occupy a position just short of the village to form a jumping off line for 44th (Lowland) Brigade to capture it. This involved crossing 1500 yards of open ground at dusk in full view of the enemy. General Graham, whose Argyll Battalion was in reserve, recalled witnessing

with admiration the 'spirited attack' of 9th Battalion as it swept over open country towards its objective. -



General Graham describes the 15th Scottish attack looking towards The Reichswald and the ground covered by 9th Battalion.

After examining the actual site of 15th Division's attack with explanations from the General, the party then moved to Gennep on the Dutch side of the border to view the site of the captured Gennep bridge by 51st (H) Division. For me this had particular interest, for it was shortly after my joining 6th Battalion that it was moved here in reserve preparatory to taking over the attack from the 51st to clear the banks of the river Maas. Brigadier Barclay CBE DSO as Regimental Historian (and a Cameronian) described the 6th and 7th Battalions' stay... *'under most uncomfortable conditions. The area was very congested and practically all houses had been destroyed or badly damaged by the ravages of war. A few troops were accommodated under leaky roofs, but the -majority lived in -slit trenches-with a temperature well below freezing at night, and almost continuous rain'* The Brigadier was speaking from personal knowledge, as he was the Commander of 156 Brigade at the time. I can heartily endorse his recollection! 6th Battalion's B Company's with which I served at the time under Major (the late Lt. Col.) S.Storm M.C. with then Capt (Later Col) Jack Harper M.C. as 2i/c, certainly was pleased to move on after several days of inactivity.

Keeping the Jocks occupied in the these Spartan conditions proved difficult, whilst maintaining a constant state of readiness, once the first few days of weapon cleaning and tidying up had been completed. Football became the main relaxation, both for exercise and means of keeping warm.

The prospect of returning to mud-filled slit trenches or an open roofed building in near freezing conditions raised little enthusiasm. Gennep is now unrecognisable, having been rebuilt and considerably expanded some sixty years on. Several other locations were used to describe the attacks of 43rd (Wessex) Division. As Veritable continued to be a slogging match conducted against a defence performing fanatically on its homeland soil for almost the first time.

The first day concluded with a visit to the Imperial War Graves Commission Cemetery Reichswald Forest War Cemetery near Goch. This is the largest War Graves Cemetery in the 1939/45 European Campaign. It contains the graves of 7,654 Royal Air Force men and soldiers (in almost equal proportions). The Air Force graves were concentrated from all over Germany and near the Dutch Border, while the Soldiers were casualties from the Veritable and Blockbuster operations, and from the Rhine Crossing and subsequent battles beyond the river. A section of the cemetery contains many of the members of the three Cameronian Battalions who fell in these actions. For me, it was a particularly touching moment to see that many of the graves had flowers and sometimes small wooden crosses before them, indicating that relatives or friends had paid recent visits to the cemetery. The grave of Lieut Ken Clancey of 6th had a small wooden cross at its foot-a poignant reminder that he was the last of the three sons of that family to perish in the World War II. He had acquired a legendary reputation for patrolling, and was found mortally wounded on the battlefield of Alpon. A short service was conducted by 2nd Brigade Chaplain to the Forces, Rev. P.S.Wright, after which a wreath was laid at the Cross of Remembrance by 2nd Brigade. I was privileged to be asked by the Brigade to lay a wreath on behalf of the Cameronians (S.R.), the centrepiece being provided by the Regiment..



One of the problems in describing on site actions that took place so long ago, is the change wrought to each location both by man and the passage of time. The Reichwald remains largely unchanged in area, and an examination of the verges of the forest reveals the remains of the original German defence line, overgrown but still intact. It is mainly in or near habitation where imagination is necessary to visualise a battlefield over which roads or buildings have been built, thus obscuring what at the time of the action would have been fields of fire and concealed approaches to the objective. In addition, the time of year is most important - particularly in the case of this Tour.

Verifiable and Blockbuster took place before foliage had grown and in the most miserable weather that grounded the R.A.F. for most of the time. While this was not so important in parts of The Reichwald Forest where there are conifers, elsewhere, hedgerows and scrub often completely obliterated the view as it was at the time. Sixty years of additional growth of both trees and scrub, produce a totally different scenario, making it even more difficult for the visitor to visualise the conditions that obtained. After dinner that evening, film footage of the battle gave some inkling of the weather and flooded conditions in which these operations were conducted. It prepared the Group for consideration of the final two days.



The Open Ground to the South of Moyland Wood and the road at its foot from which the 9th Attacked

Moyland Woods map from The History of The Cameronians p182 Caption: 'The open ground to the South of Moyland Wood and the road at its foot from which the 9th attacked. '

The morning of the following day was spent in the area of the 15th Scottish Division and the Canadians who, on 12th February took over the attack. Lt Col. Brian Reid and Lt Col. Storrie described the fighting. This dealt with the follow up to the clearance of the Reichwald Forest Once again, The Cameronians featured prominently.

'Moyland Wood' - a long and comparatively narrow ridge feature has an ominous ring for any member of 9 who was actively involved. On the 14th February, the 9th Battalion was ordered to undertake what arguably was the most unpleasant operation of its campaign in N. W. Europe. Having spent several days in reserve, spent mainly in digging out vehicles of other units that had become bogged down in the cloying mud and miserable conditions, 2nd Glasgow Highlanders were tasked to capture the Moyland Wood feature, while 9th were scheduled to attack along the principal road that bordered the left of the wood on the lower ground. Shortly before the date for the commencement, the enemy opened a lock gate and flooded the road and surrounding area to the North, which in its already muddy condition, made the ground virtually impassable. 9th were switched to a subsidiary road to the other side of the feature where conditions were comparatively better. Initially light opposition only was encountered. Like all woodlands so long after the date of the battle, the trees had grown, and being unlike the bareness of the boughs at the time of the attack, were in full foliage at the time of the visit. The ground still heavy in May gave the Group an Even in the present condition of the ground, it was plain to see the difficulties that would have confronted the attackers. He explained how the 9th had assaulted from the West and South side of the wood. The fighting soon became confused. The situation was not helped by the capture of C Company's carrier complete with the company's breakfasts and the C.Q.M.S. The C.S.M. who was travelling with them was killed. D Company H.Q. all became casualties with the exception of the C.O.. Well dug in on the hillside, the enemy offered strong resistance. Fog descended on the hill at night, and communication became extremely difficult. By 16th February,

despite this, and lack of food and greatcoats that also had been on the captured carrier, C Company held onto the far corner of the wood until 19th, when the Canadians relieved the exhausted Battalion. Col Brian gave an added twist to this hard fought action. After the Canadians began to push forward they came across several members of C Company at the extreme East end of the wood, still in position --- the order to hand over had not reached them they had been presumed to have been captured!



View from study stand looking towards Moyland Wood and road.

The final part of the day was taken up with a T.E.W.T. at the notorious Hochwald Gap an open space of some three hundred yards in width and about one mile long between two thick woods covering the crest of a hill. The capture of the gap would lead to the rear of the enemy's defences. Listening to the discussions that followed, for me the advance of modern weaponry placed a new concept on the manner in which it would have been attacked and defended in modern times.

The last day of the Tour, which comprised the final actions of Operation Blockbuster to eliminate the Rhine Pocket, was almost exclusively Cameronian, concerning 52nd (L) Division and the 6th & 7th Battalions, as well as the 4/5 R.S.F., and 4th K.O.S.B. I approached it with some misgiving, since apart from a synopsis of the general situation at the time (7/10th March), given by Col Storrie at the beginning of the day, it fell to me to describe the battle in detail and on the ground - a daunting task for an erstwhile soldier to follow such high ranking predecessors of the previous days. 6th and 7th Battalions initially had been dug in on the crest of a sharp drop from the edge of an escarpment overlooking the village of Alpon.



The approach to Alpon village showing the steep drop from 6th & 7th's positions.

This village was at the apex of the Rhine Pocket, providing protection for the crossroads that gave access to the only remaining road and railway bridges across which the enemy could retreat across the Rhine. It was essential to capture the village and crossroads beyond, thus trapping much of the men and equipment of the enemy against the banks of the river Difficulde had been experienced on 2nd Brigade's reconnaissance visit in finding suitable viewing stands. The Battalions' original positions were at the edge of the Reich Forst, (not to be confused with The Reichwald) but due to development of Alpon in the past sixty years, and the increased growth of the trees on the hillside with their verdant spring foliage, it proved impossible to find a suitable vantage point to describe the battle that afforded adequate vision over the Rhine Plain from these locations. Resort was had to a description of the commencement of the attack from the Tour bus, followed by a slow downhill drive to and through the village to explain the fighting within it. On a previous visit the remains of some of the Cameronians' slit trenches could be found on the edge of the escarpment. The centre of Alpon remains largely unchanged, the heavy damage of 1945 repaired.

I agreed with 2nd Brigade that the only feasible way in which the action properly could be explained on the ground was in reverse form, looking towards the British advance, from the position of the German defences beyond the village itself. Here again the flatness of the Rhine flood plain, new buildings and hedgerows caused problems. Eventually, the only feasible viewpoint was fixed as the (in 1945) infamous Haus Loo, or rather the mound surrounding the raised banks of the moat that enclosed the original schloss. This had been replaced by the



present structure before the 1939/45 War.

#### Frontage of Haus Loo.

The present owner, Herr Schultes, the proprietor of a large Charolais breeding farm, readily agreed to the party tramping over his land, and to the mound being used as a viewpoint. We had been in some trepidation about even approaching Herr Schultes for consent, since the present Haus had been badly damaged by shellfire during the battle, and its contents thoroughly looted. In fairness to the Jocks of 4th KOSB, there is little doubt that the majority of the damage to the goods in the property in all probability had been caused by liberated and revengeful displaced persons from Eastern Europe, working on the farm as slave labour.

6th Battalion was allotted three objectives, each some 500 yards apart, all to be taken in night attacks by a single company unsupported by armour, and with only limited artillery backing, due to the proximity of the 9th U.S. Army on the immediate right. A Company: Haus Loo, B Company: a factory, and C Company: a blocking role to the rear of the village. (For a detailed description, see my article on the battle in *The Covenanter* 1997). 'A' Company of the 6th with Haus Loo as its objective in a surprise night attack, had been held up both by enemy resistance near the railway embankment crossing the front, and confusing orders placing the Company Commander in an impossible dilemma that left him little option other than to withdraw to the line of the railway.. Viewed by the group from the German positions on the mound of the old schloss, the open ground to be crossed by the attackers the perilous nature of the operation became obvious. .



'The view from, the enemy's position on Haus Loo mound towards the railway in mid background'

The location has particular resonance for 4th KOSB as well as 6th Battalion, since it was finally taken by a full KOSB Battalion assault, supported by tanks. Several of the tanks were lost to German self propelled anti tank guns. The late Peter White a Subaltern of 4th KOSB in his remarkable Diary, edited and published as a book 'With the Jocks - 'A Soldier's Struggle for Europe 1944-45', describes the KOSB's action in detail. He concludes with a description of digging in on the mound which 2nd Brigade party used as viewpoint, and which was used by the defenders on 9th March 1945.

It ends with a reference to the fact that initially this was a Cameronian objective, and as it was not taken by them before the KOSB, adds quizzically'. 'During the attack, rumours had circulated that a large part, if not all, of the Cameronian company fighting on our right, had in some mysterious way been overrun and captured.' Later White recalled'... 'The mystery of the complete disappearance of the Cameronian company on our right was partly explained by our coming across some of these chaps as POW. I always regretted that I did not find time to talk to one of these men on what had actually happened to them during the battle for Haus Loo'

Unfortunately, White died before the publication of his diaries-had he lived, many of the 6th & 7th would have been pleased to enlighten him about those actions! In order to describe them to the 2nd Brigade group, we moved to Alpon station and the railway that ran dead straight at 90 degrees across the line of attack.



'Cliff Pettit describes the fighting round Alpon station and from the railway where 6th Battalion crossed from right to left'

The track (then with three lines) was being swept by non-stop machine gun fire as the companies crossed in the dark-C Company Commander lining up the entire company parallel to the line and crossing in a single rush. The company completed a remarkable encircling advance of over two miles over unreconnoitred ground in complete darkness, by reaching its objective just before dawn at the roadside to the rear of Alpon, and on the actual boundary between the British and American sectors, There was insufficient time to get properly sited and dug in before its presence would become obvious to the enemy. There now is little trace of the battle that had taken place for the station and surrounding factory area. Much new industrial development and adjacent new scrub growth covered the area of the attack of B Company, which ended in its lead platoons being pinned down in the vicinity of the single factory that was the only building then on the site in 1945, with the loss of the best part of the two assaulting platoons. The station buildings (now disused) still stand, minus the bullet pock-marks in the brickwork, which have long been restored. It was easy to see why such devastating fire could be brought to bear from the station buildings



that dominated the area.

'Alpon station-the upper windows were the sites of some of the

German machine guns'

The 7th were brought forward to execute a relieving attack beyond the station for the trapped platoons of 6th near the factory, and the isolated (but unknowingly then overwhelmed) C company. A farm house near the station was the centre of resistance-its capture costing fifteen killed and twenty five wounded. A much repaired



and modernised house still remains.

The site of C Company's defence position being Alpon village.

Finally we moved to the site of C Company, partially dug in by the side of the Alpon/Wesel road leading to the Rhine bridges. It was here that Jack Holland's Company, some five hundred yards behind the German lines, gave the enemy to think erroneously that the village of Alpon had fallen. The position was not of his choice the better site on opposite side of the road was in the U.S. sector, and as he had been given to understand, was 'about to be attacked by the 9th U.S. Army. C Company took a dozen prisoners, knocked out an enemy staff car, killing three of the four occupants, with PIAT's, scored direct hits on a German tank without disabling it, before finally being overrun by a combined tank and infantry attack from the side of the road that was supposedly by that time to be in American hands. It was highly likely that the Cameronians to whom White referred in his diaries, were members of C Company, eleven of whom were killed, twenty seven severely wounded and the remainder (including walking wounded) captured.

I was interested to hear the reactions of modern day infantrymen to the whole battle. By common consent of all including myself as a participant. the action was hastily conceived, based on false intelligence, overambitious as a Battalion objective in terms of area, with

inadequate support, bedevilled by the breakdown of radio communications and suffering from a complete lack of time for reconnaissance for an attack of that type, the whole to be undertaken in complete darkness over a distance of two miles.. The Battalion Commander was a stop-gap, physically indisposed by an attack of malaria, delivering orders from a sickbed, and brought in only four days earlier to replace the wounded normal Commander, It provided an object lesson to current soldiers of the domino effect of how much could go wrong with any plan How far weaponry has advanced in the ensuing sixty years since 1945 was brought home forcefully to me when I commented upon the overstretched 6th Battalion objectives, pointing out the fact that with hindsight, this appears obvious. An interesting discussion followed, culminating in the firm opinion of the Group, that the objectives with proper support, once gained, could have been held against counter attack given present day equipment and improved radio communication. I felt that perhaps there was still an insufficient appreciation of the problems of support and co-ordination in 1945, in the light of the pressure to give no respite to the enemy, the poor reliability of wireless sets that existed, and bearing mind that it took place directly on the boundary with 9th U.S. Army It was a privilege to have been invited to accompany such an impressive and interesting study group, yet a salutary lesson for myself. It can never be other than a time for sober reflection to revisit the scene of one's involvement in an action in which so many errors (not least my own) were committed, resulting in the loss of life. With the advantage of hindsight and the opportunity to study past events at leisure, it is so easy, and often facile, to consider what should or could have been done in situations far removed from the stress of battle and the need to take immediate action, the whole based on the scanty and often inaccurate information available at the time. I rest my case.

## North and South Beveland and Walcheren

### The Dutch don't Forget

The 6th and 7th Battalions of the Regiment along with the 4/5th Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers were members of 156 (West of Scotland) Brigade of the 52nd Lowland Division.

In late October, early November of 1944, in order to secure the vital port of Antwerp, which lay well inland from the North Sea, the Dutch islands of both Bevelands and Walcheren had to be captured to ensure safe passage for shipping.

This was undertaken in conjunction with the Canadians by first securing South Beveland in a series of attacks along its Southern edge by the Brigade. Then the 7th Battalion with the Canadians moved to assault Walcheren along a narrow causeway between the island and North Beveland. This first assault was very tough, hard and bitter was halted. In order to extend the enemy the 6th Battalion then undertook a night assault on the Sole estuary some 5 miles south of the causeway. This was accomplished and the second causeway assault was successful, which led to the capture of Walcheren.

This simple brief account does not do justice to the appalling difficulty in fighting in this area or to the grim determination of the enemy to resist at all costs. Much of the ground was flooded, - (much of Holland is below sea level) the Sloe estuary had about 100 yards of deep water and then over 600 yards of 4 to 5 foot deep thick mud which made movement almost impossible, heavy bombing had breached dykes, observation was very difficult due to the high banks around all fields and the whole area was scattered with 'Shue' mines which were virtually undetectable.

These difficulties however go to explain why there is such a strong link between the Dutch people of Walcheren and the soldiers of the 6th and 7th Battalions.

Once the war was over the Dutch proved to be the most generous people who then welcomed back those who had helped to liberate them. This generosity has gone on for some 60 years. Visitors are adopted and looked after by a Dutch family, for the depth of their feeling is very special; the graves of our soldiers are looked after by Dutch children.

Age takes its toll and now the young men who liberated Walcheren are well over 80 years old. The 156 Brigade Association now feel that the time has come to close down. During the last reunion in Walcheren in 2004 in order to repay a little of the great friendship and generous hospitality of the Dutch, the members wished to use their funds to invite their Dutch friends back to Scotland for a farewell party in 2005.

The Dutch were delighted to accept and the visit was arranged for the 14-18 April 2005. The guests were led by Mr and Mrs Gelok, the Burgermeister of Gementele Borsell and Mrs Nelleke Jermaisse who had



organised so many of our visits to Walcheren. Their names and our hosts from 156 Brigade are:-

Guests	Hosts
Mr & Mrs Gelok Burgermeister	Mr & Mrs Grant
Mrs Nelleke Jermaise	Mr & Mrs Grant
Mrs Caroline Platchorre	Mr & Mrs J Kelly
Mr & Mrs Boonman	Mr & Mrs Nightingale
Mr & Mrs A Allanbass	Mr & Mrs J Anderson
	Mr J Marler
Mr & Mrs Van't Westiende	Mr W Miller
Mr & Mrs M Van't Veer	Mr J Dunn
	Mrs L McKeon
Mr & Mrs Hermez	Mr & Mrs B Morris
Mr & Mrs Ringeling	Mr & Mrs Adams
Mr & Mrs Murre	Mr J Fenn & Family
Mrs Rentmeester	Mr J Deuchers
	Mr J Regan
Mrs I Mansier	Mrs L Cunningham
Mrs D Mansier Allanbass	

A full programme was arranged and the outline details were done:-

Day 1. Arrival at Prestwick airport and then travel by bus to the Avonbridge Hotel in Hamilton.

Day 2. A.M. The Cameronian Museum at Low Parks and beside the Divisional and Dutch memorial stone where a short Act of Remembrance was given by the Rev. W. D Downie, the Padre to The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) & Family Members organisation. The Provost Mustaq Achmed laid a wreath on behalf of the



South Lanarkshire Council followed by Burgermeister Gelok on behalf of Gemeentele Borselle. Alec Adams was next with a wreath in memory of our Fallen Heroes. During this ceremony, Alec's grandson, Gregg Gordon, now a piper with the Scots Guards, played. Many old and new friends attended, but the Chairman, Tommy Mackie was unable to be there but was represented by his daughter and grand daughter.

After the ceremony tea and coffee were available and the guests were able to visit the Museum.

P.M. In the evening a Civic Reception was given by Provost Achemd and after



photographs and presentations between the Provost and Burgermeister food and drinks were provided by the Council.

Day 3. A very distinct improvement in the weather allowed the party to visit the disbandment Cairn at Douglas. The party met a number of members of the organisation who lived in and near Douglas. The history of the Cairn was told by Jim Kane and then the party moved to the Douglas Museum where the Rev. Downie explained the origins of the Regiment and its Covenanting start. From Douglas to New Lanark for coffee and on to lunch at the Sandyholm Garden Centre. That evening everyone went to the Larkhall Golf Club for what used to be called 'a smoker', a great mixture of dancing, signing, eating and drinking. Many stories were told about the battle for Walcheren and how the area was rebuilt after the war. In turn stories of Scotland were told and old friendships renewed.

Day 4. This day was really a look at Scotland. A drive up to Tarbert for coffee and then by boat on Loch Lomond to Inversnaid Hotel for lunch. At the start, the weather was glorious but on the return the heavens opened and Helensburgh was seen through very heavy rain. All safety back to Hamilton for the evening meal and a quiet evening.

Day 5. A sad farewell to all our Dutch friends who returned to Prestwick for their flight home.

I believe that 156 Brigade enjoyed this visit; the sort of feeling that comes from a 'long last' being able to repay a little of the friendship and hospitality given to them by the people of Walcheren over the many years since 1944. The Dutch just don't forget, it is a sort of duty to them given to the Regiment in great friendship. We then hope that while we may no longer be able to travel as easily as we used to that our name will continue to be remembered and that our friends who are buried near the battleground of sixty and more years ago will still be looked after by good Dutch children. Our sincere thanks to Walcheren folk.

Finally, a short but special thanks to Nellek in Holland, to the Provost here in Hamilton and a very special thanks to Glenys Grant of Larkhall for she on her own put together just the kind of visit that was needed. It was truly hard work but she did it in great style and we all enjoyed it very much indeed.

## The Battle of the Scheldt Estuary

After the disappointment of Operation Market Garden the Allied Forces turned their attention to opening the Scheldt estuary. Montgomery's intent to execute a fast and concentrated push into the heart of Germany by a surprise attack on Arnhem had failed. At this point Eisenhower re-emphasised the importance of the availability of Antwerp as a supply harbour for the Allied Forces. At first Montgomery continued to display his stubborn character but in the end he compromised.

In September 1944 the Canadian 1st Army, led by Lieutenant General Crerar, captured several places along the Channel coast and in Western Belgium. While the British 2nd Army followed a more eastern route towards Antwerp, the Canadians conquered Dieppe, Oostende, Ghent and Bruges at a great pace. Le Havre, Boulogne and Calais proved to be more difficult, but during the course of September the German resistance was also broken in these places. At this point they had a chain of major harbours on the Channel coast at their disposal. However, the free passage to Antwerp continued to be of essential importance to the Allies due to the capacity and strategic location of this seaport. The Germans were also aware of this.

General Von Zangen, who skilfully withdrew his 1st Army (almost 90,000 men) back to the North, settled the German 64th Infantry Division in Zeeland, Flanders, and the 70th Infantry Division on Walcheren and South-Beveland. The Germans had

already constructed their "Atlantic Wall" on both sides of the Scheldt estuary so, for the moment the harbour of liberated Antwerp was useless to the Allied Forces. The Canadians and Polish had to fight fierce battles near the Gent-Bruges Canal and the Leie Canal in order to be able to form bridgeheads. The march towards eastern Zeeland-Flanders seemed much easier. On 15 October the frontline ran from Zeebrugge in the West along the Leopold Canal and the Braakman towards Terneuzen and from there along the Scheldt towards Antwerp.

Shortly after, the Canadian 1st Army, which was tasked with freeing the Scheldt estuary, attacked the new German line of defence. The Canadians were now under the command of Lieutenant-General Simonds, a very vigorous man, who had replaced the ill Crerar at the end of September. From Antwerp they marched to the Kreekrakdam, and further attacks were carried out to the West across the Leopold canal. However, in both sectors they met strong German resistance. The Germans had an especially strong fortress in the partly flooded polders of western Zeeland-Flanders. A combined Canadian attack from Terneuzen and from behind the Leopold Canal (Operation Switchback) forced the Germans back on the line Breskens-Schoondijke-Oostburg-Sluis. Not until 1 November, after a severe battle lasting for days, in which the civilian population also suffered great losses, was the last town in this sector liberated by the Canadians, by then supported by a British brigade.

In the meantime the German troops on North and South-Beveland and on Walcheren were cut off on the eastern side because of the liberation of Woensdrecht on 16 October. More than a week later the attack on South-Beveland was launched, also carried out by Canadians and British. Operation Vitality was a direct attack over the Kreekrakdam, and Operation Vitality comprised a landing of amphibious craft near Baarland. On 28 October the Allied Forces built a temporary bridge next to the destroyed bridges over the Canal through South Beveland. A day later both parts of the attack line met each other near Gravenpolder. The town of Goes and the western part of South Beveland were then liberated relatively easily.

Only Walcheren remained to be liberated. On this peninsula the Germans had a series of artillery batteries, concrete bunkers, machine gun nests and other enforcements. With the aim of limiting German manoeuvre the Allied Forces decided to flood Walcheren before launching their attack. After the civilian population was warned of the coming danger by leaflets,

the sea embankment near Westkapelle was bombed. Nevertheless dozens of civilians were killed during this bombardment and in the following flooding. 46 people were killed in Westkapelle when their hiding place, a windmill, took a direct hit. Because the seawater spread only slowly over the land east of Westkapelle, the sea embankments of Vlissingen and Veere were bombed as well. At this point the Germans were forced to withdraw to the higher grounds of the peninsula, but their heavy artillery was situated in the dunes area. The RAF was not able to silence the German artillery before the battle began.

The attack on Walcheren comprised several actions. On the eastside the Sloedam was attacked, in the south there was a landing near Vlissingen (Operation Infatuate I) and in the west a landing near Westkapelle (Operation Infatuate II) took place. Alongside the Canadians fought British, French, Dutch, Belgian and Norwegian troops.

Near the Sloedam the attackers found themselves in an extremely difficult position. This dam is more than a kilometre long and completely bare, with only silt and salt marshes on both sides of it. Between 31 October and 3 November a severe battle took place. However, the Allied Forces managed to form a bridgehead, also thanks to a crossing through the Sloe-area (Operation Mallard). Meanwhile the Allied landing near Vlissingen had taken place in the night of 31 October on 1 November near the so-called Slijk-harbour but here, as well, several days of severe battle took place before the Germans surrendered. On 3 November the Allied Forces assaulted the hotel 'Britannia', which was transformed into a fortress, on the Boulevard Evertsen. This hotel was the headquarters of the German garrison commander Colonel Reinhardt. Not until after many hours of battle did Reinhardt surrender and Vlissingen was liberated.

Also near Westkapelle the Germans put up a staunch resistance. Although the villages of Westkapelle and Domburg were liberated quite quickly, the German artillery located in the dunes caused a lot of trouble. The attack on such artillery batteries near Dishoek, Oostkapelle and Vrouwenpolder took its toll. The liberation of Mid del burg proved to be far less a struggle. Apparently the German General Daser was not inclined to fight to the last ditch. Finally the liberation of North Beveland quickly followed. The 450 man German occupation surrendered without notable battle.

It is a historical oversight that so little attention has been paid to the battle of the Schelde estuary. The potential of Antwerp

harbour as a supply harbour was of principal importance for the march to Berlin by the Allied Forces.

With hindsight Eisenhower should not have given in to Montgomery's demands over Operation Market Garden, by which time the German 15th Army had been allowed the opportunity to organise the defence of the Scheidt estuary. The fierce battle and the clearing of the Scheldt of mines took almost three months. During this period, Antwerp could not be used as a supply harbour and so there was a hold-up in the supply to the Allied Forces and their march to Berlin came to a halt.. Because of this the Germans were able to launch the Ardennes-offensive. Not without reason Antwerp was the main goal of this German attack in December.

Later Montgomery admitted his error of judgement. By then, Antwerp harbour had already proven its utility. During November enormous effort had been applied to clear the harbour of mines. On 28 November 1944, with some ceremony, the first convoy of Liberty ships was welcomed. On 1 December more than 10,000 tons of supplies could be safely landed.

This article was translated by Annelies Verkerk, British Embassy from:

Text: 1980 Handboek van de tweede Wereldoorlog, Uitgeverij Het Spectrum Pictures: Zeeuws Documentatiecentrum van de Zeeuwse Bibliotheek, Middelburg ([www.zeeuwsebibliotheek.nl](http://www.zeeuwsebibliotheek.nl)).  
Studie en Documentatiecentrum Oorlog en Hedendaagse Maatschappij, Brussel ([www.cegesoma.be](http://www.cegesoma.be)).  
Canadamuseum, Adegem ([www.canadamuseum.be](http://www.canadamuseum.be))

## **"As if it happened yesterday"**

In the night of October 25 on 26 I was rudely awakened by the howling of aeroplanes followed by the striking of grenades in Baarland, the village my wife was staying temporarily after the birth of our second son.

As a police officer it goes without saying that I would dress and go out to see if I could be of any assistance.

Fully dressed in uniform I opened the door to step outside when suddenly two soldiers with camouflaged faces yelled to me "hands up" and "who are you".

I called my wife and asked her to fetch the orange armband and to put it around my arm. One of the soldiers asked me what this meant and I was able to explain that I was member of a resistance group. A few minutes later a jeep arrived and I was taken away. Totally overwhelmed I was confronted with a whole lot of soldiers on the Zeedijk.

Luckily were among them a Dutch officer and a warrant officer. These two interrogated me directly and forced me to clarify which resistance group I was a member of and to give the names of other members. I gave them some names amongst that of mr. Quant from Goes and some names of the "escapeline" in Dutch Flanders. The warrant officer replied that he was also a member of that escape line and was satisfied that I was trustworthy. I was thereafter brought to the British commanding officer who introduced himself as colonel Leg and thereby he pointed to his leg.

Only some time later it dawned upon me what was happening, at the top of the dike huge machines were digging and shoving ground away while lots of boats were approaching which, to my great surprise, also had wheels.

These practical and almost everywhere to be launched DUKW 's drove right up the dike, through the hole that in the meantime was created and into the polder with many heavily armed men aboard. Some hours later almost a complete army camp was built by bringing in rolling material as kitchen trucks, radio trucks, artillery and the installation of tents. In the meantime a physician Franssen van de Putte had joined us who was an important asset because he was also a resistance member and knew the area very well because of his occupation as a general practitioner. On ordnance maps he pointed out the farmhouses and I was requested to accompany a patrol to persuade these people to leave their houses in order for the British troops to advance unhampered. It wasn't an easy job to do, we met a lot of opposition, people yelled at us and reacted furiously but we also experienced some relief and gratitude. My wife Marie had no idea what happened to me but was informed during the day by relatives and some soldiers. Both sides were still firing at each other, the Germans were also under fire of fighter aeroplanes, it was in a word still a bloody mess. At nightfall my job was finished and I learned that the decision was made to evacuate all inhabitants of Oudelande and Baarland to Dutch Flanders. In Oudelande was only one police sergeant and with him and the assistance of some civil officers everybody was informed to leave their houses at dawn and go to the Zeedijk. The misery that was hereby brought on is almost impossible to describe: All kinds of vehicles coming from everywhere packed with adults and children at the crack of dawn. Prams and wheelbarrows, bicycles with elderly people on it who had to be supported on either side by their relatives, almost unbelievable! At the foot

of the dike DUKW 's were lying where the wretched things were driven into like cattle because there weren't enough seats by far. It was awfully cold in these DUKW's because they were open and there was no shelter whatsoever. At some time my wife appeared with our two children, her parents and other relatives. She refused to leave without me but was gently forced to go aboard. I had to stay and assist this evacuation which did not pass speckless, lots of panic and anxiety. After the boats had left fear seized me by the throat, I let my wife and children go; would I ever see them back? How will the Germans react, will they let the boats go to Dutch Flanders unharmed? And how will things work out on the other side; naturally nobody could answer these questions and therefore I was also in some state of anxiety. The police sergeant in Oudelande and I would stay behind to watch the abandoned farms and houses and look after the people who stayed behind to take care of the cattle. In the night of October 30th we heard a great deal of drone from aircraft and canon rumbling and later on we were told that the allied forces launched the final attack on Walcheren and especially Vlissingen. I went back to Oudelande and told the police sergeant that it was my duty now to go back to Vlissingen to report to my resistance group and to report for regular police duties there. He understood and I left for Vlissingen on my bicycle as fast as I could, on the way wondering how my wife and children would make out, I felt anxious and powerless! This having told I would have loved to shake the hands of all present veterans and tell them how happy I am to see and greet them again and to express again how grateful we are for their devotion at that time. And of course that we understand how difficult it will be to stand still in remembrance of all the comrades who gave their lives here for us here and especially in Baarland. Because our health does not make this possible, we will be with you in thoughts when the deceased will be honoured on Wednesday.

Finally, again our grateful thanks for "our liberation" we wish you all the best and a safe journey home!

Adieu Cameronians,  
Thijs & Marie Way



# THE CAMERONIANS (SCOTTISH RIFLES) & FAMILY MEMBERS

## Programme of Events 2006

**14 May 2006** St Bride's, Douglas  
Morning Service in the Douglas Valley Church St Bride's at 1000 hrs. The Regimental Flag will be raised at the Victoria Bowling Club at 0945 hrs and lowered after the morning service.

The Regimental Flag will be raised at the Cameronian Cairn, Castle Dangerous at 1300 hrs where a commemorative service will be held at 1400 hrs. Both services will be conducted by the Reverend Bryan Kerr BA BD.

Refreshments will be served at the Bowling Club for 100 members by ticket only. Tickets may be obtained, at a cost of £3.00 pp, from Mr Jim Ballantyne, 14/2 Water Street, Edinburgh, EH6 6SU. Tel 0131 554 3736

**14 May 2006** – Edinburgh Castle

The Regimental Flag will be raised at Edinburgh Castle to commemorate the disbandment of the Regiment in 1968

**8 June 2006** – Lanark

Cameronians are invited to participate in the Lanimer Day celebrations. Muster 0900 hrs St Leonard's Street (the top of Lanark Main Street)

**4 Nov 2006** - Hamilton

The Joint Ex-Serviceman's Committee have invited our participation. RV 1000 hrs outside Crighton's Shoe Shop in Quarry Street at the bottom cross - tea and biscuits will be served.

Muster 1030 hrs then to the Garden of Remembrance and thereafter Hamilton Town Hall for refreshments.

**5 Nov 2006** – Hamilton

Members interested in attending the Festival of Remembrance in Hamilton Town Hall at 1830 hrs should contact Mr Iain Forsyth Tel 01698 425 577 who will provide a programme at a cost of £1.50 – Refreshments will be served.

**11 Nov 2006** – Museum Hamilton

A Remembrance Service will; be held at 1000 hrs to commemorate the Regiments participation in the liberation of South Beveland and Walcheren after crossing the Scheldt at Baarland and at Flushing 26 October and 3 November 1944. The service will be conducted by the Reverend William

Downie.

Following the service refreshments will be served in the main assembly hall of the Museum.

**9 Nov 2006** – Westminster Abbey

Any member able to support Mr Eddie Clark would be most welcome.

**12 Nov 2006** – Kelvingrove War Memorial  
A Remembrance Service will take place at The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) War Memorial. Muster 1000 hrs. The service will be conducted by the Reverend William Downie. Following the service refreshments will be served in The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Memorial Club, 9 Holyrood Crescent, Glasgow Tel 0141 339 9801

## Gorbals Fair Glasgow Saturday 25th June 2005

On Saturday the 25th of June 2005 the Cameronians (SR) & Family Members took part in the Gorbals Fair. The Fair is held annually in June and incorporates



many participants from the area. Local Glasgow City Councillor James Mutter DL made an enthusiastic opening speech prior to the ceremonial cutting of the ribbon at Abbotsford Place. Along side was local Gorbals Boy Mr Jack McAveety MSP and Baillie Stephen Dornan of Glasgow City Council. The Cameronians (SR) and Family Members marched behind the Standard Bearers from the Royal British Legion and various Military Associations. The parade also included floats from the Gorbals Youth and Community Theatre, Citizens Theatre

and local playgroups. Cameronians Piper Jack Willis led the marching contingent with Mr Robert Gracie carrying the Organisation Standard. Following the march the Gala Princess was crowned at



the St Francis Centre, Old Rutherglen Road, Glasgow. The Cameronians were made most welcome by Mrs Isobel Barret the Gorbals Fair Co-ordinator. Isobel chatted to all of the Members thanking them for their attendance at the Parade. Chairman Mr Andy Berry replied that the Cameronians were proud to participate, thanking Isobel for her kind hospitality the Chairman also said that the Organisation looked forward to future events. The afternoon rounded with Members enjoying the festival atmosphere.

## Lanark Lanimer Day Parade Thursday the 9th of June 2005

On Thursday the 9th of June 2005 the Cameronians (SR) & Family Members in their regular annual visit to Lanark Lanimer Day participated in the procession. The weather was perfect for what is a gala occasion in the town. The Chairman of the Lanark Lanimer Day Committee Mr Leslie



Reid made the Cameronians most welcome. The Cameronians are well connected with Lanark and are proud to parade. The marching contingent was lead by Piper Jack Willis and following close behind carrying the Organisation Standard was Mr Bill Gough. The main body comprised of the Chairman Andy Berry, Jim Hamilton, Mr



George Stringer, Kenny and Mrs Ellen Hoey, Allan Halliday, Alex Maxwell and Temporary Secretary Andy McArthur. Pictured in the group shot is the Provost of North Lanark Council Patrick Connelly JP. Patrick spoke warmly to the marching contingent complimenting the Chairman on a splendid turn out. Once again the Organisation was placed close to the front of the procession in recognition of the bond between the town and the Cameronians. The assembled crowds cheered the Cameronians (SR) and Family Members as the procession marched down the main street. Prior to the crowning of the Lanimer Queen the Cameronians fell out to be ushered to seats to view the ceremony.

## Royal British Legion Scotland Cumbernauld Branch Veterans' Week Parade

On Sunday the 3rd of July 2005 the Royal British Legion Scotland Cumbernauld Branch held a Parade to celebrate Veterans' Week. With the Pipe Band leading the parade closely followed by the Standards of the Royal British Legion Scotland, Organisations and Associations Standards. The marching contingent comprised of the old and bold. Many cap badges were represented from all units and corps. As the band struck up the parade marched from the Cumbernauld Branch Club to Cumbernauld

Village where the War Memorial is located. As the procession arrived in what turned out to be glorious sunshine the waiting crowd politely applauded. The Standard Bearers took post round the Memorial while the Marching contingent stood facing. The MSP for Cumbernauld Cathie Craigie spoke of the meaning of the parade and the Remembrance of those who made the ultimate sacrifice. The Standards then dipped in homage to the dead for the two minutes silence. The haunting notes of the "Flowers of the Forest" were played by a solo piper and as the tune faded away the Standards were brought to the carry. The parade reformed for the march past the saluting dais. From there the parade entered Cumbernauld Old Parish Church for a service. It was an emotional day as many remembered fallen comrades and loved ones that were lost. Very kindly the RBLs Cumbernauld Chairman expressed it was the wish of the Members that the retiring offering be made to the church roof renewal. The day was rounded off at the Cumbernauld RBLs Club. There the Chairman thanked sincerely all of those who attended and wished them well for the future.



Standard Bearers Mr Eddie Grace Cumbernauld RBLs Branch, Mr Robert Gracie Cameronians, Mr Bill Gough Kirkintilloch RBLs Branch & Temporary Secretary Mr Andy McArthur TD.



Cumbernauld 2. Parade arriving at Cumbernauld Village War Memorial.

## Gorbals Local Heroes Remembered

It was on a beautiful sunny spring morning on the 10th of March 2005, as the St Francis Pipe Band of Gorbals Rose Garden, on the Old Rutherglen Road, Glasgow. The Rose Garden was previously a graveyard, which has been landscaped to form the Gorbals Rose Garden.

The site is the oldest part of the Gorbals and is indeed the only original part left. There are gravestones dated 1723 to bear witness to the use of the ground for burials. Artist Liz Peden, of the Gorbals Arts Project created the memorial from an idea of local schoolgirl Emma Porter. It comprises of a rose with the head tilted downwards and a petal having fallen on to the base, which is in shape of the Victoria Cross. The inscription on the base dedicates the Memorial to all of those from the Gorbals who lost their lives through conflict. The organisation behind the project is artworks. Juliet Sebley of artworks said of the Memorial that she was proud to be involved in the production and ceremony. Councillor Aileen Colleran, Convenor of Parks and Facilities Committee welcomed everyone to the Ceremony and introduced Councillor James Mutter DL who performed the Unveiling Ceremony. Following the unveiling, Jimmy gave a warm speech praising the artist and explained the sentiment behind the Memorial. The Memorial is dedicated to everyone from the Gorbals area that has died during times of conflict, with a special dedication to Private James Stokes who won the Victoria Cross for his bravery while serving with the 2nd Battalion of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry. Private James Stokes VC was born on the 6th of February 1915. He enlisted into the Royal Artillery in August 1940. James also served with the Royal Army Service Corps with 52 Drivers Training Regiment. Transferring to the Gloucestershire Regiment in October 1943 then to the Kings Shropshire Regiment Light Infantry in October 1944. James won the highest military honour by routing a German machine gun stronghold. On the 1st of March 1945, during an attack of Kervenhein, Rhineland, Germany a platoon was pinned down by intense rifle fire and

machine-gun fire from a farm building. Private Stokes dashed into the building firing from the hip and reappeared with 12 German prisoners. During the operation he was wounded but refused to obey orders to go to the Regimental Aid Post and continued the advance with his platoon and rushed another house, taking 5 more prisoners. Now severely injured he insisted on taking part in the advance of the final objective, but he fell mortally wounded for just 20 yards from the enemy position. James' name is inscribed on the petal at the base of the Memorial. Also being remembered are civilians who too lost their lives through conflict. The family of Private Stokes were present at the unveiling and expressed their sincere thanks to all involved and were proud that James Stokes name was inscribed on the the Memorial.

Along side Jimmy Mutter was Ronnie McKay Director of Corporate Services from Erskine Care. Ronnie spoke about the care the Veterans received at Erskine and thanked everyone who supports the Charity. Conducting the service of dedication the Reverend Tom Davidson Kelly, MA, BD, FSA, Scot, late of the Royal Army Chaplains Department. He spoke of the tragic sorrow of the loss of life through conflict. The Light Infantry Collect words were spoken by the Chaplain as part of the Dedication. After the Dedicatin the congregation collectively said the Lords Prayer. The Buglers Corporal LP Guy and Private L Cummins kindly supplied by the Commanding Officer, 2nd Battalion The Light Infantry played Last Post, this was followed by Piper James Murray of the St Francis Pipe Band playing 'the Flowers of the Forest'. After two minutes silence the Buglers sound Reveille. At this moment a wreath was laid by Major Jim Hall, Officer Commanding Rear Detail, 2nd Battalion The Light Infantry and by relatives of James Stokes, Maureen Doherty and John Friary. James Stokes unit the King's Shropshire Light Infantry merged in 1968 with other infantry regiments to form the Light Infantry. From the Army Personnel Centre in Glasgow representing the Armed Services SO1 Soldiers, Lieutenant Colonel Andy Waller Royal Artillery, Infantry Colonel J Stewart Douglas OBE, (Late Royal Irish), Major Gary Brooksby Royal Green Jackets and Major

Simon Bedford Royal Green Jackets. Captain John McDermid Royal Highland Fusiliers with Colour Sergeant H Scoular, Corporal M Duncan and Lance Corporal M Linaker. Captain Colin McNab Royal Logistic Corps represented the Local Territorial Army Unit 221 Transport Squadron (Volunteers) RLC of the Scottish Transport Regiment. Standard Bearing at the Ceremony were Arthur Mooney and Bill Gough carrying the Standards of the 15th Scottish Division and the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and family members organisation. Keeping a watchful eye on behalf of the Strathclyde Police Force was Inspector Jim O'Brien, Jim previously served in the Royal Air Force Regiment. In closing Councillor Mutter said, 'It will be a fitting memorial not only to James Stokes but also to everyone from Gorbals who fought to make sure this world is a better place'. He then placed a yellow rose on the base and invited the congregation to join in and also place a rose. At the moment the majority of the congregation stepped forward in response to pay individual respects in memory of relatives and loved ones. Other local heroes include Driver Joseph Hughes George Cross. Joseph was awarded his George Cross posthumously after his ammunition lorry caught fire and after driving the vehicle away from the civilians he was injured fighting the fire. His injuries resulted in his death and for his bravery during peacetime he was decorated with the highest civilian award for bravery. The incident happened in Honk Kong in March 1946. The local people requested he be buried locally in the Happy Valley Cemetery and to this day they remember his brave deed. A crowd of 200 locals and well wishing visitors from various organisations including, the Royal British Legion Scotland, Royal Army Service Corps & Royal Corps of Transport Association, Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) & Family Members, Royal Navy Association, Royal Signals Association witnessed the inveiling and all praised the Memorial as a fitting tribute. Looking towards the future of Roll of Honour is being considered to record the names of the citizens from the Gorbals who made the supreme sacrifice.





## MISCELLANEOUS

### The Egyptian Campaign of 1801

(Extract from the *Covenanter* of 1972)

By the 16th February it had become clear to Abercrombie that there was no immediate prospect of his Army's being reinforced and that he therefore had no further justification for delaying his departure upon the mission which had been set for him – though by then he had become convinced that the mission was more or less doomed to failure. Indeed on that very day he had written "We are now on the point of sailing for Egypt with very slender means for executing the orders we have received. I never went on any service entertaining greater doubts of success at the same time with more determination to conquer difficulties."

#### Expedition lands at Aboukir March 1801

Setting out from Marmaris on the 22nd February the British Expedition had arrived off Aboukir (a few miles due east of the strongly fortified town of Alexandria) on the 1st March and the assault on the beaches had begun on the 8th.

Along that stretch of the north coast of Egypt where the Nile divides into several finger-like tributaries before emptying itself into the Mediterranean, the immediate hinterland is extremely low lying and at certain times of the year becomes flooded, thus forming large inland lakes which are only separated from the sea itself by narrow strips of land along the edge of the coast. It was because there was one of those narrow coastal strips running along the comparatively short stretch between Aboukir and Alexandria and because any troops who advanced along that isthmus would have their right flank protected by the Mediterranean and their left (or southern) flank protected first by Lake Aboukir and then by Lake Mareotis (two large expanses of water which were separated by the only dry bit of land and a narrow one at that along which the enemy could approach from the south) that Aboukir had been selected as the landing point.

The beach on which the actual assault was to be made lay across the eastern end of that coastal strip. General Moore (later to be the hero of Corunna) had been placed in charge of the initial landing parties, composed of a Brigade commanded by Brigadier

Hildebrand Oakes (a former Commanding Officer of the 26th Cameronians), together with a Regiment of Guards and part of Coote's Brigade. Craddock's Brigade (to which the 90th had then belonged) had been among the "follow-up" troops. Although the leading wave of the assault had come under heavy fire from the defenders who were occupying the sand-dunes overlooking the beach, the speed and precision of the attackers (acquired during their oft-repeated rehearsals at Marmaris) had taken those Frenchmen by surprise and had quickly forced them to withdraw. Thus the second wave had landed without opposition and by nightfall the whole of Abercrombie's force was ashore with its foremost troops in position on a line which stretched across the isthmus between the Mediterranean in the north and Lake Aboukir in the south.

#### Advance towards Alexandria

After a three-day pause for the landing of guns and stores, the Army began its move along the narrow coastal fringe towards Alexandria (i.e., to the west), advancing in two columns with the 90th acting as advanced guard to the right-hand one. After covering a distance of some four miles, however, during which the Regiment had only exchanged a few shots with some small cavalry patrols who had hastily withdrawn, a strong enemy force was found to be occupying commanding positions on a ridge, known as the Roman Camp, which stretched across the line of advance not far from the point where a road and canal ran south via the narrow causeway that lay between Lakes Aboukir and Mareotis. Upon his observing large bodies of enemy troops moving forward from that ridge, Abercrombie had assumed that a battle was imminent and he had therefore deployed his force in readiness. It had then turned out, however, that the French were only sending troops to their right front to take up positions on that causeway between the two lakes so that fire from there could be brought to bear on the British left flank during Abercrombie's advance upon their main positions. As it was then fairly late in the day he had ordered his troops to bivouac where they stood and to be ready to move forward at dawn on the following morning.

Moore had been placed in charge of the

outpost line that night and among the troops he had selected for his picquets had been the 90th, for whom he had a great admiration. It had been a gruelling duty, for them having already had an exhausting day during which they had been continually on their feet for about ten hours those men had not been permitted to lie down at all during the night nor even to remove their heavy knapsacks.

In other words, the 90th had had little rest on the eve of their first engagement.

### **The Battle of Mandora**

At daybreak on the 13th March the men were given an issue of rum and received the welcome news that they could leave their knapsacks in the care of a small party of their comrades who were found to be temporarily unfit for other than light duties. When came the order to advance, shortly after 6 a.m., the force moved in three parallel columns, with the 90th again out in front, acting as advanced guard to the centre column. They had barely got under way, however, before the Regiment's Vanguard Company suddenly saw a thick cloud of dust ahead of them and were quick to realise that a large body of French Cavalry was rapidly bearing down upon them. With almost machine-like precision and regularity (born of their recent training at Marmaris) the remaining Companies of the 90th swung successively into line on the left of their leading one in readiness to meet that furious onslaught and with orders to withhold their fire until the horsemen were almost upon them. Then only a few moments before the wickedly-glinting swords of those galloping French Chasseurs could be brought into play, there was a deafening roar as that rock-steady line of Infantrymen discharged the first of many devastating volleys into the oncoming hordes, tearing great gaps in their leading ranks and bringing horses and riders headlong to the ground in writhing and struggling heaps. Such was the confusion caused among the leading waves of Frenchmen by that withering fire at point-blank range that others behind them wavered and switched their attack to the right where the 92nd, the Advanced Guard Regiment of the British column on that flank, had dealt with them in similar fashion. Riders whose steeds had been shot from under them had found their swords to be no match for the British bayonets and in a very short time that fierce action was over leaving very few of those enemy Cavalrymen still unscathed.

It was afterwards learned that when the headdress of the 90th had first been seen by the French through the early morning mist the latter had jumped to the mistaken conclusion that good fortune had placed at their mercy a British cavalry regiment which had somehow become separated from its horses. This was because the 90th were still wearing the "Tarleton Helmet" of Light Dragoon style which not only continued to be worn by various British and French Cavalry regiments, but which (and this had apparently been unknown to the French) had also been the headgear of certain British Infantry regiments until as recently as the previous year when a newly-designed "stove-patterned" helmet had been introduced for all foot regiments. That the new helmet had not yet been adopted by the 90th was because only limited supplies of that item had reached Malta while Abercrombie's force had been re-fitting there a few months earlier.

Their overwhelming defeat of those rash French horsemen had cost the 90th and 92nd heavy casualties, and they were both to suffer further losses before the day was out. As soon as the dust of that encounter had settled, Abercrombie's leading troops had come under a hail of bullets and grape-shot from the French positions on the higher ground of the ridge ahead, and he had ordered a general advance. After driving the enemy from their foremost entrenchments, the 90th had halted temporarily to reform their front line before continuing their steady and unwavering advance towards their next objective.

It had been while leading his men during that forward move that the Regiment's Commanding Officer, Lieut. Colonel Roland Hill, had owed his life to his having been wearing a helmet of the unique pattern which had already misled the French Cavalry earlier that morning. Struck on the head by an enemy bullet, he had been knocked off his horse and had had to be removed from the field with minor injuries and severe concussion which had rendered him "hors de combat" for some weeks. It was discovered that although the bullet had made quite a dent in the crown of his helmet the initial force of the blow had been taken by the brass-bound peak of that hat. That very same helmet, still displaying those dents of long ago, can be seen today in the Royal Army Museum in London where its importance as a relic is heightened because of the distinguished career of its original

owner who rose to become Commander-in-Chief of the British Army with the rank and title of General Lord Hill.

The Second-in-Command of the 90th, Lieut. Colonel Kenneth Mackenzie, had taken Hill's place for the time being, and the slow but steady advance towards the main French positions on the Roman Camp ridge had continued. First to secure a footing there had been the troops on the right flank of Abercrombie's force, and this had resulted in a general French withdrawal to the Heights of Necropolis less than a mile from Alexandria. Without pausing to carry out any detailed reconnaissance of the enemy's position there, Abercrombie had decided to push on. Before long, however, he had found himself held up and, rather unwisely perhaps, had delayed his decision to pull his force back to the Roman Camp ridge until late in the evening, by which time his troops, who had been exposed to the fire of the French guns, had suffered many more casualties.

British losses that day had been heavy (heavier indeed than the enemy's) and had amounted to about 1200 killed and wounded, of which the 90th had had 22 men killed and 8 officers, 11 sergeants and 203 other ranks wounded. The Regiment, however, had acquitted itself well and had come through its baptism of fire in a way that had given it every cause for pride and satisfaction.

That fighting on the 13th March had become known as the Battle of Mandora (after a small redoubt of that name which stood near the scene of the action) and in recognition of the conspicuous part that the 90th and 92nd had played there both Regiments were later awarded the Battle Honour "Mandora" - the first to be gained by the 90th.

### **Nelson's Island Excavations**

In October 2001 The Nelson Society was contacted by Dr Paolo Gallo, Professor of Egyptology at the University of Turin and Director of the Italian Archaeological Institute based at Alexandria, Egypt. Dr Gallo's exciting news was that during excavations of ancient structures on Nelson's Island, Aboukir Bay, Egypt he had discovered some artefacts, graffiti and burials that he believed related to the British occupation of the island from shortly after the Battle of the Nile in August 1798 to Keith's and Abercrombie's landings in March 1801. Dr Gallo was concerned that these burials were

under direct threat from erosion, both from the subsidence of the island and general weathering as from human action - the island had become a local picnicking and fishing site. Dr Gallo was anxious that these graves would shortly be lost along with any scientific information that could be learnt from them if nothing was done to excavate and to re-bury them.

Following a preliminary visit to Alexandria and Nelsons Island in April 2002 by Nick Slope, then vice chairman of the Nelson Society (himself a near eastern archaeologist) it was decided to support Doctor Gallo's excavation as much as was possible and to this end a plan and budget was prepared and put before the Nelson Society committee and the 1805 club council and the official Nelson commemoration committee (ONCC) were kept informed of developments. The action plan and budget were approved and fundraising, detailed planning and background research commenced.

The aim of the Nelson Society's involvement was to assist in the excavation and recording of British Military graves and associated materials under threat, in order to allow the human remains to be scientifically evaluated and subsequently reburied in a British Military cemetery in Alexandria.

Following receipt of a letter from Mr Nick Slope the Trustees made a very modest financial contribution towards the costs of the third expedition commensurate with the number of Regimental remains recorded.

### **Report by Mr Nick Slope Chairman The Nelson Society 90th Foot, Perthshire Volunteers**

Most soldiers of the 90th Regiment of Foot, including Colonel Rowland Hill, were transported to Aboukir Bay in HMS Expedition and were listed in the ship's muster book supernumerary list (ADM36 15095). Also carried were seven women and eight children 'of the 90th'. Following the successful opposed landing in Aboukir Bay the soldiers stayed on land and the transport ships, including the Expedition, were turned into hospital ships for the sick and wounded of the expedition. Admiral Lord Keith requested that the women left onboard acted as nurses to the sick and wounded starting to appear. Many, including the women of the 90th agreed to this and, as a reward were given full rations (they normally received half rations). The Expedition was moored

approximately three miles north-east of Nelson's Island and seven miles from the beach of Aboukir (this is known as she was moored almost directly over the wreck of the French flagship L'Orient that blew up three years earlier at the Battle of the Nile and her captain was ordered to move the Expedition slightly to avoid fouling the wreck). The sick and injured were transported from Aboukir beach to the ships of the fleet.

Private John Shean of the 90th Foot died onboard HMS Heroine on 15 March 1801 and was interred the next day 'on land of wounds received' (ADM36 14532 and ADM52 3087).

Private Edward Fanell (sic) of the 90th Foot died onboard HMS Trusty on 18 March 1801 but there is no mention of how or where he was interred (ADM36 14085 and ADM51 1352).

Private William Blunt of the 90th Foot died onboard HMS Expedition on 26 March 1801 and was interred the next day (ADM36 15095 and ADM52 2994).

Private Alexander McLeod of the 90th Foot died onboard HMS Expedition on 30 March 1801 and was interred the same day (ADM36 15095 and ADM52 2994).

Private Angus McLeod of the 90th Foot died onboard HMS Expedition on 31 March 1801 and was interred the same day (ADM36 15095 and ADM52 2994).

Private Joseph Coleman of the 90th Foot died onboard HMS Expedition on 6 April 1801 and was interred the same day (ADM36 15095 and ADM52 2994).

Sergeant George Weir of the 90th Foot died onboard HMS Expedition on 10 April 1801 and was interred the same day (ADM36 15095 and ADM52 2994).

Private Alexander Murray of the 90th Foot died onboard HMS Dictator on either the 10 or the 16 April 1801 and it is unclear whether he was interred on land or buried at sea (ADM36 15340 and ADM51 1375).

Private Thomas Morton of the 90th Foot died onboard the HMS Delft on 18 April 1801 and was interred the next day. Private Morton died the same day as Guardsman Captain John Frederick. The Captain's log of the Delft records that on 18 April 'Died of his wounds Captain John Frederick of the Coldstream Guards and a private of the 90th Regiment' (the muster book confirms that this was Morton) (ADM36 14519 and ADM51 1406).

Thomas King 'child of the 90th Regiment' died on 28 April 1801. It is unclear whether he was interred on land or buried at sea

but at least three infants have been located and rescued from Nelson's Island (ADM36 15095).

It is almost certain that Private John Shean and Private Edward Fanell were both injured in the Battle of Mandora (13 March 1801) and died of a result of their wounds. It is probable that most of the others were wounded at the Battle of Alexandria (21 March 1801) and died of a result of their wounds.

## Nelson's Island Update: Reburial of Remains at Chatby CWGC, Alexandria, Egypt

Friday 15 April 2005

The party going out to Alexandria met at Heathrow T4 and consisted of Gordon and Joan Watson (the descendants of Commander James Russell), Clinton Lee representing The Nelson Society, Captain David Horn Curator of the Guards Museum representing the Coldstream and Scots Guards (both present at Aboukir in 1801) as well as the Museum (the Guard Regiments and the Museum supported the excavations over the last few years), Royal Marine buglers Jim Butler and Albert Beech and myself. The flight went OK, Joan Watson announcing that the last time that she had flown was during the war in Lancaster bombers as a fitter!

Saturday 16 April 2005

After arriving at Alexandria, Egypt at 5a.m. we were met by HM Consul General Alan Cobden and whisked off to our hotel. After a wash and brush up, Alan and I went to the Alexandria Maritime Museum in order to collect the remains to be reburied and to then take them to the British Consulate for placing in five coffins. Following a lot of tea drinking and pleasantries at the museum we finally reached the Consulate with the crates containing the remains and started unpacking and sorting them. I was concerned that the remains were not to be buried in the plastic bags that they had been stored in and it was agreed that each set of remains were to be labelled (in case there was a need to identify them at a later date) and placed in canvas sacks. The canvas sacks were then placed in the coffins and I recorded what set of remains were where. There were a total of 23 complete, or nearly complete skeletons and fragments of a further seven burials. Commander James Russell's remains were placed in a single coffin and the rest were

shared out between the remaining four coffins. The task took most of the day and in the evening we were guests of Alan Cobden and his family.

### Sunday 17 April 2005

The next day we were asked by Chris Terrill Director of the BBC documentary team that were making a 'fly-on-the-wall' programme concerning life in today's Royal Navy, if the Watson's and myself could be interviewed at the Consulate. This was achieved and after coffee and biscuits we returned to our hotel where Major Robin Whyte (representing the Adjutant General of the Army and himself an ex-Scots Guardsman) who had recently arrived met us. There was a walk-through rehearsal at the Cemetery but we were not needed and so relaxed for the rest of the day. I took the Watson's, Clint and David to see the centre of Alex and we ended up having a horse and buggy ride along the sea front to the restored Mameluke fort of Quit Bay (the probable site of the ancient Pharos of Alexandria) followed by the traditional argument about the fare! On our return we went out for a meal and spent a pleasant evening together although I had to keep running off to do telephone interviews!

### Monday 18 April 2005

The big day! At 10.30 a.m. we all set off for Chatby CWGC in the centre of Alexandria for a full rehearsal of the burial ceremony. There we met the sailors and Royal Marines from HMS Chatham (she had docked at Alex at 9.00 a.m.) who were to provide the Burial Party and Guard of Honour. Also there were Reverend Godfrey Hilliard Royal Navy Fleet Chaplain who was to conduct the service and the Naval and Air Attaché Commander Mike Lovett. It was good to see Mike again. He had come out to the island the previous year when we were excavating there (I had the indignity of arriving to meet him a lá Steptoe in a horse and cart in Aboukir – it had been the only transport that I could get!) and he had thrown his weight behind the reburials and organised much of the ceremony. After a full walk through of the ceremony we were shuttled back to the hotel for a bite to eat and to get into our best togs and to then return to the cemetery at 13.30. When we were gathering for the bus Gordon and Joan Watson appeared looking resplendent wearing their medals from WWII. They told us that they had not worn them since the war and did not intend wearing them again!

We arrived at Chatby amid much security and bustle and as we walked through the

cemetery gates we were amazed to see a whole pack of journalists, photographers and TV crews rush to meet us. It was an incredible moment and really brought home to us how much this ceremony had caught the world's imagination. The Watson's (Gordon aged 87 and Joan aged 83) rode the media storm and amid flashing bulbs and microphones gave interview after interview. For this media savvy we nicked them 'Posh and Becks' for the rest of the day! After what seemed an eternity of interviews we took our places and the ceremony commenced. The Guard of Honour took their place and the coffins, draped in the Union Flag were brought in borne on the shoulders of the ship's company of HMS Chatham accompanied by music from the Egyptian Navy Band that had kindly agreed to take part in the ceremony. There was then an opening address by HM Ambassador Sir Derek Plumbly KCMG followed by a background address by HM Consul General Alan Cobden. Nelson's Prayer (written before Trafalgar) was then read out by Captain S Chick Commanding Officer HMS Chatham (I had specifically requested this and it was my only real contribution to the day!). This was followed by the Army Prayer read out by Colonel S J Oxlade MBE Commander Aldershot Garrison, the Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment (the 'Glorious Gloucesters' had been at Aboukir in 1801 and had won the distinction of wearing a cap badge on the rear of their cap for their bravery in defeating French infantry to their front and French dragoons to their rear!). Captain



P Holihead (Royal Navy) Defence Attaché read out Psalm 107 and then the Reverend Godfrey Hilliard Royal Navy Fleet Chaplain conducted the Service as the coffins were lowered into the graves. The Guard of Honour fired three volleys over the graves and then the Royal Marine Buglers played the Last Post and, following a minute's

silence, Reveille. It was a most emotional moment and I have to confess at being quite



overcome with it all. The Union Flag that covered Commander James Russell's coffin was presented to the Watson's and then wreaths were laid. Clinton and I laid a wreath on behalf of The Nelson Society and The 1805 Club. One of the Diplomatic Guests was overheard to comment that "nobody can do that (ceremony) like the British". I was so proud of what had happened at the ceremony. Alan Cobden and Mike Lovett did a fantastic job organising the ceremony and the ship's company of HMS Chatham were a credit to their ship, the Service and their country.

As well as over 150 guests There were around another 150 media people including at least eight TV crews (al Jezera, CNN, BBC, Nile TV and others). The Navy had a PR crew film the event, as did the Consulate. The story went around the world and was covered from Sydney to San Francisco. The Guardian, Telegraph, Express, Mail and Independent all ran major pieces with pictures and quotes and it was covered on BBC Radio 4, BBC South Today and many local radio stations. It was all quite amazing and I feel that The Nelson Society has really achieved something tangible and unique that has contributed to 2005.

However the day was not over! We all retired to the Consulate for a reception where the Royal Navy blotted their copybook by wolfing all the sandwiches before I got there! However they made up for it by inviting us all to a splendid evening reception onboard the Chatham that was conducted under an awning over the flight deck. The evening was rounded off when the White Ensign was lowered to the sound of the Royal Marine buglers playing Sunset – a fitting and beautiful end to the most perfect of days.

**Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 19, 20 and 21 April 2005**

The next day the Watsons and Clint visited El Alemain while I recovered from the previous day's exertions. On the Wednesday we tried to get out to Nelson's Island in order to show the Watsons the site of their distinguished forebears original grave. Unfortunately the authorities would not let us go out there and so we returned to Alex and I took them to the excellent Greco-Roman Museum there. That evening we dined with Alan Cobden and family and the next morning returned to England.

### Epilogue

It was a fantastic trip that I shall never forget. It was something special to see the Royal Navy and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office supported by the Army and the MOD putting on such a brilliant ceremony. It was a great pity that Dr Paolo Gallo, who first located the burials, was not there or Rachael Stone who was a member of the British excavation team but Sir Derek Plumbly paid Paolo full tribute in his opening address. For me the whole effort of the three year rescue excavation and the ceremony was summed up by Royal Marine Dale Anderson (one of the burial party) who has served in Afghanistan and Iraq who said to the press that "*hopefully someone would do this for me if it happened to me*".

This is not the end of the Nelson's Island excavations. Paolo plans to continue excavating on the island for several years to come. We know that there are more remains to be rescued and I plan to fly out to Italy to see Paolo in the next few weeks, brief him on the ceremony and plan our future strategy.

Nick Slope

Chairman the Nelson Society

## A Cameronian Visits The Paras.

The International Military Music Society (IMMS)

I was asked by the IMMS, founded almost thirty years ago, to give a talk about my time as a Cameronian boy and bandsman. The IMMS members, with few exceptions, are not ex-bandsman but are people who love military music and plan their year to hear as many bands as possible both within and without the UK. Their main pleasure is an annual meeting at Kneller Hall and a holiday abroad to visit a band: in 2005 they were the guests of the Band of the Gibraltar Regiment. Having met them, I concluded that they have a romantic rather than realistic view of service band life

### The talk at Colchester Garrison.

Leaving Colchester Station on the 6th April, I soon saw the grim outline of a very old barracks. Civilian security guards on the gate suggested an absence of soldiers. On that day the IMMS were the guests of the Band of the Parachute Regiment. Within minutes, a musician arrived, wearing the familiar red beret, dressed in combat dress with a face bronzed by being recently in a hotter climate. He confirmed my observation by telling me that the band had just returned from duties in Iraq. He said that his band was facing a period of uncertainty because they were expecting the possibility of being merged with the Army Air Corps Band.

The society members were hearing the band as they performed play in a large cavernous room where the awful acoustics gave the same ill effect on the ears a face would endure in front of the intense heat of a blast furnace: it was for this reason that at first I found it difficult to judge the standard of a fairly good band. I welcomed the sight of girls in the band but immediately noticed that there was shortage of woodwind players. Their four clarinets were about to become three because their solo clarinet was leaving that day at the end of his 22. He had made a request to play 'The Dance of the Tumblers', a very difficult piece for the clarinets. However, the choice had humour for the band because he was noted for his frequent elbow drill. Whenever we played 'The Dance of the Tumblers' in the Cameronians, the clarinets hoped that the officers would be laughing at a joke or, if outside, the noise of an approaching train would hide our anxiety and mistakes as our fingers tried to match the fast tempo of this piece.

As I prepared my talk, I had to be mindful that my audience, though some ex-servicemen would be present, were not ex-bandsmen and would not know musical language. In the forty-five minutes allocated to me, I described the place of the Covenanters in the Scottish Reformation, how we came to be called Cameronians and the role of William and Mary in the formation of The Cameronian Regiment in Douglas in 1689. After introducing and playing the regimental music, I described the drill and customs, some words about the bandmasters, life in the boys' room and some of the amusing incidents of band life. I told them that the majority of the band were English who had to tune their ears and eventually understand not only Scots

but in particular the Glaswegian version of it. I received an appreciative letter in which I was thanked for my efforts and was paid the compliment of being described as, and I do not wish to boast, 'a skilled, charming speaker', which meant a lot to me as a former stammerer.

### The Effect of the current Defence White Paper.

Every decade has brought changes to the bands and the armed services. Michael Heseltine's decision to reduce most bands to twenty-one in the early 1980s was a major blunder. The need to have enough brass for parades led to the deduction of those woodwind instruments not normally played on parade, e.g. oboes and bassoons. In York in 1990, I heard the Band of the Prince of Wales Regiment attempting to beat Retreat with just sixteen players: two clarinets, a piccolo and alto saxophone in the rear was the woodwind contribution to the band. To cover up his shortage of players, the bandmaster padded the sound by combining with the Corps of Drums to play bugle marches. After the parade one of the bandsmen told me that many of the line bands had to merge to make the required sound for parades because many of them were below their twenty-one establishments. In 1994, the decision to have bands of either thirty-five or forty-nine made up of trained musicians from civilian life allowed for quality and a release from the problems created by having small bands. However, a recruitment problem still exists, particularly in respect of woodwind players. The mixed bands have been of limited help, for women do not, for well-known reasons, serve as long as most men.

Capt. Paul Goodwin, the Paras DOM, spoke gloomily; stressing low morale, of the likely outcome of the Defence White Paper. The proposed reduction of 283 musicians, meaning the loss of six bands, the proposed merger of the Life Guards and the RHG and the reduction to thirty-five players for the Bands of the Light Infantry and the RA. Within the RA Band is Britain's oldest orchestra: to reduce this band to thirty-five would not only mean the loss of a 200-year-old orchestra but also a slice of cultural heritage.

Capt Goodwin told us about the proposed offer of a thirty-five year engagement for musicians. He feared that it might increase the present promotion blockage when long serving sergeants prevent junior ranks receiving deserved promotion. The

Canadian forces I seem to remember made sergeant the rank for musicians. Just before I left the barracks one of the sergeants told me that if he wished to serve beyond his 22 he would be allowed to keep his rank but drop to a musician's pay: a loss of £8000 a year.

I have read that just before the Falklands War the MOD were on the verge of deciding there should be just one service school of music but it was shelved because of inter service rivalries, the fact that a Cabinet minister might lose his seat and the need to deal with a war. As there are about to be just thirty-one bands for the three services, I would have thought a single school of music would be an obvious economy: the United States has one such school for a much bigger armed forces.

#### **A Possible solution.**

The recruitment and the retention of musicians is the same as in my Cameronian days of 1946 to 1954. The two units I served with, as a RAPC sergeant, did not have bands so I was able to access the standard of the many visiting bands during concerts, mess nights and parades. The staff bands were fine whereas the line bands were largely a waste of public money because they failed to attract good musicians.

The cost of recruiting and training many unmusical boys from orphanages, from impossible domestic backgrounds or courts saying to young offenders will it be Borstal or an army band, are over. The present service musicians, mainly at school until eighteen, enter with Grades 7 or 8, with diplomas or degrees. Such people are articulate, have had choices in life, want good conditions and, like the bandsmen of the past, do not like doing military duties but cannot escape the fact that they are soldiers first. This is the past affecting the present. One can argue that if a soldier does not have to be musician why should a musician have to a soldier?

A possible solution to the recruitment problem I may have discovered during a breakfast conversation with two members of the Italian Air Force at a Berlin hotel in 2002. Although there was not time for me to fully understand their conditions, it was apparent that they had high status, for they were staying in a 4 star hotel and not in the many barracks with the pleasure of a cookhouse in Berlin. All of them were civilian professional musicians who provided just musical services on a TA basis for the Italian Air Force. Their 103 strong band, seventy in Berlin, made it always possible to provide

a band without interfering with their jobs as lecturers, teachers and orchestral players. The 'bella figura' tradition of the Italians meant they looked splendid in their tailored light blue uniforms. I had an early start on that day so lost the opportunity of hearing a good band. Of course, Italy does not have the overseas service commitment of Britain and probably their system might not work. Other nations have fewer bands, even now, and perhaps this means they have only time for musical duties: the real solution to the problem of musicians' reluctance to carry out military tasks.

Bill Coughlan.

## **"Congratulations Mr & Mrs Ballantyne!"**

Marriage; 'Tying the Knot - Getting Wed - Getting Spliced - Getting Cut and Carried', there are many other such sayings (both respectful and not) which usually mean the same thing;

A Wedding!'



Shortly after returning to Birmingham from 'Cameronian Sunday and Conventicle 2005' held once more by the side of Douglas Water, Douglas, South Lanarkshire, barely a mile from where the 'Cameronian Regiment was raised in 1689,' forever the home of our Regiment, 'The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)' .

I was most pleasantly surprised to receive an invitation for myself and my wife Patti to attend the wedding of Mr Jim Ballantyne (yes! our very own Jim!) and his lady, Margaret Rose Drever, the wedding to take place at 'Leith Town Hall, Edinburgh at IOam on 1st July 2005, followed later by a reception in the evening at 'Scotia Regia Hall, St Clairs Place, Edinburgh'.

Were they joking! Who in their right minds would drive a round trip of all but 700



miles to attend a wedding?, and on a Friday too. Well a Cameronian might, for another Cameronian, and his Lady. Especially when they have both done so very much for 'The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and Family Members Organisation', and in doing so, working on our behalf promoting, and continuing the memory of our Regiment. So I accepted the invitation! Thinking however to make it as 'special' as I could, and set-to working out how.

The weather was beautiful all that week, and come the day, though threatened, by promises of demonstrations and possible trouble in Edinburgh in the buildup to, G8, the wedding took place as planned, the bridegroom immaculately turned out in Douglas tartan kilt, his Lady Margaret looked beautiful in Pale Green gown with matching accessories, 'The 'Best Man' was our own Alan 'Doc' Halliday who did Jim proud, the only other, Cameronian present that day, (other than myself) was Tom Winters and his wife Stella. It was a family affair really, but we were all made welcome from the minute we arrived, and because of that I felt honoured to have been asked.

The Scotia Regia Hall for those that do not know; is not large, but has every facility required, and I admit to being very impressed, it would not have been possible for more guests to attend without feeling overcrowded as it was a warm and friendly night from the start of the evening, helped throughout by the well pitched sound level, and well chosen selection of music from the D, J.

A surprise for everyone was the sudden, unexpected arrival, at 9pm of a 'Lucky Chimney Sweep', suitably dressed and well blacked up, entering the hall to the tune 'Chim Chimney'. The Bride and Groom were asked on the dance-floor and the Chimney Sweep carried out a small ceremony of confirmation, which included, stepping over the brushes, a poem, and certificate (framed to be kept as a keepsake). 'The Sweep' then passed around the guests, handing out copies of the words to the song '500 Miles' and invited a group on to the dance-floor to give the song a spirited rendering, duly given by all present in true Scottish style, after which the 'Sweep' melted away into the shadows again.

Great feasting followed! And I must confess to taking seconds, and even a third of the most succulent Trout ever tasted, caught fresh that morning. All taken down with my favourite malt, in the most excellent

of company, and moreover, to music even I could actually dance to, later. Eventually like all good things, there has to come an end, and I gave way to it grudgingly, not wanting to let go of that feeling of shared togetherness and friendship you only experience when everything goes 'click', Perfect! .

'Congratulations again Mr and Mrs Ballantyne!'

PS, 'What of that 'special plan' did I hear you ask? Sorry! I thought you had guessed!' 'I was the 'Lucky Chimneysweep' of course'.

Kenn Robinson.

**Every year the Covenanters and/or the Cameronians are mentioned in the media or elsewhere. As the following articles show. 2005 has been another good year.**

#### **1. The Ku-Klux-Klan believe they are Cameronians?**

On the 8th January I heard the above words on BBC Radio 4, which were from an essay written by George Rosie about the Ku-Klux-Klan (KKK).

George Rosie, a Scot, recently read the following notice in small town Oklahoma. 'All patriotic Americans who are concerned about the future of our great country should enlist in the ranks of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan' These words were bordered by Celtic crosses. A curious local man, dressed completely in denim, holding a can of beer, showed great delight to discover that a Scot was reading the notice by saying the following words. 'Hell Fellow! Scotland is where the KKK comes from...you Scotch guys started the whole business.'

Rosie, taken a back and being a liberal minded Scot, decided to verify the words he had just heard. It was not long before he had in his hands a novel called 'The Clansman' written by Thomas Dickson, a Baptist minister, in 1906. Dickson, knowing that the majority of the immigrants to the American South in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were Covenanting folk or what the Americans call Scotch-Irish from Ulster, he decided, even though the KKK was formed forty years before his novel, to link them with the Covenanters. Dickson chose to call his main character Richard Cameron to establish that he was writing about hard-line Covenanters or Cameronians. (At this point Rosie stated that the Cameronians

evolved into the famous Scottish Rifles Regiment.)

The Clansman novel did motivate the KKK in their campaign, for like the seventeenth century Cameronians, they believed they were fighting the ungodly policies of the state. The making of 'The Clansman' into a film called 'The Birth of a Nation' in 1915, as the first popular epic, provided the KKK with valuable publicity, making it possible for them to increase their membership to four million. In 1922, the KKK had the confidence and numbers to march, with the display of a national movement, in their white hooded gowns, down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington.

It can be said that both the Cameronians and the KKK were fist people rather than word people. Both were fundamentalists who fought to impose their views on others. They declared war on their governments and used bloody means to achieve their aims. Walter Scott in 'Old Mortality' showed scorn for the Covenanters and yet tried to understand their thinking and record their sufferings. In 'The Covenanters' by David Stevenson, the bloodthirsty role of the Cameronians in the Killing Times of the 1680s are explained by their belief 'that they were the only true church' which continued, though undermined by disagreements and splits, after the William and Mary compromise of the 1690s.

It is clear in the Clansman that Thomas Dickson convinced the descendants of the Covenanters in the Confederate South to use the same methods of the seventeenth century to prevent the implementation of the law in the American Civil War to emancipate the slaves. Dickson's chilling words were: 'Can we assimilate the Negro?.. the very question pollutes.' He claimed that clan chieftains once sent the burning cross by courier through the Highlands to summons the clansmen to deal with matters of life and death. In reality, in newsreels and in films, we have all seen the fiery cross burning among the white, ghostlike, robed masked KKK. Seeing the whirling smoke, we have perhaps felt something sinister had or was about to take place. This secret organisation, made to believe they were engaged in 'a holy crusade' by Dickson and others, carried out torture, arson and lynching of Negroes to subvert the wishes of Abraham Lincoln for over a hundred years. This was possible because the planters were able to enlist the existing racism of white people against black people. This despicable organization

was able to delay the solution of the South's most serious problem of finding a way for black and white to live in peace.

This tragic period of American history surfaced a few months ago with the death of Rosa Parks, the black woman who challenged segregation by sitting in a front part of a bus reserved for whites in Alabama in 1955. A local pastor called Martin Luther King, still remembered for his words '*that a man should not be judged by the colour of his skin but the content of his character,*' organized a boycott of the buses on the road to the Civil Rights Movement, culminating in full legal rights for black people in the late 1960s.

George Rosie concluded his essay by saying that the KKK, though more careful than hitherto, still dislike black people, Jews, Roman Catholics and foreigners. He went on to say that the KKK members are obsessed by everything Scottish and Celtic. Their latest interest is in the Jacobites! Someone should sprinkle them with holy water and remind them that the brother of Bonnie Prince Charlie was Cardinal Henry Stuart.

What I have described is the use of an honourable period of Scottish history to help an unworthy cause. However, the Reformation from its beginning started the fragmentation of Christianity, making it possible, as with the Covenanters, to create a moderate majority alongside an extreme minority which Thomas Dickson was able to use to help the KKK.

## **2. The Cameronian who founded a symphony orchestra.**

On the 22nd October Rosemary and I went to a study afternoon and an evening concert at the Barbican to celebrate the foundation of the BBC Symphony Orchestra seventy-five years ago. On the 22nd October 1930 the brand new orchestra gave its first concert and first broadcast under the baton of Adrian Boult at the Queen's Hall, London.

At that time there was concern among British musicians and conductors because of insecure funding of orchestras and the fact the players were all freelance and willing to play for the highest fee. This led to the excessive use of deputies, meaning that players would send someone else to rehearsals or concerts if higher fees were offered at another performance. This unstable situation meant that British orchestras were often inferior to those in the rest of Europe where proper funding was the

norm. Professional musicians often tell this tale to illustrate the comic and unsatisfactory outcome of this situation. A foreign conductor had been engaged to take three rehearsals and to conduct one concert in London. At the first rehearsal all went well. At the second rehearsal he noticed that the orchestra were not observing the points he had made in the first rehearsal and to his horror he discovered one third of the orchestra were deputies. At the third rehearsal more new people were in the orchestra. However, he decided to acknowledge a friendly bass player who had greeted him at all the rehearsals. He went over to thank him for preparing himself so well for the concert. "Thank you Maestro" said the bass player but I feel I should tell you that I shall not be at the concert tonight, for I shall be sending a deputy.

By 1928 the BBC had grown from a small company to a fully-grown corporation. It invited the orchestras to broadcast. However, the insecure orchestras refused to broadcast on the grounds that such a decision would reduce their audiences. The refusals, and the availability of money from the licence fee, were the reason for the foundation of the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

The first director general of the BBC was John Reith. He was wounded in the 1914-18 War while serving as an officer with the 5th Cameronians. I quote: 'He insisted on the highest standards, directing the BBC as an instrument for social betterment, and retaining its independence.' In other words, John Reith was a believer in the public service ethos: the BBC, he insisted must be paid for by a licence fee. John Reith was a son of a Glasgow manse, brought up with a sense of service to others within the liberal tradition of his family. He was a 6ft 6ins towering figure who had the ability to get things done, not only at the BBC but also in his many other public appointments, particularly in the Second World War.

The Radio 3 speakers, unsure if Reid was musical, stated that he wanted a world-class orchestra to enhance the prestige of the BBC by its musical achievements. It would be a permanent orchestra with the players for the first time being paid salaries, sickness benefit, holiday pay and pensions. Being funded out of the licence fee, the orchestra was not subject to the commercial tyranny of box office receipts. As Reith intended, they became a cultural beacon by playing the full range from the orchestral repertoire plus the music of new composers.

The attractive pay and conditions ensured that the orchestra recruited the best musicians in Britain. In 1935, at the end of European tour the Vienna Philharmonic lined the platform to play them out of the station to confirm their appreciation. Every year Arturo Toscanini came to London to experience the pleasure of conducting such a fine orchestra. Nowadays the BBC Symphony Orchestra is the main orchestra at the annual BBC Proms.

I have heard from many orchestral players that Malcolm Sargent (known to musicians as Flash Harry) had disagreed with the good conditions given to the orchestra because he believed that musicians play better if they are hungry. I asked one of the speakers to confirm whether this was true or not. There was silence on her part and a reluctance to answer the question. I was a little embarrassed when ten minutes later I learned that Malcolm Sargent's son was in the audience. However, one speaker criticised Sargent for only spending 30% of the agreed time with the orchestra when he was their chief conductor from 1950-57.

His name lives on in the annual Reith Lectures. It was John Reith who decided that the BBC should educate, inform and entertain. Leaving school almost illiterate at fourteen, I was helped by the versions of BBC Radios 3 and 4 programmes not only to qualify for higher education but also to pass my degrees. I am grateful that a fellow Cameronian had made this help available to me.

### **3. The Gorbals came to Chelmsford.**

Starting in the Citizens' Theatre, Glasgow on the 2nd September, Men Should Weep by Ena Lamont Stewart reached our Civic Theatre in Chelmsford on the 18th October and would finish its UK tour in Oldham the 5th November.

This tragic and yet very amusing play, set in the Gorbals in the 1930s depression was taking the sound of Glasgow to the unfamiliar ears of many Sassenachs. The Gorbals, like the Whitechapel area of London, was where the Irish immigrants, Jewish refugees and others settled. In the 1930s, 90,000 people were crowded into tenements in just 2% of the area of Glasgow. In the play one is made aware of the cramped condition of eight people living in two rooms, a child suffering from TB taken to hospital and unable to return home because of the unhealthy conditions, the conflict in the family through the husband's long unemployment and drinking, the noise from

the frequent domestic violence coming from the flat above. The hunger of the children is illustrated by their constant need to steal a piece whenever their mother was out of the room. The coal range provided the heating and the presence of a kettle on its top was the sole source of hot water. Women neighbours arriving to chat conveyed the impression that the family were trying to seem normal. However, the programme sums up their unfortunate plight in the following words. *'One mid-1930s report survey suggested that a third of the reported illnesses were linked to job losses.'* At the time 30% of Glasgow employable population were out of work.

In Chelmsford, the play was performed with screens of captions on either side of the stage to ensure ken and not did nae ken was the outcome for the audience. My Cameronian years made me word perfect so I was able to enjoy all the words and expressions and remember the faces of the Glaswegian Cameronians who had said them. In the interval, rather like a newly appointed professor of Glaswegian, I explained to people the meaning of messages, greetin, scunner, polis, the broo, the Barras and other words. They said that they found the accent and the language incomprehensible. I told them that I gained my expertise by wearing tartan trews for many years.

In my desire to write about the variety of language used in the Cameronians, I have asked several bandsmen and others, if they remembered any words or expressions. So far I have had no response, for it seems they were oblivious to the kaleidoscope of sound around their ears. Alongside the many British accents were the words from service in India and elsewhere, the officers' accents, the language unique to the Cameronians and army jargon and slang. Can anybody contribute to my article?

Being a stammerer during my service I had to be a listener, for I never knew whether I would be able to start or finish sentences. Among the many Scottish and English accents in the Cameronians, the Glaswegian accent was the dominant one. Expressions like *'I'll stick it on yer'*, *'He's a right ticket'*, *'Yer ma's a bun'*, *'She's a right grosit'*, *she is a wee hairy, mulky, manky* and so many others were common to my ears. A Sunday newspaper acquainted me with 'The Broons' and 'Our Wullie' whose words taught me a written version of Scots: sometimes I would ask one of the Scots to read the words to me.

The English members of the military

band, the majority, used bits of Scots in their speech. One unusual person was John Davy who spoke Scots with a London Accent. I recall him saying: 'I'm gaye hungry!' Jack Keen, from Douglas Water, pronounced B natural as if he was struggling for birth within his throat, as B nat reel or something like it was the result. Lofty Hammond sang a song called 'Johnny Thompson, a lament.' It was song that sounded endless, for one could go in and out of the barrack room several times and Lofty would still be at it. It is for this reason that I did not learn the song in its entirety. All I remember is: *'There is a team in Glasgow City whose colours are white and green... they had a goalkeeper the finest the world has ever seen. ...'* Lofty did not support Celtic, for he was from Hayes in Middlesex. Bendix Page, A Londoner and a good mimic, used to create a comic effect by exaggerating the Glaswegian and any other accent that took his fancy. The real patter merchant of the band, and model Glaswegian, was 'Mac' Ron Macmillan. He was thickset, a bit like Desperate Dan in appearance, always ready to sing a song. *'When your sweetheart sends a letter of goodbye'* was his favourite. His Glaswegian speech blended well with his cheerful, friendly character. His playing of 'Mary of Argyll' and other Scottish tunes on his French horn were a pleasure to the ear. Some readers will remember him as the goalkeeper in the battalion hockey team. The Kelvinside accent always sounded as if the speaker was trying to be a refugee from Glaswegian. Someone told me that it was an attempt by people, with a few baubees, to sound posh?

I left the Cameronians with understanding of the many accents of Scots. Although I would not, apart from the odd word or sentence, try to speak it. However, I read Robert Burns, the Scots parts of Walter Scott, Hugh Macdiarmid and others with pleasure. I am always impressed when I hear Scots change from their local dialects into Standard English.

#### **4.The Cameronian Corporal and the Russian soldier. 2004 Edition.**

Readers will remember the photograph of the Cameronian Corporal and the Russian soldier standing on the bank of the Elbe in May 1945. The Russian News and Information Service NOVOSTI decided to use this photograph on the front cover of their publication called 'The Triumph Alliance of Nations' to commemorate VE Day in May 1945. Novosti has a network of correspondents in over forty countries, so

the Cameronian Corporal and his Russian comrade would have been seen worldwide.

Vaughan Melzer, the manager of the Novosti Photo Library sent me another photograph of the two soldiers, which shows the full face of the Cameronian in the hope that it will make it easier for readers to recognise him. In addition, she kindly offered to donate copies of the two photographs to the regimental museum. I accepted her offer and thanked her for her kindness.

At the Guildhall Art Gallery in London from May to June, Novosti staged a photograph exhibition called 'Cities at War - Moscow and Leningrad during the Second World War'. This was, known to the Russians as the Great Patriotic War, lasted from the German invasion on the 22nd June 1941 to the final defeat of Germany on the 9th May 1945. Within the words of the exhibition I learned that by December 1941 (the month of the USA entry into the 2WW) the Russians had two million soldiers killed and three million captured, of which half died in German captivity by sheer neglect, in complete disregard of the Geneva Convention. .

Britain had 357,116 killed in the Second World War of which 60,595 were civilians. In comparison, the Soviet Union had twenty-seven million soldiers and civilians killed: no other nation on the Allied side, apart from the Chinese, suffered so much in terms of loss of human life and the devastation of their country.

The siege of Leningrad lasted 900 days: the daily ration for workers was 8oz a day with half the amount for everybody else. The shortage of food and fuel supplies caused the death of one million, a third of the population, because of disease and starvation.

I have often heard the No.7 Leningrad Symphony by Dmitri Schostakowitsch in which he remembers in the most appropriate music the sufferings of his fellow citizens. His bad eyesight prevented him serving in the Red Army. Instead, after refusing to leave his native citizens with the other musicians of the Conservatory, he stayed on as a fireman during the siege. By candlelight, the city had no electricity; he began to compose his Seventh Symphony. On its completion he wrote on the title page in red ink: To the city of Leningrad.

As a child in the Second World War I recall the Mrs. Churchill's Aid to Russia Fund and being encouraged to think of Stalin as Uncle

Joe. With the onset of the Cold War, it was convenient to understate, or even forget, Russia's major contribution. I hope when people are on the verge of saying : 'we won the war : ' they will pause: think about the 27 million Russian dead and then amend their statement to : 'We helped to win the war. '

Bill Coughlan.

## Captain Ronald Hugh Walrond Rose



Captain Ronald Rose (1880-1914) was a career army officer, transferring with the rank of lieutenant from the Royal Warwickshire Regiment to the 1st Cameronians in May 1900. Promoted captain in 1905, he served with the 2nd Scottish Rifles until October 1906 when he was appointed Adjutant to the 5th King's (Liverpool) Regiment, a Territorial Force battalion. While hunting in Cheshire he met his future wife Hetty, daughter of George Fletcher - the Fletchers were a well-known and highly-regarded Liverpool family. Ronald and Hetty had two daughters.

After some years in Africa, the Roses moved to Glasgow with the 1st Cameronians. At the end of July 1914 Captain Rose, commanding 'A' Company, was on brigade manoeuvres at Blair Atholl in north Perthshire; while driving near Blair Castle, the captain saw a bicycle orderly arrive with orders to return

to Glasgow to prepare for mobilisation.

Captain Rose kept a detailed and lively diary of his short wartime career, and letters sent by him to Hetty and to others have also survived. The following extracts have been chosen and collated by Ann Clayton, but the help of the late Lt Col Sir John Baynes Bt., who brought the Diary to the notice of Stand To!, and of Major Michael O'Devlin (whose wife is a great grand-daughter of Captain Rose) is gratefully acknowledged. The following extracts from the letters and Diary, describing the early days of the BEF in France and Flanders and the retreat from Mons are published here by kind permission of the Rose family; biographical information was obtained from a family history written by Major O'Devlin.

Captain Rose was killed on 22 October 1914, at the age of 34. He is commemorated on the Ploegsteert Memorial to the Missing, in the Ypres Salient.

**1914**

**4 August** Settling up mess and my affairs, met Hetty at 2 pm, delighted to see her. Babies well. Mobilisation 1st day.

**13 August** Saw Hetty off at 2 pm. Left Glasgow late at night from Maryhill Station.

**14 August** Embarked on SS. Caledonia. Fine Anchor Line ship, very lucky, as many in pig boats, not told where going. Fine night, searchlights going all along coast, fine sight. [Disembarked at Le Havre next day.]

**15 August** Up at 5 am, but hung about in shed all day. Pouring with rain. Fed on ship. In evening marched off five and a half miles to No.6 camp at Frillieres, rain which held off a little, started pouring again, arrived wet to skin. Now began some of the discomforts of war...

**16 August** Still pouring, camp a vast sea of mud, men wonderfully cheerful, got best of food, and eat with clasp knife. Weather improved, dried clothes. Went into town in afternoon, and bought more food, came back to find a crowd of people braving the mud to see us. All very friendly. Left at 10.30 pm, destination quite unknown, and marched to station. This proved an arduous job, and the men got dog tired. Arrived at station at 12.30 and had some coffee. Men packed into train like sardines, but only four in our carriage. We feed as best we can, clasp knife very useful.

**17 August** All day in train, country very deserted, chiefly women and children,

people getting wildly enthusiastic, violent cheering at all the stops. A wonderful reception awaited us at Marez. The Battalion, after waiting about at the station for some time, marched about two miles to the Town Hall, where we formed up in front of the church, amid much cheering. The officers then entered the Mairie, which was decorated with the Allied flags, and we were duly presented to the mayor, who read us an address in English, this being followed by an address in French, read by a little girl. After this we were all presented with bouquets of flowers.

We then marched to take up our billets. This was a long job, the men going in small parties to houses fairly widely distributed. About midnight I got back to the Mairie, and eventually got my own

billet, which was with a weaver. Blundell came with me, and was accommodated in

the same room. I had a nice bed with clean sheets, Blundell a palliasse. The weaver then gave us some wine, and so to bed about 1 am.

**18/19 August** A day of rest. Visited all the billets of the Coy. Tried to impress on the men the importance of good behaviour. Everywhere the greatest kindness. I find my knowledge of French of the greatest importance... Was told I might have to assist the French billeting officer, so went to see at Busigny but was not required. Parties going out on fatigue during night.

**20 August** Went for a route march, much pursued by all the girls in the villages who decorated our men with flowers, and try to take their name plates. Very, very hot. Very good maps have been issued. I have arranged to have our meals at the house where Newman is billeted. The owners of the house [M. and Mme. Coppins] (and indeed everywhere) were almost importunate in pressing us to drink wine, and eat with them. It is most difficult to know how to refuse without giving offence.

The country round here is covered chiefly with corn, beet and potatoes. The chief industry is weaving, embroidery and tissue [a fine woven gauzy fabric], many of the houses, of which my host's is as example, have a handloom set up. None of the people in this village can talk English. Dogs are not allowed out, unless muzzled, one sees none in the streets... [Captain Rose was now suffering from a sore throat and a rash.]

**21 August** Marched to Busigny, entered train at 4.40 am, getting light. Had some

tea and dry bread with officers of AC. [Ammunition Column]. Arrived about 6.30 at Jeumont right on the Frontier [in the BEF Concentration Area], unloaded the AC. quickly with help of turntable. Then back to Haut-mont, mist clearing. Got my men billeted very comfortably, thanks to the help of French Artillery officer. Had dejeuner, met Capt. in Bedfords who wanted to join Aeroplanes [Royal Flying Corps were headquartered at Mauberge Aerodrome, with 63 aeroplanes and 860 personnel by 24 August]; French Civil Guard offered to take him if I would care to pass him back. Went with him in car, great preparations in fortress of Mauberge, heard here that Germans interfering with our concentration so shifting L of C [Lines of Communication] north. This made me anxious to be back so did not stay long near aeroplanes.

Place full of French soldiers, infantry and cavalry, houses being blown up to clear field of fire. Got wire when back to say must get back to Maretz before 7 am, so no bed again tonight. Dined with French officer who spoke only French. Could not get my next AC. unloaded till midnight, as no facilities, and very heavy. Men work splendidly. Very cold in train going home. Got to my billet about 3.40 am, people knocked up quite easily and very pleasant. Chemist refused money, throat rather bad.

**22 August** M. Coppins quite affected by my departure, Mama C. so overcome, strange noise. Paraded by 7.45 am, train to Valenciennes, splitting head and no voice. Put up in University, 12 miles from enemy, now full of rumours, firing heard during the day. Had a bath and a lie down, feel better, bread etc very dear. We are inlying picquet tonight and must sleep in our boots, fully dressed. Uhlans coming in. Loaded my revolver today.

**23 August** Left at 8 am, marched to Quarouble, where I saw the prospect of a lovely bed and food, when we were ordered off as hard as we could go, to line the Conde-Mons Canal. This was through pretty country. We passed through French Cavalry peeping round comers. The roads are very trying to march on, all being pave. Men very thirsty and water bad. We are without Artillery or Cavalry. 'A: Coy load rifles. One rifle goes off, hot air. Settled the men at a coal mine. Put out picquet under Drew. Had some beer. Tried to sleep in some hay, peculiarly hot, guns going all day on our right.

**24 August** Money came in to say our right hotly pressed, did up valise, and put it on an SAA cart. Don't know what has happened to our transport. 2 am, told we must clear off as fast as possible. Hear that the Middlesex have lost one officer and three men, but have driven off enemy. We had to make a flank march across the enemy's front. C.O. very anxious because 'O' Coy delayed. Got away all right, but 'O' Coy officers lost their kits. Dawn finds us marching, no food. Pass into Belgium, see everybody who can clearing off. Guns getting louder. Come in sight of battle. Shells bursting (Battle of Boussu-Bois, rearguard action) [east of Elouges]. Thought we were for it but no, marched away through Baisieux back into France, thence via Sebourg towards Jenlain. Men very tired and hardly any food, men looted apples.

Our Brigade is 19th- Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders [ASH], Royal Welch Fusiliers [RWF], Middlesex and ourselves. On the way saw battle from distance, woods, in direction of Quievrain being heavily shelled. Men throwing away their kits right and left. Halted for some time at a farm for men to rest. Then continued our retreat to Jenlain, where we halted at a picturesque farm, after which we went out and en-trenched ourselves. This took till after dark. However we only stayed till 4.30 am.

**25 August** Hard march with firing all round, anxious as to whether we will be cut off. Aero-planes. Apparently very close shave yesterday, one platoon of ASH killed outright bar corporal and two men. Riddell had narrow escape. Find we are bound for Haussy where we met main army. Saw Cavalry being shelled, came under a little shrapnel when we formed to cover Cav. Retirement. Retired amidst crowds of troops (via Solesmes) on to Le Cateau. Pave very, very trying, troops nearly beat, billeted at station about 10 pm. Got some beer and tinned beef. Very pathetic to see crowds of inhabitants fleeing.

**26 August** Only two hours sleep, then under arms, (kit in transport) at 3 am. Germans in the town, and street fighting. Glad to get out of town. See we are to be reserve for a time, so write up this diary. Take up position almost a mile southwest of Le Cateau, north of Reumont.

From now onwards I entered on sort of nightmare; watching shells bursting and guns firing was at first amusing, but with so little sleep, those that fired near us jarred

one's nerves a bit. Watch aeris move out. About 9.30 we had to move to right flank, but after moving some distance by extended platoons we halted for some time until we were told that the left was hotly pressed, and we must push on and hold it. After quite a long march we reached Ligny. One saw wounded being carried back at intervals, one man we saw who had a very lucky escape. He had a small gun wound in his jacket, and a slight wound in head, his boot hit, and also his bayonet. (Told about French coming up. Our artillery ever harassed.)

I was leading just as we were about to extend into action, when a motor-cyclist dashed up, and we were ordered to halt. Apparently we were now wanted on our right flank more, so another huge long march in front, time now about 2.30 pm. About 4.40 apparently the R. flank gave way before we could reach it, and the Cameronians and the cavalry were to join the rear guard. We accordingly started in the orthodox manner and retired on Marez. During this movement we saw a battery which had been reduced to two guns firing away, then it retired, and after a while saw some of our Cav. Patrols, which I distinguished through my glasses, so warned our men not to fire on them. On reaching Marez, picqueted all the entrances against cavalry, and waited for rest of people to pass through.

Presently I heard firing, this was some troops on our right firing on our Cavalry, they killed about three, and forty horses; their officers when they got through seemed nervous. Talked to some cavalry officers. One of these had been down to Busigny (in error) where he met some Uhlans, he shot two and then retired.'

They were sick about being shot at. I borrowed a horse, and rode back through village, now quite dark. I had to be very careful, as my men would have fired for two pence. Saw CO, and told him how anxious the RWF were. Feeling rather full of buck, rather hope for a chance at enemy cavalry.

About 9.30 awful march begins. Numbers of wounded lying out on bank. Germans have burnt one of the hospitals, full of wounded, let us hope it was an accident. March on, and on. Have to halt parties of our own cavalry occasionally, party with bayonets fixed, and revolvers ready. On - on- always on, men at last can stand no more. Let us hope they will not be killed, as many stragglers have been. On- on- men half asleep, and constantly dropping, exhausted.

Regiment now no more than a rabble party. Drop down at Estrees.

27 August Sleep half an hour, wake with cold, can see no officers, decide to get regiment on at this point, find other officers, go round, kick men up and start them on. So difficult to keep awake and not fall. Seem to see horses at side of road, daylight breaking, but still on, on, on, just a rabble of all sorts of regiments. Pass some food lying about, grab some. Men have been almost without food for two days, fed self largely on bread, raw turnips etc, my feet excellent. With daylight things a bit better. Colonel halts head of column, and we now struggle in a partly formed body, feel much less sleepy in daylight.

Reach St Quentin at last about 10 am, give the men some tea, but told we must push on at once, 11 am, as town will be shelled at any moment. Many shops still open, get coffee, no milk, and bread, and buy chocolate. Rather anxious getting out, want of sleep makes one rather nervy. March on, and on, it seems for ever. At last we bivouac at Ollezy [south of the St Quentin Canal] about 4.30 pm. One has got distinctly nervy. Breaking up a box sounds like guns (I hate the sound of guns). A motor bike is a machine gun. We have to furnish a piquet of SO men. The night is dark and wet, but by getting under straw and huddling together we are able to get about 4 hours' sleep, which is more than I have had for over three days. Riddell jibbers through tiredness.

28 August Sleep is broken however, the ground is soft, some horses draw their pegs and stampede, there is a painful wailing from a poor fellow who has had his face crushed in, others are injured. Order is restored and I sleep a little. About 4.30 we get up, to stand to arms. We are to relieve the outposts and then act as rear guard. All bridges over canal have been blown up, excepting the one we cross to take up our position. We march out over a mile, to a flank, but nothing happens.

We get news that our efforts at Le Cateau have been successful. The French caught the Germans in flank, it was our trying role to draw them 60 miles to the south and then hold them. So we go on our long march rejoicing. No need to blow up the bridge. We tell inhabitants the good news as we pass. After breakfast we march on slowly. A long halt in the middle of the day, unfortunately not near water. I take turns at riding a stray horse... As the day closes in it gets very



stuff, and we cannot prevent the men from packing up 10 abreast.

At last we reach Noyon at 9.30 pm, but alas! It is another nightmare. The administrative arrangements seem to be of the worst. We wait, and wait.

Columns of Artillery, Infantry and Cavalry, all mixed up in the same road, gradually crawl forward with interminable halts. The wretched man on foot has but a poor chance.

At last we get to our bivouacs (Bontoise), and are rejoiced to find tea and soup awaiting us, and best of all, Wood, who was thought to be killed, has turned up with the bulk of our kits. Last, but not least, we have a mail. Very happy.

**29 August** A day of rest, but as the day goes on we hear continual firing. In Noyon the town is being evacuated, and the bridge at Pont l'Eveque prepared for demolition. Lee and I go in to Noyon but can get nothing. As we pass the station we see a captured German officer, who seemed very calm. He is under an English guard, which is as well for him. As the afternoon progresses, a feeling of strain seems to envelop everyone. What is happening? Why have the guns stopped? Oppressive heat. Our long retreat is having an effect on our nerves. Rumours of all sorts begin to float about. We realise the rottenness of the administrative arrangements. We hear we are to entrench, then about 6.30 pm the order comes to move [south], but only about five miles to go into billets. I am sent on to arrange the billets at Laigle. Get there about 9 to find 1000 odd men are billeted in a squalid village of fifty inhabitants. I do what I can, however the Regiment does not turn up. Apparently the roads are hopelessly congested. The ASH eventually do, but no sign of ours.

**30 August** About 1 am I lie down for an hour, when I am aroused by a loud explosion. Probably one of the bridges going. I decide to attach myself to the ASH, whom I assisted to billet the night before. Get some hot coffee from shop, and biscuits. All mixed up with Transport, the brigade is doing rearguard. Move off at last, and after passing Carlepont came up with Cameronians. March some distance and then have a meal, the tea seems excellent. It has been made in a canteen which is dirty with past meals, a scum of grease on the top, and there is no milk, but we find it finer than any tea we have ever drunk.

The chief feature of the day is the

excessive heat, which is rather distressing. We have a long halt, and hear firing. The country changes from wooded and flat to rolling downs, with few villages and large farms, then hilly and wooded. About 6 pm we get to Attichy, near which place we get a clean field, unlike the filthy spot we had for our rest day. We hear good news, and receive the complimentary orders of the French, the Govt. and the Fleet. Tea with condensed milk. Get quite good meal of stewed vegetables, bully beef, stewed apples, bread and cheese.

**31 August** Rise at 4 am after six hours' sleep, the best rest for some time, as only disturbed once during night. Breakfast of tea, bread and jam. Fall in about 5.45, and stand by till 7.30. I have a sore toe-pad on each foot, and feel rather slack. This is reaction. The 5th Division, to which we have been attached, are going to halt sometime to refit, so we are going to be attached to the 4th Division under General Snow. We belong to the 2nd Army under General Smith-Dorrien. We march the whole day through the Forest of Compiègne. The heat is very great and breathless. No water can be obtained to drink, though the whole place is moist. About 6 pm, very tired, we reach St. Ouen, and after dark I hear we are to take up outposts. No water, little food. This is trying, very trying. It soon gets cold. There is a good deal of firing. We are in reserve. Four of us huddle together to keep warm. It is very wet with dew. A miserable night, with hardly any sleep. Too cold.

**1 September** We retire into village in a turning [St Sauveur, near Verberie] about 4 am, and then wait there. We hear violent fighting about 8 am and then move out. There do not seem to be any orders, but an RA officer asks CO to assist him. We go up a steep hill and extend for action, but nothing happens. Expect attack any moment. Apparently there has been a cavalry raid at Nery. They got their guns up unobserved and fired on the 'L' Battery who have been cut to pieces. We manage to get back a bit, capture several guns and capture prisoners. Enemy clear right off, and after a long wait we retire towards Fresnoy, where I find we are again fir outposts. On the way we pass the place where the deed was done. It is a little corner of hell. They are shooting the wounded horses. The men have been removed. The road is covered with blood trails. I have felt rather exhausted today. Lee shares his horse with all in the company, which is generous

of him. I rode a couple of miles.

During the evening, while we take up a good outpost position, there is the sound of heavy firing. We see the flashes of the guns, a village about 4 miles off is set on fire. An aeroplane occasionally passes overhead. What is it? We get an issue of rations - bread, biscuits, bully beef, tea, sugar and bacon. Fires not allowed. The only water we can get smells very nasty. The men take their sugar and tea in their caps. It gets very cold indeed. A little firing during the night, probably someone jumpy. I get about 30 minutes' sleep, too cold for more.

2 September Very cold. Retire a bit to hold position further back. We are a strange-looking crowd now, men and officers unshaved. The men, who love to be as unorthodox as possible have taken every opportunity. Many caps are lost, and .. ..(At this point I was interrupted, owing to French cavalry being pursued in distance by Germans. We opened fire with a Maxim, and Germans cleared as fast as they could.) However, to continue...comforters and caps of other units have taken their place. Equipment is extremely dirty, and all kinds of odds and ends in the shape of blackened canteens etc are tied on. Some have cut their trousers to shorts, and some have French colours in their caps. Knives and spoons are inserted in the putties. It is a beautiful cool morning, so I wish we could get under way. No water, so our breakfast has been dry biscuit and about a tablespoon of tea each.

We spend the whole day on the march, halting, then shuffling forward. We are harassed by German cavalry, and have to take up positions on the way, one time entrenching, at Eve, to help the cavalry, but nothing happened. The torture of the day, which is boiling hot, is dust and thirst. We cannot get water. All the villages are deserted. At intervals one passes dead horses. Men try to eat unripe pears and apples, anything to slake their maddening thirst. The dust makes my throat very bad. About 7 pm we arrive at Dammartin, and camp in an orchard at a fine farm.

3 September Start about 12.30 am to march to Lagny. The torture of the day is trying to keep awake. Feet very sore, very tired, very dirty. People beginning to fly from here. Arrive at Lagny about 8.30 am, a fair-sized town on the Marne. As usual no staff arrangements as to where to go. I must now make brief notes only, or my book will be exhausted. Exhaustion, depression as to

the situation in general.

[From Lagny, Ronald Rose wrote a letter to his wife Hetty; the tone of the letter reflected the exhaustion and depression he had confided to his Diary:]

My Dearest Wife,

Should I not return from this war I should like you and the infants to know as far as possible how I got on so I leave this with someone I can trust to forward it to you at the end of the war.

If I should not return dearest let this be my farewell and know that I died loving you with all my heart. Give some remembrance of me to my immediate family and to kinsmen.

There have been and will be times when life seems difficult to bear during this war but the thought of you and the infants will always make me try my utmost to win through.

Should you wish later to marry again of course I wish nothing better than that you should have a near friend to turn to, you do not seem to have been lucky so far as you have lost so many but all comes in time and you may have great comfort yet. You will always I trust have the infants and that they will grow up good, kind and faithful to their family.

Till death your affectionate Husband  
Ronald.

[The Diary continued]

**4 September** Rest, very hot. No water to wash or drink, great curse. Men looting, distress at farms. Mug lost, great loss. Visit houses. Throat sore, itching lumps. Men's feet awful, loss of kit. Visit town, and do good shopping with CO, contradictory orders about when we go.

**5 September** March at 11.30 pm. Arrive Grisy at 9.30, not a bad march. Men in bivouac, we also in part of rather nice house. Nasty cough, and sore tongue. Good pears, sleep in garden under peach tree.

**6 September** Rise at 4.30, end of retreat. March 5.30, retrace our steps... About 12.30 arrive at Ossigny, where we halt in sun till 3-15, have biscuits, jam and bully. We are told we have a chance of getting Germans in flank, in combination with French. March 4 miles to Ville-Neuf, halt, have a small piece of freshly-killed sheep, first fresh meat for some 10 days, also some milk in tea, an almost forgotten luxury. There was firing to our right most of the day, I fancy against the French. Slept in straw.

**7 September** Rise at 5. Breakfast, was

kept awake a lot during the night by [my] cough. Firing going on steadily to E. & S.E. Censoring letters. Weather is perfect. We are in a pretty country. Many apple trees line the road. A battle seems to be developing. We are standing by. I see the aeros, going out to either flank. I think division is in front. Push on to Roman Villiers, where we halt, and hear that Germans have slipped away. March on hard. Very hot and dusty, dust several inches deep. 'B' Coy is advanced guard. March on to Haute Maison where we arrive about 6.30 pm. Infantry fire, and shells are fired at us. We have marched into German cavalry, who clear off. We form outposts, pass one of the most unpleasant nights I have ever spent. Intend to lie down a bit. Begin to itch very badly all over, intense irritation. At last lie down in cemetery, which has been loopholed, and get about 30 minutes' sleep.

**8 September** Stand to arms at 3.30, kick men up. Told we are to attack. Take place in firing line and wait for daybreak. Nothing happens. See our cavalry and aeros go out, then form up and march on a few miles to Pierre Leve, where we halt to breakfast. This consists of half a biscuit, some bully, and some chocolate, also water. There is a vigorous battle going on to our left N.W., probably German rear guard. Our unit is in sight of German bivouac of night before. Find German papers etc. We now enter the disease range, the dead horses we pass smell dreadfully, and no attempt seems to be made to clear them. Dawn was fine, but fear it means rain. The French Chasseurs are very picturesque in their blue uniforms.

After a dusty march, till 11.30 am, suddenly the troops begin to move out, and take up preparatory formations near Signy-Signets, on some open ground, to which the country has now opened out. Suddenly bang, bang, bang, and the enemy's shrapnel begins to scream over us. The 1st line transport, which has gone too far forward, gets shelled but is soon stopped. Several shells, or rather their contents, fly over my little party. Apparently very near. Then our guns begin, and the battle gets going, and continues till about 1 o'clock. Then the enemy's guns slacken, but ours seem to go on. It is very hot indeed, broiling, and no shade. They begin to get back the wounded, not very many. 'C' Coy has had the most of it. Money got his leg bruised by a ricochet [ricochet]. I rig up a shade, we are hungry, and eat a tin of bully beef, no biscuits. Don't

know what's happening, but see we are getting up some rations, fire seems to have ceased. Time 2.45 pm. The Germans have blown up the bridge over the Marne. We have had some rain, which will make things cold tonight.

**9 September** After quite good night, leave bivouac about 6.30 am, to relieve Middlesex, who are holding posts on hill in front. As we come up, come under shellfire. Move into positions held by Middlesex, there is a good deal of shelling, but not much near us. Ferry wounded. The battle opens out, and guns are going all along the line. About 11.30 the Germans begin to leave, it is interesting to watch their movements. Our guns shell village, which seems to hold hostile battery, but it does not seem to mind. This place is thick with wasps. I have rather troublesome indigestion. The retreating Germans are shelled on all sides. A wooded hill on my R. front still seems to hold out. It is dreadfully hot sitting in sun. Good deal of rifle and machine gun fire round wooded hill. I hear Ferry has been hit in arm. As sun goes down, shelling still continues. We remain in position as Outposts. I have eaten and drunk nothing all day, and feel better for it. Very uncomfortable night, as if I put head near straw, cough badly.

**10 September** Feeling weak, but better. We are to retire from firing line to support. Eat a little breakfast, and feel fairly well. It has been raining mildly since 3.30 am, when we stood to arms. Lee has shaved, but I shall not. It is now over three days since I had any clothes off. March after Germans, pass through La Ferte-Sous-Jouarre, over pontoon, see broken bridge which had been shelled a good deal by us. Did not show much damage, but holes here and there, and chimneys off, many windows out. Over the rolling wooded country, and squalid village tract, people glad to see us. Traces of Germans now. Dozens and hundreds of bottles all along the road. Germans are moving very quickly.

Day improving, feeling very weak, but ride a lot. All kinds of debris, hundreds of petrol tins, broken bicycles, even broken motor cars and carriages, German papers etc. See great many of our aeroplanes at close quarters. Lots of high-smelling dead horses. Glad to see that peasants are burning and burying same. Pass lots of live shell, also fine insulated telephone wire. Am able to eat a little lunch, find march very tiring. About 6 pm arrive near Coulants, where we bivouac,

and have bully beef stewed. Ambulance fired at.

**11 September** A nasty cold night, unable to sleep much, owing to very cold wind. March off 7 am. Pass a few German prisoners. Good news all round now. A few pessimists still about. Raining and cold. Shell marks on road. Army said to have taken 1000 prisoners, much transport and machine guns. We hang about a great deal on the march and only do about 11 miles. During the afternoon it pours with rain and all are wet through. We go into billets after much waiting about in Maritz-St.-Genevieve. The woman of the farm is most disagreeable, believe her to have some connection with Germans, as they have lots of cattle and horses. All the women seem disagreeable, not so the men. I fancy some of the British have behaved badly. It is to be expected coming from a low class. We hear some nasty tales, unfit for publication, of treatment of inhabitants [by the enemy] in some places. In others the Germans are most orderly. Most of the officers sleep in one room. We can dry our clothes to a great extent, but not our boots or putties. Buy a duster as handkerchief. Hear of many prisoners taken. A mail comes in, which should have come long ago. The men are better since they have been shelled.

The men were billeted among the beasts last night. There are unrecognized heroes amongst them, men who are always cheerful and bright, but others are a constant source of irritation, and behave more like monkeys, if you take your eyes off them for one minute.

**12 September** Start about 6 am, and move out a mile, then wait. The war is largely waiting about. The roads are very muddy now. This should be bad for those we pursue. Money got a lot of German dubbin, which will be very useful. We are in for much rain now. It is very nice getting a mail, one cannot say how much so. I took off my boots the first time for four days last night, but it was nasty getting them on, till I warmed up. I am now 'bearded like a pard'. The mounted officers who can carry more look cleaner. The contracts for food seem to have been well distributed, especially in biscuits and jam. They are good. All the tinned meat is 'Frey Bentos' at present.

Guns going again. We should have a scrap today, as we must be getting near another river. Got into Busancy about 6.50 pm, and go into very bad close billets, officers in hay shed. Got some

nice plums. Country has been cleared out by the enemy. No food obtainable, sheep, etc, killed.

**13 September** Quite a nice morning, standing by, manage to get a complete wash, first for four days, also a shave. Go to church, which lasts about 20 minutes. Then go to have a meal, but just begun, when we receive orders to move at once. Was hoping to see our kits, and get some underclothes, men to get boots. Put some German dubbin in boots. I form part of Advance Guard, and head brigade with CO.'s map about 5 miles to place where we are to bivouac. Just above Carriere L'Eveque. Germans are shelling front crest of this ridge with high explosives. Went out with Lee to post observation group. Many spiders. Our planes complain that they are often shot at by our men. Troops look untidy. Cannonade goes on well into night. See aeros dropping petrol bombs.

**14 September** Sleep in a German trench, quite warm. Visit posts about 12.15, call in post, and move off. Rain begins one of the most miserable dawns I have ever known. Feel like others depressed, suffer much from cold. Sit several hours in a ditch. Our troops meet with check apparently. Day clearing a bit. Rain stops. Biscuits and jam. Bacon at 1.30, and slice of bread. Felt better. We now come under high explosive fire, one shell pretty close. You can hear them coming some time ahead. Rest in wood, we are in reserve. Lee lends me his woolly and I feel much better. In the evening we all feel much better and spirits go up. Eat stew at 7, bully and potatoes. I eat enormously. My throat is sore. Another miserable night, rains heavily, cold wind.

**15 September** Cross the Aisne (at Venizel), move into wood, very depressed, hear things not going so well.

See our guns retiring, don't like our position, as duty not clear. Germans shell part of our wood. Understand situation thus: French pressing up on both flanks, we hold centre. Germans five corps, one crippled. Many French coming up, but not for 2 days. Our 6th Division up in three days. More rain, very horrid. Good quantity of rations. Men digging trenches, CO says trenches very good, I think so too.

**17 September** Hear we are to move, as front too thick. Do not move out of wood at dark, rain clearing, feet and legs sopping, very inclined to be depressed. Village full of transport, shelled heavily with high explosive, probably spy, Bucyle-Long.

**22 September** Up at 5.30 am, parade 6.45. March to Carrierel'Eveque, one of the largest and best-kept chateau farms I have ever seen. Draw tools, make entrenchments. Lots of artillery work all day. See aero chase and firing, to bed early. Sent watch to Paris for new glass.

**24 September** Beautiful day, aero work, hundreds of rumours as usual. The Germans are said to be shooting their own badly wounded. Watch mended, but a little loose.

**26 September** Visit Soissons in afternoon, rough horse. Cathedral still getting occasional shells. Several windows and some of the building damaged. Almost every other house in the town damaged, spires of church damaged, but place kept very clean and many inhabitants still living in. Now occupied by the French. One sees beautiful uniforms in pictures of war, but in practice they are very dirty. The Algerian troops look very Arab-like. A sort of cobweb stuff, which the natives call 'fil de vierge' is falling from the sky, it catches on all the wires, and covers the ground. One sees balls floating in the air. The couple who own the house are pleasant simple old folk, very willing. The house is only two rooms and some outbuildings. They can get nothing but vegetables to eat. We have had some butter and fresh meat since we have been here. The butter came from Paris and was a great treat. Because we have an easy time, the men seem to think the war is over, they will probably be rudely awakened from this dream.

**2 October** Food is one of the principal pleasures of life during war. We are doing very well now. This is a menu for the day, which does not vary very much:

Breakfast: Bacon, bread, jam. Tea with condensed milk, and sugar. Small piece of butter. (All but bread strictly limited).

Lunch: Bully beef in some form, potatoes, bread, cheese, tea (as much as you want, some people excepted owing to special capacity).

Tea: Bread, very small piece of butter, jam, tea.

Dinner: Stew, bully (latterly fresh meat), with vegetables. Stewed apples or pears. Cheese, tea (sometimes rum). To this is sometimes added a luxury, such as an atom of pate de fois gras, or walnuts. Drink at dinner, red wine with water, but this is now finished.

The usual routine just at present is as follows:

Rise at 4.30 am, stand to arms from 5 to 6 am. Wash and shave, breakfast at 7 am. Parade 7.50. Lunch at 1 pm (in two relays). Then read papers, and eat piece of chocolate (if any), then wash and lie

down an hour. Tea at 4.15 pm. Take a walk with Lee up hill, and view battle. During this time the subject of war is banned. Return at dusk, and write letters and diary till dinner, which is in two relays, 7.15 and 8. Then go into 'A' Coy's billet ('A' Coy have seceded from the general mess), play a rubber of bridge. Oakley, Chaplin, McClellan and self. Then to bed about 9.30 pm. Proper bed, and boots off. Five of us in a rather small room.

Start day by breaking old woman's chair, she very angry, but I not pleased, finally nearly kissed, thank Heaven not quite! Guns, some quite close, going all the time. What a coup the Germans would make if they could send a message from 'Whistling Sarah' into the middle of our square. The men call the high explosive shells 'coal scuttles' as they give off a heavy black smoke.

#### Lessons of the War

Rapid fire is invaluable. Most of the German attacks have been washed out in 10 minutes, and it would seem that the stereotyped forms of attack which one has been led to believe would take place will be very rare.

Defence positions are now taken up with very small fields of fire, the enemy can get fairly close, but the last 100 Yards or so are impossible against rapid fire. I (fire superiority be gained, which necessitates Artillery fire ditto, then attacks may be successful, or a long infantry ditto (in which case ammunition supply will come in). The German attacks have been attempted, without fire superiority, which we have always heard are fatal.

Troops here face each other at 80 yards, but cannot advance.

Retrenching is most necessary. Deep narrow trenches are best. Head cover is not liked. Without trenches you would stand no chance. On the Aisne here there are 3 rows of trenches, the first if rushed, just lie down and take their chance. No.2 now opens fire, and if this were rushed, No.3 would take it up. The 4th Platoon is allowed complete rest.

At night men stand up, alternately, all night in the trenches. Communicating trenches to the rear are most valuable, and in our trenches extra rooms etc. have been

dug in supporting trenches. During daytime more sleep can be obtained.

Went for an evening walk, and found an aeroplane, which had come down for some minor adjustment. Motor cars follow our aeros, and watch for their coming down. In the cars are spare parts, and mechanics, who form the rank and file of the flying corps. The chief mechanic looked very intelligent. The aviator's name was Lewis. His biplane was fitted with wireless. Lewis said he was unable to take an observer, as the wireless weighs too much, therefore he had to work his machine, send wireless messages, and observe.

He did not seem to think much of the French air service. He said the men who could fly had no discipline and no military knowledge, and those who were soldiers knew little about flying. He seemed to think that the Germans were good flyers, but they always turn tail if our airmen appear. One of our men was shot and badly wounded from a German aeroplane.

I examined [Lewis's] machine. It had a 70-horse 8-cylinder engine. When the machine is started, the exhausts become red-hot almost at once. It was dark by the time he flew off. He said they would put out flares for him. It looked very pretty with the red-hot pipes, and the coils sparking. The wireless ariel [sic] is worked by letting down a wire from a reel.

**5 October** March off about 8 pm.

**6 October** Take over command of C' Company Arrive at St Remy about 1.30 am and are told to move into some woods near by, so as to be hidden all day. We have no idea what we are going to do, but imagine we are to be thrown in somewhere. Germans have a new nasty surprise. Aeros carry sheafs of thin steel arrows, which spread to a large cone as they drop, and pierce anything below like butter.

**9 October** In train, pass Mondidier.

**10 October** Still on train, pass Boulogne. Arrive St Omer about 11.30. Billets at Port Rouge.

**11 October** Move off at 12.10, my Company to hold outposts at Le Nieppe. I find French holding all the posts I am to hold. Have long talk with French colonel, get him to let me deepen trenches by saying men want exercise.

**12 October** Hazebrouck.

[Night march] past

**13 October** Move, with many halts, to near Strazeele. Very close billets in piggy

farm, people very pleasant.

**14 October** With regard to the behaviour of the Germans, I have not come across many atrocities. They do seem to have done a great deal of malicious damage in deserted houses, and of course some very nasty things, but what can you expect when dealing with a low class in a hostile country. We have had to put down looting on a minor scale, even in our own army who are so well-treated, and in a friendly country. The Cure was shot, I could not find out on what grounds. A French Cavalry officer was shot while on patrol, by some civilians on bicycles, presumably spies. A wounded German officer was left in the house I was billeted in, and taken by our ambulance. The Germans are terribly callous about their own wounded. Before the Guards Brigade the ground was covered with dead and wounded. The Germans refused all offers to have them removed. The stench was awful I am told.

About mid-day we get orders that the brigade will attack Bailleul from Meteren. The Welsh and Argylls leading. March on, only to find Bailleul unoccupied. We make a triumphal march through the town, and hear that the Bavarians had been very drunk, and before retiring broke windows, and did 20 atrocities. After dark, move to a field east of Bailleul.

**15 October** Hear that all danger being over we are to go into billets. Presents of tobacco and fruit arrive, from papers and societies. Informed not going into billets, move to Steenverck, move into filthy cow field. Very unpleasant night, hardly sleep at all.

**16 October** Get a big mail in. Move off at 12.45, darkness comes on, and the bad roads make marching most uncomfortable.

**17 October** About 1.30 reach Vlamertinghe. To great joy, go into billets. Waited on by a quaint fellow.

*Here the Diary ends. Captain Rose was killed on 22 October 1914, at the age of 34. He is commemorated on the Ploegsteert Memorial to the Missing, in the Ypres Salient.*



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

I enclose this article to be used by you for insertion in the Covenanter. The World War II exhibition at Hamilton Low Parks Museum and adjacent to the Cameronian Exhibition is now in place and will stay there until November 2006. I have contributed materials to the exhibition, including a letter from L/CPL William Downie sent from Stalag XXA. A photo of his camp football team which was in a Sunday newspaper here in the 1940s. Willie had been a professional footballer. These along with other materials and including a German Hospital Records copy from a collage poster in the exhibition.

I also have in my possession a map showing the positions of all the stalag and luft camps in Germany and Poland during the war. I have a map showing the advance of the Cameronians up to April 1945, this shows that the 6th Battalion were at Breman on the 19th April, 1945, just north of where L/Cpl William Downie was killed. Four Downie brothers served at the same time with the Cameronians as territorials in World War II. These were, William Downie, John Downie, James Downie and Charles Downie, all from Larkhall. John and James also served in N. Africa, Sicily and Italy. John also served in Madagascar (with the 2nd Battalion.)

Charles (6th Battalion) was invalided out during the war and he died in Killearn Military Hospital of brain tumours just two weeks after Willie was killed at Gresse. I have a book, The History of 6th Battalion The Cameronians (S.R.) World War II which contains Rfn. Charles Downie's name (Service No. 14741554) L/Cpl William Downie's service number was 3245722.

This has been a year when many events have commemorated the sixtieth anniversary of the end of World War II. National events have been held throughout the United Kingdom and world-wide. These parades and Festivals Of Remembrance included those held in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Cameronians and their families also remembered during this year.

Veterans of the regiment including members of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and Family Members organization attended a number of these. Naturally, a

number of these were held in Lanarkshire.

April 17th witnessed a service held at the Larkhall War Memorial. This was attended by sixty-two members of the Downie family, members of the public and Cameronian (SR) veterans who paraded complete with the Standard, buglar and piper. The Cameronian Flag was raised on the memorial flagpole.

The gathering was to remember the death of L/Cpl William Downie who joined the 6th Battalion as a territorial and served during World War II. Willie with his brother Jim were involved in the 1940 battle of Narvik. Willie was badly wounded by mortar fire.

He was completely incapacitated and lay in the snow for dead until a German patrol saw him move and took him prisoner.

Willie spent two years in hospital at Trondheim and Oslo until he was sent to Stalag XXA at Torun (Thorn) in Poland. He worked with other prisoners on the farms until he was made a corporal serving in the British Military Police.

In 1945, the Germans vacated the camps and moved west to avoid being overrun by the Russians. The prisoners were also forced to march westward. Thousands walked for up to six-hundred miles before reaching allied lines. Willie walked four hundred miles before being killed by friendly aircraft fire on the 19th of April 1945, the infamous 'long march' deaths at Gresse on the River Elbe in Germany.

Following the 17th April service in Larkhall, family members travelled to Berlin and Commonwealth Cemetery on the Heerstrasse, Charlottenburg.

The services at Larkhall and Berlin were conducted by the Rev. Willie Downie, a nephew of L/Cpl William Downie and a member of the Cameronian Families Association. Terry Mackenzie and his staff have mounted a special exhibition concerning World War II at the museum in Hamilton including mention of Cameronians and the Gresse happening.

June 5th at Douglas witnessed the gift of a replica plaque of the plaque mounted inside the church at Broekhuizen in Holland. The plaque was given into the keeping of the Douglas museum at a dedication service conducted by the Rev Willie Downie. A similar service is held each year at the memorial gifted by the Dutch and situated

in memory of Cameronians and others who gave their lives in the freeing of the Broekhuizen area. Cameronian veterans organise this service at Hamilton as they did at Douglas. A Dutchman from Broekhuizen and now living in Aberdeen handed over the plaque at Douglas on behalf of the Mayor and people of Broekhuizen. Friends from Holland attend every second year at the Hamilton plaque service.

The final service organised by the Cameronian and Families Association was held at the Cameronian Memorial, Kelvingrove, Glasgow at 1030am on Sunday 13th November, Remembrance Sunday. A good number of Cameronians paraded at this service.

Yours etc,

The Rev William Downie

Sir,

I recently read the enclosed poem in my local Newspaper. I think it is very sad but very true. I wondered if it would be printed in next years edition of The Covenanter. My husband was in the Cameronians during the war and very proud of it. Sadly he died on Christmas Day 2003, but I like to keep in touch with anything to do with the Cameronians.

Yours,

Mrs Doreen Walker

### **Remember the brave and fallen**

(written by a Dunkirk Veteran)

Why do you still march old man with medals  
on your chest?

Why do you still grieve old man for those  
friends you laid to rest?

Why do your eyes gleam old man when you  
hear the bugles blow?

Tell me why you cry old man; For those days  
long ago?

I'll tell you why I march. young man, with  
medals on my chest

I'll tell you why I grieve young man,  
For those I laid to rest.

Through misty fields of Gossamer silk comes  
visions from distant times

when the boys of tender age marched forth  
to distant climes

We buried them in a blanket shroud their  
young flesh scorched and blackened a  
communal grave, newly gouged in blood  
stained gorse and bracken and you ask me

why I march young man -

I march to remind you all that but for those  
apple blossom youths

You'd never have known freedom at all

Sir,

I am writing to you at the suggestion of Jim Marler, a Cameronian who lives across the valley from me, and whom I have got to know quite well over the years. My reason for writing is to ask whether you know of a second-hand bookshop specialising in military books, where I might hope to buy a copy of Colonel Baynes Morale: A study of Morale and Courage; and of 'The Jacobite Rising of 1715.' Many years ago a neighbour lent me the book on morale, and I have never come across anything since to match it. I have tried local bookshops; bookshops recommended by them specialising in military history; and computer-search programmes. All to no avail. I would still like to get hold of a copy, especially now that the regimental system is so seriously under threat, and I would be most grateful for any information you might be able to let me have, pointing me in the right direction yours etc,

The Rev'd David Henderson

Address to be added

Sir,

Charles Forrester's PhD dissertation (Leeds) is on how 21 Army Group conducted the Northwest Europe campaign 1944-1945, focusing on 8 Corps and its component and supporting divisions. He would be very interested to hear from anyone with recollections of the late General Sir Richard O'Connor, particularly from northwest Europe. He would also especially like to hear from anyone with the information on the 9th Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), 15 Scottish Division, or the officers who served in it, equally from anyone with information on the 6th and 7th Battalions, 52 Lowland Division, or the officers who served in them.

yours etc,

Charles Forrester

54 Finsbury Street, York YO23 1LT.

Dear Sir,

I look forward to my Covenanter journal each year, this year has been especially good for me, as it reflects memories of my years spent with this very fine Regiment.

I joined the Cameronians SR. in Trieste when they came from Gib and took over



from the Royal Scots, before that I arrived in India with the R.S.F.

I served with the Cameronians SR from Trieste - Hong Kong - Malaya - Bahrain. Most of my time in the MT Section while in Hong Kong I took over as COs driver Lt Col. Buchanan Dunlop, and then Lt Col Henning on into Malaya, I also served with C. Coy and remembered the Bacari Swamp very well. I also remember Snake Island.

After leaving Malaya I went to the Depot at Winstone Bks Lanark. There I was in charge of the medical centre, and also I remember Major-Carter Campbell asking me to become the Regimental barber, recruits were coming to the Depot with D.A. hair cuts and it was my job to cut them and let their neck see daylight. I remember Maj Worthington-Wilmer, he married Lt Col Hennings Daughter Phillipa.

It is my dearest wish to get up to Edinburgh one day and meet up with some of the Cameronians SR on the last Friday of the month.

I am a very active member of the R.B.L. being Chairman - Standard Bearer and Welfare office for our Branch Nether Stowey.

I would dearly love to hear from any one who might know or remember me.

I am a very proud Ex Cameronian  
Yours etc,  
Hugh Purdie

Sir,

I have just been rereading the tribute to Donald Sinclair in the 2003 edition which has brought back vivid memories.

A grandchild mentions 'holy jumpers.' I so well remember when I was staying there once, Donald coming in from the hill dressed in just that: tattered trousers, dung stained boots all contributing to an air of 'Worzel Gummidge'.

'You're presenting prizes at the school in ten minutes,' said Jean, 'aren't you going to change?'

'What on earth for?' replied Donald.

I saw him in 2000 when he came to my son's wedding in Palma, Majorca.

He had travelled via and with the Coopers and Eleanor had had a job to get him suitably clad for such an occasion.

But of course it didn't matter as Donald was his usual smiling self, gracious and polite to one and all.

I remember him saying to me as a few military chums were gathered in the bar 'just like the old days, isn't it?'

As in Chaucer's tale. 'He was a very parfit gentil knight.'

The world is poorer for his passing.  
yours etc,  
Nick Carter

Sir,

I have been asked to give my observations of 'The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Commemorative Sunday Parade' help this year on Sunday 15th May 2005 at Douglas to be sent to yourself for inclusion in next issue of Covenanter.

**The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Commemoration Service Douglas 2005.**

(Organised by; Ex-Cameronians (SR) and Family Members Organisation, and The Minister and Kirk Sessions of the Douglas Valley Church.)

Once again staunch ex serving Cameronians (SR) from home and around the world, members of 'The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and Families Organisation', widows, close relations, and descendants of our Regiment joined with South Lanarkshire Council members, residents of Douglas (forever the Cameronian Regiment birthplace and home) and Friends that still hold dear the memory of it's importance in Scottish history, already comprehensively documented in Military history in Scotland, and throughout the world thanks to that modern miracle, The Internet. All came together then on Sunday 15th May in glorious sunshine not only to commemorate the Regiments history as Scotland's only Rifle Regiment, but also to honour the memory of the men, women and children that had caused our Regiment to be raised here in this beautiful valley in the shadow of Castle Dangerous 316 years previously.

At 0945 hrs Bugler Mr John Farrell sounded Reveille for the raising of the Regimental Flag depicting our beloved Silver Cap Badge comprising the Mullet or Star of the Douglas family, set above the Horn of the Perthshire Light Infantry joined by a knot of love, encircled by ten Scottish Thistles that spell out the Regiments proud name, The Flag having been flown the previously day over Edinburgh Castle, now collected from that place of safe keeping by Mr Jim Ballantyne, was with due respect from Bugle and piper gliding skyward above Douglas.

It proved to be a fine creditable turn out with an abundance of Douglas Tartan (trews, kilt and regimental ties) that then entered the Douglas Valley Church of St Brides to

be greeted with genuine warmth by the Rev Bryan Kerr BA.BD. the resident minister, and congregation present as is always the way on Cameronian Sunday, with this particular Sunday also being Pentecost day the Festival of Whitsuntide placing great emphasis on the spiritual powers of the Holy Spirit, the Rev Kerr then went on to conduct the service and delivered a splendid sermon, befitting and sensitive to the occasion that all present could relate to and appreciate.

Following the service we again emerged into beautiful sunshine, most making their way into the Community Centre opposite to the welcome aroma of hot coffee, tea, cakes and sandwiches served with a smile by committee members of the Douglas community, happy to help make our day special our thanks go to all of them, then to sit sharing memories with old friends before taking a walk around the village, perhaps visiting The Earl of Angus Statue, James Gavin Memorial Stone, Ancient St Brides church or one of the many other historical sights of our Douglas home, (Douglas-Home, get it yes, no?) perhaps with a stop off here and there, just to be sociable you understand! The Douglas Heritage Museum proved to be very popular as I saw myself on my own visit and later confirmed by Mr Jim Fleming a Trustee, who said how very pleased he and other Trustees, Committee Members were with the sheer number of people that had visited the museum during the day, the enthusiastic interest shown in all exhibits, and the pleasure they had experienced from sharing their lively banter and enthusiastic discussions.

By 1300hrs groups had made the walk (or had driven) down the road across the Douglas Home estate alongside Douglas Water where some had once marched for the last time as a Regiment 37 years ago, to the place in the shadow of Castle Dangerous where the Cameronian Regiment had first been raised in 1689, The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Cairn stands as testimony of our Regiments-outstanding glorious history across all continents of the world, and now exists as a point of focus for us all to remember we too were and are part of that history. The Regimental Flag once again raised alongside the Cairn proceeded to dance happily in the light breeze, as more visitors arrived to stand talking with old comrades, enjoying the fine weather and to await the commencement of the promised Conventicle. CONVENTICLE: 'a secret or unauthorised assembly for worship' say's the dictionary. Well it was

certainly not secretive from my position as a sentry posted on the left of the Cairn, more that a hundred and fifty people were now assembled with a few still arriving in cars and on foot up the dusty road to be greeted by others below, the pleasure of belonging obvious as was the spiritual anticipation to celebrate their faith and speak freely with their God in these beautiful surroundings just as their ancestors had. I could not help but to try and connect with how it would have been for local Lanarkshire families over three hundred years ago, the difficulties and fears that those families and individuals would have felt and had to overcome just making their way to and from their secret place of worship, which would have been moved from place to place in order to avoid causing suspicion to their enemies, but once in groups of friends relations and comrades not unlike that gathering now, they too would have relaxed a little feeling good and taking strength from each other, knowing that lookouts were posted who would give warning should any enemies approach, and because of those assurances they could for the present reach out to their God in safety. Shortly before 1400hrs the organist played a selection of hymn tunes that brought me back from my musing, the Rev Bryan Kerr BA BD took his place facing the now much enlarged gathering, suddenly everyone became hushed, respectful and expectant, and though no walls or roof were visible it was plain to see that this place had become, a house of God.

The Parade Commander Mr Jim Ballantyne called the gathered veterans to attention and proceeded to 'march on' The Standard secured by Mr R Gracie and escorts Mr Wm Gough, and Mr A McArthur as the pipes gave out the march Athol Highlanders played by the piper Mr J Willis.

This was followed with Mr A Berry, Chairman of the Ex-Cameronians (SR) and Families Organisation, marching up to the Minister, halting-saluting and giving the now traditional report: 'Reverend Sir, the pickets have been posted, there is no enemy in sight, the service may begin.' The parade was again stood easy and the service began by singing Psalm 121, bringing many memories back to both veterans and visitors alike of that day in 1968 when a Regiment and a congregation of over four thousand sang I to the hills will lift mine eyes, the Rev Bryan Kerr continued the service again with another excellent scripture reading and service of remembrance in which he

included all branches of the armed services, auxiliary workers and civilians that lost their lives, and for those that returned but suffered terrible injuries and mental scars, the loved ones, children, families and friends left behind, sometimes alone to grieve.

This was followed by the hymn Who is on the Lord's side? the words could have been written for those we follow: *Who is on the Lord's side? Who will serve the King? Who will be his helpers, other lives to bring? Who will leave the world's side? Who will face the foe? Who is on the Lord's side? Who for him will go? Thy call or mercy, by Thy grace divine, we are on the Lord's side Saviour, we are Thine!* The bugler sounded Last Post followed by a two-minute silence of Remembrance, terminated by playing The Rouse. The Cameronian wreath was placed respectfully on the Cairn this year by Mr Wm Nelson (a veteran Cameronian living in Cumbria) dedicated to the memory of all those have passed before us, the piper played the lament Lochaber No more. Then to everyone's delight The Regimental Hymn; The Day Thou Gavest Lord is Ended followed as always by The National Anthem. The Parade Commander called the parade to attention and it was given with enthusiasm. The Standard was then 'marched off' to the pipers Castle Dangerous, the bugler not to be outdone played Sunset and The Regimental Flag was lowered to be returned to safety in Edinburgh Castle. The last words went to Parade Commander Mr Jim Ballantyne: 'No Officers on parade, Parade Dismissed!'

You would do wrong to consider that to be the end of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Remembrance Sunday 2005, because our friends at Douglas had extended use of the Bar - food and facilities at the Victoria Bowling Club all being welcome, and I do believe all did attend, the club was full to capacity, and I thought again of all those NAAFI clubs and messes of the past I had spent time in, the atmosphere was here now, and it felt really good.

yours etc

Kenn Robinson (Military Band 1956-1963)

Sir,

I thought this advert would be of some interest to ex members of the 9th Bn. Unfortunately there was no heated swimming pool when we were there, we had to run down to the sea. The signal platoon, pipe band and other B.H.Q. personel slept in marquees below the house. C.S.M. Tarling was killed by a mine on the beach there and

was buried in the local cemetery.

Hope this is in time for the next issue  
yours etc,  
J. Borthwick  
Ex Signal Platoon



**Gorse Hill**  
Aldeburgh, Suffolk  
£2million

Handsome and imposing family house with delightful gardens and fine views. The property has eight bedrooms and seven bathrooms.  
**Best bit:** Heated swimming pool.  
**Worst bit:** The price.

## A CANLOAN friend A story concluded after sixty-one years

Sir,

In 1944 a ten year old boy in Hove on the south coast of England was delighted to find several of the houses in the road in which he lived with his parents were being occupied by Scottish soldiers. Being inquisitive he soon befriended one, who turned out not to be a Scot but a Canadian. The boy always regarded him as the first adult friend he had made for himself.

The Canadian was Lieutenant Lorne Paff, a tall, quiet, patient man who was in fact only twenty-six years old himself. Lorne Paff answered all the boy's many questions and soon accepted invitations from the boy's parents to come to their home for meals. The boy continued to pester Lorne Paff with all manner of questions about the soldiers and their equipment and on more than one occasion woke him from well-earned rest after night exercises.

After a while all the soldiers suddenly disappeared but the boy - and his parents, and everyone else -- very soon found out where they had gone. They had, of course, crossed the Channel to Normandy.

Sadly, Lorne Paff was killed on Sunday 26 June only a few days after he had landed in France and only one day after writing a

letter to the boy's parents that included the sentence, "I am quite confident that I shall be okay but you can never tell"

The boy and his parents soon knew about Lorne Paff's death because they were in contact with his parents in Stratford, Ontario. The boy cried; it was the first time in his life he had known someone who died.

The boys' parents remained in regular contact with Herman and Laura Paff for many years until they all died. Then the boy, himself by now middle aged, traced Lorne Paff's nieces by writing to the Stratford local newspaper and resumed the correspondence.

By now I am sure you will have realised that I, Mike Rainey, the writer of this article, was "the boy".

In 2003, with my wife I went, belatedly, to Hottot-les-Bagues, a tiny hamlet between Caen and Bayeux and visited the grave of my long dead friend in the immaculately maintained Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery. Although I did not realise it at the time, the story was not yet over.

In an attempt to find out more about Lorne's few days in Normandy I obtained a copy of the War Diary of the 9th Bn. The Cameronians for the month of June 1944 and then contacted the Cameronians Regiment and Families Association receiving great help initially from Jim Ballantyne and Bill Tilley. Bill referred me to Major Brian Leishman who in turn provided introductions to Nat Gormley, Adam Gray, Bob Eggleton, D. Turrell and J. Borthwick every one of whom were generous with their time and information as was Harry Butler. Adam Gray also gave me the names of Major W. Leggat-Smith and Tom Laing. I spoke with Tom Laing on 2 September when he sounded lively and on good form but sadly he died only two days later. Although none of these people had known Lorne Paff personally, Major Leggat-Smith was an amazing fount of information and by an extraordinary co-incidence had actually witnessed the whole of the incident leading to Lorne Paff being fatally shot by a German sniper while advancing through tall standing corn on sloping ground near Haut du Bosq. I found it astonishing that, despite the chaos of war and the passage of sixty-one years I was able to speak to a man who is very probably the only person with such knowledge.

With background information from Canada about Lorne Paff's family and

upbringing the story is now just about complete and will soon be set out for his several nieces with whom I am in contact. It is ironic that Lorne's grandfather had emigrated in the 1840s from Germany.

Without the tremendous and most generous help given by all those people mentioned above who were kind enough to share their memories and information the whole story would never have been known. Thank you all. yours etc,

Mike Rainey

Sir,

I understand that there is a group "Cameronians & Families" with a list of members and addresses. As I am constantly trying to find old Army pals I wonder if you can tell me how to get hold of this.

Yours etc

B Mead (REME attached MT Section 1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) 30 Park Drive, Biggleswade, Beds. SG18 8QT

**Editors Note:** Contact is Jim Ballantyne Tel 0131 554 3736

Sir,

May I take this opportunity to thank you for putting my name forward to attend the July 10 Horse Guards Event this year. My wife and I, in the company of Tom Gore and his wife, attended a first class entertainment on a very good day. We had first class excellent seats which were centre stage and the weather was warm but very pleasant.

Yours etc

Donald Turrell (9th Battalion)  
27 Ferguson Avenue, Gidea Park, Romford  
Essex, RM2 6RD

Sir,

I will be most grateful if you will please renew my subscription to the Covenanter.

I am proud to say "*I served in the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)*" I served with the 1st Battalion with John Scott in Burma 1942 and in the Chindits. He was such a good friend, we miss him terribly. He came to visit us here in the US on many occasions and he insisted that my wife and I use his Ann Street home as our own when in Scotland.

Yours etc

David L Chalmers  
Glenmoor Apt 3104, 205 Towerview Drive,  
St Augustine, FL 32092 USA

Sir,

It was very kind of you to follow up my previous letter to you. I appreciate that the Covenanter is published only annually and that you are seeking to include a note of my father's passing in January 2004. Thank you again for getting in touch; my father was immensely proud of his Regimental connection.

Yours etc

Dr Brian Keighley  
Hector Cottage, Bankers Brae, Balfon,  
Stirlingshire G63 0PY

**Editors Note:** With the consent of Dr Brian Keighley, I attach an extract from a letter written by his father to his parents ten days after receiving the wound that led to the loss of his arm. He was then serving with the 2nd Battalion in Italy and his company commander, who wrote a highly complimentary letter to Keighley's parents was none other than Colonel A R (Reggie) Kettles OBE MC

*92nd General Hospital - 15 May 1944*

*"You will have received by now the official notification from the Army. It was ten days ago the worst happened! An anti personnel mine took a dislike to me and decided to let me know. However the outcome was that I received a few shrapnel; wounds, powder burns, wounds of my eye, a couple of compound fractures of my left arm which unfortunately would not be mended, resulting in amputation above the elbow. I honestly felt no pain at all. I am extremely cheerful and am completely confident in the medical services to fit me up so well; as to mitigate fully the effects of my loss. So you see you shouldn't worry because I am perfectly all right".*

This classic example of Cameronian spirit contrasts somewhat with the following copy of the Telegram received by Keighley's parents.

*Post Office Telegram - 13 May 1944*

Report received from Central Mediterranean Area that Lt JT Keighley, The Cameronians, has been wounded and placed on the dangerously ill list on 6 May 1944 suffering from amputation left arm, blast injuries eyes and lungs. The Army Council express sympathy, letter follows shortly.

*Under Secretary of State for War*

Sir,

I enclose an article (The Covenanter 2005) written by Dr George Jolly, a well known Carlisle Medical Practitioner, who spent some months as MO to the 7th Battalion in the latter stages of the European Campaign

in 1945 and also when the battalion was part of the Army of Occupation after the cessation of hostilities. He is now ninety two years old and still practising. As you will see he has the warmest regard for the Regiment and I know that he would be happy to hear from any former member of the 7th Battalion who can remember him. His address is 69 Millcroft, Carlisle, CA3 0HT Tel 01228 524 811.

Yours etc

Cliff Pettit

The Green Gate, Alnmouth Road,  
Alnwick.NRE66 2PS

## Article By Dr. George Jolly For 'The Covenanter' September 2005



Let me explain myself and how I became Medical Officer of the 7th Battalion The Cameronians during the last few weeks of the War. I had served in Normandy as the 2i/c of 100 FDS, the medical unit of the 8th Beach Group which had landed with the Third Canadian Army during the Normandy landing at Juno Beach. Thereafter we had been very busy with casualty evacuation during these days, and now relished the chance of peace and quiet in the Hospital on the hill in the city of Caen, now a quiet backwater, after a busy 3 months of casualty evacuation from the beaches and a shattering continuous bombardment of Caen from the sea, now long ceased My

peace was broken by a posting directing me to report to a Field Ambulance of 52nd Lowland Division now in Germany waiting to cross the Rhine, as I knew

Since I did not seek to be involved in any more bloodshed, with the war in its dying stages, I suddenly got involved in a Court Martial in Bayeau (not mine I'm pleased to say!) and since it happened to be a murder trial, it dragged on for a week. By the end of that I was in Germany. My own journey to Germany had been very interesting.

On the way there I had stopped at a Transit Camp, which happened to be on the Seigfreid Line, and there I had dinner with a number of Glider pilots, back from Arnhem having escaped. Their accounts of the aerial battle were graphic, stressing to us that the very late arrival by road of the tanks of 30 Corps, under General Horrocks had prejudiced the whole operation,

I arrived at my posting to the Field Ambulance only to find that, before I got unpacked, I was sent to relieve the M.O. of the 7th Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) reported wounded at a cross roads in a spike of Holland which crossed in to Germany not too far away.

I dealt with and evacuated the casualty whom turned out to be a man I had been at school with in Edinburgh, Jack Comline, at George Watson's College, who was the Battalion M.O. to the 7th Cameronians.

They had landed not very long ago in Holland. Ironically, they had been trained for mountain warfare; they landed at roughly the lowest point in Europe-Walcheren Island. It turned out that the cross roads were still under shellfire but nobody was paying much attention-they were at that time serving dinner-and off the regimental silver plate!

That was the Cameronians as I was due to discover, because it was quickly confirmed that I now was appointed M.O. to the 7th Battalion- a fact that pleased me greatly for the next year till I was demobbed.

Little remained as it happened of the War. We moved quite quietly up through Germany, a few mild skirmishes, nights in villages where I usually got myself housed, to open an R.A.P. (Regimental Aid Post), In one house I found a drawer in my room with fresh underclothing and just changed into it-quite hygienic!

Another thing; very often we would find a car in quite good nick outside our house, appropriate it, and drive the next legs of our journey in more comfort than an Army

truck, until the Divisional Commander got shirty, and stern words came down that this practice shall cease!

In due course, we came face to face with the battered walls of Bremen. In what was going to prove the last few days of the war, with a fair amount of hard fighting, we fought our way in. Here we spent time under fire from the recent addition to the German armament, the nebelwerfer, a 12 barrel mortar quite devastating to be underneath!

We set up our battalion H. Q. in a dockside mill, with good amenities like showers, and I began to learn who was who. The Colonel was Lieut. Col. W.J. Forbes, a tall patrician figure, smart and youthful and a cousin of the Marquess of Aberdeen. He had made a pet of a German hound called 'Mac', which followed him on parade always. He looked good always and his men referred to him as 'Bonnie Prince Charlie'!

The company Commanders were all good leaders. D Company was commanded by Jim Duncan, a handsome Canadian who wore the M.C. and charmed the ladies. Dougie McDonald who had a reputation for disregarding danger -an M.C. also. Bill Reid, also a Major, was the wit of the Unit, tall and extroverted. The Adjutant was Adam Simpson. I shared a room with Addie, and later we went off on a weekend's break to Blankenberg. We approved of it. The Officers' Club was on the promenade.

If you wanted to dance, and wanted a partner, you went to the door and whistled. If you whistled too loud, too many came!

During the post V.E. Day month, we were sent North to garrison the small town of Stendal, on the west side of the Elbe, with the Russians on the other bank. Presently in Stendal the Allies established a German Prisoner of War Camp, 10,000 strong with our Battalion about 700 strong to control it. Fortunately the Germans were very cooperative, and not the slightest trouble ensued. Quite soon, we were posted to Belgium, none knew why, to this day. On the way we halted outside the prime horror concentration camp of Bergen Belsen, near Hanover. . It was newly liberated and I was terrified we would be sent in. To try to sort it out would have been horrifying beyond belief Fortunately we were moved straight on.

Our next and most agreeable episode was in a charming hillside village near Iserlohn in the German mountains, called Altena. We occupied the manor house; very

lavishly furnished. The officers were dining at a table which had a wonderful chandelier above-about one hundred fronds. There was a mood of mischief- the C.O. was dining elsewhere. Over the mantelpiece was a portrait in oils of a surly and fierce looking Prussian officer with a Prussian spiked helmet and open canvas. One officer could stand him no longer. He picked up an apple from the table and threw it right through face and canvas! After that - mayhem! The Mess staff had made a praiseworthy effort at clearing up, but you couldn't miss the fact that the chandelier had now only one hanging frond, instead of one hundred. When Col. Forbes came down to breakfast he couldn't miss that fact and any amount of others!

We were 'carpeted' in twos to get our rocket; I with the Adjutant Addie Simpson-I because I had a University Degree and should have known better! I tried to get the point across that Canute would have stood a better chance of abating the tide than Addie and me of pacifying a hyped up Regiment of Cameronians blowing steam after the War!

I shall now take a leap forward about three months during which we had been moving around somewhat aimlessly in the Rhur, and start this history again at a point in time which as it turned out was about six months before I was demobbed. We were billeted on a farm in a village called Rahden near the town of Lubbecke of which more anon. The farm was a big one. One day I was poking around in a cupboard of the house I was billeted in, when I found a familiar object- a No 3 iron made by Nicol of Leven in Fife, identical with my own clubs at home. At the start of the War, my golf handicap had been 3! I got an idea, enlisted the support of the C.O., sent for clubs and balls from home, and using nine fields with stone cattle troughs in each, made a golf course which was played daily.

A few weeks on, the Director of Medical Services, a keen golfer, staged a golf tournament (one day) for the M.O.'s at the Royal Golf Club of Brussels. I managed to get there and was in much better practice than anybody else. I have a silver ash tray inscribed with my name and the legend 'Royal Golf Club of Brussels-Medical Services B.O.A.R.-Scratch Prize'!

Time passed pleasantly enough in our rural village in Westphalia. Germany by now was the most peaceful place you could be-not a shot fired in anger! Our nearest

city Lubbecke, had been chosen by the British to establish there the British Control Commission HQ. for Germany. Lubbecke in consequence very quickly filled up with attractive British Ladies, and with Officers' Clubs where we often danced, and equally often the ladies came out to parties in our Mess. I had been made Mess President (I believe this is often done to Battalion M.O.'s since it is thought probably they have more spare time daily than anyone else.- except possibly the Padre! This meant that the drinks had to be intoxicating but not crippling, so I had responsibilities in both directions! Life was good in our village of Rahden. I shall conclude by recalling as many names as I can remember. I played golf with another officer whose name might have been Douglas. Our lives touched threefold. First of all, we both lived in Edinburgh in Royal Circus, tho' we didn't know each other then. Secondly, at a party night in our Mess he would come into my bedroom, wake me up, then insist on unscrewing a loose towel rail and taking my temperature with it! Thirdly, later on in peacetime at the Royal & Ancient Golf Club, he became the Secretary of Rules of Golf Committee, which made him the arbiter of Golf Law worldwide. He was lawyer and a member at the same time as myself

The Second in Command was Major John Gray, of very few words, but a very nice man. Two Officers who were antique dealers in civil life were Capt. Eric Forest O.C. HQ. Company, and Tommy Grange a subaltern, dark handsome and Jewish- a most entertaining man. Eddie Scott, a Subaltern also tall but fair, who, I remember lived in Alderly Edge. near Manchester. Why I remember this, I have no idea, except that I heard people say it was a nice place to live? The R.S.M., whose name now eludes me, had risen to his eminence unusually from Sergeant Cook. A most pleasant modest man and a good R.S.M.. Douggie McCreath, exC.S.M., who had been commissioned in the field, and from all accounts had well deserved it-also a keen golfer.

Lastly my own Medical Sergeant, Fred Brown. We got on very well, and I met up with him again and his family in Hexham after the War.

May I wish good luck to all you Cameronians - you are the salt of the earth!

Doctor George Jolly

Sir,  
 Ex Cameronian seeks pre WWII copies of  
 the Regimental Journal – The Covenanter.  
 DGP Heathcote  
 8 Cheyne Walk, London SW3 5QZ

Sir,  
 Thank you once again for the Covenanter.  
 In it (2003) on page 53 there is a photo of  
 Albert Galloway. Is this the same Albert  
 Galloway who was Sergeant of 12 Platoon  
 B Company 2nd Battalion? Our platoon  
 commander was Lieutenant James Adams  
 and our L/Sgt was Andy Grey who was killed  
 in Germany just before we crossed the River  
 Elbe.

Yours etc  
 CEJ Bryant  
 Lynedoch, Bangor Road North, Iver  
 Heath, Bucks, SLO ORY

## Angus Squad

Sir,  
 Whilst recently browsing through my  
 photograph collection, I came across a  
 beautifully preserved photograph of a squad  
 I had trained at the Regimental Depot Lanark.  
 As I stared at this photograph, it brought  
 back a memory I shall never forget.

During the mid-fifties the Depot was  
 commanded by Major C. G. Harper M.C.,  
 and the training wing by Major M. Dunbar.  
 The training  
 wing was  
 responsible for  
 training our  
 new recruits,  
 both Regular  
 (Regs) and  
 National  
 Servicemen  
 (NS). Normally,  
 the squads were  
 made up with  
 both Regs and  
 NS training  
 side by side,  
 for a ten-week  
 period prior to  
 being posted to  
 the battalion.

Just before a new intake of recruits was  
 due to arrive at the Depot, it was decided  
 that the intake would be divided into a  
 squad of Regulars versus a squad of National  
 Servicemen. This was to ensure ten weeks of  
 intense training, rivalry and competitiveness  
 between the two squads. Initially, it seemed  
 a good idea and was met by enthusiasm by

all concerned. However, as we shall see, it  
 developed into an embarrassment for one  
 of the squads. It was decided that I would  
 train the National Servicemen in Angus  
 Squad, and the Regulars would be allocated  
 to Graham Squad. Angus Squad instructors  
 consisted of 2nd Lieut. McMillan, Sgt.  
 Dinsdale and myself as Squad Sgt.

At last the great day dawned, and the  
 recruits came streaming in. As usual it  
 was a busy day for us, ensuring that the  
 recruits were taken to the dining hall for  
 a meal, then to the medical centre for a  
 final check-up and inoculations. Once  
 that was completed, they were then taken  
 to the Quartermasters Stores for the issue  
 of clothing and equipment. After that, it  
 was back to the barrack room where the  
 room corporals commenced the process  
 of settling in. Intake day was always on a  
 Thursday, and training would commence  
 the following Monday, by which time the  
 recruits were able to dress themselves, and  
 were familiar with their new surroundings.  
 So, here we were with a squad of NS men to  
 knock into shape and, in the ensuing weeks,  
 compete against the Regular squad.

Every new squad we had I would gather  
 together in a barrack room at the end of that  
 first day and give them a lecture about what  
 lay ahead of them, and then a question and  
 answer session. After I had finished this



ritual with  
 the NS men,  
 I remember  
 thinking that  
 there was  
 something  
 different  
 about this lot,  
 but could not  
 put my finger  
 on it. I also  
 remember  
 that night  
 mentioning  
 my thoughts  
 to Arthur  
 Dinsdale en  
 route to the  
 Sgts' Mess to

have a well-earned beer or two, and he had  
 similar thoughts.

It took us a week to find the answer. At  
 the end of that week it was clear that these  
 young men were a cut above your average  
 recruit, very intelligent, very quick on the  
 uptake, and very mature. This maturity  
 stemmed from the fact that all of them were



twenty-one years or over. All of them had been deferred call-ups so as to allow them to complete a trade or some other calling.

Well, that was it. They went on to become a brilliant squad, sweeping the competitive board completely. They won the Drill Competition, the Best Barrack Room Shield,

the Inter-squad Football Cup and, last but not least, the Boxing Cup.

In conclusion, I would love to hear from any of that squad. My phone number 0208 677 3095

Gentleman, it was a pleasure.  
Eddie Clark

Sir,

Thank you for sending me the Covenanter. I thank you also for printing my letter about the film made in Malaya before the Regiment returned to the UK in 1953. I hope to get a response to it. I enclose a contents list of the packs of Compo Food we had (all tins) for the interest of your readers. Often we did not get a different pack each day!

Yours etc

Ronald Henderson

25 Greenpark Drive, Polmont, Stirlingshire FK2 0PZ

## 24 Hour Ration

There are three types of ration. Type 'A' Type 'B' and Type 'C'. The contents of each pack differ and you should get a different pack each day.

### Type A

#### Breakfast Packet

Oatmeal Block  
Sausage and Beans  
Jam  
Tea and Sugar  
Biscuits

#### Snack Packet

Milk Chocolate  
Clear Gums  
Spangles  
Mars Bar  
Biscuits, Sweet  
Tea and Sugar

#### Main Meal Packet

Corned Beef  
Veg. Salad in Mayonnaise  
Mixed Fruit Pudding  
Cheese  
Biscuits  
Tea and Sugar

#### Sundries Packet

Condensed Milk (in Tube)  
Salt in Dispenser  
Chewing Gum (four tablets)  
Matches  
Paludrine Tablet  
Toilet Paper  
Can-opener  
Lemon 'Frizz' Tablets

### Type B

#### Breakfast Packet

Oatmeal Block  
Bacon and Beans  
Marmalade  
Tea and Sugar  
Biscuits

#### Snack Packet

Milk Chocolate  
Clear Gums  
Butt-o-Scotch  
Boiled Sweets  
Biscuits, Sweet  
Tea and Sugar

#### Main Meal Packet

Ham and Beef  
Spaghetti  
Treacle Pudding  
Cheese  
Biscuits  
Tea and Sugar

#### Sundries Packet

Condensed Milk (in Tube)  
Salt in Dispenser  
Chewing Gum (four tablets)  
Matches  
Paludrine Tablet  
Toilet Paper  
Can-opener  
Lemon 'Frizz' Tablets

### Type 'C'

#### Breakfast Packet

Oatmeal Block  
Chopped Bacon  
Jam  
Tea and Sugar  
Biscuits

#### Snack Packet

Milk Chocolate  
Clear Gums  
Boiled Sweets  
Nuts and Raisins  
Biscuits, Sweet  
Tea and Sugar

#### Main Meal Packet

Liver and Bacon  
Beans in Tomato  
Rice Pudding  
Cheese  
Biscuits  
Tea and Sugar

#### Sundries Packet

Condensed Milk (in Tube)  
Salt in Dispenser  
Chewing Gum (four tablets)  
Matches  
Paludrine Tablet  
Toilet Paper  
Can-opener  
Lemon 'Frizz' Tablets

# MEMORY LANE



Representatives of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and family members organisation attending a WWII reunion. Left to Right: Mr B Duffy, Mr R Hoey, Mr J Simpson, Mr J Kane, Mr J McMin, Mr J Docherty, Mr W Closs, Mr A McArthur.



VE / VJ Day Parade - Glasgow 14th August 2005



Sgts Mess 2nd Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) - Gibraltar 1946



Wives night out - Minden 1962



Pipe Maj Jock Wilson - Ghent 1945



Pipe band 2nd Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)  
Governor General Speirs Mission - Syria 1943

## IN MEMORIAM

*To those they leave behind may their memories be happy ones*

### Lt Colonel Sir John Baynes Bt.

It is with great sadness we report the death of Lieutenant Colonel Sir John Baynes, Bt. On the 22 January, 2005 at Talwrn Bach, Llanfyllin, Powys his home in Mid Wales John was the son of a distinguished Cameronian, Lieutenant Colonel Sir Rory Baynes, who commanded the 2nd Bn from 1933 - 1938. With such a background it is not surprising that he should have always enjoyed his service with the Regiment be it as a Platoon Commander or Company Commander as the Adjutant or Battalion Second in Command or commanding the Regimental Depot. He, himself, however, said that he most enjoyed being the Medium Machine Gun Platoon Commander with Support Company in the Buloh Kasap area in Malaya. On one occasion his platoon undertook the almost impossible task of ambushing an ambush which the Guerrillas had hoped to spring on a food lorry on the main Segamet/Labis road at Windy Corner. The guile, absolute silent field craft and skill at arms of the MMG Platoon were extraordinary and these were due to John's planning, training and leadership; all the Guerrillas were killed.

On another occasion, but a few hours before our final withdrawal from operations in Malaya, his platoon had the role of the "cut off" some miles from where the initial contact with the Guerrillas was to take place. Once contact was made, the platoon's knowledge of the ground, speed of movement and battle skills were such that in total darkness and in difficult swamp country they moved and caught the three leaders who were about to escape into thick jungle. For his leadership, courage and example in the field he was awarded a Mention in Despatches.

Three other features of John's service with the Regiment should be recorded. The first was during August and September 1964 he had the honour of commanding The Queen's Guard during Her Majesty's stay at Balmoral.

Guards of Honour were provided when the Queen arrived at Ballater and on her departure from Balmoral and of course Church Parade every Sunday at Crathie; this last duty was inevitably carried out

in accordance with Regimental custom for all on parade were armed. The second was his role as the Second in Command and in particular during the very difficult months before the final disbandment of the Battalion, which gave a myriad of difficult administrative details much of which fell to his care and all of which he covered with the greatest thoroughness, sympathy and understanding. The third was his award of 'a Defence Fellowship to Edinburgh University under Professor Erickson

Undertaking a degree course many years after leaving school is a difficult task and to do so under Erickson a man of great intellect and a hard taskmaster, but supportive of those who were enthusiastic and clearly had sound ability, led to a hard earned and well deserved award of an MSc. Maybe University improved his skills of research, the identification of the key factors and their relevant deductions and economic summary when he undertook military authorship, but his style of writing always remained very much his own.

Apart from Regimental service, John undertook many staff appointments both before and after Staff College at Camberley. It was however, here that the idea for his first book - "Morale, A Study of Men and Courage" came to mind. This account of The 2nd Scottish Rifles (at that time this title was used by the 2nd Battalion of the Regiment) at the battle of Neuve Chapelle on the 10 March 1915 was very well reviewed by many... it had immediate success both in the Regiment and the public and had two reprints.

John wrote a dozen and more books and many, many articles and papers all of which were very well received. In the Regiment we are indebted to him for Volume IV The Close of Empire, which is the last volume of our Regimental history. His straightforward style, his clear and reasoned argument, his knowledge of the facts, a hint of humour are all put together in an easily readable style - while we think Morale was his best, John will be known outside the Regiment for many feats of excellent authorship.

After disbandment, John was gazetted to The Queen's Own Highlanders and promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and

appointed to command the 52nd Lowland Volunteers who's headquarters were in Glasgow. The Companies (a total of six) of his Battalion were spaced across Southern Scotland having been raised from a Territorial Lowland Scottish Regiment; Glasgow has two companies representing the HLI and the Glasgow Highlanders, Edinburgh the Royal Scots, Galashiels and Dumfries, The KOSB, Ayr The RSF and Motherwell The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). Extensive travel was a feature of his command in order to keep the Battalion as a cohesive whole.

John commanded for three years and finally retired from the Army in 1972 after some 30 years service. In retirement he joined Mrs Ruth Moir as co-proprietor (and later as co-owner) of the very beautiful Lake Vyrnwy Hotel in Mid Wales. The hotel prospered and so did the Fishing, and Shooting which were close to his heart. The two partners sold the Hotel in 1987 but John was able to retain an interest in the sporting side of the business with the new owners.

John was a natural soldier who enjoyed command and one who was very proud of his Regiment. He will be greatly missed by his many friends of all ranks for he was great good company, a generous host, had a marvellous sense of humour, the sort of person one always looks forward to meeting. He did, however, have one unusual habit which was always good for a leg pull: At a dinner party (and maybe at a concert) at about the halfway stage, one could see his eyes swimming a bit and a moment later, he would fall asleep - we would smile, his hostess would be quietly upset and his wife would be rather cross! The smallest fault of a very good friend.

He married Shirley Maxwell Dodds in 1955 who survives him together with their four sons. Christopher succeeds in the Baronetcy.

To his family we send our deepest condolences on the loss of a gallant, gentle, sincere and devoted Husband, Father and Grandfather. HM

### Major R (Dick) B Parkes

It is with great sadness that we have to record the death of Major Dick Parkes in November this year. He is remembered with fondness by many not least those with whom he served. His ability to get the best out of those around was a feature not only of his military life but also in his much loved village of Kingswear, Devon where he and Peggy settled when he left the Army.

Dick was Kingswear's prominent citizen. District Councillor, Chairman of the Parish Council, driving force of the Combined Charities, attendee at all functions editor of the Kingswear Page and latterly the Kingswear Life.

Born in January 1923 he was commissioned in December 1941 and awarded a Regular Commission with the Regiment in October 1945 retiring in February 1966 having served in India, Germany, Gibraltar, the Persian Gulf, East Africa, West Africa, the West Indies

He is survived by his wife Peggy, his children Penelope and Richard together with five grandchildren Alex, Emily, Rufus, Henry



and Edward to whom we send our sincere condolences. BASL (pic Dick & Peggy)

### Lt Col Stanley (Sandy) Storm OBE MC

It is with great sadness that we have to record the death of Lt Col Sandy Storm in November this year.

Sandy, born in February 1911, enlisted as a boy soldier in March 1928 and was posted to the Regiment. On reaching the age of 18 he was mustered as a Rifleman. In September 1939 his promotion to Warrant Officer Class II was registered having systematically worked his way through the ranks.

His discharge in June 1940 was recorded with his appointment to a commission under King's Regulations and posting to the 6th Battalion. During his period with the battalion he was awarded the Military Cross presented to him by none other than Field Marshal Montgomery.

A Cameronian officer who served with him at this time, having joined the battalion as a young inexperienced 19 year old, (Clegg Petit) remembers him with great fondness as his first Company Commander given his experience and maturity.

In January 1945 he was granted a Regular

Commission with the Regiment antedated to February 1934 and until his retirement served in staff appointments in Scotland, Malaya, Singapore and Germany.



Following his retirement in September 1958 he served the Edinburgh Military Tattoo in the role of the officer in charge of the Arena and Local Administration with Brigadier Alastair MacLean followed by a further five years as Assistant Producer with Brigadier Jack Sanderson.

Interesting to note that his thirteen year involvement coupled with that of two other Cameronian officers namely Lt Col Leslie Dow OBE and Major Brian Leishman MBE whose contribution of fifteen and twenty one years respectively, the former as Producer the latter as Business Manager, amounts to a Cameronian continuous commitment of fifty years.

Sandy is survived by his wife Velma to whom we send our sincere condolences. BASL (pic Sandy Storm)

### Address by the Rev David McKay Minister St. Andrews, Moffat

We come here today at what is naturally a time of sadness for us as we mourn the loss of Sandy; for his passing has left a gap in our lives which no-one else will be able to fill. And that is only right, for he was

special to us and none can take his place. But although we come here in sorrow at our loss, we also come in gratitude at what we have gained by Sandy's life. For it was a long life, 94 years, lived and enjoyed to the full; and it's appropriate that we should thank God for all that Sandy meant to us.



Sandy was born and brought up at West Hartlepool and worked for a short time after leaving school and before he joined the army. He had always had a fascination with the pipes and so he joined the Cameronians and learnt to play them. During the years of the second world war, he rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel; and when the war was over, he chose to stay on in the army. His marriage to Velna came in September, 1939, just after war had been declared. They married at Richmond and there was no time for a honeymoon as Sandy had to be back in barracks the same day. He was however allowed out to join Velna for lunch the following Sunday; after which he was posted abroad and she didn't see him again for several months.

Once the war was over, however, she was

able to see plenty of him for their marriage was to endure for over 66 years; and they spent many happy years in different parts of the world, particularly in the far east, Malaya, Hong Kong, Australia and Tasmania, following Sandy's various postings. Eventually they retired to Edinburgh and he worked for a few years at the Castle, helping in the planning and running of the Tattoo. Thirty five years ago, they came to the cottage at Woodside, largely demolished and rebuilt it and have been there ever since. Sandy's interests ranged from fishing - he used to go on regular trips out from Edinburgh - to his extensive and well-kept garden and greenhouse, to walking his dogs. He was an elder of this church and took his part in the running of its affairs until his health and deafness forced him to give up.

Sandy was a gentleman in the best sense of the word, unfailingly courteous and always retaining something of his military bearing. I quite often used to meet him and his dog when I was out running round the road past his house and he would greet me with a hearty "Well done! Keep it up!" so that I always had a strong urge to salute as a I ran past and say, "Yes, sir! " You will all have your own memories of Sandy; of the years you have shared, of the things you've seen and done in the world together; of his friendship; of his kindness and his goodness and his love.

All that is part of your tribute to him. Take your memories now and offer them to God in gratitude for Sandy's life; and trust that he is safe with his God, his long life complete.

### **Captain Gordon McNeil**

It is with great sadness we have to record the death of Gordon McNeil. Gordon, who died suddenly on 1 July this year, was the son of Lt Col Gordon McNeil who served with the 7th Battalion for eleven years before moving to the 2nd Battalion following the outbreak of war.

Like his father, Gordon went to Glasgow High School where, aside from his academic studies, he was active in the Army Cadets. His predilection for a hirsute appearance started early and he was ordered to remove his first moustache whilst still at school.

After school he began his studies in accountancy and joined 6/7th Battalion as a rifleman in 1958. Without allowing his studies to encroach too much upon his interest in the Territorial Army he achieved his goals, being commissioned in

the battalion and qualifying as a Chartered Accountant: his skills in both areas were to prove of great value to the Regiment in the years that followed.

From the start Gordon's rumbustious spirit was in evidence and stayed with him as he became an Officer Cadet. Colin Donald, then Adjutant of the 6/7th recalls a Camp at Millom in Cumberland "*We had a barbecue on the beach and I remember playing a rather drunken form of mess rugger and being heavily tackled and bundled into touch by Gordon, playing with his usual boundless energy*"

The singular gusto which Gordon brought to his every activity continued into his commissioned service and his years as a young subaltern are remembered by George Ferguson, also in his time battalion Adjutant.

"*Perhaps it was his service in the ranks of the 6/7th which kindled in Gordon the buccaneering spirit for which he was so well known*". Its certain that the words "Gung and Ho" would be included in any account of his approach to TA soldiering.

He was an absolutely perfect choice for the Nijmegen Marches Team, which performed with great distinction. Many will remember

At Thetford the sight of the team as they trained, marching endless miles through countryside we later recognised as the setting for "Dad's Army".

Gordon later commanded a sort of "demonstration platoon" another role which required special training and practice in field craft, movement, hand signals and filed formations. His enthusiasm to lead from the front soon gave him the affectionate nickname of "Arrow Head". So "Arra Heid" he became and wore the distinction well, if at first unknowingly

A year or so later the 6/7th took part in a night exercise with Glasgow RMFVR and the Lowland Yeomanry at Garelochhead. The Cameronians crossed Loch Long by night and swept up through thickly wooded countryside toward Arrochar looking for Marines. They swept South looking for us and the Lowland Yeomanry patrolled the perimeter in their little scout cars looking for both parties. It was of course pitch dark, cold and by then soaking wet since it rained all night. Came the dawn and with it the news that no-one had seen anyone! With everyone wet through and with patience and endurance exhausted one might think that morale might be low but the vehicles arriving at the RV at Arrochar met the sight of Gordon's platoon marching with him at

the head at a good clip down the last stretch of road whistling as the stream rose of them like a herd of cows coming in for a winter milking. "Arra Heid" was in his element,

As his professional work increased Gordon could devote less time to his TA duties but after his retirement in 1980 he took over the running of the 6/7th Battalion Trust Fund from his father and the became Secretary of the Cameronian Memorial Club in Glasgow

So his links with the Regiment remained strong and his work in these roles was invaluable

More recently he was handling the Regimental Trust Fund and the Museum Trust Fund. His successor Guy Maxwell remembers well both the period of handover and the many subsequent Cameronian Officers Dinners when Gordon would enjoy the company, revel in the Regimental traditions and be crustily vocal in his views if they were not maintained. "Then his dry wit and observation would always register and his advice given was invariably professional and astute Gordon served the Regiment well and long. He was a tower of strength in his support of the Regimental Trustees.

His forthright manner and indomitable spirit, just as much as his handsome side whiskers, would mark him out in any crowd and will make him a much missed person following his untimely death while hill-walking in Wester Ross Efric his wife and their three daughters may take comfort from the affection, goodwill and appreciation of his many friends in the Regiment. GF - JGC Efric, Elspeth

(following her graduation) and Gordon))



### Major Charles Gordon Bryan Fotheringham

It is with great sadness that we have to record the death of Major Gordon Fotheringham in June this year. Gordon was born in September 1919 in Quetta, an



important military base and trade centre close to the frontier of Afghanistan. His father Colonel JB Fotheringham RAMC was then a senior medical officer in the Balluchistan region.

Gordon was educated at Loretto and was in particular noted for his sporting skills and together with his height earned him the nickname "Shanks" which he was pleased to lose on joining the Army.

He passed the Army Entrance Examination in 1937 and entered the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst in January 1938. Again his prowess in sports and particularly in athletics, rugby and golf, were a feature of his Sandhurst experience. Due however to the imminent threat of war his course was cut to 18 months and he was commissioned in June 1939, to the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles, to his great delight.

He was attached to the 2nd Battalion in Catterick where followed a hectic summer of courses and helping the 9th and 10th Battalions to mobilise and train. Eventually he joined the 12th Battalion in 1940 on Lanark Race Course (his office as the Weapons



Training Officer was in the Tote Office). The battalion next moved to Lossiemouth and then further North to Caithness. Gordon however for a short while was sent to join 155 Brigade in Clare College, Cambridge to help out with their transport problems.

He returned to the 12 Battalion which was now on the Faroe Islands, perhaps one of the most isolated postings for a unit but important for it denied access for good Atlantic weather reporting to the Germans. The 12th Battalion had a very well deserved reputation for being very fit and tough and well trained in the arduous countryside that they found themselves. By early 1943 however it was clear that they were too far from the War for both the War Office and the likes of Gordon. It was decided by the powers that this valuable source of fit and well trained men should be split up to provide reinforcements for our 2nd Battalion and a battalion of the Essex Regiment, both of which had taken heavy casualties in Italy.

Subsequently, in that role they made a great reputation for themselves. At the same time Captain Ramsey Tullis and Gordon along with 40 volunteers from the 12th Battalion, asked and were allowed, subject to passing the selection and medical tests, to join the Parachute Regiment. Pass they did and after a short stay with 8 Para, Gordon was transferred to 7 Para which was made up in the main from Rifle or Light Infantry Regiments and much to his delight he even had his Sandhurst Platoon Commander as his new Commanding Officer.

Gordon missed the D minus 1st Airborne Assault on France – he had broken his shoulder-blade playing rugby for 6 Airborne Division – but he did join in time for the Normandy battles up to September 1944. At Christmas he was in the Ardennes battle in the bitter cold of that winter. In March 1945 he was part of the airborne assault on the Rhine and was badly wounded. Evacuated eventually to Brussels he was surprised when his father who had been recalled to the Colours, greeted him with a bottle of Champagne to help control gangrene!

For the next 18 months after VE day 7 Para had a sort of 'fire brigade' role. They were moved out to the Far East to clear up after the surrender of the Japanese, dealing with 'freedom fighters' in Java and Malaya, sorting out prisoners of war and supporting governments trying to re-establish themselves, all of which was exciting work. In 1946, in Malaya. Gordon finally left 7 Para and the many good friends he had

made while serving with them.

By chance at this time our 1st Battalion was also in Malaya and was about to be placed in 'suspended animation', thus Gordon was a welcome reinforcement and could rejoin his Regiment after a gap of three years. Subsequently he returned to the UK and joined the 7th Battalion in Copelaw Street, Glasgow. It was he was at Copelaw Street that he met and married his wife Anne (nee Salisbury-Craig). They had a Regimental Ceremonial Guard of Honour for their wedding and a reception in the Glasgow Highlanders Drill Hall in Hotspur Street.

His next posting took him back to Malaya and to the 1st Battalion which was based in Muar and North Johore State. Gordon commanded D Company initially at Bukit Serempang and subsequently at Temiang Renchong. The Malayan Emergency started in 1948 close to Bukit Serempang and both his company areas were in thick jungle and deep swamp, notorious guerrilla lairs

From the jungle his next posting was to Headquarters Far East Land Forces in Singapore. This headquarters became a Regimental stronghold under Major General Eric Sixsmith, for with four other officers from the Regiment it was a good meeting spot for those in the Battalion on leave.

On returning to the UK in 1953 Gordon attended the Warminster Company Commander course before rejoining the 1st Battalion in Barnard Castle. It was here that he learned that he had been awarded a Mention in Despatches for his service in the Far East.

After some seven months of hard and very cold training exercised under Henry Alexander on the Northumberland Moors, Gordon was posted to 83 RAF Group Wahn as the Ground Liaison Officer to the Belgian Forces. This RAF base was close to the Marienburg area of Cologne and using his knowledge of golf, Gordon more or less designed the first municipal golf course in Germany which has now become a highly successful and wealthy club.

Gordon's final Army posting was as Training Officer at Glasgow University OTC which post he held from 1956 to 1958. On leaving he undertook a two year course in Business Management and a further course for Business Training at Glasgow University. Thereafter he joined a sugar broking business and worked himself up from the bottom to becoming the Managing Director. Mergers with other brokers finally led to him being

made redundant. However his knowledge and experience led to him looking after a Liverpool sugar trading interest in Scotland whilst helping a little with his wife's antique business.

On final retirement the family moved to a charming house in Fife to enjoy a busy life and of course some more of his favourite sport of golf. Gordon was a member of the Royal and Ancient, St Andrews and for many years played for the Lowland Brigade and the Lorretonian Golf team to say nothing of Club teams wherever he was living. There is a story that apart from all his other golf cups and trophies, the collection of silver mugs he won in Singapore was so huge that they needed their own packing case to bring them home.

Gordon was a quiet dedicated soldier who much enjoyed all his service with both the Cameronians and the Parachute Regiment. His gentle sense of humour, unfailing courtesy, kindness and his modesty about his achievements were all part of his character which will be greatly missed by all his friends.

He is survived by Ann and their two children, Felicity-Ann and Charles Bryan to whom we send our sincere condolences. HM

#### **Major Albert S McVean TD**

It is with great sadness that we report the death in October this year of Major Albert McVean of Newton Mearns, Glasgow. Albert joined the Regiment in September 1939. After one year he volunteered for overseas service and was posted to Africa. He proceeded with African troops to Burma where he served with the 14th Army – 'The forgotten Army' for five years. He is survived by his widow Agnes to whom we send our sincere condolences. BASL

#### **George Moore**

It is with great sadness that we report the death in December this year of George Moore of Little Hulton, Manchester.

George often spoke of his time in the Army and was very proud to have been a Cameronian; he wore his badge with pride. He is survived by his widow (Jean), their five children, eighteen grand children, four great grand children, to whom we send our sincere condolences. BASL

#### **Captain William John Hutchison**

It is with great sadness that we report the death in March this year of Captain

John Hutchison of the Erskine Home. John served with the 2nd Battalion from 1940 – 1946 and saw service in North Africa and Italy. BASL

#### **Captain Jeffrey T Keighley**

It is with great sadness that we report the death in January 2004 of Captain Jeffrey Keighley of Bishopbriggs, Glasgow. Jeffrey was proud to be associated with the Regiment and maintained a keen interest with the TA after his medical discharge following the loss of his left arm in the Italian Campaign of 1944. Despite his injury he spent the rest of his life as a director of a wallpaper merchant company. He is survived by his widow (Winifred), three sons and five grandchildren to whom we send our sincere condolences. BASL

#### **Hugh McCumiski**

It is with great sadness that we report the death in April 2004 of Hugh McCumiski of Newmains, Wishaw. BASL

#### **T Bryce Laing MM**

It is with great sadness that we report the death in September this year of Bryce Laing of Edinburgh. Bryce was born in Aberdeen in April 1918. Although heavily involved with a broad range of household goods becoming in due course Managing Director of George Jeffrey Ltd he is well known as the founder of Craighall studios. In 1939 he joined the Regiment, during which service he was awarded the Military Medal when serving with the 9th Battalion in Germany. (see Regimental Journal – The Covenanter 1991). On one memorable occasion Bryce displayed great resourcefulness in liberating a warehouse of fresh eggs, aided by the quick thinking of one Rfn Fred MacCallum. Despite being asked by Field Marshal Montgomery, who presented him with his Military Medal, if he intended staying on in the Army and applying for a direct commission he replied "Definitely no sir, my demob is coming through in two months". Bryce's and Craighall Studios long time involvement with the sound recordings of the Edinburgh Military Tattoo not to mention many other musical ventures kept him busy well into retirement and he will be well remembered and missed by many in the music business..

He is survived by his wife, Eleanor, his two sons, Keith and Jeffrey and his two daughters, Tricia and Sarah. to whom we send our sincere condolences. BASL



The Regimental War Memorial, Glasgow

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



# THE COVENANTER



THE REGIMENTAL JOURNAL OF  
THE CAMERONIANS (SCOTTISH RIFLES)

2006

## *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.

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### 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

## 2007 DIARY OF REGIMENTAL EVENTS 2007

### MARCH

Friday 9th 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

Sunday 13th May -

#### **Cameronian Sunday -**

The Douglas Valley Church - St Bride's, Douglas  
10.00 am The Reverend Bryan Kerr BA BD.

Friday 25th May -

#### **Officers Luncheon -**

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

### OCTOBER

Friday 13th October -

#### **Officers' Luncheon -**

Officers Mess Dreghorn, Edinburgh  
Contact is Lt Col I.K. McBain.  
Tel: (0131) 445 2953 (H). (It has not been possible to arrange this on a Saturday)

### Warning Order 2008

The Trustees intend to mark the 40th Anniversary of the disbandment of the 1st Battalion by holding an Officers Dinner Night on Saturday 10th May 2008 (location to be notified). It is hoped that the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) & Family Members Organization might wish to hold a similar event for its members. These events will be followed by the Traditional Church Service at Douglas on the following day the 11th May 2008 at 10am and an all ranks gathering following the morning church service.

In order that planning may take place Officers wishing to attend the dinner should advise the Editor accordingly if they and their partners wish to participate. Similarly all Cameronians are asked to say whether or not they wish to participate at the events programmed for Sunday.

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



# REGIMENTAL MATTERS

## Museum Report Year 2006

### New acquisitions to The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Collection 2006

Towards the end of this year has seen a surge in the digitisation of the collection and addition of objects to the collection from the museums backlog of un-accessioned objects. This has obviously led to a larger number of both Cameronian related objects and non-Cameronian objects being added to the Vernon data base.

We would like to thank all who have donated to the ever growing collections here at Low Parks Museum.

Among the 120 objects accessioned in 2006 thus far are:



### Medals:

With kind thanks to The Trustees of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) an Abyssinia 1867-68, medal (827. R. Kenny 26th Regt) was purchased at auction from Morton and Eden and has been added to the collection. 1st of 7 of medal group on bar. British War Medal 1914-20. Awarded to Major Roderick Gordon Hogg, The Cameronians.

**Envelope of greaseproof-like paper containing three medal ribbons:** France and Germany star (32mm wide blue, white, red, white and blue in equal stripes), British War Medal 1914-1920 (32mm wide Broad watered orange band down centre, bordered with white, black and blue stripes), Defence Medal (32mm wide floame-coloured with green edges, two thin stripes down centre of green). Belonged to Sgt James Howgate of the 6th Bn Cameronians.

Rifle shooting medal belonging to James Chalmers King in dark box with gold coloured trim - The Cameronians S.R. emblem on front - set in blue velvet, in box

### Uniforms accessories and equipment

Black note book with bullet lodged near spine, Signed David Smith 14th October 1914.

Death penny inside cardboard case - relates to James Chalmers King- letter signed by King George also enclosed in case Khaki green hat with Cameronian cap badge owned by James Chalmers King Unidentified lanyard.

### Paintings and photographs

Photobook of the 2nd Battalion, published 1929.

Copy of group photograph of Cameronians taken in Salonika 1915-18.

Copy of black and white group photo. Three Cameronians in shorts and puttees, with pith helmets, flanked by two young children Black and White photograph of 8 Cameronians. 7 in foreground, shirtless and tanned on rocky outcrop, in front of sand-bagged structure, 1 in background on structure.

13 watercolours painted by Fred Tuck, D Company, 6th battalion, Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) 1943-47.

### Archive

Message of congratulation, 21st April 1915, to 7504 Private Henry May upon the receipt of his Victoria Cross. Donated by Sir John Keir

Message of congratulation, 21st April 1915, to 7504 Private Henry May upon the receipt of his Victoria Cross. "Hearty congratulations on your VC may you live long to wear it. Good luck." Sent by General Staff, Sixth Division. On 'Army Form C.2121'.

Letter from F. Gordon, Brigadier General, to Colonel Robertson. 21st April 1915. States F. Gordon's 'utmost satisfaction' that Private H. May has been awarded the Victoria Cross.

Signature book. Cameronian Crest on front cover with 'The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Regimental Dinner Glasgow' in gold. First entry 25th October 1933

'The Soldier's Pocket Book : For Field Service' by Colonel Sir Garnet J Wolseley.  
 'Battalion Scrap Book: 6th/7th Bn The Cameronians (The Scottish Rifles)'  
 Postcard, Cameronian Crest on tartan background. Handwriting in black in on reverse.

### 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.

### Volunteers.

The friends of low parks have been busy during the year completing the identified war diaries from the First World War 1914-1918 held By SLC. The list is:

1st battalion  
 2nd battalion  
 6th battalion  
 7th battalion  
 8/17 composite battalion  
 8th battalion  
 9th battalion  
 11th battalion  
 Palestine war diaries  
 Iraq war diaries  
 Singapore war diaries  
 Chindits war diaries.

The Friends have started working through the enlistment books having photographed 2 of the 10 volumes and hope to start to transcribe them during the coming year as well as transcribing the Malaya war diaries. The friends of low parks have also been busy collecting names of people whilst transcribing the diaries that have won medals, they hope to compile a database that can easily access names and honours.

### Digitisation

An astonishing 2400 Cameronian (Scottish Rifles) photographs have been digitally

scanned and added to the Vernon data base. So now at the click of a button we can view both text and images simultaneously.

### New!

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.

This has been completed and we are now just waiting for images to be sought, the research, writing and design have been undertaken by Katie Barclay MA MPhil, a 2nd year PhD student at Glasgow University.

### Cameronian (Scottish Rifles) Exhibitions:

2008 marks the anniversary of the disbandment of the 1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), we hope to stage a major exhibition to celebrate the history of the regiment from 1689 to 1968. Watch this space for more details.

### Web site:

The exciting new official website is now up and running. If you have not already visited this much needed resource the site is well worth a look.

[www.cameronians.org](http://www.cameronians.org)

### Looking for something special for a birthday, anniversary or for the person who has everything:

why not contact the reception staff at LowParks 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.

For further information contact reception staff at Low Parks Museum 129 Muir Street Hamilton ML3 6BJ, or telephone 01698 328232. Email [lowparksmuseum@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:lowparksmuseum@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

## Regimental Curling

Thursday, 12th January 2006 saw the occasion of the final Lowland Brigade Bonspiel at Murrayfield, held in its traditional format. The Regimental Rink comprised Malcolm Macneill (skip) David Scott, Jim Orr and Ian McBain. In the morning match we defeated the RHF 9-5. In the afternoon we lost 8-6 to the KOSB, which meant the KOSB won the cup in the final Lowland Brigade Bonspiel. The Cameronians finished in 2nd place after winning the cup for the two previous years. The final Inter Brigade match took place at Murrayfield on Thursday 16th February 2006, and resulted in yet another victory for the Highland Brigade. The Regimental Rink consisted of Jim Orr (skip) David Scott, John McMyn and Bob Wright (a guest who very kindly agreed to curl for us as we were one short) In the morning session we won 8-5 against the BW, and in the afternoon we narrowly defeated the A&SH by 5-3. Thus ended the final Inter Brigade Match, in which The Highland Brigade have regularly proved victorious. The future is uncertain with regard to the Brigade Clubs and we await patiently for the outcome of Highland Brigade deliberations. From a Regimental curling point of view it is sadly clear that the Regiment cannot continue to raise a Rink due to lack of curlers and "anno domini" We therefore have indicated that should inter-regimental curling continue in some form we could sadly no longer raise a rink. The Cameronians have had a proud tradition in the annals of Lowland Brigade curling, and have performed very creditably for many years. For my part I am extremely grateful to all those Regimental stalwarts who willingly, cheerfully and enthusiastically supported me and represented the Regiment over the last 10 years. Thank you all very much. J.A.O.

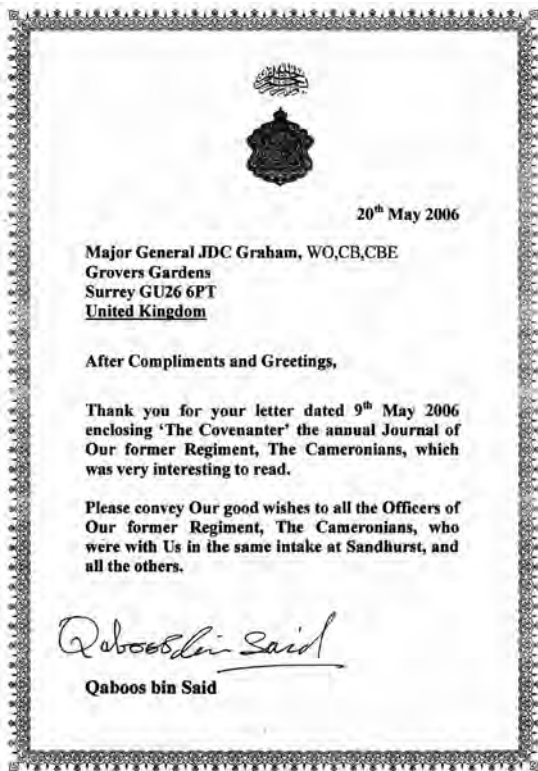
## Connections

Covenanter readers may recall that in the 2001 edition there was an article on "The Regiment's Links with Oman." That article included mention of Major General John Graham CB CBE, a former Commander of The Sultan's Armed Forces, who had been a Guest at the 2000 Regimental Officers Annual Dinner at The Western Club in Glasgow. General John had very kindly, on behalf of the Regiment, in November 2000 personally presented to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, Ruler of Oman, an illuminated framed greeting from The Regiment. This was in

recognition of His Majesty's birthday and the fact that he had been an officer cadet at RMA Sandhurst from 1960-1962, and had undertaken an 8 month attachment to the 1st Bn in Minden in late 1962. Subsequently in the 2002 edition there was an interesting article by Major Philip Grant, who had served with His Majesty at RMA Sandhurst and in the 1st Bn during his attachment. He also mentioned the link between Major General John Graham and his illustrious forebear - Thomas Graham of Balgowan - who raised the 90th later to form the 2nd Bn The Cameronians. (Scottish Rifles) This article by Philip Grant led to Major Mike Sixsmith contributing a letter in the 2003 edition, adding his own recollections of those days at Sandhurst, Lanark and Minden. Continuing the connection but digressing slightly from the Oman link, I keep in regular touch with General John having served with him in The Parachute Regiment, and it is clear that he has the highest regard for His Majesty, for Oman and for The Cameronians. He also keeps in touch with another Cameronian, Captain Cliff Pettit from Alnwick (6th Bn) who is a regular contributor to The Covenanter. His latest contribution appeared in the 2005 edition and was entitled "Operations Veritable and Blockbuster - Feb/Mar 1945" The subject of this article was a Battlefield Tour arranged by HQ 2 Infantry Brigade, covering the costly battles to clear the south bank of the Rhine on the border of Holland and Germany. Among the guest speakers for this tour, who had both taken part in these battles, were Cliff Pettit (6th Bn, part of 52(L) Division) and John Graham (then a Major commanding a company in 2nd A&SH) General John contacted me after the tour to say that he had got together with Philip Grant regarding a possible book that Philip plans to write - concerning Thomas Graham (Lord Lynedoch)

To return to the Oman link - General John mentioned in his letter that he recently visited Oman (as he regularly does) but had not been able to meet with His Majesty as he was away in Salalah. However he was able to leave a letter for His Majesty, together with a copy of the latest Covenanter, and Philip Grant's article on The Generals. He went on to say that he had very recently had a very nice reply from His Majesty, and he enclosed a copy of the letter. He felt that we may wish to publish this in The Covenanter for the interest of readers. I therefore enclose a copy of the letter from His Majesty Sultan

Qaboos bin Said. I sincerely hope that this rather rambling article is nevertheless of interest and it just goes to show that The Cameronians have many and varied connections.  
JAO.



## Letter from London November 2006

I suppose it must be down to the ageing process, but I'm sure you will agree with me that after the age of seventy the months speed by rapidly year after year, I can't believe I am writing this letter so soon after the last one I wrote.

I was deeply saddened by the death of Jim Ballantyne, our Association Secretary. I knew he had been very ill over a considerable period of time, but his death still had a profound effect on me. You see, Jim kept me up to date very closely with everything that transpired in our organisation, and I was very grateful for the lifeline, as it were, between myself and all the Cameronians in the Association. As far as I am concerned, Jim Ballantyne did a tremendous job during his ten years in office, ably assisted by his good lady Margaret. I will not elaborate any further, as I'm sure sincere tributes will be

paid to Jim from other sources.

I also learned of the death of a dear friend of mine here in London, namely Alfie Howard MBE, MM. Alfie was for many years the Town Crier for Lambeth Borough and, in his capacity as such, travelled all over the world dressed in all his finery and sounding his magic bell. He and I became great friends and drinking companions as members of our local Conservative Club in Brixton. Alfie was awarded the MM at Dunkirk, and the MBE for his outstanding charity work in Lambeth over many years.

He also had great admiration for our Regiment whom he came in contact with during his Army service.

Philip Grant is to be congratulated for his deeply researched and accurate supplement in last year's Covenanter, entitled The Generals; it was brilliant. This account of Cameronian Generals was of great interest to me, as during my service in the Regiment I had the honour of meeting some of them. In my private book collection I have a book written by the great military historian John Keegan, called Churchill's Generals, and our own General Sir Richard O'Connor is given a distinguished appraisal by Keegan. I met Sir Richard O'Connor when he paid a farewell visit to the Depot Lanark prior to his leaving the Army. In all, I met Sir Horatio Murray three times, firstly in Korea when he commanded the Commonwealth Division, then at the Depot on one of his visits and finally in Minden where he and Lady Murray congratulated my late wife Ellen and me on the birth of our daughter Helen. Finally, when Sir George Collingwood was installed as Governor of Edinburgh Castle on his appointment as GOC Scottish Command I was the Guard Commander of his escort on that day. One of that guard was Tom Winters who I am expecting to visit me here in London soon.

In his article, Philip mentions another officer, whom I recall with great sadness, and that was Lt. Col. Sir Edward Bradford Bt. I was an instructor at the Depot when the RSM informed me that Sir Edward, who was commanding the Depot, wished to see me about some administrative error regarding my rank which had occurred. I was told just to knock on Sir Edward's office door and enter without any undue ceremony.

This I did. On entering I found Sir Edward sitting at his desk attired in riding gear. He gave me a grin, and explained his turnout was due to his having to take part in a point-to-point meeting in Dumfries later in

the day. He explained the situation to my satisfaction, gave me a cheery wave and grin of dismissal. Later that afternoon Sgt. Jim Brogan came into my room and informed me that Sir Edward had been killed in a tragic accident at the meeting. Although I remember Sir Edward as a Company Commander in Gibraltar and Trieste, the day of his death is my abiding memory of a fine officer and gentleman.



Sgt McMin (Ginte)	COQS Trussler (BA)
Sgt Decherly (Dec)	Sgt Clarke (Nobby)
Sgt Brevn (Danny)	Sgt Moladam
Sgt Mulvenna (Paddy)	Sgt Cooper
Major Kunn (QM) (Harry)	U/k Officer
Major Hunter	Major Thompson
Major Richmond	Major Scott
2/lt Engehan	

This year, my grandson Ashley headed off to the United States to study at Rutgers University in New Jersey. For ages the name Rutgers kept buzzing through my head as I tried to think where I had heard the name. It wasn't until I spoke to Brian Leishman during a telephone conversation that he cleared up the mystery for me. On his enquiring after my family, and me telling of the whereabouts of my grandson, Brian informed me that Rutgers University had performed at the Edinburgh Military Tattoo on several occasions, with resounding success. Of course, I had watched them on those occasions on television. Clearing up that little problem saved my sanity. However, during my next telephone conversation with Ashley, he told me that he had gone up to New York to watch an American-style football match and, low and behold, there was Rutgers Band performing before the start of the match! He had nothing but praise for the band's brilliant performance, but hated the football. Like me, Ashley is 'fitba daft', and can't wait to see our beloved AFC Wimbledon play again when he comes home for the festive season.

On two occasions this year, I have been highly delighted to see our Regiment mentioned in the national press, namely the Daily Mail. Firstly, they ran an item on animals who had received the award of the Dicken Medal (the animals' VC). I'm sure many of you will recall the medal being awarded to our own Rifleman Khan, an Alsatian who saved the life of his handler, Cpl. Jimmy Muldoon of the 6th Bn. from drowning during the invasion of the Dutch island of Walcheren in the Second World War. Secondly, they have a queries section where readers write in asking many and varied questions on virtually every subject. On this occasion, the questioner asked when was the last time that officers carried swords into battle. One of the answers given was when Major E. B. Ferrers, Company Commander of 'B' Coy. the 2nd Bn. The Cameronians ordered his officers to do just that at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle in 1915. Once again, a memory came flooding back to me. In 1946 I joined the 2nd Bn. in Warminster, Wiltshire, and the Bn. second-in-command was Major Ferrers, the son of the aforementioned sword-wielding Company Commander of Neuve Chapelle. Our Major Ferrers was a strikingly handsome man with a large jet black moustache and a deep resonant baritone word of command. I used to love hearing him call the battalion up to attention.

I would like to thank Andy Berry for his great efforts during his tenure of office as Chairman of our Association. Never an easy task when dealing with the human element, as I know from experience in trade union work, and politics. I sincerely hope that whoever succeeds Andy Berry and Jim Ballantyne as chairman and Secretary of the Association, do so in a sensible manner conducive to the best interests of the Cameronians (SR) and Family Members Organisation.

As a former soldier, I never thought that I would live to see the day when the most senior soldier in the Army would criticise in public the government of the day on a matter of policy. Who can blame General Sir Richard Dannat for venting his spleen on this administration regarding our Armed Force being sent into conflicts possibly for many years to come, that could result in many young lives being lost or seriously wounded? I personally will never ever forgive this government and the opposition for allowing the Scottish regiments to be sent into oblivion. I despise every Scottish Member of Parliament who allowed this to

happen. Pardon me if I sound bitter, but I'm sure any old soldier must feel the say way, irrespective of rank.

On 9 November I arrived at the Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey, to carry out my annual task of representing our Regiment at the opening ceremony. On reaching our regimental plot, I was completely stunned and overwhelmed by a small sea of weel kent faces surrounding our plot. I know that over the years I have been disappointed at the small or virtual non-attendance at this occasion. However, I have no complaint whatsoever about this turnout. It was magnificent. At the end of this letter I will append the names of all those who attended. HRH Prince Philip stood in for Her Majesty the Queen this year, owing to her being on "light duties" due to a back ailment. After the brief formalities of the opening service were over, Prince Philip proceeded to visit every plot, stopping at every one to speak to each representative. On coming to me, the Prince bade me 'Good morning'; I, in turn, relayed to him the Regiment I was representing; I then told the Prince that, on behalf of all ex-Cameronians, we wished Her Majesty a full and speedy recovery. At this, Prince Philip



gave a nice smile and thanked me very much before moving on to the next Regiment. As usual everything at this poignant occasion was carried out in the excellent manner it has always done over the many years.

The Royal British Legion are to be congratulated on the layout of our plot. It was beautiful. I will be contacting personally all of the ex-Cameronians who turned up on the day to thank them for making this a memorable regimental occasion. At the conclusion of the morning's activities, my daughter Helen and I proceeded to the Union Jack Club in Waterloo, where we had a lovely lunch with several of the ex- Cams,

having a great chat about old times. A perfect ending to a magnificent reunion. Those who attended the ceremony were Colonel Hugh Mackay OBE (Sussex), Major Philip Grant (London), Major Mike Sixsmith (Kent), Lieutenant Dudley Heathcote (London), Tom Winters (Aberdeenshire), Kenn Robinson (Birmingham), Eddie Crawford (Portsmouth), Ian Bilboe (Chelmsford), Tom and Dorothy Gore (London), myself and daughter Helen (London).



No doubt you are aware my letter has contained some sadness but I personally feel to a great extent this has been negated by the joy and happiness of the 9 November reunion.

Once again, it is time for me to replace my pen in its holder. But before doing so, I wish you all a happy and guid new year.

Yours aye,  
Eddie Clark

## HENRY MAY VC

**The headstone over the grave of private Henry May VC has been renewed in Riddrie Park Cemetery, Glasgow, after the original stone had been vandalised.**

12 September 2006

Following Henry May's death in July 1941 a headstone was placed over his grave in Riddrie Cemetery, Glasgow, which didn't contain his name, but did commemorate his two children. Over the past few years Henry May's headstone had deteriorated, suffered badly from vandalism, and had been knocked over. Therefore, it was decided to erect a new headstone over Henry May's burial plot recognising him as one of Glasgow's Victoria Cross holders.

The ceremony to unveil the new headstone took place on the 12th September 2006 where members of the May family gathered in Riddrie Cemetery, accompanied by representatives of Henry May's old regiment,

the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), the regimental museum, the Thistle & Poppy Society, and the Royal British Legion.

*At daybreak on 22nd October 1914 Private Henry May, 1st Bn, Cameronians, was in a platoon under the command of Lieutenant D.*

*Graham. This platoon was acting as a covering party in a ditch to hold the enemy in check while the main part of the Cameronians entrenched positions about 700 yards to the rear. This took place on the eastern side of the village of La Boutillerie. During this time the enemy, who were only 50 yards to the front of the platoon, attacked them in force which resulted in them falling back, but not before the trench-digging to the rear was completed.*

*During the fighting Lance Corporal Lawton had been wounded, about a hundred yards to the right of May who quickly ran across the firing line through a hail of bullets. Lance Corporal McCall and Private Bell went with Henry May to assist. Bell took off Lawton's equipment but he was shot dead as May and McCall tried to lift him to his feet. McCall too was knocked unconscious and May then flattened himself on the ground determined to fight to the last.*

*At that moment he saw his platoon commander Lieutenant Graham fall to the ground with a bullet in his leg. May called to Bell to follow and ran over to their officer, the two men carried him step by step, zigzagging as they stumbled on. When they had covered about 300 yards they reached a ditch where Bell was shot in the hand and foot but they managed eventually to reach comparative safety. May was exhausted but struggled to drag Lieutenant Graham a little nearer safety when Corporal Taylor came to his assistance lifting Lieutenant Graham onto his shoulder but was then shot dead. Henry May, by some supreme effort, then dragged the wounded officer to the British trenches and to complete safety.*

*Private Henry May's heroism and utter disregard for the safety of his own life was in the true tradition of the holders of the Victoria Cross.*

Eleven days after his VC action May was wounded by shrapnel during the attacks on the town of Ypres and was invalided home, returning to France in mid-January 1915.

[London Gazette, 19 April 1915], La Boutillerie, France, 22 October 1914, Private Henry May, 1st Bn, Cameronians ( Scottish Rifles )

***For most conspicuous bravery near La Boutillerie, on 22nd October, 1914, in voluntarily endeavouring to rescue, under very heavy fire, a wounded man, who***

***was killed before he could save him, and subsequently, on the same day, in carrying a wounded Officer a distance of 300 yards into safety whilst exposed to very severe fire.***

Private Henry May was invested with his Victoria Cross on 12th August 1915 by King George V at Buckingham Palace.

Henry May was discharged from the Army on 28th August 1915 when his regular engagement of thirteen years expired. He rejoined in 1918 and in March obtained a commission with the Motor Transport Corps and was demobilized with the rank of temporary Lieutenant in 1919.

After the war May joined a hosiery firm the Glasgow Manufacturing Company in which he became a partner. He was taken ill at his home and died in the Glasgow Infirmary on 26th July 1942, just before his fifty-sixth birthday. His funeral took place at Riddrie Park Cemetery, Glasgow, and was the largest seen in the East End for a long time. It was attended by four holders of the Victoria Cross: John McAulay, Robert Downie, David Lauder and Walter Ritchie.

Iain Stewart

## **Murrayshall Hill**

**Unveiling of plaque on Lynedoch Obelisk on Sunday 14th May, 2006  
'Cameronian Day'**

This obelisk was erected in 1853 to the memory of Lieutenant-General Thomas Graham, 1st baron Lynedoch of Balgowan, who died in 1843 at the age of 95 years. He was buried beside his wife at Methven. Who was he and what was his achievements?

Thomas Graham was born in 1748, the son of Thomas Graeme of Balgowan. In 1774 he married the Hon Mary Cathcart, a great beauty whose portrait was painted by Gainsborough four times and one now hangs in the National Gallery of Edinburgh. She was of delicate health and died in 1792. He remained a widower for the rest of his life. Graham had no love of the French and as Britain faced the threat of war with that country at the end of the 18th century the government authorised the raising of a number of new regiments and he raised the 90th of Foot (Perthshire Volunteers) in 1794. In the same year he became the MP (Whig) for the county of Perth and sat until 1807. During this time he also saw active service. He won a brilliant victory at Barossa in Spain and served as second-in-command to the Duke of Wellington in Portugal; during the

Peninsula War. The 90th was the first army regiment to be equipped and trained as light infantry and they acquitted themselves so well in action, including the Napoleonic Wars, that in 1815 they were redesignated the 90th Perthshire Light Infantry. The 'Perthshire Greybreeks', as they were known, also served in the Crimean War and the regiment's first Victoria Cross was won there by Private Alexander. Later they went to India and during the Indian Mutiny the regiment won a further 6 VCs. Afterwards

1842 and Field Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood, VC. A Cairn on the North Inch commemorates the founding the 90th, whose old colours were laid up in Perth in 1872.

The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) regimental Trustees are presently winding-down their affairs and we are doing whatever is necessary to preserve artefacts associated with the regiment. The statue of the Earl of Angus at Douglas, the first Colonel, on the spot where The Cameronians were raised, has already been transferred to The national Trust for Scotland for preservation. Although some minor repairs were made to the obelisk about 10 years ago the inscription had weathered so badly as to be almost illegible. Following approaches to the owner of the Murrayshill estate and the Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust, the latter prepared and submitted the necessary planning application, dealt with the objections and observations of



they served in South Africa and again in India where in 1881 they received the news that they were to be brought together with the 26th of Foot (The Cameronians), which had been raised in 1689, to become The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). The 1st battalion of the regiment was disbanded in 1968 as part of defence cuts.

The 90th produced some great military figures including Rowland Hill (Viscount Hill) who was C-in-C of the army from 1828-

Scottish Heritage and arranged for the new plaque, bearing the wording of the original inscription, to be affixed to the plinth. The Heritage Trust has thanked the Regimental Trustees for the opportunity to do this work. It is the hope of that Trust that this plaque will alert more people to the remarkable history of Thomas and Mary Graham. Thanks go to the Provost, to Mrs Mary Cairncross for her help, to Mr Charlie Blythe, the piper, and to Mr Andrew Driver who has taken this project forward on the Trust's behalf.

This short ceremony was concluded by the Piper playing the pibroch 'The Gathering of the Grahams'.

Lisle Pattison MBE TD



## The Cameronian Generals

Significant interest has been shown in The Generals, published as a supplement with The Covenanter last year. As a result new information has come to light. This is an update on the 2005 Covenanter article, together with some additional comments. Space did not allow sufficient emphasis to be given to the forerunners of those who shone in and after World War II (the subject of The Generals). It is worth listing here those forerunners, those who brought such distinction to the Regiment, especially to the 2nd Battalion, previously the 90<sup>th</sup> Perthshire Light Infantry.

**General Sir Thomas Graham**, later Lord Lynedoch, (1748- 1843). He raised the 90th and went on to reach high rank, prominence and ennoblement as a result of his leadership under Wellington, particularly in the Peninsular War, where he was considered one of the great commanders.

**General Sir Rowland Hill**, later Viscount Hill, (1772-1842). Commanded the 90th 1794-Circa 1800, served with Graham again as a General under Wellington. He was Commander-in-Chief (1828-1842) in succession to Wellington.

**Surgeon General Sir Anthony Home VC** (1826-1914). He rose to become Principal Medical Officer in India and later in Southern Command, England.

**Lieutenant General John Guise VC** (1826-1895), third son of General Sir John Guise Bt, (1777-1865). He commanded the 90th from 1861 to 1864. Although he rose to high rank there is no known record of his later service.

**Major General Montresor Rogers VC** (1834-1895). As has been noted elsewhere, he died on the same day as Lieutenant General John Guise VC. He succeeded Evelyn Wood VC when he commanded the 90th (1879 to 1882), and as such was the last Commanding Officer of the 90th and the first of the 2nd Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles).

**Field Marshal Sir Garnet Wolseley**, later Viscount Wolseley, (1813-1913) was the outstanding soldier of his generation, widely known and hero-worshipped wherever he went. While at the War Office was largely responsible for the major reorganisation

of the Army called the Cardwell reforms, which included the creation (1881) of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) He was Commander-in-Chief 1895-1900.

**Field Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood VC** (1838-1919). He commanded the 90th from 1878 to 1879. One of Wolseley's circle, he was second only to his mentor in fame. Wherever there was a war he would be sure to be in the thick of it. Adjutant General 1897-1901. Acting Commander-in-Chief in 1900.

\*\*\*

The 2005 Covenanter article gave some incomplete information regarding the three who were Commander-in-Chief. This has been corrected above. Further information is to be found in footnotes to The Bravest of the Brave - The VC's of the Regiment.

Likewise, some incorrect conclusions were drawn regarding the three VC's who each commanded the 90th. This is also corrected in the 2006 article (above).

The History of the 5th Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) tells of the great contribution made to that battalion by their Adjutant, Captain then Major and later Brigadier General WD Croft DSO\*\*\*. Originally from the 2nd Battalion, his influence on the lives and careers of the young officers then, as well as those who followed, should not be underestimated. He was Adjutant for the quite exceptional period of four years (not three, per The Generals), from January 1913 to December 1916.

A final correction is to the table showing those who held key appointments in the Regiment during the period 1930-1939, and notably during 1931. A corrected version of the 2005 Figure 1 is to be found opposite.



Figure 1. Key appointments in The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) prior to World War II.

Appointment	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939
OC Regimental Depot	Maj John Evetts MC 1930-32		Maj Douglas Graham MC 1932-1935			Maj Alexander Galloway MC 1935-37		Maj <sup>2</sup> DF Campbell MC 1937-39		Lt Col RD Hunter DSO 1939-41
Commanding Officer 1 <sup>st</sup> Battalion	Lt Col HC Hyde-Smith DSO 1927-30	Lt Col Robin Money MC 1931-34			Lt Col RD Hunter DSO 1934-35		<sup>3</sup> Lt Col <sup>1</sup> CF Drew DSO 1936-38		Lt Col Alexander Galloway MC 1938-39	
Adjutant 1 <sup>st</sup> Battalion	Lt Horatius Murray 1930-33			Lt Eric Sixsmith 1933-35		Lt <sup>5</sup> George Collingwood 1936-38			Lt Henry Alexander 1938-39	Lt <sup>6</sup> DG Jebb 1939 -
Commanding Officer 2 <sup>nd</sup> Battalion	Lt Col Thomas Riddell- Webster DSO 1930-33			Lt Col RMS Baynes 1933-37				Lt Col Douglas Graham MC 1937-40		
Adjutant 2 <sup>nd</sup> Battalion	Capt RA Anderson 1926-30	Lt <sup>7</sup> RM Willers 1931-34			Lt HM Fisher 1934-36		Capt AJ Lardner- Clark 1936-38		Capt JEB Whitehead 1938-39	Lt JH Law 1939-40

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<sup>1</sup> Brevet Lt Col

<sup>2</sup> Later Brigadier

<sup>3</sup> Lt Col Richard O'Connor DSO\* MC was nominated to command but was instead promoted to Command the Pershwar Brigade

<sup>4</sup> Later Brigadier

<sup>5</sup> Captain from April 1936

<sup>6</sup> Later Brigadier CBE DSO\*

<sup>7</sup> Later Brigadier DSO

## General Sir Thomas Graham

(1st Baron Lynedoch)

The Covenanter 2006 contained a spelling mistake for which the editor should not be wholly blamed. Many have made the same mistake, including this writer. It is made easier to understand because of a common mistake in pronunciation. Let the great man himself tell the story. One of his biographers wrote :

*'Early in May [1814] Graham was notified that Lord Wellington, in recognition of his brilliant services, had been created a Duke, and that he himself, as also John Hope, Beresford, Hill [qv] and Cotton had all been raised to the peerage. ... As long ago as 1812 he had heard a rumour that he was to be honoured in this way and had given Alexander Hope [his cousin; also a General] strict instructions that if the rumour proved to be true he [Hope] was to notify the Prime Minister that he would greatly prefer to refuse such an honour since, with his wife dead and no heir to succeed him, a title would be useless and burdensome.*

*'Now however Hope had written him that he had refrained from taking this action as Graham's exclusion from the honours list at such a moment would hurt his name forever. He instead assured the Prime Minister that the peerage would be gratefully accepted and that the title by which Graham would like to be known was Lord Lyndoch – a name which Hope accidentally misspelt by omitting the "e"'*

'Writing to Lord Cathcart [his brother-in-law and now Ambassador to the Czar of Russia], Graham, after describing the precautions he had taken to avoid acceptance of this honour, added:

*'My surprise therefore was not small when I received the intimation from Lord Bathurst and from Hope of the thing being done. He chose a title of which I never thought. I should have preferred, if the Duke of Montrose would have agreed to it, not changing my name in the least; but he might not have liked it on account of interfering with the second title of his family. Alex Hope should at least have known how to spell Lynedoch as the pronunciation is quite changed by the omission of the "e".'*

So there you have it. If you say it right 'Lynedoch', you will not make the mistake of spelling it 'Lyndoch'. That said, the streets named after him in Edinburgh and Glasgow are commonly called 'Lyndoch'. That's as it may be, but not what we should call the founder of the 90th and the United

Service Club.  
PRG

## The Royal Hospital Chelsea

I was delighted to accede to the request from the Chairman of the Regimental Trustees, Ian McBain, that I should visit the one and only Cameronian in the Royal Hospital Chelsea. This was back in October and Ian told me that the form was that the regiments supporting 'inmates' were invited to send two representatives to attend the Christmas lunch with their regimental colleagues.

As a consequence, shortly thereafter, I received the formal joining instructions for the event from the Royal Hospital. Full of zeal, I immediately telephoned the adjutant to touch base and, more importantly, to request that he should send me a copy of our colleague's record of service. After all, I reasoned, I or another member of the regiment known to me might well know the person in question. I returned the performa with my details and those of my wife, Jo, who had been selected to accompany me!

Time passed but the record of service did not materialise. I called again to re-iterate the request. Still nothing. Then, just when I had given up hope and the day before the appointed visit on 8th December, I finally received a copy of what purported to be the record of service for IP No. 227 Wilson, Alexander Pte. (Presumably the record maker did not know about Riflemen!)

Sure enough, the record showed that he was a Cameronian:

### SERVICE RECORD

No 227 WILSON Alexander Late PTE  
CAMERONIANS (SCOTTISH RIFLES) \*  
2933335 15. 1.40 to 1943  
ROYAL ARTILLERY 1943 to 19. 3.46  
Total Service 6 years 2 months

He enlisted into the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) on 15 Jan 1940 and served in Dutch West Indies, defending the oil fields before in 1942 being posted to man 4.7 guns with 19 Light Artillery and working on the DEMS (Defensively Equipped Merchant Ships). He was discharged on 19 Mar 1946.

So now, at last, I knew something about the person that we were due to meet on the following day.

Then I received an email from the Chief Clerk at the Royal Hospital informing me that Mr. Wilson was an in-patient of the Infirmary, so that, although we could by all means visit him there, he would sadly not

be able to join us for lunch in the Grand Hall.

Jo and I arrived at the Hospital about 12:00 on the appointed day. We were shown into the Infirmary where we met Mr. Wilson.



He turned out to be a very spry 88-year old, alert and with a great memory for the events of half a century ago. He regaled us with stories of the posting to the Island of Aruba in the Dutch West Indies – how many Cameronians, I wondered, knew that a battalion of the Regiment served there in the early days of World War II?

However, it soon became clear that his memory for very recent events was not so good, the reason no doubt that he needed to be in care in the Infirmary. And so we had to leave him in order to attend the Club where our hosts awaited us with a pre-lunch drink, followed by lunch itself in the Great Hall.

The Great Hall is a magnificent place, well worth anyone taking the time to visit. The Royal Hospital was founded by Charles II, whose gold encrusted statue stands in the courtyard. In the Hall, the wooden panels around the wall have carved on them all engagements in which the British Army has been engaged from then until now. It was uncanny to see battles such as Jellalabad (1841) and Maiwand (1880) remembered at one point along the wall and Iraq and Afghanistan, again, at the end (the end for now only, of course!).

We lunched in the company of several RMP pensioners, accompanied by the Regimental Secretary (Colonel J Berber) and the current Provost Marshall (Brigadier Colin Findlay). Altogether, it was a very enjoyable day but, all too soon, it was time to leave and rejoin the real (?) world.

I wonder if by now any ardent regimental historian has reached for Volume II of the Regimental history? I omitted to mention

that Jo brought Mr. Wilson a lovely cyclamen and I had a bottle of 10 year-old Laphroaig. I gave Mr Wilson the whiskey when we arrived in the ward, saying that it was a privilege to meet a fellow Cameronian:

*“Cameronian,” he said “I wasnae a Cameronian, I was a Cameron!”*

Ah, well, things aren't always what they seem.

However, the sequel was that Alex Wilson was brought up in Maryhill - so he should have been a Cameronian! As it was 1940, he was simply drafted into the Camerons and sent to Fort George; which explains the point about the Dutch West Indies.

And what's more: the Provost Marshall lived on Muir Street, Hamilton as a boy!

# THE CAMERONIANS (SCOTTISH RIFLES) & FAMILY MEMBERS

## Future Parades & Events

The following dates are optional to all Cameronians and Family Members. Events in Bold Print are particular to the Cameronians (SR) & Family Members Organisation.

Date	Time	Event Location
Sun 4 Feb 07	14:00	<b>Annual General Meeting.</b>
Sun 13 May 07	10:00	<b>Cameronians Sunday.</b>
Thu 7 Jun 07	09:30	<b>Lanark Lanimer Day.</b>
Thu 14 Jun 07	TBC	25th Anniversary of the Falklands War.
TBC	TBC	Gorbals Fair.
Thu 27 Jun 07	TBC	Veterans Day various locations in UK.
Sat 03 Nov 07	09:30	Hamilton Garden of Remembrance, Opening Service.
Sun 04 Nov 07	18:00	Hamilton Festival of Remembrance, Town House Hamilton.
Sat 10 Nov 07	18:30	Falkirk Festival of Remembrance, Falkirk Town Hall.
Sun 11 Nov 07	10:00	<b>Remembrance Sunday at Cameronians (SR) Memorial Kelvingrove.</b>
Sun 25 Nov 07	TBC	Aden Veterans Parade in Stirling.

The Cameronians (SR) and Family Members Organisation will be holding the Annual General Meeting at the Olde Club, Old Edinburgh Road, Tannochside on Sunday the 4th of February 2007 at 14:00 hours. Members are encouraged to attend the meeting. Items on the Agenda will include the preparation for Cameronians

Sunday at Douglas on Sunday the 11th of May 2008. This will Commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the Disbandment of The 1st Battalion the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). Members and Non-Members wishing further information are invited to contact the Minutes Secretary Mr Andrew McArthur TD, 18 Rosewood Avenue, Bellshill, Lanarkshire ML4 1NR. Telephone: Home: 01698 746863 Mobile: 07710 007331 e-mail: andy.mcarthur@openreach.co.uk

## Merchant Navy Association Dedication Service January 2006

"On a beautiful clear morning on the Island of Great Cumbrae Ayrshire a Service Dedicating a New Merchant Navy Association Colour was held. The background to this event stems from the construction of a Memorial for Relatives and Friends who have no known grave of their loved one killed in conflict. Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen who were killed in action. Mr Ian Forsyth President of the Royal British Legion Scotland Hamilton Branch realised a 60-year-old dream to have this Memorial in place. His sister had lost her husband during WWII with no known grave and Ian vowed to create a Memorial for such people. The planning took years and funds were collected. The location chosen had to be somewhere appropriate. The site finally chosen was the Island of Cumbrae in the Clyde Estuary. The significance was very emotional. The Royal Navy would form up convoys in these waters. The Army trained in the Argyle Hills close to the estuary. The Royal Air Force were stationed at RAF Prestwick on the coast. There was one significant add-on to the Memorial included the Merchant Navy who were crucial to the war effort. With the help of Millport RBLs Chairman Andy Bryant and Standard Bearer Ian McGill plans were put in place. Utilising Royal Engineers, who else could do such a task, the construction, was completed for the Dedication Service in May 2005. At that service was Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Standard Bearer Eddie Wallace. He noted

there was no Merchant Navy Association Standard present at the Dedication Service. He contacted Ian Forsyth and informed him that, as there was no Merchant Navy Glasgow Branch Standard he would pay



for the costs himself. This was done and in January 2006 the Merchant Navy Association Glasgow Branch Standard was duly dedicated at Cumbræ Parish Church with the Reverend Marjory H Mackay officiating. Other Standards attending the service were, RBLs Branches, Parachute Association, RASC & RCT Association East Kilbride Branch, Cameronians (SR) & Family Members Organisation. The Right Honourable Adam Ingram MP the Armed Forces Minister participated in the service by reading from the book of Deuteronomy. Mr Ian Forsyth was asked to speak and he did with a passion. He described the casualty rate of the Merchant Navy in WWII. The first and last casualties of the conflict were indeed Merchantmen. The description of boys less than 16 years of age being killed by enemy action while serving in the Merchant Navy. The total lost exceeded 32,000, most of whom have no known grave. He spoke of Eddie Wallace's generosity for his gesture and thanked him sincerely. The Reverend Marjory then dedicated the Standard. Following the service all the Standards formed a Guard of Honour at the church entrance. The party travelled the 4 miles to the Memorial for a wreath laying service. At the Memorial the Reverend Marjory conducted the short service. Mr Ian Forsyth, the Right Honourable Adam Ingram MP, laid wreaths and to complete the service two Officer Cadets from the Glasgow Nautical College laid a tribute. The Millport Pipe Band playing the Flowers of the Forest closed the service. At the RBLs Millport Branch Club all participants were made most welcome to tea and sandwiches. The Right Honourable Adam Ingram MP was pleased

to note the RASC & RCT Association East Kilbride Branch Standard was being carried by Andy McArthur who serves as an officer in the RLC TA at Grantham Lincolnshire with 2 (Multi-National) Logistic Support The Armed Forces Ministers constituency is at East Kilbride in Lanarkshire. Following the refreshments and chatting with the Members and their families at the club the Minister gave a speech of thanks to the event organisers. He spoke of the sentiment behind the tribute and complimented the Officer Cadets for their attendance. He presented to the Millport Branch Club a photograph of the Memorial, which will be placed in the Club. Mr Andy Bryant thanked the Armed Forces Minister and asked that he round of the day by presenting two veterans with Veteran Badges. Delighted to do so the members Ian McGill and Duncan McTaggart were duly presented with the badges. Gordon Logan and Jack Hunter, two veterans resident at Millport Hospital were also visited by the Armed Forces Minister to



be presented with their Veterans Badges. At the RBLs Club the last word was left to Ian Forsyth. To round of an emotional day he once again said "Thanks" to Eddie Wallace for his thoughtful gesture."

### **Kinnaird Manor Camelon by Falkirk Open Day 2006**

Basking in glorious sunshine Kinnaird Manor Residential Home in Camelon, Falkirk held its Annual Open Day in August 2006. Kinnaird Manor is home to residents including ex-Services Veterans who enjoy excellent facilities along with friendly staff who carry out the duties of caring. The open day was well attended by the resident's families but also many local residents who supported the event. It was a day of fun and enjoyment with various stands to be visited

and entertainment for the youngsters. Pleased to attend were the Standard Bearers of the RBL Glasgow Area (Pat Ponsonby), Hamilton (Murdo Grant) and Larbert (Jimmy Kinnaird) Branches together with the RASC & RCT Assoc East Kilbride Branch (Andy McArthur) and the Cameronians (Scottish



Rifles) and Family Members Organisation Standards (Bill Gough). The Standards Bearers provided a demonstration in the car

parking area of precision drill movements for the onlooker's pleasure. Following the display a Guard of Honour was formed to welcome the returning cyclists participating in a sponsored Charity Cycle Run in aid of



Kinnaird Manor. The Management, Staff and Residents extended a sincere thanks to all the visitors who made the day very special.



## MISCELLANEOUS

### Edward Scott - The Only 'Badged Cameronian in the Arnhem Bridgehead?



The salient details of the airborne landing at Arnhem in September 1944 have been recounted so often, and from such varied sources, as to require no repetition here. This is not yet another armchair critique of the feasibility of the operation, its execution and its eventual failure.

Anyone versed in the Regimental History of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) is well aware of the heroic part played in the battle by the legendary the late Major-General (then Lt. Col) John Frost, and the fact that he commanded 2nd Parachute Battalion in the capture and the famous defence of the river bridge which spanned the Rhine in the

centre of the city. That he was serving with 10th Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in the autumn of 1941 when he volunteered to join the Airborne Forces and took with him a goodly number of Cameronian volunteers from this Battalion, also is recorded in John Frost's own memoirs. Once they became members of the Parachute Regiment, they lost the right to wear the Regimental Badge and their direct affiliation to the Cameronians. While there is little doubt that all those transferees retained an affectionate respect, and often a personal connection, with their former Regiment, it would be wrong to treat them as Regimental Cameronians during the fighting in the Arnhem Battle. However, the Regiment did have a direct potential to play a substantial part in the airborne landings. While that potential was not destined to be fulfilled, in fact, there was one member of the Regiment who took part in the airborne assault, as a Cameronian - and had he not been clad in a steel helmet at the time -- properly displaying the Regimental cap badge: Lieutenant Edward Scott. The peculiar circumstances surrounding his becoming (so far as one is aware) the only 'Badged Cameronian' to participate in it have not been recorded before.

One facet of the original operational plan for the assault, beyond those who have made a special study of it, has received scant and almost dismissive attention by many historians. That it posed immense and ominous possibilities for the Regiment has now virtually been forgotten. The 1st Airborne Army comprised four Divisions: 1 British Airborne, 82nd and 101st American Airborne, and in an air-portable role, 52nd (Lowland) Division. A Polish Airborne Brigade also was attached. Two of the Battalions of 156 Brigade of 52nd were 6th and 7th The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). The roles of the three Airborne Divisions and the Polish Brigade remain clear in the memory of most members of the public that may have read about it. In the case of 52nd (Lowland) however, this is not so. That Division was scheduled to follow up the first landing, tasked to consolidate the bridgehead gained. The means by which this was to be achieved was by two of the three of the Division's Brigades (155 and



156) being flown in Dakota transport aeroplanes, complete with light equipment, to land at Deelen airfield four miles north of Arnhem soon after its capture by 1st British Airborne. The remaining Brigade, 157, was scheduled to join the Division as part of the relieving force that was to fight its way up 'the Corridor' between the U. S. Airborne divisions and Arnhem. In anticipation, it had already been dispatched by sea to join other troops of 21st Army Group poised South of Eindhoven to strike towards Arnhem.

The failure to capture Deelen airfield meant that the air portable part of the attack never took place. It has resulted in a tendency for it to be overlooked or merely mentioned en passant in most histories of 'Operation Market Garden'. What might have occurred had that airfield been captured, therefore, can only remain in the realms of speculation? Nevertheless, it is arguable that had the two additional Brigades landed to swell the numbers of combat troops in the bridgehead, their presence could have been crucial. It could well have bought the additional time required to allow 21st Army Group to relieve the beleaguered 1st Airborne Division, tipped the balance in favour of the Allies; and thus allowed General Montgomery to execute his plan of a thrust to the heartland of Germany.

The airborne plan for 'Operation Market Garden' ('Market' being the airborne part and 'Garden' the ground attack to link up with it) bore distinct similarities to the German airborne invasion of Crete. There, German airborne troops seized a bridgehead that included a tenuous hold on the airfield at Maleme. The German Paratroop Army soon found itself in dire trouble, losing many of its members while still in their parachutes, and many more, immediately upon reaching the ground. Their losses were such that Germany never attempted another major airborne assault throughout the War. It is generally recognised that had not an additional back-up division of mountain troops been flown over in transport planes, under enemy fire, to Maleme airfield, the Cretan operation could well have been a disaster for the attackers. Their arrival turned the threat of defeat into victory. One wonders whether or not this factor was a consideration in the planning for Market Garden, and if the two Brigades of 52nd Division had been included in the plan after a study of the German experience?

However that may be, the preparations for the involvement of 52nd Division were no

chimera. In 1944, the Lowland Division was probably the best-trained and most versatile unit in the British Army. It was the last unused fully trained infantry division in the British Army that was still held in reserve. This had caused a considerable amount of disquiet among its soldiers, who had watched with more than a little envy the exploits of, and the publicity accorded to, its compatriot 51st (Highland) Division.

Since 1942, 52nd had been converted from a normal infantry division to a Mountain role. It underwent rigorous training in the Scottish mountains that weeded out the less fit. It took part in the Combined Operations Battle School at Inverary, and was the only fully equipped Mountain Division in the British Army. Its natural role would have been in the mountainous Italian Campaign, but the fact of its presence in Scotland, and its specialist role, posed a potential threat to the German occupation of Norway. Strategically, this made sense, as its continued presence in Scotland caused Germany to retain some 15,000 troops in Norway against the chance of a British attempt to liberate the country. By 1944, 52nd had become one of the hardest physically and finely trained units of the Allied Forces - but, it had not yet seen action, save fleetingly in France in 1941 before its conversion to a mountain role.

The first months of 1944 saw the conversion of the Division to its air-portable role, with much of its mountain equipment discarded, this being replaced by items more suited to its new status. Two of the items retained were the specially designed mountain windproof smock together with the string vest to be worn beneath it. These soon became almost an additional Divisional icon that distinguished it from the normal infantryman. They proved to be a boon when later, the Division was to fight in the bitter cold of the Netherlands and the Rhineland winter of 1944/45. The smock's similarity to the airborne jump jacket and the Commando battle jacket, gave a special feeling of superiority to the Jocks, and was much sought after by later reinforcements in the North-West European campaign. Air-portable training had been in force for sometime prior to Arnhem as several planned airborne attacks in France and the Low Countries had come to nothing, due to the rapid advance of the Allies after the breakout from the Normandy bridgehead.

Edward Scott was one of many Englishmen posted to Scottish Regiments as the war progressed. Scott's first posting came as

a surprise. He found himself joining The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) at Hamilton Barracks as a Rifleman on 14 November 1940, billeted amongst a barrack room of Lanarkshire and Glaswegian Jocks whose accents, at first, were almost unintelligible to him. A Cheshire man, he had no previous connection with The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). Scott's first impression of his new Regiment must have been favourable. Likewise, his superior officers must have liked what they saw of their new recruit, since, after completion of his initial training he was recommended to apply for commissioned rank. He duly passed out in May 1941 through 168 OCTU, had no hesitation in opting for the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) as his first choice of Regiment, and was delighted to be accepted. Second Lieutenant Scott's first posting was to 10th Battalion - coincidentally while the then Captain John Frost was still serving with it. At that time it was engaged in constructing beach defences near Southwold, in Suffolk. After a further period of about nine months with a Training Unit near Glasgow as a Weapon Training Officer, on 7th September 1942, he was posted as a Platoon Commander to the 7th Battalion, then at Hayton Camp, Aberdeen. This was to be his unit for the rest of his wartime service; he participated in all of the specialist training undergone by 52nd Division. By the time that conversion to air-portable role took place, Lt. (by then) Scott had qualified to command the Battalion's mortar platoon as soon as a vacancy for the post arose. He was one of the senior subalterns.

The comparative lack of active service for 1st Airborne Army, in the period after D Day proved to be most unsatisfactory and unsettling. Several operations in France and Belgium, all planned at short notice to be support 21st Army Group, were set up and then cancelled, when the rate of advance of the ground forces made them unnecessary. The last of these prior to Market Garden (code named 'Comet') comprised a smaller operation involving only British and Polish troops. 52nd Division was not scheduled to take part. It was programmed to take place at about 10th September, but was cancelled in favour of the much larger Market Garden attack.

For Scott air-portable training, continued; then, at the end of August, his prospects of action took a sudden and dramatic turn. Without the warning rumours that usually circulate around units prior to any major

movement actually taking place, he was called by the Adjutant to the Battalion Orderly Room, ordered to collect his kit and report forthwith to 52nd Division H.Q. Scott was told only that he had been selected to be 52nd Division's Liaison Officer to 1st Airborne Division in a forthcoming operation. Having presented himself at H.Q. of 52nd, he was interviewed by the Division's G1, a somewhat brusque Lieutenant Colonel, who ordered Scott to report forthwith with his motorcycle to H.Q. of 1st Airborne Division. The requirement to provide his own transport had never been mentioned previously the fact that a motorcycle was required seemed to have been overlooked in the rush to make the appointment. When Scott brought the point to G1's notice, he was told sarcastically, as Scott put it "with the courtesy that senior officers normally accorded to their juniors - 'I didn't tell you to bring a tooth brush!'" Feeling somewhat aggrieved at being on the receiving end of the short temper of a no doubt over-harassed staff officer, Scott returned to the 7th's Transport Section to collect his transport. He was to be unaccompanied, but arranged for himself, his newly acquired Norton bike and his kit, to be carried in a 15cwt. tuck to 1st Airborne Division H.Q., then stationed in Lincolnshire, where he reported to G1 Ops.

Scott was well received by the airborne men; there was a distinct sense of elitism about the Airborne troops, many of whom had taken part in the air drops in North Africa and Italy. At the time of his arrival no decision had been taken about the cancellation of Operation Comet, for which hectic preparations were still in train. Divisional Headquarters was moved to a tented camp in the Swindon area. It was that Division's temporary base immediately before the beginning of Market Garden. There was a distinct air of tenseness and unrest, caused by the frantic preparations for, and the subsequent cancellation of so many earlier operations. Comet's replacement at extremely short notice by Market Garden resulted in further feverish bout of activity, as new plans and logistic arrangements were made. Scott was introduced to his air transport - a Horsa glider and its two pilots. The glider's complement comprised: the pilots, Scott and his motorcycle, a jeep, and about eight other-rank members of Divisional H.Q., their kit and other stores. This was to be Scott's first flight in a glider. Although he had been trained in loading

and unloading Dakotas in his Battalion's air-portable role, he had no experience in similar methods for gliders. Securing inert cargo in a glider required particular care as the impact of a glider landing was likely to be much more severe than by engine powered aircraft. An insecure load could break free on landing and hurtle forward, causing death or severe injury to the pilots or any occupant unfortunate enough to be in its path. He still had been given no written orders. His principal instruction came when he attended the Divisional briefing for the 'Market Garden' Operation given by the Divisional Commander, Major General R.E.Urquhart at Moor Park Golf Club. His role was made clear, the details sparse: to act as Liaison Officer between the two Divisions as soon as 52nd began to land at Deelen airport. What was to be the precise nature of those duties, Scott never discovered.

The airborne drop at Arnhem was to take place over two days, for logistic reasons. As a member of Divisional H.Q., Scott's glider was scheduled to be towed in on the first day by a Stirling bomber - the machine in question named 'Lady Of The Night' by its crew. It had a graphic painting of her on the fuselage, resplendent in a ball gown. His first experience of glider-borne flight proved to be traumatic. He describes the sensation of being towed to gain airspeed as being similar to travelling in a rather bumpy underground train. The glider becomes airborne before the towing aircraft. Scott, taken by the novelty of it all, took up position immediately behind the pilot. For the first few miles all went well as the Sterling and its charge manoeuvred to take up position in the air armada. The relative calm of the engineless aircraft was summarily shattered by a flow of expletives from the first glider pilot - the tow rope to the Sterling had broken free, leaving him with the prospect of an emergency landing. Fortunately, sufficient height had been gained to allow the pilot to execute an accomplished landing in an Oxfordshire field. By evening, a relieved Scott was back at his point of departure, enjoying an evening meal. He was not greatly reassured by the apologies of the Tug Pilot of the Sterling, who promised to 'Get you there the next day?'

After the experience of his maiden flight, it is understandable that Scott had some misgiving, but the pilot was as good as his word - the flight into the Arnhem drop zone was accomplished without incident until the approach to the battlefield. Puffs of

smoke from heavy anti-aircraft fire could be seen ahead, directly in the line of flight.

There was no option but to fly directly through it. The glider's crew once more gave an accomplished performance; Scott was fortunate to enjoy as smooth a touch down as could be expected in the circumstances, although from the state of some of the adjacent gliders, it was apparent that others had not been so lucky. As a result of the previous day's landings, the enemy was thoroughly alerted for the possible arrival of a second landing. The glider came under fire as it touched down among the abandoned first wave gliders and those already landed and landing as part of the second wave - there was no time to be lost in vacating the area. Unloading a Horsa glider was a cumbersome business, particularly when under fire. The first step was to remove completely the Horsa's tail. It was only with difficulty this was accomplished. Scott recalled that the urgency increased as small arms fire began to sweep the landing zone. The longer this took, the greater was the risk to glider's occupants. Only then could the cargo be unloaded, the jeep and Scott's motorcycle released from its moorings and made ready. The jeep was the first to be unloaded. Before take off, Scott's kit had already been stowed in the jeep together with other items of equipment. He ordered the driver to take the jeep to nearby cover. However, the driver lost no time in clearing the drop zone and heading straight for Arnhem. As the jeep disappeared, so did Scott's kit - it was never seen again!

The area now was the scene of hectic activity. 7th K.O.S.B of the Air Landing Brigade had been tasked with holding the Drop Zone, and having now fulfilled its function, seemed to have begun to withdraw from the open fields to other duties. A mixture of paratroops and glider -home soldiers now joined them. Orderly but mixed columns had formed, all of them heading through the woods or by road in the direction Arnhem. Scott joined in. Near the drop zone, it was necessary to cross the open track bed of a two-track railway - extremely difficult task for an erstwhile motorcyclist. Riding his trusty Norton, there was little disturbance as he found the road leading towards the Hartenstein Hotel, at Oosterbeek - the designated H.Q. of 1st Airborne Division. On arrival without incident, he described the atmosphere in the precincts of the hotel, as reasonably quiet, and at that time undisturbed by enemy fire save for the

occasional mortar bomb.

The Norton was parked against a tree at the side of the building, while Scott went to report for duty. He was ordered to dig in outside the hotel beside the Division's Defence Platoon. He had reverted to being a plain footslogger with no apparent immediate role - one for which he would never require the services of the Norton. Scott cannot recall its fate, and can only assume that it fell into German hands. No information was available about the capture of Deelen airfield, and thus, none about the possible arrival of 52nd Division. Wireless communication with 21st Army Group was virtually non-existent, leaving Scott in the position of an observant bystander. From that time onwards, he acted mainly as a supernumerary, performing any task that became necessary. Information about the general situation was sketchy. General Urquhart was missing, having failed to return from visiting his Brigades.

Scott was given several tasks when none of the H.Q. Staff were available. By this time the situation around the Hartstein Hotel had livened up considerably. The quiet of the first day of his arrival had long gone. There was constant mortar and artillery bombardment, and latterly also bursts of machine gun fire sweeping the open grounds. Headquarters of 1st Airborne Division was in the cellars of the hotel. When called on to receive orders, the short dash from slit trench to the shelter of the building became an increasingly hazardous undertaking. Being able to drive a Bren, gun carrier - as a trained mortar platoon officer - he was ordered to take a carrier loaded with ammunition to 7th K.O.S.B., which was entrenched in the North Eastern shoulder of what had now become a defence perimeter. On another occasion, he was ordered to deliver a message on foot to the Eastern Perimeter about one mile from the Hartenstein, held by 'Lonsdale Force', a mixture of units now gathering round Oosterbeek Church near to the river. These defenders, by now, were in a desperate state, under constant fire tired and needing to be rallied. Scott arrived to hear the now legendary inspirational address by Major 'Dicky' Lonsdale to the remnants of his Force, delivered from the Church's pulpit. From time to time, he was ordered to carry out patrols near to the H.Q. to protect against possible infiltration by the enemy. He also laid and, as far as possible, camouflaged a series of some fifty Hawkins anti-tank mines in the vicinity of the Hotel and the

adjoining roadsides. Now clearly surplus to requirements in his designated role, Scott merely filled in at H.Q. when required. He was not called to fill any particular post, and at times felt very much the outsider. He was never equipped with an airborne type helmet. His conventional issue steel helmet, probably the only one of that type in the perimeter (Airborne troops wore a closer fitting rimless variety) led to several misunderstandings and disappointments for the defenders, many of whom wrongly assumed that the relieving force had arrived when Scott came into view.

By now, the Hartenstein was under almost constant shellfire, and it was becoming clear that the bridgehead could not hold much longer. Still waiting in England, the Commander of 52nd's two Air Portable Brigades, Major General Hakewell-Smith, realised that there would now be no possibility of the intended fly-in to Deelen airfield. His offer to fly a Brigade by glider to bolster the shrinking perimeter was refused, not on logistical grounds, but because of a lack of appreciation of the gravity of the situation by 1st British Airborne Corps Headquarters, still some twelve miles South near Nijmegen. The only relief from the enemy's constant bombardment of mortar and artillery fire occurred when re-supply aircraft flew over at heights as low as three hundred feet to make supply drops. The slow flying transports, flew fearlessly through heavy anti-aircraft and small arms fire, the loadmasters continuing to offload supplies, that sadly fell into enemy, not British, hands. Scott viewed this respite with mixed feelings, as he watched with admiration the bravery of the aircrews, some of whom continued their hazardous duty even when on fire and soon doomed to crash.

On the afternoon of 25th September the order was given to evacuate the bridgehead. Scott recalled a spectacular barrage by the British Artillery to seal off the perimeter, and to conceal what was taking place. The evacuation was an orderly process. Scott was one of many parties of men, fifteen to twenty in number. They were passed to the riverbank though several staged checkpoints, all these being manned by glider pilots. All were ordered that on no account were they to halt to assist the wounded or any stragglers. There was intermittent and apparently random machine gun fire. He was impressed by the fact that while many were waiting, there never was any rush for places as each boat came into view -

discipline being maintained throughout. Several attempted to swim the flooded Neder Rhine, and at one point Scott considered the possibility, but thought better of it at the last moment. He was ferried across with eleven others in an outboard motor boat manned by Canadian Sappers. One of his fellow passengers was a United States airman who, after being shot down, had managed to evade capture and reach the perimeter. Along with other survivors Scott was ferried to Nijmegen in a DUKW, where he reported to Airborne H.Q.. It was only at this juncture that he learned of the fate of the whole operation. He was seen by a Colonel of the General Staff, who informed him that, in common with all other survivors, he was awarded two weeks leave, and would be returned to his Unit 7th Cameronians - still in England. He was flown back to England from Louvain, rejoined to his Battalion, to the relief of his anxious colleagues, and was able to make his first contact with his parents. His leave was sort-lived however. After a few days, Scott was recalled - his unit about to depart to Europe to join 21st Army Group in Belgium.

Effectually, Scott's Arnhem adventure was over, yet still able to claim the honour of being the only 'badged' Cameronian to have fought at Arnhem. He returned to his former duties. He commanded his Platoon in the South Beveland and Walcheren assaults, then on the Dutch, German border in Operation Blackcock. On 1st January 1945 he took over command of the Battalion's Mortar Platoon and was promoted to Captain. He led it at the battle of Alpon, at Rheine, Dortmund-Emms canal and the subsequent actions across the plains of North West Germany and at Bremen, receiving a Mention in Dispatches. After the German surrender, when 52nd Division moved to the banks of the Elbe in the area of Magdeburg, he commanded a prisoner of war camp at Stendal. Scott regards his time with the Mortar Platoon as more satisfactory, and of infinitely greater use and benefit than his Arnhem odyssey, however spectacular that might have appeared!

Before joining the Army, Edward Scott had begun his studies to qualify as a Solicitor. He qualified in 1949, and practiced until retirement in a partnership in Macclesfield. His experience of my service was not wasted. He joined the Territorial Army and rose to command 7th Battalion The Cheshire Regiment. It is of interest that this fine Battalion was commanded by a

Cameronian officer Colonel HL Moir in Palestine in 1917 and in France subsequently until wounded in 1918. Edward Scott retired from the Territorial Army in 1966 with the rank of Colonel, after promotion to Deputy Commander of 126 Infantry Brigade. Now aged 85, He retains an active interest in both The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and The Cheshire Regiment. He has been a regular attender for many years at the Annual Dinner of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) at the Western Club, Glasgow.

C.S.P.

## One Day's Action with a Section Commander

Personal accounts of battle are relatively easy to obtain from former officers and senior non-commissioned officers, by virtue of their usually being kept wholly or partly 'in the picture'. The further one follows down the chain of command, the more difficult it becomes for the individual to retain a clear picture of events, other than what is occurring within the extremely limited ambit of one's immediate surroundings. Often, that picture is obtained literally at ground level or below. In May 2006, at the request of the Museum, former Cameronian Willie Miller recorded a lengthy interview of his full military service. Later, independently, he committed to paper an account - still fresh in his memory - of twenty-four hours of personal experience at 'the sharp end' of battle. He has kindly agreed to permit this account as written by him (only slightly edited) to be published in the Regimental Journal. It provides a fascinating insight into the problems faced by junior leaders 'at the sharp end' when, without means of communication to the rear, one's immediate superior becomes hors de combat and an assault falters, resulting in the attackers being pinned down and isolated. Willie Miller, a former Cameronian section commander, would be the last to claim that his account is other than typical of the experience of many of his fellow junior non-commissioned officers in any fighting Battalion of the British Army, when as so often happens in warfare, 'the best laid plans of man and mouse ... ..'.

He joined the Regiment's 6th Battalion at Cultybraggan Camp, Comrie, Perthshire on 12th January 1942. The weather was severe; Willie recalled it was so cold, that after washing, one's hair became frozen on the return trip from ablutions to billets. His Company Commander (B Company) was

the late Major (later Lieutenant Colonel) Stanley (Sandy) Storm M.C. The Company's officers included the then Second Lieutenant David Riddell-Webster and Lieutenant John Girdwood. At the time - Willie Miller probably did not realise that he was in such potentially influential company. David Riddell -Webster (of course destined to end his career as Brigadier, and the last Colonel of the Regiment) was the son of the famous Cameronian, General Riddell-Webster (then Adjutant General to The Forces and after to be Colonel of the Regiment). John Girdwood was the son of Major-General Girdwood also a distinguished former Colonel of the Regiment! After a spell of illness and light training, Miller returned to B Company, again under Major Storm. He remained with that company throughout his active service in the Netherlands, and in Germany.

On 9/10th March 1945, then Corporal (later Sergeant) Willie Miller, was a Section Leader in 12 Platoon of B Company 6th (Lanarkshire) Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), the Company being Commanded by the late Major (later Lt. Col.) Stanley Storm M.C. (For a full account of the 6th and 7th Battalions' attack vide: 'The Covenanter' 1997pp 31-40). At that time, a Section (of which there were three per Platoon) comprised: a Section leader (Corporal) armed with a Sten light machine gun, a Bren light machine gunner plus his reserve gunner carrying ammunition, and six Riflemen, all of whom carried hand grenades as well ammunition for their rifles.

52nd (Lowland Division) which included both 6th and 7th Battalions, then on the Dutch/ German border, took part in the final stages of operation 'Veritable' and 'Blockbuster' in February and March 1945. Their object was to clear the Rhineland between the rivers Maas and Rhine to make space for the preparations for the crossing of the Rhine itself to be put in hand. The 6th was ordered to execute a left-flanking attack on the village of Alpon only a few miles into Germany, and some five miles from the river Rhine. It was then at the apex of the last pocket of resistance on the South side of the river, in the British Sector. The attack began in the mid-afternoon of 9th March, but stalled due the failure of another unit to fully capture the village, thus providing a screen for the 6th's advance. This resulted in the 6th being unable to break through the outskirts of the village to the open ground to the left of Alpon; over which the flanking movement was to be executed. Corporal

Miller's Platoon, commanded by Lieutenant G.S. Symm, was the leading Platoon in the Battalion's attack. It became cut off from the Battalion and was isolated on the verge of the village. With some difficulty, it was extricated later in the day, and then, with only two hour's rest, ordered that night, to be the point Platoon of B Company's assault on part of the Battalion's initial objective - a factory beyond and behind Alpon. It was to be a surprise attack, made without reconnaissance, unsupported by armour or artillery.

Intelligence about the enemy was faulty. Instead of minimal opposition, which the Battalion was briefed to expect, the factory was strongly defended and reinforced during the day's fighting. Soon after entering the factory precincts; unknown to Miller, Lt. Symm suffered a severe stomach wound. His Platoon, including Corporal Miller's Section, became pinned down in the factory yard and the surrounds, together with the following Platoon, at the outskirts of the factory, both taking heavy casualties.

*... After briefing to pass through 4/5th R.S.F. who were tasked to take Alpon, B Coy was to take the factory. B Coy started off towards Alpon, and at the top of the escarpment I noticed three Sherman tanks knocked out and burning with the crews lying dead and hanging out of the turrets.*

*At this time our shells were bursting on the roofs of Alpon, I said to Lt. Symm 'The Fusiliers couldn't be in Alpon' and was told to keep going.*

*I set off with my section and started to make my way down into Alpon when two spandaus opened up. I made for the nearest cover, which was the first house with a garden and lay behind the wall. One of my men ran past and entered the house to find a soldier of the Recce corps lying dead behind a Bren gun.*

*I got up and went next door and rushed upstairs and crawled across the floor where I could see from the corner of the window, which had shutters on the outside, four German soldiers throwing hand grenades across the street from the house they occupied.*

*I went downstairs to look for the PIAT team [The PIAT was a spring-fired anti-tank weapon. It was portable, and fired a powerful projectile that could penetrate most armour plate save frontal armour. Its disadvantage was its bulk, it was difficult to load and had an effective range of about one hundred yards. It was also often used in close quarter street fighting] I went back upstairs and warned the men to crawl across the floor and when four of*

us were watching what was happening across the street a bullet came through the window missing all of us, except one soldier being cut with flying glass.

A Sergeant from another Platoon asked to be pushed up, into the attic. He pulled out a slate and could see a spandau firing from a balcony. He was passed up a rifle and killed the gunner. His number two kept looking out a door at his comrade, and he also was killed.

Shortly after that the 4/5' Fusiliers came into Alpon and one of their soldiers had a phosphorus grenade explode in his equipment. We dragged him indoors, took his clothes off and applied first aid. We lost another soldier at the next house by a sniper who we believe shot him from across the other side of the street right through the house. Symm had a corporal and two men sent to try and find Major Storm's Coy. H.Q. They came back later to say they couldn't find anyone.

Then I was detailed to pick two men and do the same. It was now dark when we went out of Alpon up the main street. Shells were falling all round. We met no one until we saw the silhouettes of two people who we challenged and were two officers from the Royal Engineers who wanted to know if the bridges were intact? We couldn't help, as we did not know. I asked if they had seen any soldiers. They directed us to some 52nd Division men who turned out to be from Brigade H.Q. They knew about 12 Platoon being cut off. They showed me a map where Major Storm was - we had passed him within a hundred yards! After returning to Coy H.Q. we were told to bring the troops out of Alpon. When we got back Lt. Symm had a revolver and translating book trying to get information out of a German woman who seemingly had been in the toilet all day when our troops occupied the house. It seems one of soldiers wanted to use the toilet which was locked and put his foot through the door to find the woman sitting on the pan and had been there all day. She was scared - and no wonder with Symm holding a gun at her!

We returned to H.Q. and were told to get our heads down, for in a couple of hours we were going to attack the factory' with no artillery' or tanks in a silent attack.

It must have been two or three in the morning when we left. Going along the railway a house blew up, as this must have been the German troops. In the vicinity of the factory a bullet passed me and the soldier three behind me had his shovel blade split in two behind his head. We all hit the ground and I cut through barbed wire and slithered over the banking and crawled around the factory' fence. I didn't notice at that time I was crawling through where the

German soldiers had been relieving themselves. The front of my battledress was covered in excrement, which I had no chance to clean so I had to stay in this stinking state for the rest of the day. I eventually found a gate open into the factory yard, which was full of machinery and some storage tanks. I ran in followed by my Bren gunners who immediately started firing, 'wounding a German soldier. They called on me to shoot the German but I said 'No'. We were unable to get into the factory building due to the heavy fire and we were forced to take cover taking casualties all the time.

I was standing beside a large oil or water tank when bullets passed through it. I dropped and lay still. Another soldier joined me when two grenades landed about ten feet away. The wooden handled one exploded bursting his eardrum. The Bakelite one didn't go off. It was decided we all got out, of the factory as the German mortars were coming down like hailstones. We grouped together amongst the bushes 'wondering what to do when a smoke screen came down and a German soldier wandered out with a schmieiser only about thirty feet away. I didn't speak but pointed to one of my men who shot him. He was screaming and a young lad of eighteen named Rfn. (name withheld) put five bullets in him before I got him stopped. We had lost contact with the Platoon by this time. I think they were all seeking what little shelter there was in the yard. I ran to an empty trench followed by Rfn (name withheld). We were lucky to reach the trench as we were heavily fired on. We tried to make contact by shouting but to no avail. I also tried putting up my Sten with my helmet, but it was also fired at. Rfn. (name withheld) was concerned as to how long we could stay in the trench I said that it was safer here until it was dark.

By this time he was crying, his nerves were shattered, then he fell asleep. I decided to clean my Sten, and it was (lying in bits on my knee when a shadow crossed the trench and I looked up to see a German was about to shoot me. I shouted 'You f\*\*\*\*\* b\*\*\*\*\*!'. He dropped his rifle and put his hands up and took his helmet off.

Rfn. (Name withheld) woke up asked what was wrong, and I told him there was a German standing above him. He wanted to shoot the soldier, but I said 'No, if we are taken prisoner we will be shot.' I shouted to him head back in the way we had come to where I thought the rest of the Company might be. I didn't know at this time B Coy had had to withdraw two hundred yards because no one knew 'what was happening. We waited until dusk. Then we heard voices and machine gun bullets going over the trench. It was a relief as it was the 7th

*Cameronians who came to our rescue. We didn't know where to go, and headed back the way we had come. We saw a soldier alone in the dark. We challenged him his reply 'R.S.F.'. He told us there were a few Cameronians in Alpon railway station. I reported to Major Storm who in one of the houses near the station and told him what had happened. He was ordering a citation for decorations Sgts. Robertson and Kilpatrick. We were told that food was coming but I couldn't wait. The survivors went down to the cellar and ate cherries that were in a jar. There was only about a third still standing from the two Platoons that had attacked the factory. (Name withheld) was wounded later at the Fokke Wolf factory in the attack on the city of Bremen. I was very annoyed about the state of my battledress was Canadian and of much better quality than British issue and was the envy of the rest of the Platoon... ..'*

At the conclusion of hostilities Willie Miller remained with the 6th until, in 1946, the Battalion was being reduced to Cadre status pending its return to the UK peacetime territorial status. Despite his eligibility for early release, he stayed on for some months, ending his Army service at the end of that year. Now aged eighty-six, Willie Miller stays at 30, Keppenburn Avenue, Fairlie. He still enjoys his garden, and an occasional shoot. Married for sixty years, his wife; a former member of the ATS. died in 2005. He has four children, and five grandsons and two great grandchildren. He is fortunate to have members of his family living nearby. Willie would be pleased to hear from any fellow former Cameronians, particularly three London ex-Cameronians: Coughlin, Tanner and Mumford. Willie Miller is a veteran of the highly successful crossing of the Sloe Estuary. at Walcheren. Holland; in November 1944. As one of the few survivors still able to do so, he attended the wreath-laying ceremony at Hamilton Museum in November 2006 held to commemorate the anniversary of the action.  
C.S.P.

## Traditions And Memories

In Galashiels the other day my heart leapt as I beheld coming towards me a young soldier wearing a Tarn O'Shanter with a black hackle. As he drew nearer I realised that the wearer was a major and not all that young. Nowadays brigadiers look youthful to me; I must be getting old! I asked him about the black hackle; he explained that it was in recognition of the KOSB's close connection with the Cameronians. After all,

it was a few days' difference in the raising of the two regiments in 1689 which ensured that the 25th of Foot would survive the 26th by nearly forty years. Now his regiment has gone too. Sad!

Back in 1977 I was asked to put together a team of five competent Russian interpreters to act as conducting officers for the first high level Soviet military delegation to the UK. It was in fact a visit of the Frunze Military Academy, the senior Soviet staff college, to our own Staff College at Camberley. I wrote a full account of the visit for the *Covenanter* at the time. Many features of a memorable few days still linger with me. I have never experienced so much VIP treatment, visited so many august establishments or met so many important people in such a short span of time.

One particular memory haunted me during the long debate which led to the recent merger of the surviving Scottish regiments. It made me appreciate afresh how wise was the Cameronians' painful decision to 'march out into history' rather than to merge with the King's Own Scottish Borderers. Invariably one side dominates in such mergers, however honest and open the initial intentions may appear to have been. We saw something of it at Lanark when the newly merged RSF and HLI joined our Depot, and I was organist for the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards (Scots Greys merged with Carabiniers) in the early seventies and instructed many of their NCO's at our education centre.

Among other places to which we took the Soviet delegation were the forecourt of Buckingham Palace, to see the changing of the guard, and the Royal Mews, to see the facilities of the Household Cavalry. The choice was hardly surprising, in view of the fact that our sponsoring officers were Major Generals John Stanier, later Chief of the Defence Staff, a cavalryman, and Michael Gow, Director of Army Training, a Guardsman! Every evening of the visit the Frunze commandant gave a private briefing to his generals and colonels, whilst we five 'tour guides', got together to decide who was to be the lead interpreter for each of the following day's events and to share interesting facts which we had gleaned. Our colonel observed that the visits to the Palace and the Royal Mews were likely to elicit from the Russians a fair degree of sarcasm and criticism because of their traditionalism and ceremonial.

Instead, however, as we emerged from



Hyde Park Barracks, Lieutenant General Reznichenko turned to GOC Household Division and told him most earnestly that we had something very precious in all these traditions and that we should endeavour to never to lose them. Sadly, nobody from the Treasury was there to hear him. Several years later when the by now General Sir Michael Gow was C-in-C BAOR, I used to prepare for him a brief digest of interesting features in Krasnaya Zvezda (Red Star), the military daily newspaper. Frequently regimental and divisional anecdotes referred back to a 'rich tradition'. When one considers that the very furthest any Soviet unit could go back was the 1917 Revolution, and many dated only from the sieges of Moscow, Leningrad and Stalingrad, one was impressed by how great a value they put on any victory or heroic experience. How much longer are the unbroken histories of British regiments, and how lightly esteemed these are in the corridors of power. Of course we need progress, and we cannot cling onto every trivial memory; but too much is in danger of becoming lost, and with it the lessons once learned.

Sir Michael was a great believer in open dialogue with one's opposite number. It is ironic that he should have been C-in-C following the Christmas 1979 Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Our national protest against this intervention included social cold-shouldering of Soviet forces in Eastern German and of their liaison missions, as I know from personal experience. This was a political decision, not a military one. So Sir Michael never met his opposite number in the East and I never had the honour of being his interpreter. At the risk of saying something desperately politically incorrect, one cannot in retrospect help but have a crumb of sympathy for those Russians who found the going tough in Afghanistan, even with their vastly greater troop numbers and better lines of communication than the British and other NATO forces currently deployed there.

Back in the late 'fifties, when I was a young recruiting sergeant in Hamilton, I quickly learned the strength of regimental ties and traditions. My job was to encourage as many potential recruits as possible to join the Regiment; and in this I had a fair degree of success. Yet if I am completely truthful, I have to admit that half of those who joined us wanted to be Cameronians in the first place, because of brothers, fathers or uncles who had served there. Others would

enter the office having already made their mind up about the Black Watch, Argylls or some other Highland lot! It was well nigh impossible to dissuade such fellows without being unscrupulously dishonest, which was not an option. I am glad I am not a Scottish regimental recruiter today. I fear too much has been lost which would appeal to the finer senses of would be soldiers.

Now I left the Regiment in 1961 for my first long language course and never rejoined it. I turned up at the disbandment ceremony in Douglas in the uniform of an RAEC lieutenant in charge of a few Cameronian young soldiers from the Junior Tradesmen's Regiment at Troon. In theory ail this regimental nostalgia should leave me cold. But it doesn't; and anyway, it is much more precious than mere nostalgia.

When I was invited recently to speak at a service in an Old Folks' Home in Duns and saw Mr Archie Wright, sitting there wearing his Cameronian tie, I made a bee-line for him, and after the service heard quite a lot of his fascinating history. His father had also been a Cameronian - the only one of six Wrights in the 6th Battalion to survive one of the first and worst enemy machine gun concentrations at the battle of Festubert in May 1915-the Aubers battle honour, I believe.

The late Lt Colonel Alan Campbell and I kept bumping into each other professionally and had a special bond, perhaps based upon a shared sense of humour, which came out when he was my 21C at Troon.. My wife and I visited him a few years ago in Cambridgeshire, shortly after the death of his wife. His two medals were mounted on a little stand on a sideboard; only two General Service medals, but what a lot of campaign bars! There was barely room for his Malayan Mentioned in Dispatches oak leaf. This was another of those Treasury economies. In any other army each bar would have merited a separate medal. They seem to have got the message at last.

One frequently sees comparatively young soldiers being interviewed on television, sporting three or even four medals. When I was with the Soviet Mission in Germany Lt Col Jim Orr was deputy chief of our own mission in the East, I suppose we also had our own tacit understanding about professional matters of common interest. I at least was glad to know that that particular ex-Cameronian and fellow regimental athletics team member was at the other end of the 'corridor'. He deserved that OBE.

Until we moved home recently, we occasionally saw Rev Donald EN and Monica Cameron, who lived twenty miles further up the A1 road. Retired or not, they still do an invaluable Christian work amongst Edinburgh University students.

I have kept in touch with some of my National Service recruits, whose training corporal I had been, who live near me in the Borders - not traditional Cameronian country. Bill Miller is a semi-retired fruit and vegetable wholesaler in Jedburgh, Elliot Barrie is a sheep fanner in Yarrow valley, but also easing into retirement. He and I represented the Regiment in the East African Caledonian Games in Nairobi in 1957.

Roy Proudfoot, based in Moffat, has just retired from sales and marketing. Anybody who manages to secure as cushy a job as Padre's batman must be a bit of an entrepreneur. Andy Heggie left the Army to go to the Colonial department of Hendon Police College. He is now a refugee from the Borders, living in Queensland, but very much alive and well, judging by his recent letter.

As for me, I have recently completed a PhD in Theology and published a fairly weighty book on a subject which I believe to be hugely important. It is "Apocalypse Facts and Fantasies - Truths Tested and Errors Exposed by God's Gracious Guarantees to Israel" (Two edged Sword Publications), and have started on a second book intended to be more within the average reader's pocket. I have had many articles published in Christian journals.

However I recall that my first words in print were in the Covenanter. I had, as Dog Company clerk (remember Dog came before Delta?), typed out Covenanter notes in Barnard Castle. Later, as PR1 corporal in Buxtehude, I was entrusted by the late Major Douglas Clarke not only to re-type the entire First Battalion notes, but to edit and where necessary correct them, much to the annoyance of one future eminent colonel, whose splendid but lengthy skiing notes I had dared to foreshorten. Now I can sympathise with him, having recently had a letter to the Editor of the Scotsman so doctored that it elicited irate responses which the original version would not have prompted.

Reluctant to sever my long connection with our regimental journal, whose day must surely now be numbered, I would like to finish these ramblings on one light hearted demi-official religious note and one more

serious note. First I quote from my own "Lamentations of Alpha", as published in the Covenanter of circa May 1958. With the end of National Service then in view, the Army Council, with incentives rather than motivation in mind, had just offered massive pay increases and bounties to National Servicemen who were prepared to sign on, Regimental traditions have more to do with motivation. 'Bigbil' was the then Captain Alan Campbell, our OC. I have no idea where that nickname originated. 'Or' (Jim Orr) I have already referred to. Sadly Sergeant Major Johnny Hannah MM died a good number of years ago.

And there was great rejoicing amongst the elders of the Sons of Alpha, for a messenger, Dalitelegraff, did appear before Or, and did say unto him:

*"Call the people together and prophesy unto them."* Thus saith Selwyn Lloyd:

*'Hear ye, oh Sons of Alpha, and be it known unto you that tidings of your labours and your longsuffering have reached the ears of the Council. And it shall shortly come to pass that great riches shall be unto you, even to as many as shall write their names on the dotted line. And ye shall receive gold and silver and marriage allowance which shall be unto you for incentives. But woe unto him that writeth not his name thereon, for he shall suffer loss. And from him shall be taken Insurance, and it shall be a burden unto him greater even than tax.'*

But they that were called Nashees hearkened not unto the words of the prophecy, for the god Demob had blinded their eyes and darkened their understanding, for they were a stubborn people. And they did come before Bigbil and Or and Hannah-Em-Em, and did say unto them,

*"Sirs, be it known unto you, that though ye shall heap upon us great riches, and shall array us in fine raiment with many stripes, and shall give us Conditions, yet will we not write our names on the dotted line."*

And Bigbil answered and said unto them:

*"Oh ye foolish ones; it shall be unto you even as ye have desired. And ye shall return unto the land whence ye came, even Civvy Street, where the snow lieth deep, and the tempest rageth over the face of the earth, and the rain ceaseth not. But unto him that is wise shall be great blessing, and he shall be taken unto the south, unto a*

*land which floweth with beer and suppers, and he shall rejoice in his service, knowing that at the end cometh Peshun."*

A few weeks later we left Sharjah on the jolly troopship 'Dunera' for Kenya. The rest is history.

The driver-courier's commentary on a recent coach tour of the West Highlands reminded me of extend to which the Stewart dynasty's history has been romanticised by tunnel-visioned historians. But our Covenanter forebears and their survivors from whom the Regiment was formed were victims of a Stewart regime. Whatever our personal persuasion, we may learn much from their example. Covenanters Richard Cameron, Donald Cargill, Alexander Peden and many others, who fearlessly went to the gallows or gibbet, did so because their consciences compelled them to take a stand against laws imposed from another country. Today Protestants and Catholics alike are challenged by the overturning of good, wholesome laws which, though not perfect, have served us well, and by the introduction from abroad of new laws which may offend our faith and our consciences and defy the old commandments.

"Sometimes we too must take a stand, inspired by those who went before us."

#### **Addendum.**

Since submitting my article I have been in touch with Mrs Doris Strachan. Doris is the widow of the late Rev. Jim Strachan who was chaplain to the first Battalion in Trieste in 1948/9 and returned as Padre at the beginning of our tour at Buxtehude in 1955. He remained with throughout Buxtehude, Redford Barracks and Kenya-plus-Persian Gulf Tours thereafter he was posted to the K.O.S.B in Berlin. I recall that he said that he had one of the worlds largest parishes, with members scattered throughout Nairobi, the Rift Valley, Bahrain, the Trucial States and briefly Oman, not to mention any soldier under sentence of more than 56 days in the Cyprus detention centre!

When Jim retired from the Army he became minister at Colmonell in Ayrshire and later at Hobkirk in Roxburghshire. He loved the borders countryside and when he left the ministry, settled with Doris near Hume in Berwickshire. Sadly Jim died in 1960: Doris recently moved to nearby Kelso.

Some readers will remember the four

children, Rhoda, Vivienne, Francis and Jamie. Francis and Jamie were with them in Bahrain and Nairobi, the two older girls being at boarding school. All are evidently well, because Doris now has 10 grandchildren.

Doris was pleased the other day to receive a visit from ex national serviceman Roy Proudfoot and Sam Shaw, Jim's batman and driver and occasional babysitters, both of whom have a great respect for him. Doris regarded the visit as a tribute to Jim. Roys trip from Moffat to Glasgow to pick up Sam and thence to Kelso with a return trip involving dropping in on me, amounted to 318 miles. Doris says that of all the regiments with whom Jim served The Cameronian were by far his favourites

**Donald CB Cameron**

**A Cameronian in the R.A.P.C.**  
The Intelligence Corps Centre WC) - near Uckfield.

In July 1955, having passed my course, I was feeling a little overwhelmed by the direct promotion from bandsman to sergeant and yet delighted that I had received six months retrospective promotion as a reward for my success. I had to be mindful that I was being



posted as a specialist and so far as the unit were concerned I would be the Pay Corps at the ICC. The name Maresfield Park Camp did suggest to me I was about to see grandeur. However, I was soon disappointed, for the unit was a scattered collection of wartime brick huts without a staircase in sight. Stoves

had to be lit and coke fires maintained in this cold winter camp.

The Intelligence Corps, detached from the Corps of Military Police in 1940, was still a nonregular corps, meaning officers, often on short service commissions, were transferred in and combined with those regularly commission from the sergeants' mess. This fact alongside the educated National Service recruits of A level and degree standard gave the ICC an egalitarian, learned atmosphere and sense of fan. Seeing a recruit having difficulty in lighting a fire, my words led to the response: "Sergeant, fire lighting was not part of the curriculum of my university ." Even the corps cap badge of a rose beneath a crown, with a base and supports of greenery was treated with humour and called a pansy resting on its laurels. The sergeants' mess did not have an elbow, boozy atmosphere and was so little used outside mess nights that the commandant thought it necessary to remind us that our social life together was essential to the esprit de corps of army life. Move it - If you can't move it paint it -If it moves salute it.

During my second day at ICC the RSM (Irish Guards attached) rang to say, in his rasping Northern Irish accent, that Capt Stevens, the adjutant was displeased because I had not saluted him. It could have happened because, being new, I had first to find my office and then ask someone to show me the layout of the camp. I learnt later that Capt Stevens was an ex- Cameronian officer who had served with the battalion in Gibraltar in 1947. He was a great admirer of the cockney QM, 'Luggy' Bunce. Noblesse Oblige.

I look upon my time at the ICC as a period of funny incidents. The first began when a squat, auburn haired man, wearing the badges of the Oxford OTC, asked me to explain the pay system to him. He had prepared well for this National Service by adding to his school's CCF by doing all his basic and corps training and passing WOSB during his vacations. I found him friendly, sociable with the assurance of an aristocrat who knew he had it and did not need to impress anybody. I disliked, and told him so, his excessive sense of paternalism and the desire for leadership. I told him if he ever went over the top I would not want to be with him.

As an aristocrat, he quickly became known as the Honourable Ted. He stood out because of hedgehog shaped hair, gold-rimmed spectacles, and a squint and by his extrovert and eccentric nature.

After a week he went to Baton Hall OTS. After a few months Ted, under his brand new service cap and newly placed pip, came to take pay parade. A recruit described him, in his blues, as looking like an oriental bus conductor.

One early afternoon, looking down the slight hill running through the camp, I could see that the recruits were about have a bit of fan with Ted as he began to climb the hill. In an ordered fashion, they were gradually leaving their huts in a continuous line to ensure that Ted saluted them with the motion of a bread slicer, which he did without any comment. My final memory of Ted was doing a solo jive in the sergeants' mess while his fellow officers either showed pleasure or disapproval.

#### **A Soviet Surprise.**

One of the Russian linguists was sent to do fatigues at the museum and quickly estimated that one of the displayed Russian officer's uniforms would fit him. Knowing that the ICC had often NATO officers on courses, he knew another strange uniform would probably be accepted. He decided to wear the uniform when the officers and sergeants were at lunch.

Having received a few salutes on the way to the cookhouse, he presented himself to the orderly officer and sergeant by saying in an accented voice: "I am a member of the Russian Military Attache's staff and would like you to show me some of your training." His effectiveness was met with a stunned silence and an immediate burst of laughter from him.

The joke was so much appreciated that he appeared in Russian uniform again to help us serve the cookhouse dinner at Christmas. Speaking Polish was not enough.

G, a former member of the Military Provost Staff Corps, had been transferred to the Int. Corps as a Polish linguist. His Polish wife had taught him the language for many years. He had become a problem because he had failed all the courses that would have made him a useful member of the Int. Corps. His unsuitability for intelligence work can be best illustrated by his failure to respond to the following remark: "I have a friend who speaks the Kiwi dialect of Polish: he is always brushing it up." As an interim measure, G

returned to familiar work by becoming the provost sergeant.

### **Going Lightly**

The recruits retained their original units and ranks, trooper etc, until they had passed the Field Security Course. At mid point they were granted a forty-eight hour pass. As a joke on one occasion, someone booked out a fictitious Gunner Golightly. As expected, G did not see anything unusual about Golightly and set in motion the usual Abseight telegram to Records and asked some dim witted clerk to send it. The RA Record Office asked the ICC to check and everybody recognised that that a hoaxer had been at work.

### **HQ-1(Br)Corps in Bielefeld.**

This large HQ of senior ranks had a sergeants' mess of 120, with staff cars to salute, an opportunity to know personnel of every corps in the army and to see colonels and brigadiers along every corridor: the sight of a private soldier was a rarity. 'When everybody is somebody nobody is anybody.' A short tram ride placed us within a medium sized city to satisfy every interest. First recorded in 1016, Bielefeld received a charter one year before the Magna Carta in 1214: became a Hansa town and then became Prussian in 1647. Like parts of Ulster, it made its name growing flax and making linen.

### **A Veil of Vapour**

The humour of my RAPC service continued after I reached Bielefeld. On arrival I told the interpreter, Neville Davies of the tot. Corps, that I wanted to learn German. Neville, bilingual and educated in pre-war Germany, was well connected in the community. He kindly offered to take me to a club to meet the locals. As I set off one evening, the other sergeants, with mischievous grins, told me that I would enjoy the evening. In the dressing room, Neville declared that this was a naturist club and we would have to proceed naked beyond the door.

Hearing my gasp, he said: "They won't mind and why should you." We entered a room of whirling vapour, a damp floor and dripping tiles of a Turkish Bath. Mentally I was wearing L-plates or for those who have been stationed in Germany the Fahrschule sign. Neville, still holding his pipe, gradually introduced me to naked adults of both sexes with their children. I remember the handshakes and all the bodily movements. A couple invited Neville and me to lunch

the next Sunday: I was relieved that it was not served in the nude.

Later in the evening, I found myself sitting with a very pretty girl and her parents. Renata offered to show me Bielefeld the next Saturday afternoon with an invitation to have dinner with her family. Meeting Renata with her clothes on at the Ratskeller gave me a feeling of a topsy-turvy world. With hindsight, although I would not be able to sell it as a Covenanter excursion, I now believe that the naturist experience can defuse smut and allow children to feel relaxed about their bodies.

Vinegar can mean less.

In my desire to learn German, I succeeded in being given permission to live with a German family (they just charged me my ration allowance.) Their three grown up children got me quickly absorbed in their circle of friends and soon had a regular Gasthaus. One evening three RASC drivers came in for a meal. After their plates had been placed on the table I heard one of them asked for vinegar. In German W is sounded as V so vinegar can sound like weniger, meaning less. As I saw the waitress about to remove the full plates, I knew what was in her mind. I walked over and explained the misunderstanding to the waitress and told her the drivers wanted Essig (vinegar) and not weniger. The drivers had a good laugh and as I walked away, I heard one of them say: "He's a decent Jerry."

### **Not awa to bide awa**

Among general duty men at I(Br) Corps was Gunner Sharples, a very cheerful lad, who had a lovely teenage girlfriend called Anita. He had spoke German well enough without studying it. I often saw them together and often passed a few words. One evening Sharples told me that he was taking Anita home to meet his parents. A week later the RSM rang to ask me if I knew anything about Gunner Sharples. I was told immediately to report to the commandant's office where I found a German policeman. As the story unfolded I learnt that Anita, still at school, was studying for her Abituron her way to university. She was in conflict with her parents over her romance and she knew they would not have given their permission for her to go England with Sharples. A telephone call to England confirmed all was well. Three weeks passed before Sharples returned very late from leave. Escorted from the guardroom, he handed me his marriage certificate to claim his marriage allowance.

Seeing The County of Dumfries on the certificate, it lessened my surprise when he told me that, after being in residence the required time, he had married Anita at Gretna Green. It caused so much delight that presents began to arrive at the guardroom.

Anita's parents were both upset and angry. The meetings of military and German lawyers told us the parents were questioning the validity of the ceremony. Of course, they had no knowledge of the difference in English and Scottish law in respect of age of marriage without parental consent. They heard that runaway couples chose Gretna Green because it was the nearest border crossing within Scottish law. In the end, they had to accept that Anita would have to remain Frau Sharples. I hope that our Bielefeld Romeo and Juliet are happy in their retirement.

### Auf Wiedersehen

Although I saw both army and Bielefeld friends again, I did not return to this Westphalian city until June 2002 when I was staying overnight there with one of my regular tour groups before we travelled to Berlin. This group were the ex-soldiers and their families of the 2ndWW US 102nd Infantry Division (Ozarks) whose tours (after they have visited their battlefields) I have helped to arrange and taken for now twenty-five years. With some of my group I walked from our hotel opposite the Bahnhof to the centre. I told them just as the tram stopped near us I could still hear the Schaffher saying Jahnplatz. I thought of Renata as I looked at Ratskeller, the theatre reminded me of the time when I saw the White Horse Inn, and just around the corner was the building where the Anglo-German die Brücke met for its calendar of social events between mainly local Germans and service personnel. I recalled going to hear the superb Christmas concert given by the Bielefelder Kinderchor at the Oetker-Halle with Olga, the daughter of the family where I was living. She had been a member of the choir. The concert was largely for former choir members and when they sang with the children one was covered with a blanket of the most beautiful music.

The Europa Cafe was still on the Jahnplatz where I remembered the Germans lighting paper napkins, allowing them to drift into the air while saying that this was to remind us that Rudolf Hess had flown to Scotland in June 1941. I learnt that German evenings out were wine, women and song (and dancing)

with drink becoming the servant and not the master. During my time in Bielefeld I believed I experienced the full benefit of living in Germany.

Bill Coughlan.

### Is there life after Kneller Hall?

On the 6th September 2006 three former pupils, John Curtis, Jim Furner and Bill Coughlan met in Chelmsford



to compare their lives as boys and bandmen during their different periods of service between 1946 and 1961.

To enlist in bands in those days one had just to be able to breathe and walk: bandmasters hoped that within the boys' room there would be some musical ability. Although among the boys there were passengers who observed unauthorised silences, there were some very fine musicians waiting to be discovered in this lottery like recruitment.

We served at a time when many of our fellow boys were from orphanages, from poor, deprived backgrounds or courts saying to young offenders "will it be Borstal or an army band"? Few of us spoke about our past.

Most of us were irregular regulars, for our reasons for enlisting was often Hobson's Choice. Often our actual, or near illiteracy, soon placed us in the unique position of becoming good readers of music before we became basic readers of print.

Apart from our year at Kneller Hall, as line bandmen, we spent the greater part of our service with our regiments overseas. We had the common experience of being in Germany. John and Bill served in Trieste and Hong Kong. John also had postings in Austria and Korea: Bill in Gibraltar and Malaya while Jim, without an army number, was sent almost immediately after enlistment to join his band in Libya. They achieved far more from this varied foreign experience than just noticing the characteristic smells

of each place. The continuous pleasure of seeing new places gave a sense of comparison and the validity to Kipling's words: 'And what should they know of England who only England know?'

### **John Curtis - Northampton - The Northamptonshire Regiment.**

John faced with the uncertainty of whether to leave or return to KH with his brass bass as a student bandmaster, decided to sit and passed the competitive examination to enter the Civil Service at executive level. Along the road to eventual promotion to Senior Principal, John successfully gained an M.Phil in Education from Sussex University. Although he still feels a little regret that he did not become a BM, he has to balance this feeling with the satisfaction of advising Cabinet ministers and working at the EU in Brussels.

John left his band but did not leave music, for he became the choirmaster of his local church. Nowadays he is often seen at KH as one of the organisers of the International Military Music Society. Not as keen a listener of music as Jim and Bill, he is very interested in the historical and organisational aspects of army bands.

### **A Chance Meeting.**

Jim and Bill, both clarinettists, met while training to be teachers and reading for their degrees at London University. Combining the value of travel with education opportunities provided by the army, they had progressed through the three army certificates of education, allowing them to proceed further to qualify for higher education with music as one of their subjects. In the annual university music festival, Jim won the solo section with his performance of the Hindemith Sonata and then helped us to win the chamber music award. Our college paper acknowledged our success by using Bill's initials in the headline: 'WC Tops Chamber.'

### **Jim Furner Chawton, Hants - The 14/20th King's Hussars.**

Jim used the longevity of his cavalry band in Germany to learn German. A combination of formal study and the right social connections made it possible for him to gain a BA (Hons) in German. Alongside his busy time as a teacher, Jim has had many other interests, including coins, archaeology and Egyptology. Jim not only played in an early music group but also extended his interest

by making and selling gernshoms, shawns, crumhorns and other instruments to eager players at home and abroad: he often goes to Germany to hear ensembles playing his instruments. Jim does not see animals just as meat and milk but is also concerned whether their horns would make playable musical instruments. Like Bill, he regularly goes to the opera, concerts and to the theatre.

### **Bill Coughlan - Isle of Does, London E14. - The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles).**

Bill valued the variety of music he played in the band, for he gradually noticed the many differences. He discovered that compositions were often linked to folk music, literature, history, geography and the activities of men and women. He soon learned that all subjects were linked together and while studying he recognised this fact. Bill's desire to find answers to what he had seen in Europe and the colonies led him to reading History at university, taking the British Imperial period as his optional and special subjects. Later he widened his knowledge by gaining a MA in Imperial and Commonwealth Studies. In his school holidays, in order to augment the genteel poverty of teaching, he used his studies 7 languages and my travel experience as a basis to work as a guide in Europe, Britain and Ireland. He was chosen to take American university students on study tours, 2ndWW G.I.s back to their battlefields and was assigned to tours with a musical content.

### **The Music we Played.**

John, Jim and Bill did enjoy playing good music either just for practice or alongside the popular items played to their audiences. Trying to play the Polovtsian Dances, Scheherazade and many other difficult pieces was a rewarding musical experience. In their day the two Holst Suites and the Vaughan Williams English Folk Song Suite were only three original compositions for military band. Do bands play The Grasshoppers? Dance, the Dance of the Ostracised Imp or In a Persian Market anymore? Are the D.J. Duthoit arrangements collecting justified dust in the band libraries? The need to provide dance bands, jazz quartets and chamber music ensembles gave them an overall knowledge of music and a genuine chance to choose what they really liked. Some Cameronian bandsmen could not resist the temptation to write inappropriate words to most beautiful music, which

ensured that it would never sound the same again. Often they had their own names for pieces: e.g. The Maid of the Mountains was called 'The Whore from the Hills.'

Many past bandsmen had ensured they would be remembered by drawing or writing on the permanent extra bags in their music pads. Bill's band had Dicky, the BM, drawn as an absurd cartoon with the words beneath his feet: 'Never in the history of music had so much noise been made by so few to so many.'

We were fortunate, too to have served within the National Service period, allowing bands to use many conscript musicians while at the same time providing the socially useful cross mix of society in the services.

We agree that the help given to us by the NS Ed Corps sergeants and other NS men was the key to passing our examinations.

### Present Thoughts.

Bill said he disliked the use of trumpets in military bands because their battlefield sound disturbed the required harmonious sound. He further pointed out that Sousa recommended the use of cornets in bands.

John said that many of the present compositions and arrangements for bands are scored for trumpets.

Although we accepted that band music, like everything else is not static, we wished that bands would play no louder than lovely and keep the blast of pop music at bay.

The present service musicians, remain at school until eighteen, entering with Grades 7 or 8, with diplomas or degrees are different from us. Such people are articulate, have had better choices in life, want good conditions and, like the bandsmen of the past, do not like doing military duties but they cannot escape the fact that their basic training proves they are physically fit to be soldiers first. This is the past affecting the present, for we also disliked doing military duties. One can argue that a soldier does not have to be musician why should a musician have to be a soldier? This dual role has always deterred musicians joining the services.

We understand that, although there are now so few bands, recruitment is a major problem. Jim said the German army uses civilian professional musicians and such a job is one of prestige in Germany. A possible solution to the recruitment problem Bill may have discovered during breakfast conversation with two members of the Italian Air Force Band at a Berlin hotel in 2002. Although there was not time for him to understand

their conditions, it was apparent that they had high status, for they were staying in a 4 star hotel and not enjoying the pleasure of the barracks and the cookhouse in Berlin. All of them were civilian professional musicians who provided just musical services on a TA basis for the Italian Air Force. Their 103 strong band, seventy in Berlin, made it always possible for them to provide a band without interfering with their jobs as lecturers, teachers and orchestral players. The 'bella figura' tradition of the Italians meant they looked splendid in their tailored light blue uniforms. Of course, Italy does not have the overseas service commitments of Britain and probably their system might not work here. Other nations have fewer bands, even now and perhaps this means they have only time for musical duties: the real solution to the problem of musicians reluctance to carry out military tasks. No doubt, in time, KH will work out a compromise to minimise the military element in bands.

We concluded that our varied service as army bandsman and the educational classes presented to us gave us our opportunities that might have been denied to us had we remained in civilian life.

John Curtis - Jim Furner - Bill Coughlan.

## The Scottish Regiments

### BACKGROUND

Under the terms of the Defence White Paper of summer 2004 Scotland's six line infantry regiments will re-form as five battalions of the Royal Regiment of Scotland. Although the historic names will be enshrined in the operational battalions, to all intents and purposes the change is as drastic as the reforms of 1881 which brought the current regiments into being. Few senior officers involved in the Future Structure of the Infantry believe that the names, or indeed the number of battalions, will survive much further into the 21st century. At present there are six line infantry regiments. In order of precedence they are:

The Royal Scots

The Royal Highland Fusiliers

The King's Own Scottish Borderers

The Black Watch

The Highlanders

The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders

In addition to these regiments Scotland also possesses a foot guards regiment and an armoured cavalry regiment. These are:

The Scots Guards

The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards



**INTENTION**

The proposal is to write a concise history of each regiment based on existing sources but with a good deal of new material which will highlight personalities, not just famous commanders or medal winners but the experiences of the Jock, particularly when they exemplify regimental differences. The following anecdote from the First World War will be typical of the style: "The ferocity of the bombardment was an unnerving experience and later a Highland Division officer remembered hearing a sergeant encouraging his frightened men with the far from optimistic words: "*Great God Amichty, ye canna a' be killed.*" But despite the fear and the turmoil, in the midst of the fighting there were moments of black humour. Commanding the 6th Gordons at Arras was the Hon William Fraser, a regular officer with high standards, who asked a battalion runner from the front line where he had come from, only to receive the answer, "*Aberdeen*". With the battle raging, the conversation became more surreal.

*"No, no, where do you come from now?"*

*"Yonder,"* replied the runner.

*"Well,"* said the colonel, *"what's happening yonder?"*

*"Well, a Boche officer comes up to us and says surrender."*

*"Well?"*

*"We told him, to hell with surrender."*

*"Where's the officer now?"*

*"Yonder."*

*"What's he doing yonder?"*

*"Doing?"* said the runner. *"Doing? He's deid."*

Each volume will run to 65,000 words with appendices dealing with regimental music, tartans, colours, battle honours and VC winners.

**EXECUTION**

Work would begin in September 2005 and would be concluded within a 24 month timescale. Before writing anything I would approach the regimental colonels to appraise them of the project and to ask for co-operation from their RHQs for illustrations and other source material. It is also likely that they would publicise the books through the regimental associations. Production I leave to you. The books might not be written sequentially as each regiment has a different history. The Royal Scots, for example, have never suffered amalgamation whereas The Highlanders are a cocktail of

Camerons, Seaforth's and Gordons with other older regiments such as the Ross-shire Buffs lurking in the background.

**CODICIL**

It might make sense to concentrate solely on the line regiments and to omit The Scots Guards and Royal Scots Dragoon Guards. This would allow separate volumes for Queen's Own Highlanders and The Gordon Highlanders (amalgamated as The Highlanders in 1994) and to include The Cameronians (disbanded in 1968).

Trevor Royle

**Alone**

*The padre, the bugler, the piper and me Stood high on the hill by the boobab tree,  
Waiting and fearing the hearse on its way  
Carrying the man we would bury that day.*

*"It's a general who's died," the adjutant said  
"There's no one to mourn him now that he's dead,  
So it's up to us now and especially you three,  
The padre, the bugler, the piper, and me.*

*So the padre, the bugler, the piper and me Stood high on the hill by the boobab tree  
And following the hearse on the red desert track  
Strode a soldierly figure marching in black,*

*Who could it be out there all alone? A pale ashen face as though carved out of stone  
"It's his wife," said the padre, turning to see  
The bugler the piper and now sadly, me.*

*And now it was time to honour the man Lying so far from his home and his clan  
His widow looked up and under the tree  
Saw the padre, the bugler, the piper and me.*

*The sad bugle called, the pipes softly wailed  
As over the hills the wild lament sailed  
While into the grave the bearers did bend  
She had followed the drum to this bitter end*

Nick Carter

## **Recollections of the 10th (Lanarkshire Battalion of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in World War II**

The 10th Battalion was trained to the highest standard for the battles which it would not be called upon to fight.

Embodied in Hamilton in September 1939, under command of Lt Col Moncrieffe-Wright MC, it moved in May 1940 to Hawick, transiting through Braintree to coastal defence and training duties in

Suffolk in July of the same year. Along with the 9th Battalion of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and the 6th Battalion of the Royal Scots Fusiliers it was part of the 45th Infantry Brigade within the 15th (Scottish) Division. In November 1941 it moved through Durham to Newcastle where it assisted coastal defence of the Whitley Bay-North Shields area.

By July 1942 significant transfers of NCO's and Riflemen, and to a lesser extent Officers, were being made to other units.' The ultimate fate of the battalion was determined in December 1942 when a reorganisation of the 15th (Scottish) Division took place, three infantry battalions being replaced by an armoured brigade. The 10th Battalion, as the junior Cameronian Battalion in the Division was moved out, and its role determined as a holding formation. It moved to Barrow-in-Furness in January 1943. In June 1944 its role was further defined as a Reserve Battalion when it became associated with 9 I.T.C. and became part of 144th Infantry Brigade within the 48th Reserve Division. The other battalions in the Brigade were the 10th Battalion The Black Watch and the 2nd Battalion London Scottish. In July 1944 the Battalion moved to Langholm and thereafter was to perform a training and draft finding role until October 1945, when, the War over, it moved to Churchill Barracks in Ayr. Sadly, what had been trained as a fine fighting Battalion was destined never to see action as a unit.

I joined the 10th Cameronians as a Second Lieutenant in March 1941. I enlisted, and was given the King's shilling in September 1939 while at St Andrews University but was not called up until I passed the age of twenty. In July 1940, together with other St Andrews graduates, I reported to the Black Watch regimental barracks in Perth, being sent to an Officer Cadet Training Unit (OCTU) in Pwllheli in Wales at the end of the year. My father,\* who was commissioned in the Motor Machine Gun Corps in World War 1 had rejoined the Army in 1940 and was then Adjutant of the amalgamated 11th and 13th Battalions of the Cameronians in Ardrossan. I applied to be commissioned in the same regiment and, although it was wartime, had to give references to be accepted. I served with the 10th Cameronians until February 1943 when I applied to join the Parachute Regiment and was posted to the (Scottish) Battalion of the Parachute Regiment.

I eventually left the Army in 1946 in the

rank of Captain having been wounded in Italy in 1944, taken prisoner, and spending fifteen months of captivity in Prisoner of War camps.

\*Colonel Thomas Russell OBE MC was seconded from the Cameronians to the Royal Air Force Regiment and took part in the Normandy landings as officer commanding 1306 Mobile Wing, number 83 group RAF Second Tactical Air Force. He was twice mentioned in dispatches. At the end of the war he was appointed a British Resident in Germany and later a member of the Joint Services Liaison Organisation. Service for 14 post war year in Germany he earned the OBE for his services.

\*\*\*

I joined the Battalion when it was in Suffolk, and was posted to A Company stationed at Scots Hall, Minsmere. It was commanded by John Frost, then a Captain, a regular officer of the Cameronians. He was later to join the Parachute Regiment and after gallant actions at Bruneval, Tunisia and Sicily was to earn his place in military history with his legendary defence of the bridge at Arnhem. He took seriously his duty to imbue his subalterns with the fighting qualities which were part of his nature.. He remained slightly aloof, but friendly, regaling us with stories of his recent service in the Iraq Levies. He was then a bachelor and somewhat shy in female company. When the wife of one of his officers brought a young baby to the Mess he knew that he had to take notice of it and make some remark to the mother. This emerged as "**When do they start to eat meat?**"

Our company role was defence of the coast near Minsmere where the marshes behind the beaches had been flooded. We had platoon and Company Headquarters positions which were fortified with whatever materials were available.

A minefield of anti-tank and anti-personnel mines had been laid seaward of the beach ridge and in front of this we were in process of constructing an anti-tank obstacle made of scaffolding poles. The contraption was triangular-shaped in section, with the shorter vertical side, a pole about ten feet high, facing the sea. It was held in place by a clip fastened to a longer scaffolding pole lying on the sand and running inland. This in turn was fastened at the landward end to a long diagonal pole which joined the top of the vertical face. With the use of scaffolding clips this could be extended along the full length of the beach, being strengthened by scaffolding poles running laterally at angles through the structure. To erect and maintain the structure spanners had to be used to

fasten the clips. Riflemen soon found how easy it was to lose a spanner in the sand, and if there were no spanners this disagreeable chore could not continue until a further supply of spanners could be supplied. Air attacks on offshore shipping were not uncommon at this time.

Defence duties, however, were not always static. Exercises took place at divisional, brigade, battalion and company level to test specialist services such as signals, artillery and mortar support, anti-aircraft and anti-tank capacity, dealing with casualties and liaison with other formations such as contiguous units, the Home Guard and civilian services.

While coastal defence was the Battalion's primary role it was engaged in a rigorous training programme to ensure that it was fit for attack as well as defence and that all ranks were brought to peak physical fitness and battlereadiness.

"CROMWELL" was the code-word for invasion and there were written divisional orders for all units. The Standing Orders for War issued by Divisional Headquarters runs to twenty-eight pages. The training section is precise. All ranks were to carry out night exercises twice weekly. Each man had to carry out a twenty mile route march each week and be in an acceptable state of fitness at the end of it.

Cross-country runs had to be held weekly for all ranks under thirty-five years of age with less than fifteen years of service. Those not finishing in the specified time had to run a further two miles in a direction away from barracks. Thirty minutes of Physical Training had to be carried out each day. Training was to be twice as rigorous as that of the enemy. On return to barracks each day ten minutes good, repeat good, drill would be performed before dismissal. Training was so rigorous, that when I joined the Parachute Regiment I did not find the hardening training prior to parachute jumping unduly arduous after my experience in the 10th Cameronians.

Perhaps, even more important than physical training was proficiency with weaponry. Weapon training was a constant regime. Marksmanship was encouraged in all the infantry weaponry of the day, Bren guns, Sten guns, and .303 rifles. Every month saw practice in grenade-throwing, with the bayonet, laying down of smoke with 3 inch and 2 inch mortars as well as by grenade Lectures and demonstrations were arranged to gain familiarity with enemy weapons and specialist British weapons not used at

platoon level, such as Vickers and Lewis machine-guns, antitanks guns and Bofors anti-aircraft guns. A few were trained in the use of Bangalore torpedoes for breaching wire obstacles, and defusing booby traps. Officers were tested frequently on their tactical use of ground both in attack and defence..

Discipline was firm but charges for breaches were few. In mid-1942 the Battalion had the confident outlook of a well-trained athlete walking towards the start-line.

Apart from unit training within the Battalion, officers and NCOs were sent to Divisional establishments and further afield on specific specialist training courses. These were rigorous. At the Divisional Battle-school live ammunition was routinely used in training. In one exercise we were given a short time to dig in six feet from the edge of a bank which was subsequently attacked by live-firing tanks shooting into the bank. The Battle-school was reputedly cautioned as there were too many casualties on training. In the two years I spent in the Battalion I was sent on courses on 3 inch and 4.2 inch mortars, Infantry Rangefinder, Infantry Course at the Divisional Battle-school, , Royal Engineers Course on Explosives and Boobytraps, and Royal Artillery courses on 2-pounder and 6-pounder anti-tank guns. In retrospect I am led to wonder whether the ultimate role of the battalion as a training establishment was known before the final decision was announced and whether officers were being trained as trainers for the remainder of the war. The Parachute Regiment was a more attractive war-time alternative.

Training was taken so seriously that the War Diaries sent monthly to the War Office had to include an Appendix showing training activities for the month down to platoon level. By June 1942 this was twenty eight pages long.

In April 1941 the command structure of the 10th Battalion was as follows:

Commanding Officer Lt Col G Moncrieffe-Wright MC  
 Second in Command Major Irvine  
 Adjutant Captain T A Sweet  
 Officer commanding  
 A Company Captain J D Frost  
 Platoon commanders. Lieut G H Brocklehurst  
 (promoted Captain and 2 i/c in July)  
 Lieut St C V R Grant  
 2/Lt T Russell  
 2/Lt J M Symington

Officer commanding  
 B Company Captain J Williams  
 C Company Major Carter-Campbell  
 D Company Captain R Hume  
 HQ Company Major Henderson  
 Later in the year, in August, battalion strength is quoted as 881 During 1941 and 1942 Exercises continued. : BRUCE to test landward defences: KANGAROO to test the Home Guard: SEALAND to practice tank hunting. A Battalion exercise TORTOISE took place after the Battalion had moved to Newcastle and this was followed by OATMEAL, DELUGE, TWEED, DRYSHOD, BLACKADDER, LYNEDOCH, WEAR, BLYTH AND LOWLAND over a period of eight months in 1942. The move to Dalton-in-Furness on 6th January 1943 was a transport exercise in itself, undertaken in very wintry conditions and involving code words being announced to the convoy commander as the tail of the convoy passed various check points. The code words were all names of drinks, -

GIN, BRANDY etc. The Orders must have been issued by an Irishman as WHISKEY was spelt with an "E"!  
 While the battalion was in the Newcastle area air attacks on Newcastle docks were followed by a strike of port personnel which led to up to 160 riflemen being detailed for stevedoring duties on a daily basis. In the autumn up to 151 riflemen were assigned to agricultural duties to augment civilian labour Neither assignment was popular. Coincidentally when I was studying Law at Cambridge University after the War prior to assuming administrative and magisterial duties in the Colonial Service the period at Newcastle docks again came into focus. My legal tutor informed us that Churchill was so incensed with the action of the Newcastle stevedores that he directed that legislation be drafted to make striking in wartime a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment. He was dissuaded from this by his legal advisers on the grounds that such action might provoke much wider strike action and prison capacity and staffing were insufficient. The case was used to illustrate that laws should not be made if the means to enforce them were not in place.  
 In July 1942 Lt Col Moncrieffe-Wright MC was replaced as Commanding Officer by Lt Col E.K.G Sixsmith who was due to be posted to the War Office as GS01 nine months later. In the same month of July the Second in Command of the Battalion was also replaced by Sir C M A Bradford Bt. That

the two most senior officers in the Battalion were replaced in the same month, coupled with the transfer of 275 other ranks to other formations during the year should have alerted us to the announcement, made in December, that the Battalion was to move out of the 15th (Scottish) Division and assume the role of a holding formation. From the beginning of 1943 the War Diaries concentrate less on training duties and become a laconic record of postings to other units. Nevertheless recruits were brought in from ITC's for further recruit training and in April 1943 companies were graded according to their readiness for posting. A Company consisted of fully trained riflemen: B and C Companies were training companies: S Company a Specialist Company. By October 1943 the influx of trainees was at such a level that each rifle company now had six platoons.

The following is a summary of postings in and out of the Battalion for the years 1942 to 1944

	1942	1943	1944 (six months)
IN			
Officers	3	87	55
Other Ranks	15	1460	826
OUT			
Officers	4	78	40
Other Ranks	275	1174	583

Transfusions to and from other units at this rate severely affected the Battalion as a fighting force. The turnover in 1943 exceeded normal battalion strength.

In World War II many soldiers whose units had not been assigned to the expeditionary force in France in 1939 nor had been posted to the Far Eastern, African nor Italian theatres spent the majority of their service in defence and training roles in the United Kingdom from 1939- 1944 until the invasion of Europe in June 1944. Thus the period in action was relatively short. For a Battalion which had been honed to the highest standard of readiness for action it was a cruel blow to have been denied the opportunity to fight as a unit. The fighting prowess of the officers, NCO's and riflemen it posted to other units remains its legacy.

Gattonside Melrose.  
 Tom Russell

On leaving the army in 1946 Tom Russell served In the Colonial Administrative Service and Her Majesty's Overseas Civil Service in The Western Pacific from 1948 to 1974. He held posts of District Commissioner,

Financial Secretary and Chief Secretary. He was awarded the OBE in 1963 and the CBE in 1970. From 1974 to 1982 he was Governor of the Cayman Islands being awarded the CMG in 1980. He represented the Cayman Islands in London from 1982 to 2000. He has also been a Council Member of the Royal Commonwealth Ex-Service League since 1982 and published Memoirs entitled 'I Have The Honour To Be', in 2003.

Grateful acknowledgement is made to the National Archives at Kew for material obtained from War Diaries WO166 4181, 12505, 150.84, 14350 and 16443

## God save the Queen

On one glorious day in 1958 I was, "Senior British Officer Trucial Coast," on the occasion of the Queen's birthday. I was only a Captain and there were others far senior to me around but they were all attached to Levies, Scouts, Police and the like so as I was commanding "B" Company of the Battalion I was the only one actually serving Her Majesty. Hence my lofty title. We were stationed in Sharjah whence to get to the British Adviser's residence in Dubai one had to cross Dubai Creek in a local boat called an "abra" which was nothing more than the hued out trunk of a palm tree.. The instability of this frail craft was compounded by the fact that I had taken precautions to get myself into the right mood for this happy occasion. Came the moment when we hit the bank with a bump and I was propelled over the bows into the Creek, Sam Browne, medals and all, so that the first sight that the assembled dignitaries had of the SBOTC was a Glengarry floating on the water . The Pipe band were there under Bill Boddington ( no stranger to events of this nature) but even that did nothing to lighten the pofaced attitude of the British Adviser which resulted in my standing to attention in front of red-tabbed gentry whose line was, "What have you got to say?" Nothing much.

Nick Carter

## A Sad Afternoon for the Military Band.

The decoy was a known bandit tactic. Our neighbours the 1/Worcesters were led to disaster by sending a patrol of ten in response to a report that the bandits had burned out a timber lorry. They found the lorry on a logging track. They came under automatic fire from about eighty-five bandits, shouting, screaming and blowing bugles, from both sides of the track. Five of the Worcestershire Regt. survived but the other five, surrounded in an ambush, were

either killed outright or were killed at close quarters with parangs.

The death of the five members, one sergeant and possibly four young National Servicemen, of the Worcestershire Regiment turned out to be a tragic experience for the military band. On the 23rd February 1951, the band was at the British Military Hospital, Kluang to play the music for a touring and hospital concert party. In the afternoon, in the interval between the rehearsal and the concert, they were sitting around doing nothing in particular when a medical officer indicated that he would like six of us to help him. I think he assumed that, as bandsmen, we had had medical training, which at that time was not the case.

Much to our horror and surprise we found ourselves in the mortuary. Soon suitably dressed we began to assist in the post-mortem of the five members of the Worcestershire Regiment.

The surgeon told us that being killed in action was not enough: the War Office required a post-mortem. They were acting as porters and lifting and moving the deceased. What struck us was how final death looked on the faces of the soldiers. It occurred to me that death could come quickly and there was little time between life and death. For the surgeon it was an ordinary, regular duty but for us it was a deflated sick feeling because we too had done a variety of duties, which could have landed us in the mortuary. What was most disturbing for us, too, was that the M.O. was not sensitive to our feelings. He began to name and describe the human organs and their functions as if he were Dr. Tulp giving 'The Anatomy Lesson'.

The cuts of the parang convinced us of the reality that there was no Geneva Convention in Malayan Emergency, meaning the communist bandits, if captured, were likely to face the death penalty and this possibility meant that they would kill prisoners and leave no wounded.

Treating the bandits as criminals did not lead to a short campaign, for we were fighting people who believed in an ideal who were prepared to fight for twelve years in Malaya and then attacked periodically from over the border in Thailand. Chin Peng, the communist leader, did not cease hostilities until 1989.

Why was it called an Emergency and not a war? We were on active service, subject to a harsher discipline, awarded a medal and faced all the dangers of warfare.

The documents suggest that London

insurance firms would cover losses through the unlawful acts of an emergency but not a war. The recognition of a war would have transferred the whole cost to Britain.

In May 2004 I visited Worcester Cathedral and, while in the military chapel, I noticed there was a recent plaque to the memory of the members The Worcestershire Regiment who were killed or had died in the Malayan Emergency. I have never seen any other memorial to the Emergency before and this seemed unfair to me, for the campaign lasted twice as long as the 2nd WW. In chapel were two other men and their wives looking at the plaque. One of the men was a former CO of the Worcestershires' and was most interested in what I told him about five of the names. The years that had passed had not made it any easier for me to speak about this sad event.

Bill Coughlan.

### Recommended Reading

**The Flowers of the Forest** - Scotland and the Great War by Trevor Royle - Birlin Press ISBN 1843410303

Written and researched by Trevor Royle, one of Britain's major military historians, this is the first study to show the massive impact of Scotland's role in the defeat of the Kaiser's Germany.

Today we are as far away from the First World War as the Edwardians were from the Battle of Waterloo, but it casts a shadow over Scottish life that was never produced by the wars against Napoleon. The country and its people were changed forever by the events of 1914-1918. Once the workshop of the empire and an important source of manpower for the colonies, after the war, Scotland became something of an industrial and financial backwater. Emigration increased as morale slumped in the face of economic stagnation and decline.

The country had paid a disproportionately high price in casualties, a result of the larger numbers of volunteers and the use of Scottish battalions as shock troops in the fighting on the Western Front and Gallipoli - young men whom the novelist Ian Hay called 'the vanished generation [who] left behind them something which neither time can efface nor posterity belittle.' There was a sudden crisis of national self-confidence, leading one commentator to suggest in 1927 that 'the Scots are a dying race.'

Royle examines related themes such as the overwhelming response to the call for

volunteers and the subsequent high rate of fatalities, the performance of Scottish military formations in 1915 and 1916, the militarisation of the Scottish homeland, the resistance to war in Glasgow and the west of Scotland, the boom in the heavy industries and the strengthening of women's role in society following on from wartime employment.

The Flowers of the Forest - Scotland and the Great War by Trevor Royle - Birlin Press ISBN 1843410303

Available from Birlin Press most bookshops for £25.

**Dunkirk: Fight To The Last Man** - by Hugh Sebag-Montefiore

This recently published book contains a new angle on how the 1940 British Expeditionary Force came to be evacuated from Dunkirk: it was not just because of the courage of the men on the beaches as they were rescued by the Navy and those celebrated little ships.

According to author Hugh Sebag-Montefiore, the evacuation would never have taken place had it not been for the bravery of the British soldiers who were left behind to hold back the Germans while the evacuation went ahead.

The troops left behind were involved in a series of rearguard actions which were fought to the south of Dunkirk. Battle was joined there on 27 May 1940, the day after the commencement of the evacuation, because the British commander-in-chief Lord Gort had decided there was only one way to save the majority of the British troops in France: the infantry had to shield the corridor up which the British Army was retreating to Dunkirk by holding a string of strongpoints. They were to stand and fight, whatever the cost, even if they had to fight to the last man.

One of the battalion commanders who took this instruction literally was Lt Col Pop Gilmore of the 2nd Cameronians. When he was told his men had retreated beyond the point in the line they were supposed to hold, he immediately marched them back to where they had come from even though by this stage they were being fired on by machine guns. The battalion was all but decimated, and Gilmore was seriously wounded, but not before he and the few men left standing had recovered the lost ground.

It had been a close run victory however, as the following extract from the newly

discovered account by Captain Pat Hendriks, one of the surviving Cameronian officers, testified: "I was trying to discover if anyone was left on my left, when old Pop [Gilmore] appeared supported by three chaps, and hit in a couple of places. He was very heroic, and said: 'Well, I leave you in sole charge. This position is vital to the British Expeditionary Force, and must be held at all costs.' I said I'd do my best - with 20 men!"

One of the reasons so little has been written about the exploits of the men who shielded the corridor to Dunkirk in previous history books is that so many were lost during these battles.

The vivid accounts of the fighting in this book may only scratch the surface of what occurred - the author is still looking for more accounts to fill the gaps - but they mean that never again will the trials and tribulations of those involved be forgotten.

Dunkirk. Fight To The Last Man

Published by Viking/Penguin can be purchased from most bookshops for £25.

### **Tartan - by Hugh Cheape**

The story of tartan is told from the medieval love of display to the Victorian invention of exclusive clan identity. Along the journey, the history of the Highlands and its society is brought vividly to life.

In the latest edition (the third) of this classic and best selling book are 16 new pictures, details on women's Highland habit and revelations following recent dye tests on a kilt allegedly worn by Bonnie Prince Charlie.

A full colour section on individual clans enables the reader to find their own tartan and family history.

Hugh Cheape is Head of the Scottish Material Culture Research Centre at National Museums Scotland.

Available from bookshops or (p&p free in the UK) from the publisher NMS Enterprises Limited - Publishing, National Museums Scotland, Chambers Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1JF 0131 247 4026 publishing@nms.ac.uk

### **The Thin Red Line / War, Empire and Visions of Scotland**

- by Stuart Allan and Allan Carswell

Inspired by the collections in the National War Museum of Scotland, the authors explore the impact of war on generations of Scots, through union, empire, world war and modern global politics.

Exploring the history and relationship

between Scottish society and the growth and decline of British Imperial military power. Four substantial, illustrated essays explore the influence of war and military service in concepts of Scottish cultural identity, and the affects of changing military and strategic imperatives in Scotland and the Scottish people.

'...Allan and Carswell observe that the Scottish military heritage may have less appeal within contemporary Scotland as memories of the Empire and the Second World War fade. Hopefully this book will remind its readers that these are memories worth recalling and memories that are worthy of further study.'

As reviewed in Army Historical Research

'This richly illustrated book of 160 pages is a most succinct yet comprehensive journey through Scotland's glorious military history ... This book and the magnificent Museum in the Castle are recommended as a must for every professional soldier.'

As reviewed in The Highlander

'There is much truth in the old saying that Scotland was born fighting ... I recommend the book to anyone who seeks to understand how Scotland came to be the way it is today and especially how the military factor has shaped the national story.'

From the foreword by Professor T M Devine, University of Aberdeen

Available from bookshops or (p/p free in the UK) from the publisher NMS Enterprises Limited - Publishing, National Museums Scotland, Chambers Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1JF

0131 247 4026 publishing@nms.ac.uk

*All these publications are available also from Amazon (see also the Regimental website [www.cameronians.org](http://www.cameronians.org) at Links)*

## **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](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)

[enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto: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](http://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](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)

[enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk)

**Ratings enlisted after 1924**

NPP Accounts 1, AFPAA

Centurion Building

Grange Road

Gosport

Hampshire

P013 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](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)  
[enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto: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](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)  
[enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto: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](http://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](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)  
[enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto: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](http://www.cwgc.org)

#### Indian Army Officer's Records

British Library  
Asia, Pacific and Africa Collection  
96 Euston Road  
London  
NW1 2DB  
[www.bl.org](http://www.bl.org)

#### War Pension Enquiries

Veterans' Agency  
Norcross  
Blackpool  
FY5 3WP  
Telephone: 0800 169 2277  
[www.veteransagency.mod.uk](http://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](http://www.national-army-museum.ac.uk)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

The following advertisement took me vividly back to 1957 when I was commanding a platoon group of the Cameronians in what was at that time.

**SPECIAL OFFER**

from  
**£499**

**AL AIN OASIS**

7 nts incl meals/drinks/excursions

In the Abu Dhabi Emirate, the oasis city of Al Ain, set in the desert against a mountain backdrop, was once a stopping place for trading caravans. Now a modern city, you will still find a fascinating mix of old and new.

**Hilton Al Ain:** An excellent 1st class hotel with large swimming pool. At extra cost: tennis, squash, golf. Rooms: A/C, fridge, hairdryer, bathroom, balcony.

**Included:** Buffet breakfast, lunch, dinner; house beer/wine/tea/coffee, selected spirits and soft drinks.

**Included excursions:** Al Ain Oasis: dating back 2000 years, this is a true oasis in the midst of town and desert; Al Ain Fort and Museum; Camel market; hot springs; Jebel Hafeet Mountain with panoramic views.

Departure:	Price:	Departure:	Price:
03, 24 Apr 2006	£699	10 Jul	£599
08 May	£649	24 Jul	£699
22 May	£599	14, 21 Aug	£749
05, 20 Jun	£499	04, 18 Sep	£599

Selected UK domestic flights from £130  
We regret children are not accepted on this holiday.

Price includes: Rtn flts from Gatwick. Transfers. 7 nts accom inc meals/drinks/excursions as described. UK Dept tax: £20.  
Prices per person sharing twin. Not incl: local dept tax. Optional insurance. Booking conditions apply.

**ETIHAD** **01306 871161**  
ALWAYS (open daily inc Sat/Sun)

To book, telephone:

The Travel Collection,  
Decadence House, Dorking, Surrey RH5 4AZ

The Travel Collection  
The Royal Travel Group

called Buraimi, then a little oasis in the howling desert, of great strategic importance on the edge of the Rub el Khali. It was a collection of five villages, two of which were called Buraimi belonging to Muscat and three called Al Ain belonging to Abu Dhabi. Oil was being drilled for which drew the Saudis to occupy the oasis but they were

driven out by the Trucial Oman Scouts in the early fifties so we were there to see that although everybody wanted Buraimi they were not going to have it. We lived in a Beau Geste fort there ... A compound of high, strong mud walls, interspersed with watch towers, in which our tents were pitched among various odd mud buildings used for cooking, stores, arms, kites and the like. There was no running water or electricity and only British troops would have lived in those utterly foul conditions without a mutiny. It was the hottest place I have ever been in, with the temperature going up to 120 F plus. The "mess", which I shared with Dudley Heathcote was in the fort, a round three storied tower which nicely caught the searing winds and any sand storm which was passing by. We did have a kerosene driven fridge which occasionally worked. Now and then an RAF Valetta would drop in from Bahrain and once a thirsty pilot drained what he thought was an ex gin bottle of water which was in fact gin. He didn't fly back that day.

Not that any of us had much in the way of luxuries. Company HQ was in Sharjah in the Trucial Oman some 24 hours away by landrover across the trackless sandy desert. A hazardous journey only to be taken in necessity.

Apart from being a deterring presence one of our tasks was to protect Sheikh Zaid, brother of Shakbut, the Ruler of Abu Dhabi. Zaid had played a major part in overcoming the Saudis, even refusing to accept a £3,000,000 bribe from them so he was a marked man who himself took great care to watch his back. He didn't trust his fellow countrymen much either so slept somewhere different each night which made it difficult for us to keep track of him. He loved hawking and would often be miles out in the desert for days. I would go with him and got to know him well. He wouldn't speak English so I had an interpreter with me who from time to time was called upon to say, "Sheikh make joke," to nudge me into joining in the laughter. We guarded him well and he became Ruler of Abu Dhabi, President of the UAE and for a time was the richest man in the world. (Alas, nothing in it for me). One of the wonders of the place was the "falaj", a water system brought to the

country by the Persians in which from an underground source water is led through tunnels for miles to where it is required. In Buraimi there was a well maintained one and it was delightful to lie in it. covered in cool flowing water while little fishes nibbled at your toes. Compare that with the, "large swimming pool and bathrooms," of the advertisement.

A visit to Jabal Hafit is on the programme. I suppose there is a road there now up which you can go in air conditioned vehicles. We went there at the instigation of a fiery General ( whom I had known in the Gurkhas) who felt that a bit of mountain climbing would" do the chaps good". So a group set off, climbing the rocky, burning hill, battling through "camel thorn" when one of their number, a second lieutenant who had only been with us for a day got seperated so when they came to muster at the bottom of the hill he wasn't. In that heat with little water he wouldn't last long so a search was set up. The villagers rallied round, the Trucial Oman Scouts sent men, under Tony Gibb, ex Indian Army whom I knew well. This was before the days of helicopters and sophisticated communications so it all took time and therein lay the danger.

We searched for hours, the Bedu keeping in touch with each other with high pitched cries and the plan was one shot in the air, (all the Bedu carried rifles of course) if he were found alive and two if dead. It wasn't long before two shots told us the worst and there lying in the shadow of a rock was the body of John Boyd who had died horribly of thirst. His body was laid out in a little palm tree hut on the airstrip to await a plane to Bahrein where he lies buried to day. 'What a way to go, ' said the sentry guarding him when I went to check during the night. There lying under the brilliant desert stars John had never been so well protected in his life.

Nobody had had a chance to enjoy the "panoramic views." At least we didn't have to pay £700 to be there so we missed what is shown as "included to augment our melting bully beef,elastic goat's meat, liquid tinned butter, flies and an occasional tin of near boiling beer liable to explode, In spite of all this the Jocks' morale was high with no more than the usual soldiers' moans and anyway it was good to be far away from the beady eyes of Sergeant Majors, kit inspections and the like.

Surprising that a newspaper cutting can bring back memories of fifty years ago.

yours, etc  
Nick Carter

Sir,

As both a step-son of a Cameronian, HAP- (Tony) Doddwho lives in Western Australia and as a very amateur historian, I have always read with interest "The Covenanter". So it was that, shortly before a trip to South Africa and the Anglo-Zulu War battlefields in August last year, I chanced upon a reference in one of the issues (Covenanter 2004 page 52) to Daniel Sheehan's involvement at Rorke's Drift. This is near the property called Fugitive's Drift, owned by the Rattray family, now made into a fine guest lodge. It is only a few miles from Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift. The Late David Rattray had become an expert historian of that war and has gained insights to the battles by speaking to old Zulus whom he knew when he was a young man, who either participated in the battles or had stories passed down to them. I was able to give a copy of the Sheehan reference to the staff at Fugitive's Drift\*, and maybe this elicited the new information to which you refer under "Enquiries" in last year's issue. I cannot recommend a visit too highly. The tours are first rate, and the sites are full of atmosphere. The Welshmens' extraordinary resistance together with the remarkable Col. Durnford,as well as the retrieval of the regimental colours, bring tears to the eyes and could be in the best Cameronian traditions. On another note, a scientist work colleague of mine born in Renfrew, Prof. Bob Borland, was back in Scotland earlier this year and at my suggestion visited the exhibition at Low Parks. I am sending some of the material to Tony Dodd c/o his sister, Jeanne Vickers, as he leaves for the U.K. this Wednesday for 6 weeks, and a trip to Scotland may be in prospect. It may whet his appetite!

Yours etc,

The Hon. David C.L. Baillieu

\*Fugitives Drift, P.O. Box Rorke's Drift, Kwazulu, Natal 3016, South Africa  
[www.fugitives-drift-lodge.com](http://www.fugitives-drift-lodge.com)

Sir,

Campaign Medal Malaya

I noticed in the Sunday Telegraph that a new Campaign Medal instituted by the Malayan Government is to be awarded to ex servicemen who took part in the Malayan Emergency in the 1950's. Obviously this will affect many veterans of this campaign

who served there. I would be grateful if you could throw any light on the effect of this proposal.

Yours etc

Captain JHL Christie

**Editors Note:** *The Pingat Jasa Malaysia Medal is a special medal of service to eligible United Kingdom Service personnel who served from Independence until the end of Confrontation in the security of Malaysia, during the period 31 August 1957 and 12 August 1966 inclusive. Given that the Regiment served in the zone during the period 1950 – 1953 it is unlikely that any Cameronian will qualify – however Cameronians who may have served on the posted strength of a unit or formation and who served in the prescribed operational area of Malaysia or Singapore during the period 1957 - 1966 who think that they may qualify should let me know and an application form will be sent to them.*

Sir,

I would like to thank you for taking time to write and tell of the march "Save our Regiments." I did attend and marched with the Black Watch. This was a proud and sad occasion because this amalgamation will go ahead. This group of misfits and failures we call THE GOVERNMENT have not the least idea how the Regimental System works.

God help Britain because nobody else can

Yours etc

MM Edwards

Sir,

Colin Patrick Munro

A Memorial Plaque to Colin Munro - Born Aberdeen 22 Sep 1905 Died Sydney 27 Apr 1967. Younger son of Finlay and Isabella. Husband of Barbara, Father of Colin & Finlay is to be found in the Garrison Church at Rocks (old part) Sydney Australia.

He served with the London Scottish and The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)

Dunkirk 1940, POW Germany 1940 – 1945

Does anybody recognise the name?

Yours etc

Editor the London Scottish Regimental Gazette

Sir,

As at Singapore - August 1951

Down at Singapore for rest and re-training. There were a lot of Cameronians at the big NAAFI one Saturday night, all enjoying their Tiger beer when a group of Green Howard's came in carrying a Cup and chanting "We

won the Cup". Silence fell but looking around you could see belts being removed and being wound around fists. Within minutes bedlam- tables, chairs, bottles and glasses flew. The reason for this they had beaten us 2-1 earlier in the Malaya Cup.

The Military Police eventually arrived and peace was restored. The next day the sergeants went round waking everybody up "Get dressed, Hat and Belt, on Parade".

With everyone on Parade the Commanding Officer, Colonel Henning, accused us of letting the Cameronians down with our disgraceful behaviour.

He ended up by telling us "Only thing in your favour – there are more Green Howards in Hospital than Cameronians"

That brought a great cheer from all those present!!

Yours etc

Rfn Wilson (MMG Platoon – Forward Link Operator, Segamat)

Sir,

Thank you for my 2005 issue of the Covenanter which, as usual I quickly go through just to see old remembered names - Walcheren, Faroes etc. When I read through it at my leisure, Dan will be with me. We are fortunate to have the ferry service to Holland and we often spent our wedding anniversary in Holland seeing the place Dan had visited during his service there.

I have just read the article on Veritable and Blockbuster. I met Ken Clancey when they were stationed in the Crieff area. Dan was 25 and Ken seemed so much younger yet they were good friends. Ken's family gave hospitality to Dan and he was very distressed at his death and asked me to write to them. Dan spoke very little about his Army life and this article has been an eye opener for me. We were married for 56 years and I have always felt very proud of him – his mention in despatches hangs in our hall with the oak leaf attached.

Yours etc

Mrs Effie Watson

Sir,  
I enclose some photo's I took when returning from Australia in 2000.

I took the train from Singapore to Segamat at a cost of \$8, had thirteen stops and took 4 hours as it was the mail train. On my return I took the Express train, five stops, 4 hours five minutes and cost \$21. In 1952 it took ten hours for this journey.

Our HQ is now the Police Station, with a dual carriageway not the single track road.



The Railway Station is just the same (don't think it has been painted since) and outside the station is now the Bus Station. The



English speaking school over from our HQ is



still there but some houses have been built around the playing fields.

Yours etc  
Ronald Henderson

Sir,  
I would be grateful if you could kindly forward details in regard to taking out a subscription to the Covenanter. My interest in the magazine is in respect of my late uncle who had served with the 2nd Battalion and was killed whilst serving in France on the 10th March 1915. His name is commemorated on the Le Touret Memorial in France and the Scottish National War Memorial in Edinburgh Castle.

Yours etc  
David G Sheldrick

Sir,  
As members of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Memorial Club in Glasgow we wish to bring to the attention of your readers that out of 27 Regimental Clubs in Glasgow, we are the only one left.

The club was established in 1929 at Lynedoch Place before movimng to Holyrood Crescent in 1980. During the recent refurbishment a memorial stone has been erected in the front garden in memory of officers and men who perished in the two Great Wars.



At present our membership stands at 390 and the club is on a sound financial footing. Each year on the nearest Sunday to the 14th May a bus is laid on to take members to

and from Douglas for the memorial service which commemorates the disbandment of our 1st Battalion in 1968. The club provides a subsidy towards the cost of this trip leaving a charge in the order of £10 per person, Those wishing to attend should contact Mr Roy McCartney at 0141 427 4668 by 15 March. Visitors would be made very welcome.

Yours etc

J Bain – Chairman

Sir,

Thank you once again for the Covenanter. I was reminded again of old times with the photo old Pipe Major Jock Wilson and the Pipe Band in Syria. I was with the 90th, came out in 1947. My father also served in the 90th from 1908 until 1921 when he retired as RSM. During his service he received the Italian Medal of Valour.

Yours etc

CEJ Bryant

Sir,

Just a short note to confirm our conversation of 4 May when I contacted you concerning my previous contact in February 2002.

Thank you for including my letter in the Covenanter. Sadly there was no response to my enquiry but this is not surprising as the men involved were probably under canvas and any senior officer may not have been in our company that evening. There was a small correction I should have given to you and that is the fact that Major General DAH Grahame was the host and not a guest.

Since that time I have visited the site of the huts in the woods at Hursley Park in Hampshire where the event took place. I was able to pinpoint the exact location but of course the trees and bushes have grown extensively. The telephone cables are still in place and this was a help to find the corner of the path to the village where the Mess Hut was situated.

The book which I have been writing for many years is now within a matter of a few weeks of completion and I hope to get it published within the next months.

Yours etc

Mrs Stella Rutter

Sir,

I would be most grateful for any information that you can find regarding my late father James Henry Wilson Bannatyne (known as Harry). He was born 4 November 1915 in Glasgow (Langside Drive or Burnhead Road (both Newlands, Glasgow) His rank was

Captain and he served in the 2nd World War. He was badly injured by shrapnel in both thighs and spent a very long time in hospital towards the end of the War. I remember him being eternally grateful to an American surgeon who managed to save his legs by pinning his sciatic nerves together with platinum pins.

I recall another gentleman from the Newlands area whose surname was Davidson and I think he may have been Major Archie Davidson.

Probably like so many others, I wish that I had been privy to more information regarding my father's Army days. I do remember however that he did not like to talk about the War. I also believe that something extremely distressing had happened around one Christmas time which stayed with him until the end. I always remember his sadness at Christmas time. He died on 31 January 1987 aged 72 years after a short battle against cancer.

As the younger generation have no first hand knowledge about the wars and there is now no National Service, I feel it most important that I glean as much information about my father as possible and the role that he played in the war, so that it can be handed down through my children to their children keeping alive the gratitude that we should never forget.

Yours etc

Mrs Noreen DB Muir

**Editors Note:** See separate entry "Ministry of Defence Army Personnel Records."

Sir,

I am trying to find out more about my great grandpa, Private John Dallas who served with the Cameronians during WW1. I know he was in the 1/8th Battalion and his name is inscribed on the Jerusalem memorial which makes it look as though his death took place in Palestine. I am writing this in the hope that someone could help me as it's the 90th anniversary of his death next year and I think it would be nice for him to know that he hasn't been forgotten.

Yours etc

Sarah Rogers

**Editors Note:** See separate entry "Ministry of Defence Army Personnel Records)"

Sir,

Following our telephone conversation I enclose three photographs I have received from Jim Nightingale, formerly of the 7th Battalion. They were taken while the 52 (L) Division was undergoing conversion to a mountain division in the highlands hence the presence of an Indian soldier on two of them. The date was 1944 while Nightingale and Medics of the 7th were at the Divisional



*L to R Back Row - Jim Smith, J Burrows, Willie Bell, Bill Spears  
L to R Middle Row - Jim Nightingale, Willie Love, Cpl Foster, ?, John Patton  
L to R Front Row - Bobby Smith, John Coates, Cpl Willie McGuire, Dougie McCreath, L/Cpl Fred Brown,?. (Dougie McCreath was a Sgt at the time but later became a Captain)*



*L to R Standing - Rfn Gibby Watson, Indian, Rfn Bill Blair, Kneeling Cpl Freddie Wragg*

Ski School, their station being at Bridge of Allan and Aviemore. The Indian was one of the muleteers, who with mules were brought over to act as mountain transport. However the experiment was not a success the climate being unsuited to both Indian



*L to R Standing - Cpl Freddie Wragg, Indian, Rfn Bill Mair, Kneeling Jim Nightingale*

and animal. They were soon replaced by the American "Weasel" a small wide tracked vehicle adopted after a cadre from the 52nd had spent time in the USA Rockies carrying out evaluation trials.

Rifleman Nightingale was the jeep driver to the 7th Bn MO - he tells me successively there were four of them, the last being Dr George Jolly. George Jolly died earlier this year predeceasing his wife who only survived him by only a few weeks.

Yours etc  
Cliff Pettit

Sir,

I am writing to enquire whether you can provide me with any information on my aunt's father. His name was Mathew Gunn and he was a Rifleman in the Cameronians around 1948.

Yours etc  
Nicola Pithers

**Editors Note:** See separate entry "Ministry of Defence Army Personnel Records).

Sir,

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Yours etc

Sarah Rogers

**Editors Note:** See separate entry "Ministry of Defence Army Personnel Records)

Sir

On Saturday 18 November I received a n unexpected letter in the post. After reading this letter and letting my wife read it my first thought was that this was some kind of wind up! After digesting its contents again I realised it was not a wind up having checked the telephone numbers to be sure.

The letter read as follows

"In recognition of Services to the Voluntary Sector The Prime Minister and Mrs Blair request the honour of the company of Mr Jim Kane at a reception ar No 10 Downing Street Whitehall on Tuesday 12 December 2006".

To say I was surprised to receive such an honour (amazed might better be a better word)! So why?

After some thought someone must have put my name forward, but who? At this moment I am involved in three different organisations:-

- The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and Family Members
- INCAS (In Care Abuse Survivors)
- RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteers Programme)

Which of these might it have been?

Some ten days later my wife also received an invitation and on Tuesday 12 Decmeber we travelled to No 10 Downing Street. After a wait of about 20 minutes we were allowed in and were made most welcome by the staff on duty who escorted us to a room where we were issued with name tags. We were then escorted to the main reception hall at the top of a long flight of stairs along which were hung pictures of all past Prime Ministers. On entering the Main Hall we were again made most welcome and offered a choice of drinks.

After all the guests had arrived (I was amazed to see how many guests had been invited – about 100-150 and from all walks of life and nationalities, Wheelchairs, Crutches,

Blind and many other disabled persons). Both my wife and I were felt really proud to be involved with so many dignified people. When the Prime Minister arrived his first comment was to welcome all those present and he made the point that everyone present was someone special and a credit to society.

After his speech the Prime Minister mingled with guests as did his wife and they spoke to a number of them.

Photos were taken and the experience of being a guest at No 10 will never be



forgotten.

I must express my most grateful thanks to the person who put my name forward for this great event (Mr Ted Archer from RSVP!!)

Thank you very much.

Yours etc

Jim Kane

Third and fourth from left Mr Jim and Jane Kane

Sir,

I saw the attached in the Daily Telegraph 11 Nov 2006 and wondered if it would be of interest to you

Yours etc

Connie Dawson

Att PDSA advert

Sir

I wonder if any of your readers have any knowledge of the author Murray Smith formerly an officer in the Regiment. He has recently published "An exhilarating thriller in which astute characterization, a breakneck pace and an assured narrative technique result in a riveting read – Publishers Weekly". General Sir Peter de la Billiere said of the book "Devils Juggler" "A novel of ruthless intrigue and terrorism, brought together with a gripping realism"

Yours etc

Mike Sixsmith

Sir,

You may have read of the death of Brigadier John Tilly CBE 12 June 2005, the last Commandant of the Staff College Quetta. He was no stranger to Cameronians when Commander of 31 Lorried Infantry Brigade in BAOR during the fifties. He wrote to John Baynes who included his comments at page 90 in the Volume IV of the Regimental History  
Yours etc  
Dudley Lucas

*He said: "Of course I saw a good deal of the Jocks on training and I always had the highest opinion of them. They were tough, hard, cheerful and resilient and thrived on hardship and unpleasant conditions. They were undoubtedly the sort of chaps one would like on one's side in war and certainly were very fine fighting soldiers. I remember too, how excellently they were always turned out on any important occasion and what a high standard of administration the battalion had in barracks. During an inspection my impression was of rank upon rank of rather small chaps with pink and white complexions of healthy boys and clear blue eyes peering at one, so innocently, as though they had their minds on higher things, whereas one knew quite well behind those guileless faces some ghastly skulduggery was probably being considered – if not already laid on!"*

Sir,

News of the death of John Irvine took me back to Bahrein on New Years' Day in 1958 where the custom was that the resident British Battalion turned out a Guard of

Honour for the Ruler to celebrate the occasion. No exceptions were made for the strange customs of Scottish Battalions on that day.

My company was detailed to mount this guard so with the Sergeant Major I set about selecting the men who would most likely be sober at sunrise on the 1st of January. Not an easy task especially as I of course had to be one of them.

John was to command the party and he and I sat up all night with the chosen few sipping well and fairly wisely, ignoring the wild whoops and cries of "I belong to Glasgow," which rang around us.

Came the dawn and the platoon formed up, led by John to march to the place of parade where, albeit swaying slightly they underwent an inspection by the Sheikh. (They had all been issued with peppermint sweeties) John was the steadiest man on parade and was duly rewarded in the mess afterwards.

Some years later when i was umpiring in a prep school cricket match, my fellow umpire was John. So there we were still keeping things under control.

The photograph shows the parade with John commanding it along with Colour Sergeant Critcher.

Yours etc

Nick Carter



# MEMORY LANE

*VE / VJ Day Parade - Glasgow 14th August 2005*

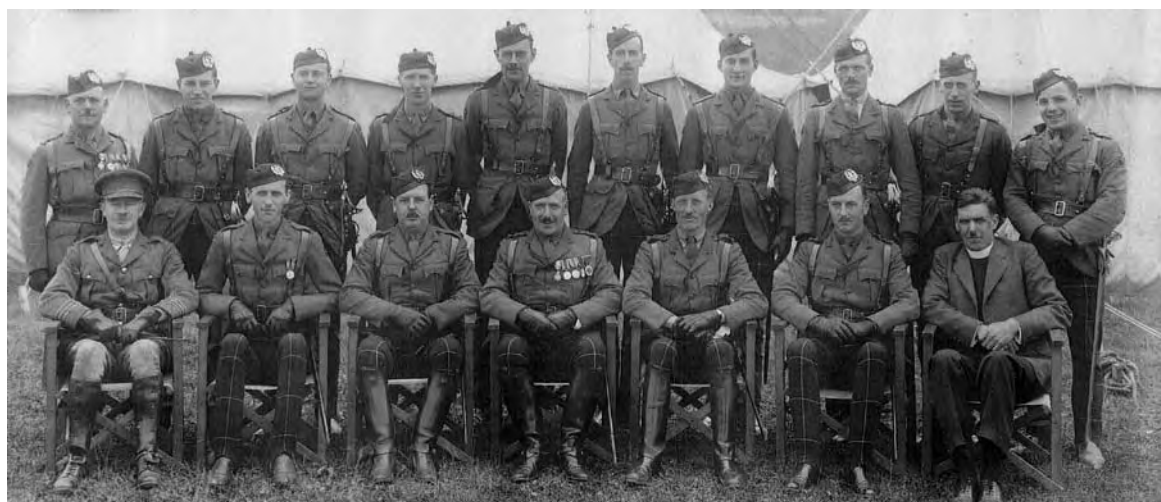


*Five Officers on parade*

*Major Brian Leishman (motorised – complete with troop refreshments)*

*Lt to rt Lieut Dudley Heathcote, Major Ian Farquharson, Major Colin Lindsay, Lt Col John Murray*

*5th/8th Battalion Officers - Girvan 1936*



*Back Row Left to Right No 5 Norman Woodburn No 6 Forrest Carnegie No 9 Alec Ogilvie Robertson  
Front Row left to right No 1 Joe Bingham - RAMC TA No2 Teddy Orr No3 Charlie Hall Watson  
- 2i/cNo 4 Robbie Begg CO No 5 Jock Sutherland - Adjutant (1st Bn) No 6 George Reid*

*Major PR Grant and the deputy Head Librarian - Shrivvenham (The Generals)*



*K.O.S.B. Farewell Parade Holyrood Palace  
Lft to Rgt: Capt David Eydes, Maj (Retd) Peter Eydes,  
Capt (Retd) David Christie, Maj James Christie*



*Cameronian Sunday - Douglas*





## IN MEMORIAM

*To those they leave behind may their memories be happy ones*

### Andrew Howat

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Andy Howat in January 2006. He is survived by three sons, two daughters, twelve grandchildren and nine great grandchildren to whom we send our sincere condolences.

### Major William Andrew Hay TD

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Major Hay on 13 March 2006.

### Captain Ronald Montgomery Reid

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Captain Reid at home in Dundee on 22 January 2006.

### Robert (Bobby) Cameron

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Bobby Cameron at The Erskine Home on 16 November 2006.

### Lieutenant Colonel George Paterson

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Colonel George Paterson at The Erskine Home on 27 August 2006. He served with the Regiment from 1940 – 1946 and saw service in India and Burma.

### Captain Colin Donald

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Colin Donald who died on the 13th October 2006, and those of us who knew him as a Subaltern in the 1st Bn. or as he rose to Captain and Adjutant in the 6/7 Cameronians lost a charming, kind, erudite and witty friend.

But these episodes are but a small part of the long, full, committed life of service to Glasgow and to Scotland at large which filled his later years and formed his main legacy.

Born near Strathaven in 1934 Colin was educated locally and then went to Rugby School and thence to Cambridge University, the law degree from which, coupled with a further qualification from Glasgow University, fitted him perfectly for the career on which he then embarked.

Although his own father was a stockbroker, the Donald family tradition was in the law, centred on the firm, by then McGrigor

Donald, which his great-great-grandfather had founded (as CD Donald and Sons) in 1800.

Colin now joined the firm and remained based there for the next 30 years.

His many clients enjoyed his skill, professional thoroughness, charm and great good humour, a combination which we Cameronians can readily recognise.

Throughout these years and throughout his retirement Colin undertook a huge range of other work which was of immense value to Glasgow, Glaswegians and the whole of Scotland.



He worked with the National Trust for Scotland for 40 years, assisting with the acquisition of properties like the popular "Tenement House in Garnethill", and preparing, in the mid 90's, the Donald Report which subsequently transformed the Trusts system of governance.

The Burrell Collection captured his time and attention after he became a trustee in 1983 and senior trustee some years later. He continued with this responsible work

through good years and tough ones, with their attendant publicity and exposure despite his distaste for both.

Much of his work, however, was done away from the public eye, though many benefited from his presence on the Court of Glasgow University and his work as director and eventually vice-chairman of the Universities Superannuation Scheme, a pension fund with assets of £2 billion, his chairmanship of the Thistle Foundation, an Edinburgh disability charity, and his trusteeship of the Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland.

The full list is a much longer one and confirms Colin's remarkable and sustained interest in a wide range of activities to the benefit of many folks in Glasgow and throughout Scotland.

Alongside these responsibilities Colin maintained an active social and domestic life. Theresa and he had three children and



placed a high value on the time spent with them and, in due course of time, their four grandchildren.

Those who knew Colin in his army and TA days, all those years ago will recognise the mixture of calm efficiency, charm, dedication and sometimes uproarious wit

and humour which typified his enviable approach to life.

All of us like to be appreciated and remembered and to set our stamp upon the time and place in which we live. In this regard, few men will leave a firmer footprint from a gentler tread than Colin Donald.

Colin's schooling at Rugby, his service in the 1st Battalion and his time at Oxford prepared him to face life with quiet self assurance and understated charm which served him well, and made him many friends, throughout a long illustrious career in Scottish business and public life. However, my own best – remembered recollections are of the years spent in 6/7 Cameronians as subalterns and successively as adjutant.

He never appeared to take anything in life, certainly not in T.A life, too seriously, could spot pomposity a distance away, against the wind and his delight in providing "le mot juste" could describe something, or defuse a situation, with great skill.

It was he who described Ian Keith's new Humber Super Snipe; a vehicle of enormous size and red-leather-lined opulence as the "fornicatorium" a name which stuck until Ian parted with it.

The many rounds we all played at camps whether @ Carnoustie or Rye, or elsewhere were always a pleasure. Colin played golf with languorous ease, he was a brilliant exponent of a shot, later copied and used to great effect by Phil Mickelson the USA Pro Tour, which involved a slow full swing through lush greenside rough which sent the ball through a high arc to drop and nestle near the pins. The result would be met by an expression combining modest pleasure and a sort of bemused disbelief that the magic had worked - again!

Conversation during these rounds of golf, and afterwards, was always interesting and amusing, and these occasions are amongst the happiest recollections of T.A. life.

Barry Camp, on the year of Colin's marriage, produced a well-remembered moment. Part of the morning had been spent in decorating the officer's mess – a large Nissen hut – for the mess cocktail party. This was to have a Spanish theme, which explained why the entire floor was covered with straw and the two main central light fittings had been draped in red satin trimmed with black lace – with military accuracy. Colin had promptly dubbed these "camiknickers – right and left – in such surreal surroundings, after lunch and before afternoon duties, it was time for



the annual mess meeting.

Each year at this meeting, officers who had recently married would be presented with an inscribed salver from the mess to mark the occasion.

"This year, alas", said Ian Keith "costs have risen, times are hard and we've had to cut down, so the four young officers involved will each receive a cut glass whisky decanter with an appropriately engraved silver bibs instead"

These would be handed over now, but as time was pressing for the return to duties, he was rather afraid that there would be time for only one short speech of thanks on behalf of all four. As one, the other three pointed to Colin who, when all had received their gifts, rose and said in suitably modest, even chastened tones "on behalf of us all I would like to thank you for this cut-down glass decanter".

"From his earliest days in the Regiment Colin wore uniform with an air which was somehow more academic than military, a situation which did not always meet with the approval of his superiors one of whom, while discussing with Colin the need for some sartorial improvement, held up the example of Jeremy Hawtrey -Woore, fellow subaltern, as a model for all that a smart, well- pressed brightly-polished BD clad young officer might aspire to be.

This graphic image prompted Colin to produce another of his own and he thereafter referred to Jeremy as 'this shimmering vision in khaki'!

He is survived by his wife Theresa, their sons Colin and Jamie and daughter Caroline to whom we send our sincere condolences  
George Ferguson

### Colonel Robert Dobson

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Bob Dobson, who died in August 2006, he was born in 1920, which put him right at the heart of that generation of young men who contributed so much and served so long in the Second World War.

Like many of them Bob "had a good war", in which he began in the Royal Engineers, straight from youthful T.A Service, and was commissioned in to the Royal Artillery though he transferred to the Royal Scots Fusiliers before D-Day. Scheduled to arrive in Normandy on

D. Day plus three with his Bn., Bob was dispatched by his C.O to take command of

100 first-line reinforcements at Newhaven, which he did, whereupon he and his party were bundled onto an assault craft and delivered onto Juno beach on D-Day plus one, which meant that the reinforcements were in place two days before any casualties had occurred, since the Bn were still in England.

After the break-out from Normandy, as the advance through France gained pace, fighting and recce patrols were everyday fare for the leading Bns. And Bob was soon a veteran of more than 50 of these, always bringing his men back, and acquiring the name of Pin Down Dobson" from the signals platoon because of frequent calls for support when pinned down by enemy fire. Whilst not objecting to the accolade Bob maintained the name awed more to alliteration than accuracy.

He did admit to being caught once, as it were, literally "red-handed". During the advance his platoon had liberated a village whose inhabitants pressed upon them liberal supplies of calvados, the local speciality.

Accepting their hospitality (and the spirit in which it was given!) Bob and his men were soon refreshed to the point where they were feeling no pain, which was fortunate as the Americans, arriving, as usual, late and in numbers, jumped from their tanks to join the party. In welcoming them Bob, by his own account, leant nonchalantly against a tank with his hand on its super hot exhaust pipe - and was swiftly medevaced with a face as red as his hand!

Before the end of hostilities Bob was to serve with the military government in Dortmund before further postings to the Far East and East Africa.

A "good war" indeed.

And all this took place before his time in the 6/7 Cameronians'" which began after Bob, by now married to Mary, established in the world of Marine insurance and settled in Glasgow, rejoined the TA and enlisted in the Cameroonians'.

In the years that followed Bob could be found, whether on a TEWT or in the mess in Coplaw Street, with his Lovat-patterned pipe clenched in his teeth or cupped in a gesticulating hand, joining in, and revelling in, the conversation.

As his war service showed, Bob had a capacity for getting in the thick of things and seeing them through. As the last commanding Officer of 6/7 Cameronians

he served through until the T.A ended with a memorable final camp at Thetford, and the TAVR replaced it.

Soon after, Bob became Colonel Commandant of the Lanarkshire Cadet Force.

For a man with his war and T.A background Bob could have found retirement dull were it not for a late call to "trouble – shoot" in Nigeria over some sinister goings on in the world of marine insurance and his presidency at home of the Glasgow Red Cross Society up to its merger with East Renfrewshire in 1992.

Like so many of his generation Bob Dobson found the time and drive to be a success in several fields over the years, since in his time he played the roles of a Soldier, C.O, business man, public and charity servant, husband, parent and grandfather and will be missed, by those who knew him, in all of them.

He is survived by his wife Mary and their sons Peter and Andrew to whom we send our sincere condolences

George Ferguson

### **Jimmy Ballantyne (1942-2006)**

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Jim Ballantyne. It is almost certain that every man and woman that reads this will have known Jimmy Ballantyne personally, or will have read or heard about him at one time or another over the past forty five plus years since he joined the Regiment. I do suppose that most could be heard to say: 'I knew him very well, and we shared some good experiences over the years', others perhaps may point to instances when the things Jim said or did were not to their liking, not as they thought correct, and instead of treating them as they would their own presumed human failings, would covertly seek to hide their own shortcomings behind those of his, and others.

Jim Ballantyne was born at Beckford Lodge, Hamilton, on 30th March 1943. Most Cameronians alive still will have shared with Jim the difficulties and experiences of growing up as a young boy and teenager growing up in those early post war years in Scotland. One member of our Organisation who will remember Jim during this period is Robert McAuslin of Hamilton when as a schoolboy Jimmy used to deliver his families newspapers. Life was to sweep Jim along as it does us all, Jim wanted most of all to enlist with the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) but first became a Miner, then when he and a

friend finally enlisted with the Regiment on 31st October 1960 Jim dreamed of becoming the best Piper in the Pipe Band through his love of music, and his friend wanted to become a Chef. You guessed it; fate and the army decided Jimmy was to be a Chef, and his friend a Piper. Jim would tell you that his most terrifying moment came when as a Regimental Chef in Aden there came the news they were to receive a visit by a General who in all possibility would also want to look around the cook house during his visit, despite having been pre-warned of the visit and repeatedly reminded to salute smartly if approached, Jim was completely overwhelmed when he saw General Jolly and Lt Col. Leslie Dow (Commanding Officer) stride towards him and despite whispered instructions to salute, Jim was so taken with nerves he just could not, but lived to boast that he must be the only Rifleman to escape with not having done so.

Just as most servicemen and women have some problems re-adjusting to civilian life again on completion of their service, it can be more so for a regular soldier having completed nine years service. Jim's first employment was as a Chef with the hospital in Leith, Edinburgh. Later he became an Insurance Agent for a short time before finding a job he enjoyed as a Bus Driver with L.R.T, and later in The Borders with Lowland Buses, Jim was content during this period of his life because once again he was to some extent a member of a regimented team of people, and he enjoyed the daily contact it gave him with others to whom he was of service. Then fate once more took control of Jim's life in the shape of a motor car in the hands of a drunken driver, driven at speed into the bus he was driving, it ripped out one side of the bus causing part of the roof to crumble, a number of passengers received minor injuries and were treated for shock while Jim now in his early fifties was encouraged to take early retirement, it also marked the beginning of a period of illness and frustration. At a meeting of some 70 ex-serving Cameronians and their wives at the R.B.L.S, Forth Branch Club, Lanarkshire in October 1997, it was decided that as Cameronians no longer had either an Association or R.H.Q, it would be in their own and the Regiments best interest to help promote and maintain the Regiments proud place in Scottish history by establishing a 'point of contact' for all Cameronians, their Families and Descendants, and other

Associated, Interested Parties and Persons, if an Organisation were formed. A Committee was selected with Bill Tilley as the first Chairman and a framework set out to ensure 'The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) & Family Members Organisation' could maintain the function for which it had been formed: (a) For the Benefit of it's Members: (b) To maintain the History and Traditions of 'The Cameronians Scottish Rifles. Jim Ballantyne was one of the Organisations earliest Members and soon became a Welfare Assistant with his natural enthusiasm to serve fellow Cameronians and Members of the Organisation, but foremost it was his love for 'The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) Regiment' that fuelled the enthusiasm that was to remain with him for the rest of his life. At this time Jim also had his other love Margaret Drever at his side, Margaret the lady who would not only share his life and the work Jim had taken on, but would later take up a vacant position as the Organisations Treasurer when others were reticent to step forward, and in doing so has proved irreplaceable. In 1999 Jim replaced Douglas Hall as Secretary making himself available to Members at any time of the day or night (now called 24/7), nothing was too much trouble for him, if he did not have the answer to an enquiry he would soon ask and find one by consulting with other Members of the Committee, or seeking advice from Trustees and Officers of the Regiment with whom he had built a good rapport and understanding over the years. If and when a Cameronian presence at a Parade, Service or Event was requested or could be seen as a benefit to the Regiments memory by attending, Jim would ensure a good turn out by making personnel visits or spending hours on the telephone mustering everyone possible from the listing. Parades and Historical Events such as the annual Cameronian Sunday Remembrance Service: Lanimer Day Celebrations: Westminster Abbey Remembrance Plot and Service: R.B.L.S, Veterans Parades and Services: The Queens Jubilee Parade: Save Scottish Regiments Parades: Numerous Remembrance Services each year including VE/VJ Day Parades, not to mention visits by Cameronians and their Families from home and abroad, and exceptional circumstances and requests. Each year Jim would ensure that 'The Flag' was flown at Edinburgh Castle by delivering and collecting it again afterwards himself, its safety being taken as a personal responsibility, as was his position as Secretary

to the Organisation. In 2002 Jim Ballantyne learned from his Doctor that he had Prostrate Cancer, was told of the treatments he would be receiving and advised to reduce his stressful responsibilities and way of living to best help those treatments succeed and prolong his life. Jim took the doctors advice changing some things in his life but for two, those he simply could not or would not give up one being his smoking of cigarettes, the other his position and responsibilities as Secretary of The Cameronians Scottish Rifles & Family Members Organisation, to Jim it was not a choice at all, this had now become his whole life.

On Cameronian Sunday 2005 Jim and Margaret announced their forthcoming Marriage, which took place as planned in Edinburgh on 1st of July 2005. Despite the various treatments Jim's health continued to deteriorate, the Cancer now within his bones, he received a stroke down one side from which he later only partially recovered and May 2006 saw a Jimmy Ballantyne held up by will power alone, his body having all but given up the fight, when Jimmy, Margaret, Tom Winters Andy Anderson and myself met the day before Cameronian Sunday in the Douglas Arms Hotel as we had every year, Jim decided he wanted us all to get a taxi to Colin McCready's house in Douglas as was our normal practice and attempt to eat and drink Colin out of house and home, something we never had managed, this year on his first visit we had new gun Colin Blair with us who we hoped would give us an edge (he didn't), Colin as usual was ready with a fine buffet prepared and the door to his private bar opened wide. The seven of us sat talking of this and that and old friends we hoped to meet again the next day - Cameronian Sunday, Jim got up and went outside for a cigarette, I went too and we just sat quietly in the garden until Jim said he was feeling a little strange and wanted to return to the hotel, back outside the hotel Jim was by now very poorly and Helen owner of the hotel fetched her car round and drove Jim. Margaret and myself to the Hospital in Douglas, as the hospital had no Doctor on duty they transferred him to Wishaw hospital later that evening. Cameronian Sunday 14th May 2006 was a success just as Jim had planned it with the turnout for both Remembrance Service and Conventional being larger than in recent years, the fine weather adding to the atmosphere of excitement and comradeship shared once more, but it was not quite the

same for some of us, and we knew why. The news that Jim had been taken ill again was given to everyone over the Conventicle speaker system, and received with visible sadness, all expressed the hope that he would get well soon and prayers were offered by our own Vicar of Douglas Valley Church St Bride's, the Rev Bryan Kerr. At Wishaw Hospital Jim was given tests and sent home, two hours later he had another stroke and was returned there where he spent a week before being taken to the Western General Hospital, Edinburgh, where he passed away at 12.05pm on the 25th May 2006, cause of death: Prostrate Cancer and Multiple Cerebral Accident. Cameronian James Allan Ballantyne's Funeral Service took place at The Warriston Crematorium, Edinburgh, on the 31st of May 2006. He had been dressed in his Douglas Tartan Trews, White Shirt, Cameronian Tie, and Blazer; his coffin draped in the Cameronian (Scottish Rifles) Flag that he had loved so very much his Glengarry and Belt placed on top, on arrival Cameronians present formed a Guard of Honour through which the car carrying his coffin passed. Eight Cameronians carried Jimmy into Chapel through the assembled gathering of over a hundred Cameronians, Officers of the Regiment, Friends, Relations and Neighbours as the bagpipes played Highland Cathedral, until finally being lowered and placed gently before the Alter. There followed a very moving service which included a personnel address to Jim by Andy Berry a close friend of Jim's and outgoing Chairman of The Cameronians Scottish Rifles & Family Members Organisation, I had the honour of reading a family poem\* 'When Tomorrow Starts Without Me', the service ended with Jim's final departure to the Pipes and Drums playing the Regimental March 'The Black Bear' on this occasion played we all felt, for a Cameronian that had entered our lives, enriched them and would now take a high place within our treasured memories. Those that could stay afterwards were invited to The Victoria Park Hotel to share a buffet and hot drink, most attended and it was good to sit for awhile to talk about Jim, his life and manner of passing, how it would impact on our own lives, and finally, wondering what tomorrow had in store for the rest of us and would we be as strong, before we are all reunited again?

He is survived by his wife Margaret to whom we send our sincere condolences

Kenn Robinson.

## \*When Tomorrow Starts Without Me

When tomorrow starts without me, and I'm not there to see: If the sun should rise and find your eyes, all filled with tears for me: I wish so much you wouldn't cry, the way you did today, While thinking of the many things we didn't get to say.

I know how much you love me, as much as I love you, and that each time you think of me, I know you'll miss me too: But when tomorrow starts without me, please try to understand, that an angel came, and called my name and took me by the hand, and said my place was ready, in heaven far above, and that I'd have to leave behind all those I dearly love.

But as I turned to walk away, a tear fell from my eye, for all my life, I'd always thought I didn't want to die, I had so much to live for, so much yet to do, it almost seemed impossible that I was leaving you.

I thought of all the yesterdays, the good ones and the bad, I thought of all the love we shared, and all the fun we had, If I could relive yesterday, just even for a while, I'd say good-bye, and hug you, and maybe see you smile,

But then I fully realised that this could never be, for emptiness and memories would take the place of me: When tomorrow starts without me, don't think we're far apart, for every time you think of me, I'm right here in your heart.

### Alexander Duncan Gordon McRae'

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Alex MacRae. On the 29th January 2006.



I received a telephone call from the family of Alec to inform me that he had passed away at his home the previous day, (the 28th,) aged 76 following a heart attack. A loving Companion of Maureen, a dear Father, Grandfather, and Great Grandfather he will be sadly missed by all family and friends. Alec was born in Gloucester in 1930, his father was a Scot and Alec grew up proud of his heritage, so much so that upon leaving school he wasted little time enlisting with The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) the Regiment he loved and served for the next 22 years in a number of countries including Malaya, Kenya and Jordan, he left on completion of his service having attained the rank of Sergeant Major. On his return to 'civvy street' Alec joined the Prison Service, he also joined the Territorial Army branch of the Gloucestershire Regiment later becoming the band's Drum Major, he also joined the Hardwicke and District branch of the Royal British Legion where he was a former vice-president, his sporting passion being football Alec once served as a director of Gloucester City Football Club, and later Forest Green and Gloucestershire Sunday League. I was invited to Alec's funeral on the 6th of February and was very moved by the ceremonial tributes afforded to him and his memoirs by relations, friends and in particular the RBL, Alec's body had been dressed as he had always wished; in his Douglas Tartan, Green Jacket, White shirt, Regimental tie, Belt and Glengarry. As it entered the Church grounds I placed a Cameronian Scottish Rifles wreath upon Alec's coffin draped now in the Union Jack which led by a Scottish Piper and Standards of the RBL was carried by six friends and relations through a Guard of Honour consisting of his ex-soldier comrades into the Church of St Nicholas, Hardwicke, Gloucestershire. There followed a beautiful tribute service after which the coffin bearing the body of Alec was carried in procession led once more by the piper to its final resting place in a quiet corner of the Churchyard where it was gently laid down for the last time. A bugler played Last Post and Reveille for an old soldier, fellow friend and forever a Cameronian, Alec McRae. RIP.

### Sydney Scroggie

It is with great sadness that we report the death of William Sydney Scroggie who was born Nelson, British Columbia 1919; died Bridgefoot, Dundee, 9th September 2006. He was educated at Edinburgh and Dundee,

following which he became sub-editor of the legendary boy's comic The Hotspur, editing many tales of heroism he was to match in later life.

An active climber before the Second World War, he contributed to several first ascents in the tricky corries of Lochnagar and Ben Nevis. On the outbreak of war he joined first the 7th Cameronians, Scottish Rifles, later transferring to serve his final two years as a lieutenant in the elite Lovat Scouts. During training in Canada, he led a 35 man team of soldiers up Mount Columbia, hitherto unclimbed in winter and the training also involved learning their hard graft in Scroggie's old Highland climbing grounds. He was unfortunate enough to lose his eyesight and left leg below the knee just days before the end of hostilities, during the Italian Campaign, when leading his men on an advance mission, he trod on a Schu mine. His last vision, he remembered, was of the planet Venus bright in the twilight sky over the hills of Italy.



He was taught how to operate a telephone switchboard and got a job at NCR in Dundee, remaining until his retirement in

1975. His first wife Barbara, a nursing sister with St Dunstons and with whom he had three children, Jamie, Sydney and Mary, died in 1980.

Before returning to Dundee, he also spent five terms at New College, Oxford, where he learnt to read in Braille, as well as teaching himself Greek by this method, to fulfil an interest in reading ancient manuscripts in the original language.

Scroggie became an inspiration to all who were fortunate enough to make his acquaintance and something of a legend in Dundee itself, following his return to the hills in 1954, in the company of friends and members of his family, including most notably his second wife, Margaret, whom he described as his 'best pal and companion' in the final 26 years of his life. All told he made over 600 ascents, Margaret on one occasion saving his life on Carn a' Mhaim in the Cairngorms, catching hold of his sliding body, when they lost their footing as they were en route to one of his favoured places, Corrou Bothy.

His distinctions included national recognition, when he appeared on *This is Your Life* in 1964. His collected poems *Give Me The Hills* was published 1978, followed by the semi autobiographical *The Cairngorms Scene and Unseen*.

In 2000 guided by Margaret, Scroggie climbed Balluderon Hill (1320 ft) in the Sidlaws where a cairn and indicator was placed on the summit in tribute to his achievements. A year later Dundee University awarded an honorary degree to a 'remarkable vagabond'.

He is survived by his wife Margaret to whom we send our sincere condolences

### Sidney Gordon Stevens

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Sidney Stevens. Who died on the 16th August, aged 83.

Sid joined the London Scottish nearly 70 years ago on the 27th September 1937. On the outbreak of war he was in the 1st Battalion, and it would appear that he was keen to see action, so he transferred to the 2nd Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) on the 21st February 1942.

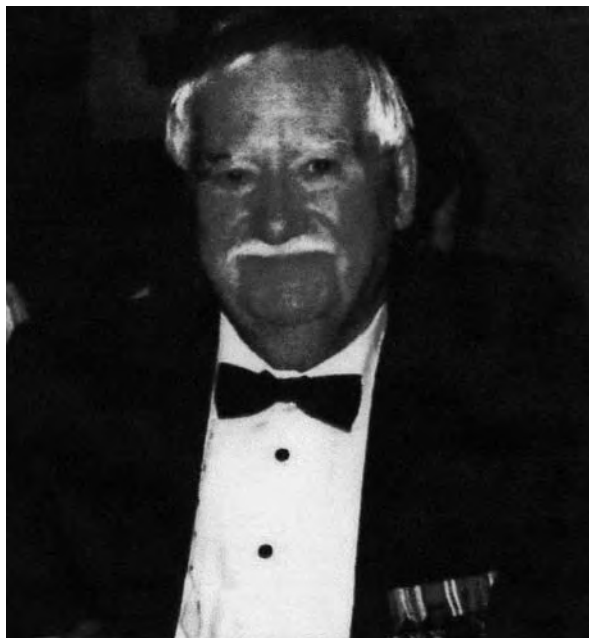
However, he was not to see action until the Cameronians landed in Sicily and Italy at around the same time that our 1st Battalion were in the thick of the fighting in that theatre.

He was badly wounded in the thigh by a German 88 at the River Gargliano near

where Pte George Mitchell won his VC. Sid was sent to a tented Red Cross Hospital at Capus, near Naples. He must have been very badly wounded, as his brother Doug who was in the Royal Navy and serving aboard a ship in Naples, was given permission by his captain to visit him in hospital. Later Sid was transferred to a hospital in Algiers.

As he was no longer fit for frontline service, at one stage he was put in charge of a hotel for officers.

During the war he saw service in North Africa, Persia, India, Burma and Madagascar with action in Sicily and Italy at Messina, Anzio and Cassino, Sid ended the war with the rank of Sergeant. It was while in Italy that Sid met his future wife Maria. They celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary in March this year. In civilian life he was in



the printing industry.

Sid was a keen London Scot and Cameronian. He used to attend most reunions and activities. He loved Hallowe'en and his daughter Barbara used to drive him there. When he died it was his wish that he be buried in his tartan trews and dinner jacket, that he would have worn for the Hallowe'en dinner this year.

As a keen Cameronian he used to travel up to Douglas each year to attend their reunions, including a special event in May this year. His grandson James used to go with Sid to the London Scottish Sergeants' Mess dinner each November. It will be very sad for the family that they will be unable this year to

do it for him.

He is survived by his wife Maria, daughter Barbara, grandson James and not last his brother Doug on their great loss. To whom we send our sincere condolences

### **Lieutenant John Anthony Irvine 1936 -2006**

It is with great sadness that we report the untimely death of John Irvine during this summer after a long and very difficult illness called Motor Neurone Disease; a truly tough challenge which he faced up to with dignity and bravery. John joined the 1st Battalion at Bahrain in 1957 and was posted to B Company where he saw service in Bahrain, the Trucial States, Kenya, Aden and Jordan Despite being a fine Athlete and a remarkably good cross country runner he was never the less plagued by a degree of ill health, not that he allowed this to hinder or handicap him undertaking his duties. However it was this fact that in the end caused his retirement from the Army to his great disappointment and our great loss John had good Army connections: his Father had been an RAMC Colonel for many years and his brother-in-law was Guy Brunker, the son of Colonel Brunker. John became a regular attender of the Regimental London Lunch Club and always sought news of the Regiment after his retirement. John made his mark and will always be remembered as an outstanding Platoon Commander He earned respect by his example and leadership, his skill, sense of duty and unfailing sense of humour. He had the art of making the difficult, hard and uninviting task appear easy, exciting and enjoyable His platoon was a wonderful example of a place of good soldiering. On leaving the Army John established himself down South as a business man and something of an expert in business management instruction. His outstanding volunteer work was his appointment as the Churchwarden of St. Giles Church at Stoke Poges: a role he undertook for many years with great success. The church itself is a beautiful old building set within a large garden. A sort of oasis in that built up area of the busy world. It was, of course, made famous for being the church in the poem "Curfew tollsthe knell of parting day" ,Thomas Gray. When John became too ill to manage at Stoke Poges he and Jennifer moved to an old family-owned farmhouse in South Wales. The knew the place well and it was a place of happy memories. Just two days before died they had a huge

family birthday party as it was the day of his 70th birthday. A wonderful happy occasion and a day of great joy to John.

He is survived by his wife Jennifer to whom we send our sincere condolences

### **Major William Murray**

It is with great sadness that we record the death of William Murray in Wolverhampton on 11 December 2006. Bill served for many years with the 6/7th and commanded a company in the late 50's early 60's. He enjoyed many happy memories of his time at Copelaw Street and the companionship of the Regiment. He is survived by his wife Sheila to whom we send our sincere condolences

### **FWP Keeley**

It is with great sadness that we report the death of FWP Keeley in Dorset on 19th December 2006 after a long illness. His death was notified to us by his stepson to whom we send our sincere condolences.

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





# 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"

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### 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](http://www.cameronians.org)

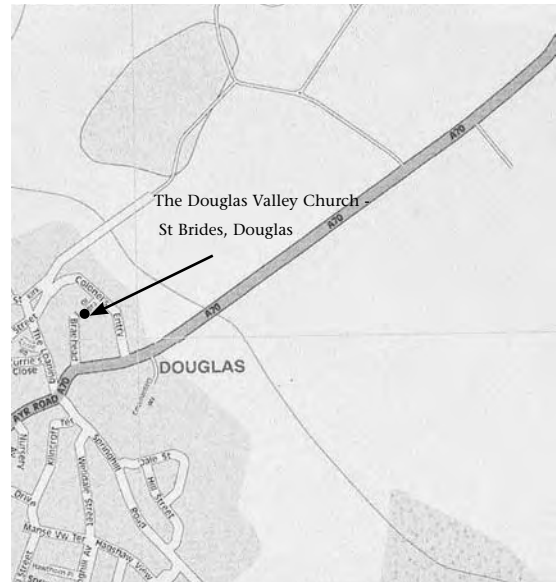
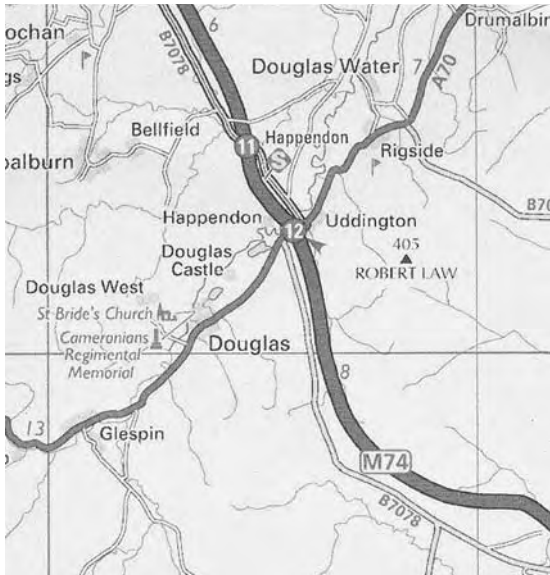
Next year the Covenanter will report on the two major events scheduled to take place this year in May. It has been suggested that the final edition should be one that records the impact that the Covenanter and indeed the Regiment has had on all Cameronians.

**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 Ranks 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 Covenanter* 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 [scran.ac.uk](http://scran.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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:andy.mcarthur@openreach.co.uk).

Major Philip R Grant - [prgblue@yahoo.com](mailto: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 Ponsoy 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 Bruce<sup>1</sup> 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 reformed battalion was sent to Italy at Trieste<sup>2</sup>, 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 fear<sup>3</sup>, 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 US. 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 US. 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.<sup>4</sup>

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 be 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'....*<sup>5</sup> 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 vanquished<sup>6</sup>. 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 officers<sup>7</sup>, 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

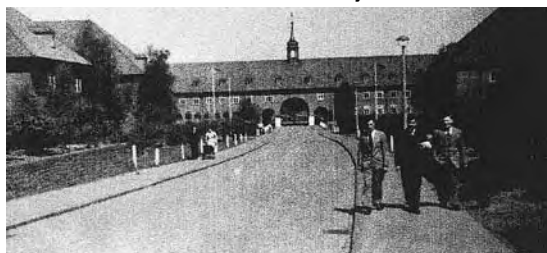
## Jubilation, Frustration, Lamentation

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 them, 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

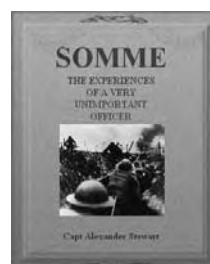
## Grandfather's Great War

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 unslung 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.

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The entire diary may be purchased at:  
[www.grandfathersgreatwar.com/2html](http://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 comprise 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](http://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 accommodates 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 1, 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](http://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](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)

[enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto: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](http://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  
P013 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  
P01 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](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)  
[enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto: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](http://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](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)  
[enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto: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](http://www.cwgc.org)

**Indian Army Officer's Records**

British Library  
 Asia, Pacific and Africa Collection  
 96 Euston Road  
 London  
 NW1 2DB  
[www.bl.org](http://www.bl.org)

**War Pension Enquiries**

Veterans' Agency  
 Norcross  
 Blackpool  
 FY5 3WP  
 Telephone: 0800 169 2277  
[www.veteransagency.mod.uk](http://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](http://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 thats 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 nights 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 lines 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 Iog 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 Cameronian's 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 Gaily 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)"*





# THE COVENANTER



THE REGIMENTAL JOURNAL OF  
THE CAMERONIANS (SCOTTISH RIFLES)

2008

## *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

Colonel Hugh Mackay OBE (Chairman)

Lieutenant Colonel Ian McBain · Major John Craig DL TD

Major Brian Leishman MBE · Major Ian Farquharson · Major Philip Grant

## EPILOGUE

With the third major round of defence cuts in 1967 it was announced that the 1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) was to disband, thus ending nearly three hundred years of service to the Crown. The disbandment parade, in the form of a Conventicle, took place on the holm at Douglas on 14 May 1968. Fittingly the salute was taken by the then Earl of Angus, the 14th Duke of Hamilton (1903-1973).

In his sermon

The Reverend Donald MacDonald, a much loved former Chaplain to both regular battalions, said:

“ ... 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.”

In May 1921 The Covenanter was born as the journal of the 1st Battalion The Cameronians. It was not until the third edition published in September 1921 that the journal became the The Magazine of The Cameronians thus encompassing the entire Regimental family. At its birth the officer commanding The Cameronians wrote “When I first heard the idea of a Magazine mooted I was inclined to think, especially in these days, that it never would be published. That it is, goes to show what determination backed up by enthusiasm and a high resolve can do. It is a lesson to all of us in esprit de corps.”

The resolve and determination of the first editor, Lieutenant Eric MH Galbraith, bore fruit. and in his first editorial he wrote “ The dream of having a battalion Magazine entered my brain many moons ago. The Covenanter is to be a reflection of the Battalion’s life and an aid to its enjoyment. But it should be much more than that. It should be an expression of the great ideal that is The Cameronians to which with our faltering steps we are all attaining” May it be that The Covenanter will help you by amusing you and keeping before you the record of the life of the Battalion and stating for you, clearly and lucidly the ideal of esprit de corps.”

I think we can safely say that over the

intervening years we have kept faith with those original aspirations. That we have done so reflects great credit on all of you who have contributed to the Journal over the years and in particular those years which followed our disbandment at Douglas in 1968.

We now move on to a future without the Covenanter but, we have created a Regimental Blog which will serve to keep alive events, not least luncheons, dinners and gatherings, which may continue to be held by the posting of Notices. The Regimental Blog (which can be accessed from the Regimental website) is to be used to advertise events or indeed matters of general interest whilst the Discussion Forum will continue to be used for the posting of queries/questions.

It is a privilege to have been allowed to edit the Covenanter for the last twenty one years and I commend to you the Regimental Blog and website at [www.cameronians.org](http://www.cameronians.org). In the initial stages contributions to the Regimental Blog should be sent to me for posting.

Brian AS Leishman MBE

Major (Retd) The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)

Editor The Regimental Journal – The Covenanter

### Location List

As reported in the 2007 Covenanter, it is for consideration that this edition might be followed up with as definitive a list as possible containing the names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of all living Cameronians. Given the requirements in regard to Data Protection those wishing to be included must inform me, the Editor, in writing of their wish to be so included.

# REGIMENTAL MATTERS

## Letter From London

The year 2008 got away to a very slow and uneventful beginning for me it then seemed to burst suddenly into life! First of all, my hometown football team, Hamilton Accies became league Champions and were duly promoted to the Scottish Premier League. Then my beloved AFC Wimbledon were promoted again into the Blue Square South League.

Like many young boys born and brought up in Hamilton I developed a love of football so when I joined the Cameronians in 1946 that love of the game was reinforced by the fact that the regiment recruited some great footballers who I greatly loved and appreciated watching throughout my service.



Then, to complete my hat-trick, it was the Commemoration service at Douglas on the 11th May. Due to circumstances beyond my control I had been unable to visit the Conventicles at Douglas for several years. However, I considered myself very fortunate to be able to attend on this occasion.

First and foremost I was highly delighted, and greatly honoured when I was invited to lay the wreath of poppies at the front of the Cairn. In addition to this I was also invited to read the lesson at the service. I arrived in Hamilton on Thurs, 8th May, staying with friends in a lovely part of the town. The weather for the next three days was very cold and unsettled for the time of year. On the 11th however, Mother Nature, as always,

decided that our Conventicle must have a lovely day and sure enough it was lovely with sunshine and clear blue skies.

I missed the morning service at the church, but attended the service at the Cairn in the afternoon. Prior to the service commencing,



I found it a tremendous experience meeting up with all my old friends in the regiment. The only problem was that our meetings were too brief, simply because there were so many to meet and greet. I know that I missed a few old friends because of this problem and I apologise for this happening it was a case of not enough time prior to the start of the service.

I felt so proud when I received the signal from the Rev. Donald Cameron to come forth and read the lesson. This was, for me, a life long gratifying memory.

All too soon the proceedings came to an end and we had to go our separate ways to wherever on the planet. In conclusion, I would like to thank all concerned for organising such a momentous and enduring occasion. I could not help noticing the beautiful regimental crests which adorned the Cairn. I have been informed that these items were the work of Alex Maxwell, who also constructed the lectern. Congratulations, Alex on a fine piece of work, skilfully done.

On the 25th July, I attended my Grandson

Ashley's Graduation day, held at the Dome Theatre in Brighton. Ashley graduated from the University of Sussex with a Bachelor of Arts, 1st Class Honours Degree, and Lord Richard Attenborough made the presentation. As you can imagine, this was a truly magic moment for me. Ashley is now preparing to go to America to study for his Masters Degree.

On the 6th November it was once again the opening of the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey. HRH The Duke of Edinburgh led the service and the subsequent presentation to the regimental representatives. As usual, Prince Philip was in great form talking to every representative in turn. This year, my grandson attended the occasion for the very first time so I was stunned when a young woman in Prince Philip's entourage broke away, reached over to embrace Ashley and kiss him on the cheek. It transpired that this young lady, who is an official Royal journalist had been a classmate of Ashley's at Alleyns school which he attended before going to university. It is a small world indeed.

I was delighted that another good attendance was recorded and I would like to reassure all Cameronians that our plot at Westminster Abbey will be maintained for the foreseeable future: that is, the Thursday prior to Armistice Sunday. So please, make every endeavour to attend this great solemn occasion.

A newcomer to our ranks this year was Alex Morrowsmith. Alex was a member of the Pipe Band in Kenya and Minden. On leaving the army he became a renowned journalist and on retirement settled down in Essex. Welcome to the fold, Alex.

On the conclusion of the service at the Abbey, several of our party retired to the Union Jack Club where a beautiful lunch was served up and a most convivial afternoon was enjoyed. In attendance at Westminster were: Col. Hugh McKay OBE, Major Philip Grant, Major Mike Sixsmith, Ian Bilboe, Tom and Dorothy Gore, Eddie Crawford, Alex Morrowsmith, Helen, Ashley and me.

I am delighted to hear that The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) & Family Members organization will continue to function thus allowing us to keep in touch with our old comrades. My thanks and best wishes

are extended to Margaret Ballantyne who after eight years as Association Treasurer is standing down. Margaret is succeeded by Beth Maxwell, welcome aboard Beth, may your tenure be a long and happy one.

Like all ex servicemen I was stunned, and disgusted at the way our Ghurkha comrades had been debarred from settling in Britain. Those of us who served in 26 Ghurkha Brigade in Hong Kong and Malaya have nothing but love and great respect for "Johnnie Ghurkha" can we say the same for a lot of the human flotsam and jetsam that our ghastly politicians have allowed to enter our great country? I think not.



Originally I had intended to bring the attention of our subscribers to The Covenanters to the names of the many, and highly devoted members of the regiment who over the last forty years had worked so hard to maintain, and perpetuate the memory of the regiment. Suffice to say, that in attempting to do this would amount to a nominal roll which would fill many pages. So, just let's say thank you to our historians, the committee of the old original Cameronians Association, the founders of the present organisation, The Regimental Trustees, and finally all the Cameronians who have taken part in the many parades all over Glasgow, and Lanarkshire in remembrance of fallen comrades. The efforts of the above will never

be forgotten.

Finally I would like to finish of my final contribution to the Covenanter with a tribute to my company clerk, my regimental barber, and official photographer at Westminster Abbey who has contributed unstintingly in my efforts to produce the "Letter From London". These roles over the years have been filled by my daughter Helen. She has done a splendid job for me, typing up my copy, attending to what's left of my tonsorial growth, and always coming on parade with me at Westminster Abbey.

I wish every Cameronian all the best for the future, and "lang may yer lums reek".

Yours Aye  
Eddie Clark

## **General Sir Thomas Graham of Balgowan (Lord Lynedoch) 'A Peer among Princes'**

The Graham family, much encouraged by Major General John Graham, late Argyll & Sutherland Highlander and a past commander of the Sultan of Muscat's Armed Forces, has asked me to write a new biography of the esteemed founder of the 90th Perthshire Light Infantry - 2nd Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). I have been delighted to accept and have been given exclusive access to the family papers.

There have been three previous biographies, one by Delavoye written in 1880, which is probably unreadable now, and two written in the 1950's. One of these, by Aspinall-Oglander, is come across occasionally. The other, by Brett-James, is so rare as to be unobtainable. Both concentrate quite understandably on his military career, but he was a much more interesting man than just that. It is hoped that a new account of his life will bring the man behind the gold braid much more to life.

Graham lived an exceptionally long and immensely varied life. His military career spanned barely twenty of his 95 years. He is best remembered now, if at all, as the victor at the Battle of Barrosa (1811) and as Wellington's ablest lieutenant in the Peninsular War. What are little known or remembered are the breadth of his interests,

his place in the society of people like the Duchess of Devonshire (now the subject of a glamorous film) and Lady Emma Hamilton (after the death of Lord Nelson), and the respect and affection in which he was universally held.

He came from a family of wealthy Scottish landowners. He had a well-rounded education, never at school but with a most remarkable tutor who became famous in his own right. After two years at Oxford he made the Grand Tour. He married the great beauty of that age. But he was no dilettante: he was an outstanding sportsman. He showed courage and initiative from an early age. He was a real man's man. The quote above is attributed to his father-in-law, Lord Cathcart, HM Ambassador to Russia, who must have known enough about princes.

The great tragedy of his life was that his beautiful young wife bore him no children and died at the age of 35. Whilst being borne back across France for burial in Perthshire her coffin was violated by drunken French revolutionaries. Grief-stricken and outraged at the behaviour of the French he was not content just to join the army and to fight them, he raised his own regiment to do so. He earned a fine reputation as a leader and as a field commander and rose rapidly to the highest rank. Even at the age of 85 he was invited to take over as Commander-in-Chief of the Portuguese army. That says as much for his energy and stamina (he still rode to hounds daily in season) as for his reputation as a General.

The regiment which Graham founded went on to earn an unsurpassed reputation for bravery and for producing very senior officers. Its first Lieutenant Colonel, Rowland (later Field Marshall Viscount) Hill, a close friend of Graham, rose to become Commander-in-Chief in succession to Wellington. The regiment continued to spawn such prodigies right through World War II.

He was the most companionable of men. On return to London and semi-retirement, ennobled and fêted, a retired Member of Parliament but now a member of the upper house - in those days as active a political forum as the Commons - he founded his own club where he could meet his old friends and companions in arms. The magnificent clubhouse still stands in Pall

Mall and is now the home of the Institute of Directors. For 30 years he supplied the food and champagne there for a celebratory dinner on the anniversary of Barrosa - and even told them how to carve the saddles of lamb.

All his life he kept stables of horses for his own use at leisure as well as for hunting. He kept others in race training at Newmarket. Much of the time he travelled Europe - a sort of extended and long-running Grand Tour. He used his excellent command of languages and indulged his classical learning. He was never short of friends and companions.

But Mary was the love of his life; he never married again. A biography of her, *The Beautiful Mrs Graham* by Mrs E Maxtone Graham, sheds much interesting light on their life together.

Perhaps he was an early example that keeping an active mind and a broad range of interests really does help to prolong life. At 95 his age must have been at least double the average life expectancy. It is right that that life be fully acknowledged and appreciated.

If any reader feels that they can shed light on little known facts about Graham, or the whereabouts of papers or artefacts of his, I would be delighted and obliged to them if they would contact me.

Philip R Grant

## **Bible And Sword: The Cameronian Contribution To Freedom Of Religion - An Abstract**

Presented for the Degree of Doctor of Theology - Stellenbosch University, During the 16th and 17th centuries, the Stewart rulers of Scotland and England endeavoured to enforce Royal Absolutism on both countries. This included ecclesiastical pressure on the Scottish Presbyterians, giving rise to a movement known as the Covenanters. One identifying aspect was their field preaching's, or Conventicles, held in secret, frequently on the moors. As persecution increased, worshippers took weapons to these Conventicles for self-defence in case of attack during the service.

Royal efforts to impose Episcopalianism on

Scotland intensified after the Restoration of 1660 and were met with resistance. In 1666 open revolt broke out in The Pentland Rising, which was put down with great severity after the Covenanters were defeated at Rullion Green.

Open revolt broke out again in 1679, when some Covenanters defeated a small royalist force at Drumclog, but they were soundly defeated by the royal army at Bothwell Brig shortly afterwards. The Covenanters split into two factions, moderate and extreme; the extreme element becoming known as Cameronians after the martyred covenanting preacher Rev Richard Cameron, "The Lion of the Covenant."

The hypothesis researched was that; The development and actions of the Cameronian movement made a significant contribution to Freedom of Religion in Scotland. The hypothesis rests on whether Cameronian influence was significant, and to what degree.

Subsequent to Bothwell Brig, the Covenanting movement virtually collapsed in Scotland. The leaders fled to Holland and the common people who remained were severely persecuted. But by early 1680, two covenanting ministers, Richard Cameron and Donald Cargill, had returned from Holland to preach in the fields against Erastian limitations on doctrine, worship, discipline, and church government. They were hunted down and killed, but their followers (now called Cameronians) formed their own ecclesiastical polity known as the United Societies. This was a presbyterial Church, separate but not sundered from the Church of Scotland (The Kirk), which had by now largely accepted a considerable degree of Erastianism.

The Cameronians became a small but vociferous pressure group, not only persecuted, but denigrated by moderate Presbyterians. Throughout this period they ensured a considerable degree of freedom of religion for themselves, despite the ever intensifying persecution. Their stance was vindicated at the Glorious Revolution of 1688/9, one outcome being the raising of both a guard, and a regiment, of Cameronians, both of which enabled a period of comparative calm and safety to prevail, thus allowing Parliament and the General Assembly to finalise the



Revolution Settlement for both Church and State, without any external threat from Jacobitism.

The Cameronian clergy then became reconciled with the Kirk in 1690, and brought two-thirds of the United Societies with them, thus ending their period of isolation, and once more presenting a (virtually) united Presbyterian front to the world. Rev Alexander Shields was critical to both the formation of the regiment and reconciliation with the Kirk.

The thesis (see separate supplement) demonstrates that the Cameronians made four significant contributions to freedom of religion in Scotland.

- Firstly, they made a significant contribution to freedom of religion by their struggle to protect the right to retain their own freedom of doctrine, worship, discipline and church government, resisting every effort to remove these by force. In 1690 they secured these freedoms.

- Secondly by their new-found military effectiveness, they secured a climate of comparative peace and stability in the latter half of 1689 and 1690, during which both Parliament and General Assembly were able to carry through vital legislation for Church and State, without any external threat.

- Thirdly, through the reconciliation of their clergy with the Kirk, the Cameronians were catalytic in the establishment of a [virtually] united Presbyterian front in Scotland, thereby ensuring that the Kirk was strong enough to accept the existence of other denominations without feeling unduly threatened.

- Fourthly, Rev Alexander Shields stands out as catalytic in the achievement of the Second and Third significant contributions. It can be argued that his behaviour, in itself, was a significant contribution to Freedom of Religion.

The Kirk's future problems came rather from within, with the First and Second Secessions of 1733 and 1761, which lie outside the scope of this dissertation. Most of the RPC joined the Free Church in 1876, and there was general re-unification in 1929, when most of the United Free Church joined the Kirk, (after Budeigh 1960).

D.O. Christie

EDITORS NOTE: See separate supplement published with this, the 2008 Covenanter

## The 1st Lanarkshire Volunteers (5th Scottish Rifle)

In The Bravest of the Brave , the article about Cameronian winners of the Victoria Cross Philip Grant mentions the 5th Scottish Rifles (5th SR) and its predecessor volunteer battalion , the 1st Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers (1st LRV). The change of name took place in 1908 when volunteer units were incorporated into the newly formed Territorial Army.

The 1st LRV was formed in 1859. According to the Post Office Directory of Glasgow 1867-68 its orderly room was at 73 Renfield Street in what was or became the business area of the city. Thereafter (perhaps in the 1870's the battalion moved to a new drill hall at 261 West Princes Street, near St Georges Cross and convenient for the burgeoning West End of Glasgow. According to the introduction to the history of the 5th SR in the first World War, it and before it the 1st LRV, was the corps d'elite of the city of Glasgow and surrounding districts. On formation it was composed of a number of companies recruited from the professions , industries and trades carried on in the areas. Before the days of the officers Training Corps, it acted as the training school for those who wished to obtain commissions in other West of Scotland volunteer units. Indeed, anybody who wanted to become an officer in the 1st LRV had first served in its ranks.

The standards expected of all ranks were high and the battalion won many trophies in marching and shooting competitions . The 1st LRV , and following it the 5th SR was a swish outfit ; so much so that many citizens of Glasgow considered their social education incomplete until they had served in it.

According to JJ Bell , best known as the author of the "wee Macgregor" in "I remember", an account of life in the West End of Glasgow in the 1870's and 1880's, one of the events of that time was the Annual March Out of the 1st LRV each Spring. A lengthy column of men in grey , helmets included,

marched out of the Burnbank drill ground across Kelvin Bridge up to Hillhead. They were led by a brass band, with a pipe band being added later and also, I understand (see below) a mounted troop, Every boy in Hillhead regarded the 1st Lanark as his regiment and most of them had friends or relations in it.

According to the war history , the bulk of the 5th SR in 1914 consisted of young men in comfortable circumstances. It was one of the sights of Glasgow to see them disperse after drill at Charing Cross in their hodden grey uniform. A considerable number of former members of the 1st LRV achieved distinction in walks of life other than soldiering.

The most notable of these were the future Prime Ministers Henry Campbell-Bannerman and Andrew Bonar Law, the scientist Lord Kelvin, who as William Thomson was a Captain in the Battalion in 1867-68 and the future founder of the BBC John Reith who was the transport officer of the 5th SR in the early part of the 1914-18 war. A further notable political alumnus of the battalion was the turbulent Red Clydesider, James Maxton MP, who according to the introduction to the war history was proud to have served in it.

In 1884 Will Carnegie, a farmers son from Forfarshire (as the county of Angus was then known) came to Glasgow to work for the then National Bank of Scotland. He knew only a few people there and joined the 1st LRV as a means of meeting other young men. In due course a mounted troop was formed under the command of Captain William Smith, the founder of the Boy's Brigade, Carnegie transferred to it. Family lore has it the mounted troop took part in the Annual March Out and that as a strapping farmer's son with considerable riding experience, Will Carnegie was allotted the biggest and most mettlesome horse available

Through the mounted troop, Will Carnegie became friendly with John Forrest who lived nearby and who worked in the city Saw Mills at Port Dundas. Forrest introduced him to his sister Nanny, and after a long courtship Will married her in 1900.

Will and Nanny were my grandparents. As the vehicle through which they met I and the rest of their descendants should be grateful to the 1st LRV. But for it we would

not have existed!

William Carnegie

Notes:

1. According to the war history of the 5th SR, over 450 officers and 5000 men served in the battalion in the 1914-18War. Of these 84 officers and over 1300 men were killed or reported missing an over 100 officers and 3000 men were wounded or otherwise disabled. Four members or ex members of the battalion won the VC.

2. In 1920 the 5th SR was amalgamated with the 8th Battalion of the Regiment whose Drill Hall was near Glasgow Cathedral to become the 5th/8th Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). The joint battalion operated in West Princes Street. In 1938 it was converted into a Searchlight Regiment Royal Artillery thus severing its connection with the Cameronians eighty years after its formation.

3. About ten members of my family or men who married into it served in the 1st LRV and its successors or in other battalions of the Cameronians. This service covered our generations and a 100 years from the 1860' s to the mid 1960's It was not continuous, but nonetheless it is a record of service worth mentioning. Three members of the family, a son and two nephews of John Forrest , lost their lives in the 1914-18 War. One of those Captain Lyon Malloch, won the MC at Arras in May 1917 before being killed a few months later.



Back Row - 5th from left Will Carnegie and 6th from left John Forrest  
Front Row - 2nd from left William Smith

## A Concise History of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)

As 2008 draws to a close two things stick in my mind. It is the end of the year which marked the 40th anniversary of the disbandment of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and with the passing of November it is the end of my involvement in the process of writing the concise histories of the pre-1968 Scottish infantry regiments. The series had its origins in the government's decision to restructure the infantry by abolishing the remaining single battalion regiments and introducing new "large regiments" with Regular and Territorial battalions.

As everyone in Scotland knows, the new Scottish regiment is The Royal Regiment of Scotland with five Regular battalions and two Territorial battalions, a replica, so to speak, of the old Scottish Division. To mark the occasion Mainstream Publishing, part of the Random House empire, asked me to write concise histories of what had been so that people could be reminded of what had preceded the new regiment.

Originally, only the six existing regiments were to be addressed but when The Highlanders complained (rightly so) that it would be impossible to do justice to the 72nd, 75th, 78th, 79th and 92nd Highlanders within the agreed 65,000 words, sense prevailed and a volume was devoted both to Queen's Own Highlanders (Seaforth and Cameron) and to The Gordon Highlanders. This opened the way for a final eighth volume to be produced on The Cameronians and when it appears in 2009 it brings the story full circle.

I should admit straightaway that I did not serve in a Scottish regiment but over the years I have enjoyed a close relationship with the army in Scotland and have been privileged to have known many of the main personalities. And as an outsider perhaps I have had different insights into what has gone before and what has come into being. The main lesson I learned is this: while it was regrettable to see the demise of so many historic names the history of the British Army has been one of constant change with regiments disappearing through amalgamation, disbandment and cutbacks. Indeed, after every major war the government's main aim has always been to slash back the budget of the armed forces which one them.

It was ever thus and it has to be said that the formation of The Royal Regiment of Scotland

is a direct result of the end of the Cold War and the consequent need to address the challenges of modern asymmetrical warfare in the wake of the recent terrorist attacks. Besides, there is no earthly reason why the new regiment should not be the equal or even superior to those who existed in the years before 1968.

As a military historian I have every sympathy with the unhappiness expressed by those who were dismayed by the passing of the old order, but let us look again at that history from a slightly different point of view. Over the years the British Army's regimental system has hardly been a seamless garment. Far from it. For example, at the end of the eighteenth century The King's Own Scottish Borderers spent 20 years as the 25th Sussex Foot and during the nineteenth century several proud regiments including the Argylls lost their Highland status and were not allowed to wear tartan. They all survived their different transformations and thrived. Now that we have the new Royal Regiment of Scotland there is no reason why it should not inherit the traditions, history and devotion to duty that characterised its founder regiments.

And it can work. During the Second World War Bernard Fergusson, a great son of the Black Watch, served in the Chindits, a special force raised to fight behind Japanese lines in Burma. (The second operation included 1st Cameronians.) He noted that its men came from all over the British Army but the Chindits quickly gelled and its men developed an esprit de corps which was second to none. Why was that? Well, as Fergusson put it they were given a smart uniform and a new cap badge and told, congratulations, you're Chindits now. That should be the message for the new regiment. Not, hard lines you're no longer Black Watch or whatever, but well done, you're the new Royal Regiment of Scotland.

One last word. Oceans of ink have been used to argue the pros and cons of the Cameronians' decision to disband. Amalgamation with the KOSB was one possibility but when the axe fell in 1967 the decision was taken within the regimental family to disband. With the passing of time and with hindsight, it was the correct move. Even if the amalgamation with KOSB had worked, it would only have led to further amalgamations and the dilution of the Cameronian name - in 2006 The Royal Scots and KOSB amalgamated to form The Royal Scots Borderers, 1st Battalion The Royal

Regiment of Scotland. At least, in the case of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) its history is inviolable and its traditions are still intact - just as the Rev Donald MacDonald foretold in his moving words of eulogy at the disbandment parade in May 1968.

The Cameronians: A Concise History and the other seven volumes are published by Mainstream and are available at all booksellers and on-line at amazon.co.uk  
Trevor Royale

## Bahrain Headstones

Readers will recall the letter published in the 2004 Covenanter from Mrs A Winkley concerning the state of the cemetery in Bahrain where two of our members now lie.

I quoted the response from MOD Directorate of Personal Services (Army) – Non War Graves. “This office has within its remit the administrative oversight of the maintenance of the graves of soldiers who have died in service since January 1948, who were buried at public expense and whose graves have a military pattern headstone similar to those of War Graves.” They went on to say “New headstones for Lieutenant Boyd and Rfn Sunter along with those of 19 other servicemen have arrived safely in Bahrain” I am happy to report that these headstones have now been put in place.

Editor



## O'Connor in Italy

There appeared in The Times on 4 November 2008 an article entitled:

'Britain's oldest regiment hails a great Italian victory 90 years on'.

It was accompanied by a photograph, reproduced here, of what looks like a punt with a slight glengarry-clad figure in the bows. The article goes on to tell of a parade



that day in Vittorio Veneto before the President of Italy, Senor Giorgio Napolitano. It was, ... 'a grateful acknowledgement by the Italian authorities of a remarkable British contribution to Italy's final victory over the forces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the First World War'. The newspaper article is based on another written for the journal of the Honourable Artillery Company (HAC) by their Archivist, Ms Justine Taylor.

The Times goes on:

[It was] ... a commemoration of the 90th anniversary of the Battle of Vittorio Veneto in 1918, and the HAC's role in spearheading an assault across the River Piave in the hours of darkness, while it was in full flood.

Under a heavy Austrian artillery barrage the HAC's 2nd Battalion, led by Lieutenant Colonel Richard O'Connor, led a force of Italians, Americans and British over the river compelling the garrison of the strategic island of Papadopoli in the main channel to surrender. Thereafter the Italian and Allied pursuit of the enemy continued for ten days, ending in the complete rout of the Austrians; an armistice came into effect on November 4, 1918. The upshot was the dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian

Empire.

For this remarkable feat of arms the HAC was awarded two Distinguished Service Orders, five Military Crosses, three Distinguished Conduct Medals and 29 Military Medals. And to show their appreciation of the British contribution the Italian authorities awarded each member of the 2nd Battalion HAC a special medallion generally awarded only to Italian units. O'Connor, who was awarded a Bar to his DSO [and the Italian Silver Medal for Valour], went on to distinguish himself as a general in the Second World War in which, ironically, he spent some time as a prisoner of the Italians against whom he fought in the Western Desert.

Readers of The Covenanter will know that O'Connor became General Sir Richard O'Connor KT GCB DSO\* MC. In a supplement which accompanied the 2005 issue there appeared a brief biographical sketch of him [He] was described in his obituary in the 1981 Covenanter as 'unquestionably the Regiment's most distinguished soldier of his generation'. His crowning achievement was his defeat of the Italian 14th Army in 1941. Who knows what else he might have achieved had he not then spent the next three years as a prisoner of war.

He was born in 1889. After school at Wellington College he went to RMC Sandhurst and from there he was commissioned into the Regiment, joining the 2nd Battalion in 1909. (For this and for much else which follows we are indebted to his excellent biography, *The Forgotten Victor*, by Lt Col Sir John Baynes.) The following ten years, formative for any young man, were to shape him and his career. His obituary in The Times said (in part):

'O'Connor's record in the First World War was remarkable. He was mentioned in despatches seven times, was awarded the DSO and bar, the Military Cross, and the Italian Silver Medal for bravery. ... He was 25 years of age when the war broke out and he was in the thick of the fighting on the Western Front practically without a break. As a company commander and adjutant he became a legend in his own regiment. He was Brigade Major of [two] Brigades; and he created a precedent when he commanded the 1st Battalion of the Honourable Artillery Company ... for it is a three centuries old

tradition in the HAC that their unit should be commanded by one of their own...

And here is the first point that we should look at again. Baynes says that it was the 2nd Battalion HAC and not the 1st and it was undoubtedly that which he commanded with such distinction. Why the discrepancy? Odder still, his official army record (AFB199) shows the following entries:

Appt Temp Lt Col in Command 1st Bn HAC (Inf) - France - 4.6.17 ... [and then, next line] To Italy appt OC British Troops Austrian Tyrol under orders 47th Italian Division.

Let's try to clear up this first point: which battalion was it? In writing the biographical sketch quoted above this writer concluded that (based on the Times obituary and the official army record) it must have been the 1st Battalion to which he was appointed. In recent discussion with the Archivist at the HAC, Ms Justine Taylor, we have together concluded that both versions are probably right. This is based on evidence in the HAC regimental number register (a purely civilian Company record) that the infantry battalions were referred to as the 1st/1st, and 2nd/1st and sometimes the 1st/2nd in much the same way that in other regiments at that time we see reference, for instance, to the 1/7th, 2/7th, 1/8th and 2/8th Battalions of the Middlesex Regiment. The entry in the HAC register shows:

4.6.17 RN O'Connor 2/1 HAC.

Which brings us to the story of his joining the HAC first before taking over command of the 2nd Battalion. Here some explanation is necessary. The HAC is unlike any other regiment in that it has a social club element which is connected to and yet separate of course from the military wing. Details are to be found at [www.hac.org.uk](http://www.hac.org.uk). There it says:

There are two broad classes of memberships available in the HAC, Regimental and Non-Regimental.

Regimental Members are either TA soldiers in the Active Unit of the HAC or Veteran members who have ended their active soldiering but still enjoy the many benefits of belonging to this unique organisation. Non-Regimental members will have served for at least 2 years in Regular or 3 years in Volunteer units of any of the British

Armed Services. They must be proposed and seconded by Regimental members.

The tangible benefits of HAC membership include use of the restaurant, bar and accommodation at Armoury House [City Road, London], the Holmes Place gymnasium, various meeting rooms, playing fields, secure car parking facilities and access to the many HAC clubs and societies (see other pages on this website for more details).

This, in very broad terms, was the organisation which O'Connor joined in 1917. Here again opinion is divided. In the Times obituary it says:

[Picking up again from the above quotation] ... it is a three-centuries-old tradition in the HAC that their units should be commanded by one of their own number who had served in the ranks, a difficulty which was overcome in O'Connor's case by payment of one guinea to join the regiment, and being entered on their roll as a private soldier for one day.

On the other hand Baynes says (p22):

In a matter of weeks he had won the respect, even the affection, of the HAC and he was gratified when the officers of the battalion elected him to honorary membership of the Company.

It is this writer's view that, with no disrespect whatever to the biographer, the former story from The Times sounds more like the man and is therefore, perhaps on balance the more likely. Further, the date given in the civilian register for joining 'the club' is the same as that given in his army record for promotion and the assumption of his command.

In passing it is worth making brief mention of the 5th Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) who, based in Glasgow, fulfilled a similar role in the west of Scotland to that of the HAC in London. Many of the very best soldiers from both these units were promoted, often commissioned, and sent elsewhere to positions of importance .

We have read of 'the respect, even affection of the HAC' for their new Commanding Officer. This should come as no surprise. He had that magnetic quality of an inspiring leader. He must also have fascinated them.

A totally unknown quantity he had been imported into their midst from a Scottish infantry regiment of which most can have had little if any knowledge. He was but 27 years old, small and bird-like, softly spoken. But what they will all have noticed, because in those days medal ribbons were worn on everyday service dress, was his DSO and his MC. Had they made enquiry they would have been told that the 2nd Battalion of the Cameronians, who preferred to be known as the Scottish Rifles, had an outstanding record. Their performance, though a crushing defeat, at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle in 1915 (O'Connor was not then serving with them) was to become a legend.

The Times again:

O'Connor was a man of irrepressible energy, short, wiry, alert. He had a quiet, retiring, almost shy manner, but could sometimes be alarmingly direct in thought and speech.

Writing many years later, General Sir Horatius Murray (a subaltern in the 1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) when O'Connor returned in 1924 as Adjutant) said:

'Whether you are prepared to accept it or not, the fact remains that you were a somewhat frightening person. We were all told about the officer of the HAC who had fainted while being dealt with by you .

The 2nd HAC were in a bad way when O'Connor took them over: low in numbers and morale. In little time he had impressed his personality and professionalism on them. Drawing not just on his wartime experience but on all that he had learned in his regiment before the war he soon rekindled the spirit of a fine fighting force. He led them first in France: Baynes again :

The battalion was at the Front again at the end of June, and spent the next few months doing the usual periods in and out of the line without suffering serious casualties. Then in October 1917 the series of battles began which are known as Passchendaele. The first action ... found the 7th Division back where it had been at the start of the war. Its objective was the Reutel-Broodseinde track. Reutel was eventually captured, but the casualties sustained by the HAC amounted to eight officers and 49 men killed, 189 wounded, and 49 missing,

almost all later reported killed. O'Connor would never forget these losses suffered in a frontal assault, and when in action again would always look for a way in from the flank against an enemy position. ...

Luckily for the HAC, Reutel was the 2nd Battalion's last battle in France. On 20 November 1917 it was moved with the rest of the 7th Division to the Italian front. ...

The next year was to be spent in rigorous training though the strategy was one of defensive inaction. Eventually an Allied offensive was planned and hence the crossing of the River Piave. His investment in that training was to pay handsome dividends.

Returning to the recent Times article: it says ... 'ironically he spent some time as a prisoner of the Italians against whom he fought in the Western Desert'. This really will not do, on two counts. Let's deal with the second point first.

The real irony of his relations with the Italians was the feat of arms for which he is best known - and rightly so: his legendary defeat of the Italian 14th Army in North Africa in 1941.

He had had to wait until 1932 before being offered command of another battalion but it was not in his own regiment. He turned it down in the hope and expectation of commanding a battalion of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). But before could happen he was promoted to Brigadier and given command of the Peshawar Brigade on the North West Frontier, a plum job for any Brigadier. His command included five infantry battalions, and an Indian Army cavalry regiment as well as the usual supporting troops and elements of the Royal Air Force.

August 1939 found him in Jerusalem in command of the 7th Division. When war seemed inevitable his headquarters was moved from there to Cairo and almost immediately from there two hundred miles west along the Egyptian coast. Eventually by June 1940, having by this time been promoted to Lieutenant General, he was in command of the Western Desert Force. At his disposal he had: 7th Armoured Division, 4th Indian Division and the 6th Australian Division. Opposite him the Italian forces comprised some 250,000 men, 450 medium

and light tanks and 1,400 guns. 'Resources which in actual numbers exceeded [his] by about 8 to 1 in men and very greatly in guns and tanks.'

As The Times put it:

When fortunes in the Second World War were at their lowest, it was he who advanced 500 miles in eight weeks, taking 130,000 prisoners, 400 tanks and 1,290 guns. In a long and distinguished military career this brilliant campaign was his crowning achievement for which he will be remembered.

The second point from the present Times article is that he spent a great deal more than just 'some time' as a PoW in Italy. By a stroke of great misfortune he was captured by German forces in North Africa on 6 April 1941. Shortly afterwards he and others were flown from Tripoli to Rome. They were moved from camp to camp and in all he made three attempts to escape, the last being successful in the confusion which followed the Italian capitulation. His attempts were nothing if not inventive. He went over a wall once, tunnelled under another and eventually walked through a third. As The Times obituarist has it:

'He and other officer prisoners walked out disguised in peasant costumes from the wardrobe of the prison camp dramatic society. Travelling by night and hiding in ditches in the daytime they eventually reached the British lines.'

A telegram was sent to UK that day telling of his release. He had dinner that night with General Alexander at his HQ (where the principle guest was General Eisenhower, the Supreme Commander). It was 21 December 1943, his wedding anniversary. Their first stop on the long journey home by air was Tunis and there they spent time with the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, who was convalescing from pneumonia. Next stop, Algiers, where they had dinner with Harold Macmillan, the resident Minister. They were then flown to Marrakech and thence to Prestwick, landing on the morning of Christmas Day.

He had been held captive for little short of three years. He bore the Italians no ill will, indeed he later wrote at great length of the kindness of those who had facilitated his escape, telling of their bravery and

hospitality.

This is not the place to trace his resumed career from early 1945 to mid-1946 when he took over as Adjutant General. Field Marshal Montgomery who had not long taken over as CIGS summoned him to this vital post. Soon he had to embark on a long series of tours visiting a huge army which was spread across the world. His first visits were in UK and then the whole of October was to be spent on the Continent. Of this the first week was to be spent in Italy visiting many of the Italians who had guided him, General Neame and Air Vice Marshal Boyd to freedom two years earlier.

'Gussie' was visited in Florence and a trip was made out to the monastery at Camaldoli. Next they moved south to stay in Sovera's hotel in Cervia, which was no longer troubled by the presence of the Wehrmacht! Here he was also able to make contact with Madam Teresa Spazzoli. Phipps [his MA] was greatly struck by the warmth of the welcome given by these Italians who had risked so much, and in many cases suffered so much, to aid British escapers when virtually nothing could be done for them in return.

The Times photograph depicts the visit to Italy in 1924 and an early commemoration of the Battle of Vittorio Veneto. On this occasion (28 September 1924) it was for the unveiling of: 'A memorial to the 7th Division, placed on the mainland, opposite the middle of the Island of Papadopoli'. But another visit to the battle site should be recorded as well. In 1930 O'Connor returned to regimental soldiering on a posting to the 1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in command of the machine gun company. Baynes says:

During 1931 O'Connor and another Cameronian officer drove in his car from Cairo to London on their annual leave. [A not inconsiderable undertaking today in a modern motorcar!] On the way they visited the Piave river, and crossed to the island of Papadopoli to inspect the scene of his battle thirteen years before.

Whether he had further occasions to visit Italy is not known. It seems entirely in character that he placed as a high priority the need to thank those who had shown him such kindness and consideration when he needed it most. It is clear that there was



a feeling of great mutual liking as well as respect on both sides. This perhaps makes it all the more ironical that the role for which history remembers him is the comprehensive defeat of an Italian army, the loss of life thus incurred and the incarceration of those lucky enough (?) to be captured instead.

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\* 'Lieutenant Colonel O-Connor, left, and Sergeant Major Bradley of the HAC on their way in 1924 to a service commemorating victory on the Piave in 1918.'

## Museum report 2008

It has been a busy year again for the museums service. After achieving our full accreditation in July 2007 for all three of our museums we thought that our great achievements could not be outdone, the good news came when we were awarded a prestigious award from the Quest quality assurance scheme for our achievements in quality assurance.

This is a great achievement as we are the first museum service in the United Kingdom to be awarded the charter mark.

### New Acquisitions

The collections team have been busy working on a huge project of digitising the combined collections of Hamilton District museum, Clydesdale Council, Glasgow and the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). The collection is estimated to be over 150,000 objects and this is not including the large archive.

We hope that over the 15 year period we will photograph or scan the collections so they are more accessible to the public. More than 3000 Cameronian photographs have been scanned, both from the regimental museum collection and private collections that have been donated to South Lanarkshire Council over the past 10 years.

As some of you may be aware the museum service placed a collection embargo for a period of 2 years to allow the collections team to begin the large digitisation project. This embargo is still in force for another 12 months. We did however state that if an object was offered to the service that we could not turn down we would take it in to the collection.

I am pleased to say that we have taken in

some very special pieces this year, from silver spoons to medal groups. A large collection was bought at auction owned by Awarded to Brigadier Cyril Nelson Barclay C.B.E DSO who commanded 156th Infantry Brigade (52nd Lowland Division). The group consists of:

Distinguished Service Order Medal  
1914-15 Star  
British War Medal  
Victory Medal  
Indian General Service Medal  
1939-45 Star  
Burma Star  
France and Germany Star  
Defence Medal  
War Medal 1939-45  
Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) and a full set of miniatures.

Image of medal group Brigadier Cyril Nelson Barclay C.B.E DSO who commanded 156th Infantry Brigade (52nd Lowland Division).

If you do have something that you would



like to donate to the museum then please write a letter detailing your donation with a photograph and send it to Low Parks Museum, 129 Muir Street, Hamilton, South Lanarkshire, ML3 6BJ. or telephone 01698 328232. I would ask that you do not send collections directly in the post.

### 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. The final version is now with the museums departments who are currently working on Copy right issues and adding final comments. We hope that the book will be published in 2009.

### **Enquiries.**

It has been a very busy year for the enquiry service with over 386 enquiries to date. The majority of these enquiries are of a Regimental nature, the increase in the amount of enquiries rises every year, again we have broken another record.

Enquiries as ever are from all over the world, England, Republic of Ireland, Isle of Man, Spain, Belgium, Australia, Canada, New Zealand. We again would like to draw peoples attention to the research guide that has been updated on the Cameronian official website on the museum pages.

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

There is lots of useful information and resources for you to use such as, where you can get copies of service records, if you can get photographs of soldiers and what resources the museum have to help you.

In some cases we will not be able to supply any information but there are places that may be able to help. Check out this useful guide and its free.

### **Friends of Low Parks Museum.**

The friends of Low Parks Museum again have been working hard they have transcribed and proof read Sergeant Rattray's diary from the early 18th century – one of the oldest first hand accounts from a Cameronian we have.

They have also transcribed and proof read the war diary of the 3rd (Special Reserve) Battalion from 1908 – 1916, and the 5th Battalion war diary for the First World War. They will be working on transcribing the Second World War diaries, which we bought in from the National Archives, in the New Year.

### **2008/09 Exhibition.**

The 2008/09 exhibition at Low Parks Museum Called At Ease opened 5th July and closes on the 5th May 2009. This exhibition looks at the history of the regiment away from the battlefield, the exhibition is broken down into defined themes that we can all relate to such as, Travel and transport, sports, animals, history of the regiment, the officers mess and love and relationships.

The exhibition has been a great success having over 22669 visitors so far and with another 5 months to go we hope that we can double that. There has been a lot of objects brought out of the stores that have not been on display for a number of years. We must also thank a number of people who kindly loaned objects to the exhibition, you know who you all are.

The museums department are currently working on the 2009 temporary exhibition that will explore the theme of regimental sliver. This exhibition will open in March 2009 at Low Parks Museum, Hamilton.

### **Other Staff news.**

I am please to announce that South Lanarkshire Council museums department has began a three year project of significance not only for our department but for museums as a whole.

Succession planning has become a work on everyone's tongues in the small world of museums, as staff members move on valuable knowledge is lost and in some cases 30 years plus knowledge can be lost. To prevent this happening our knowledge management officer has been working on a project that will prevent this happening in the future.

### **Succession Planning in our Museums**

Collections knowledge is a key aspect of the cultural value of our collections for this and for future generations.

To illustrate its importance, here is an example:

To tell a more complete story about Lieutenant Colonel William Cleland's sword, it is essential that, down the centuries since 1679 when Cleland last had it in his hand; the link between the sword and its

famous owner was maintained through the traditions of the families that kept it. If even one generation failed to pass on the vital knowledge about the sword, that information would have been lost forever. The sword would merely be a well-preserved example of a 17th century weapon in our collections. We would have had no idea that it had belonged to Cleland.

Multiply that by at least 50,000 times for all the objects in our collection to see the scale of the importance of passing on collections knowledge.

Lt Cleland's sword illustrates an essential part of successful and consistent preservation and sharing of collections knowledge: succession planning.

In the museum world many long-serving employees retire or leave their museum for another job. When they leave much of their accumulated knowledge about the collections goes with them.

In recent years museums and museum bodies such as Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) and the Museums Association (MA) have begun to deal with this challenge.

The MA, through the Lottery-funded Monument fellowships scheme, is able to fund a few fellowships each year for a retired curator to spend a further period with his/her old museum to pass on his/her collections knowledge to colleagues.

Here in South Lanarkshire Council we have a different approach. We have re-structured our service to allow a long-serving museum employee, Terry F Mackenzie, to work 3 days a week exclusively on succession planning in partnership with Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS).

Terry is now 60 years old and has worked in the museum service in Hamilton since June 1974. He has also worked in partnership with the Trustees of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) over most of that period. Terry has an unrivalled knowledge of the collections - most of it in his head.

If Terry's brain could be plugged directly into our computerised collections management system, then the downloading of the data would be relatively simple. That part of the process is being achieved instead

through a procedure known as "knowledge harvesting". Sharon Paton, who works both with South Lanarkshire Council museums as a Museum Officer and with Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) as a job-share Collections Development Manager is working with Terry on developing a series of questions for Terry to respond to while studying the object or group of objects in question. Sharon commits 50% of her time to this work. Early pilot work on knowledge harvesting is showing it to be very successful at capturing data that's in Terry's head.

We believe that we are the first museum service in Britain to take such an approach and to make such a commitment.

The joint aim of South Lanarkshire Council and Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) is to develop a succession planning toolkit that any museum in Scotland could use with suitable training and support. In addition, elements of this toolkit are planned to be available to the museum sector as part of a new Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) learning website for employee development.

Succession planning in museums has a wider objective than the concept has in its more familiar role in business. Succession planning in museums is about developing procedures to share collections knowledge, not just amongst museum employees, but to make it available to all museum visitors to our museums and to our website.

Our project is intended to run over three years in three phases, gradually widening the project to include more of our project objectives. We plan to seek grant-aid from Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) to support this important project. The Trustees of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) have agreed to match fund parts of the first two phases where it concerns Cameronian collections. In the second year it is planned to digitise the complete run of The Covenanter from its first issue in 1922. This goldmine of information about Cameronians worldwide can then be browsed page by page and be fully searchable.

Our objective is to make succession planning an integral part of a museum's daily work so that collections knowledge is a constant stream of sharing of information and adding an ever-growing stock of collections

knowledge.

We hope that readers will agree that this is a fitting article to include in the final printed edition of *The Covenanter*, as the Cameronian family looks towards the future as well as the past.

**Low Parks Museum Shop.**

As reported in the 2007 *Covenanter* we have

currently working on an online shop for all of the Cameronian gifts. In the mean time they can be purchased by contacting the reception staff at Low parks Museum for a price list. Amongst the gifts that we have are: crystal pedestal clock, Pyramid paperweights, and crystal coasters to mention a few. For up to date prices and availability please contact the front of house team at Low Parks Museum, 129 Muir Street, Hamilton, ML3 6BJ or Tel: 01698 328232. Email: [Lowparksmuseum@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:Lowparksmuseum@southlanarkshire.gov.uk).



*2nd Battalion Centre Piece at RMA Sandhurst*

# THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION

## The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) 40th Anniversary Commemoration of the Disbandment of the 1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)

### Press Release

All ranks The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) are to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the disbandment of the 1st Battalion in 1968 as part of the Defence Cuts of that era when the Regiment chose to disband rather than amalgamate with another Scottish Regiment.

It is intended that this be the last formal gathering of the Regiment.

An Officers Dinner Night is planned for Saturday the 10th May and an all Ranks gathering at Douglas on the 11th May, when close on four hundred old comrades and family members will meet to celebrate their service with one of Scotland's most famous Regiments. The re-union will be followed in the afternoon by a traditional gathering on the site where the Regiment was raised in 1689 and where the 1st Battalion was disbanded on the 14th May 1968.

On that occasion The Reverend Donald Macdonald (the much loved former Chaplain for many years to each of our regular battalions) said by way of conclusion to his address to all those present:-

*"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 amendment 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"*

The Cameronian Regiment, a unique part of Scottish history for nigh on three hundred years, was formed in one day on the 14th May 1689 without beat of drum on the banks of Douglas Water. The original Cameronians were zealous Covenanters and took their name from Richard Cameron.' The Lion of the Covenant'

As the 18th century drew to a close Britain faced a war with the French and a Perthshire Laird, Thomas Graham of Balgowan, later Lord Lynedoch, raised a Regiment namely the 90th Perthshire Volunteers who acquitted themselves well in France and throughout the Napoleonic Wars and later in India and South Africa.

The amalgamation of these two Regiments in 1881, as a result of reforms to the whole structure of the army, saw the creation of the Regiment The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) designated as a Rifle Regiment given their prowess at marksmanship.

The Regiment saw service in most theatres during two World Wars and in the post war years earning thirteen Victoria Crosses and a further six by association over their years of loyal service.

Prior to this gathering the following message will be sent to Her Majesty The Queen:

All ranks attending the 40th Anniversary Commemoration of the disbandment of the 1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) send loyal greetings to Her Majesty The Queen.

## Regimental Dinner 10 May 2008

### Band Programme

#### Marches:

Old Comrades  
Killaloe  
Mechanised Infantry  
The Great Escape

#### Selection from:

Out of Africa  
The Mission  
Saving of Private Ryan  
Zorba the Greek

#### Solos:

Piccolo - Bosun's Fancy (Captain Pugwash)  
Cornet - Yesterday (The Beatles)  
Clarinet - Pirates of Penzance

#### Selections from:

Jesus Christ Super Star

National Anthem

Regimental March:

"Within a Mile of Edinburgh Town"

*Music by: William Phillips and the William Phillips Band*

### Menu

Carpaccio of Beef, Horseradish Cream,  
and Parmesan Crackling

Sea Bass with Wilted Greens and Sesame  
Dressing

Baked Lemon Tart with Berry Compote and  
Mascarpone

Filter Coffee and Chocolates

Wine: Hardy "The Riddle" Colombard-  
Chardonnay South Eastern Australia

### Pipe Programme

March: Balmoral Highlanders

Strathspey: Arniston Castle

Reel: Lexy McAskell

March: Killiecrankie

Pibroch: "Correnesains Salute"

Regimental Marches:

"Kenmuirs' On an' Awa"

"The Gathering of the Grahame's"

*Music By: Cpl Turnbull, L/Cpl Gray*

*By kind permission of the Commanding Officer  
1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland*

## Attendees

Baynes Lady Shirley  
Brotherton Major Ron and Elke  
Brunker Guy and Mary  
Buchanan-Dunlop Colonel Robin  
Burrell Lieutenant Colonel Jim and Norma  
Cameron Major Donald and Monica  
Christie Captain Jeremy  
Cooper Eleanor  
Cox Lieutenant Colonel Jeremy  
Craig Captain David  
Craig Major John and Caroline  
Daglish Nicholas and Jennifer  
Eydes Major Peter and Rosemary  
Farquharson Major Ian and Eileen  
Ferguson Captain George and Elma  
Gardiner Ronald  
Gordon Ian and Janice  
Gordon-Smith Captain Peter and Kate  
Grant Major Philip and Raimonda Pellegrini-  
Theiss  
Hathorn Rosemary  
Hawtreay-Woore Jeremy and Josephine  
Heathcote Dudley and Patricia  
Hewat Major Alastair  
Jerman Barry  
Leishman Major Brian and Gillian Charlton-  
Meyrick  
Lindsay Lieutenant Colonel Sandy and Jean  
Lindsay Major Colin  
Lomas Robert and Jenifer Ann  
Lucas Colonel Dudley and Stephanie  
Mackay Colonel Hugh  
Martin (RH) Bob  
Mathews Lieutenant Colonel Frank and Sue  
McBain Lieutenant Colonel Ian and June  
McNeill Efric and Katherine  
Muir John and Margaret Richmond  
Murray Lieutenant Colonel John and Ruth  
Nisbet Major David and Sue  
Orr Lieutenant Colonel Jim and Alison  
Park-Weir Major Iain  
Paterson Lieutenant Colonel Bouffy and  
Maggie

Pattison Major Lisle and Dorothy  
 Pettit Captain Cliff  
 Rodger Major Bill and Sheena  
 Selkirk of Douglas Lord James and Susie  
 Sixsmith Major Mike and Jo  
 Tedford Lieutenant Colonel Ian and Lindy  
 Weir Captain John and Nessa  
 Williams Anne  
 Worthington-Wilmer Major Hugh and  
 Philippa

## Regimental Gathering

Following the annual church service at 10am in the Douglas Valley Church, St Brides there will be an all ranks gathering.

### Cameronian Sunday St. Bride's, Douglas 11 May 2008, 10.00 a.m.

The Reverend David Easton

*Text – During his lifetime Absalom had taken a pillar and erected it in the King's Valley as a monument to himself, for he thought, "I have no son to carry on the memory of my name." He named the pillar after himself, and it is called Absalom's Monument to this day.  
 2 Samuel 18.18*

Today is a day when we remember. We remember the long and proud history of the Cameronians both in war and peace – a history which stretches from the raising of the regiment on 14 May 1689 to its disbandment on 14th May 1968. We remember the political and religious convictions of those who first formed the regiment; we remember the wars in which it fought across the centuries; we remember acts of heroism in far flung battlefields; we remember those who paid the price of such courage and gave their lives for their country; we remember the disbandment of the regiment on a cold and wet day 40 years ago; and we remember the annual commemorations at Douglas which have kept the spirit of the regiment alive and have maintained a sense of continuing belonging.

We remember, because it would be wrong to forget. Not to remember would not only be a gross betrayal of those whose names are recorded in the annals of the Cameronians,

or are inscribed on war memorials, or who to this day bear the scars of war. Not to remember would also diminish us. Let me illustrate what I mean.

Shostakovich, the Russian composer who died in 1975, describes in his memoirs the reign of terror which Stalin unleashed in Russia in the 1920s and 1930s. Hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people were arrested and executed or sent to labour camps in Siberia, never to return, and those who were snatched from their homes by the KGB in the middle of the night, or arrested at work, or picked up off the street, were not remembered. You didn't ask what had happened to them. You didn't even let on that you knew them. If you did so, you also would fall under suspicion, and it wouldn't be long before you too were taken away.

In his memoirs, Shostakovich pays tribute to one of his teachers at the Moscow Conservatoire called Zhilayev who encouraged him as a young composer. He often went to his house to show him his latest work. In the front room hung a picture of a famous army general called Tukhachevsky who after the First World War became a national hero. But for Stalin, he had grown too big for his boots. He feared him as a rival and ordered his execution on the trumped up charge that he had worked for the Germans as a spy.

Shostakovich writes:

After the announcement that Tukhachevsky had been shot as a traitor to the homeland, Zhilayev did not take the picture down. I don't know if I can explain how heroic a deed that was. How did people behave then? As soon as the next poor soul was declared an enemy of the people, everyone destroyed in panic everything connected with that person. If the enemy of the people wrote books, they threw away his books; if they had letters from him, they burned the letters. The mind cannot grasp the number of letters and papers burned in that period, no war could ever clean out domestic archives like that. And naturally, photographs flew into the flames first, because if someone informed the authorities that you had a picture of the enemy of the people, it meant certain death.

Shostakovich goes on to say:

Zhilayev wasn't afraid. When they came for him, Tukhachevsky's prominently hung portrait amazed even the executioners.

“What, it’s still up?” they asked. Zhilayev replied, “The time will come when they will erect a monument to him.”

Not to remember, to blot out the past, to erase the memory of people and events from our minds, is not only a denial of the past; it is also a denial of our common humanity.

It is important that we remember. What and whom we remember is an important part of what we are. And an even more important part of what we are is who remembers us. To remember other people is to be thoughtful, considerate, and kind. To be remembered by other people is to be cared for and loved.

The desire to remember and be remembered runs deep in human nature. There’s a bit in us all which says, “Remember me!” In childhood we make sure we’re remembered when the sweets are shared out. In adulthood we still shout “Remember me!” as the annual pay review takes place, or as the profit margins and dividends are shared out. “Remember me!” And if it’s not our determination to have a fair share of the cake which lies behind our cry to be remembered, then it’s our craving for status, recognition, appreciation, or even love. “Remember me!” We’re at it from the cradle to the grave. The desire to remember and be remembered is part of human nature.

Which brings us to the story in 2 Samuel of the pillar which Absalom erected. It was his bid for a kind of immortality of the sort which people still crave today. It may be an entry in Who’s Who, or an autobiography, or a plaque, or a stain glass window, or a trust fund - Absalom’s pillars, some of them fitting and appropriate, others vulgar and pretentious.

The story is part of the record of the reign of King David. David was getting on in years and beginning to lose his grip on the affairs of state. His son, Absalom, led a rebellion against him. His force of malcontents was defeated by the king’s army. But before battle was joined, David had instructed his commanders to spare his son’s life. However, in the event he was put to death by David’s commander-in-chief, Joab. It happened like this. As Absalom fled from the scene of battle through the forest on the back of a mule, his long hair caught in the overhanging branches of a tree. The mule ran on and Absalom was left hanging. Joab

and his men found him and finished him off with three javelins. His body was then thrown into a pit and covered with stones.

Meantime, David waited for news of the outcome of the battle. His main concern was for Absalom. A runner came hotfoot from the battlefield to tell him that the king’s forces had won the day, but David wasn’t listening. His only thought was for Absalom. “Is the young man Absalom safe? The runner didn’t have the heart to tell him. He would only say, “I saw great confusion just as Joab was about to send me, your servant, but I don’t know what it was.” But a second messenger was blunt and to the point. “May the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise up to harm you be like that young man.”. Then we’re told that David went to his room and wept – “O my son, Absalom! My son, my son, Absalom! If only I had died instead of you – O Absalom, my son, my son!”

Now in the middle of this moving story, the chronicler tells us of the monument which Absalom had erected in memory of himself. Joab’s soldiers had buried Absalom without ceremony under a rough heap of stones in the forest. And that reminds the chronicler of the very different memorial which Absalom had built for himself.

Here one can’t help think of other memorials which people have planned for themselves –the architectural dreams of Hitler; the statues and palaces which Saddam Hussein built for himself; the multi-million pound villa which Grace, the wife of President Mugabe of Zimbabwe, has built for herself; or the ornate tombs in the necropolis across from the Cathedral and the Royal Infirmary in Glasgow which were erected over the remains of the tobacco barons who made the city great to keep alive their memory.

Deep irony surrounds all these monuments which people have built for themselves. Who of us will ever forget those pictures we saw on TV of the mob in Baghdad pulling down a huge bronze statue of Saddam Hussein, then dancing on his torso and slapping his face with their shoes, which apparently is as insulting as you can get in Islamic culture. In the same way, the heap of stones in the forest was a far cry from the pillar which Absalom had erected to perpetuate his memory.



But the irony goes even deeper than that. Why do we remember Absalom today? Because of the pillar which he raised to his own achievements? No. If we remember Absalom at all it is because of his father's love and tears – "O my son. Absalom! My son, my son Absalom. If only I had died instead of you. O Absalom, my son, my son!"

This annual Commemoration Service which has taken place on this Sunday for the past 40 years is an Absalom's pillar of sorts. And a fine and worthy pillar it has been. All honour to those of you who have kept the pillar in good repair all these years. And though this is the last formal commemoration of the regiment's disbandment, the memories will live on, and the camaraderie and friendships forged in active service across the world, and the pride in having served with the Cameronians. The regiment's place of honour in the annals of military history is secure. The Cameronians will always be remembered. Of that there is no question.

But to return to our story, Absalom is remembered, not because of the pillar he raised to his achievements, but because of his father's love and tears – "O my son, Absalom. My son, my son Absalom." Absalom is remembered because of his father, and for no other reason.

But what about you and me? Are there not parallels between ourselves and Absalom? Surely there are. Like Absalom, like the prodigal son in the parable Jesus told, we too are rebels. We've rebelled against our Father in heaven. And like Absalom we have erected monuments which proclaim our independence of God, and which defy his authority – monuments to man which glorify his achievement and which proclaim, "Glory to man in the highest!" The face of the earth is covered with them. But, of course, it is also littered with piles of rubble which mark the place where those who built monuments to themselves came to a sticky end (think of Hitler's bunker) - just like Absalom who built a monument to himself, only to end up under a pile of stones in a dark corner of a forest. So there is a parallel between the story of Absalom and our story.

But we can press the parallel even further. Absalom is remembered not because of the pillar he raised to his achievements, far less for the ignominy of his end which

was without honour and dignity; he is remembered for his father's love and tears. And what of us? In the end of the day, what is it that gives you and me significance? Surely it is that God, who made us, so loved us, rebels that we are, that he gave his Son to die for us. That is the measure of the worth God places upon you and me

David wept when he learned of Absalom's death, and cried, "if only I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son." But God has not only shed tears over us. In Christ he has borne the consequences of our rebellion. He did so at Calvary. He died in our place. What David wished he could do for Absalom, God actually did for us.

That is the heart of the gospel. "The Son of God loved me," says the apostle Paul, "and gave himself for me." Or as he puts in his letter to the Romans which was read to us earlier in the service by Colonel Mackay, "Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrated his love for us in this; while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

CS Lewis, that great apologist for the Christian faith back in the 1940s and 1950s (and how we need another CS Lewis in our day to commend the faith to those whose mindset leaves no place for God) described Christ's death for us on the cross as the "intolerable compliment which God has paid us." Intolerable because we can't ignore it or escape it. The fact that God wept over us and gave his Son to die for us, ensures that we shall be remembered, and remembered for all eternity. Because at death we won't lapse into oblivion. There is no question of God forgetting us. How could he when he gave his Son to die for us. The question is: how will we be remembered? Will we be welcomed with the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your Lord"? Or will we be dismissed with the words, "Depart from me. I never knew you."? Eternal destinies hinge on how we shall be remembered.

May this final service of commemoration, followed by a last conventicle, point us to that day when one way or another, we shall all be remembered by the God whose verdict alone matters.

## Commemoration Service at Douglas, 11 May 2008

Major The Reverend DEN Cameron

MICAH Ch 6, Vv 6-8

*Text - With what shall I come before the Lord  
and bow down before the exalted God?  
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,  
with calves a year old?  
Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of  
rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil?  
Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression,  
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He  
has showed you, O man, what is good. And  
what does the Lord require of you?  
To act justly and to love mercy and to walk  
humbly with your God.*

I am proud to have served with the  
Cameronians!

That is surely the theme in our hearts as  
we gather here today. And I mean not just  
those who were commissioned or non-  
commissioned in platoon and company  
and battalion - but wives and children - also  
members of our great Regimental family.  
They belong here, too!

We've come a long way from that moment  
when Colonel Dow stood before the  
Commander-in-Chief in Scotland and said:  
"We have to go now, Sir. It is time for us  
to go." And those on parade marched off  
to drum beat - for the Battalion and Regular  
Regiment officially no longer existed.

We all know that is the way of life. Times  
for change must always come, sometimes  
unwelcome. And it has come today, 40  
years later.



This is the last formal gathering of  
Cameronians and well-wishers. Of course  
friends and comrades will continue to meet  
one another here and elsewhere as long as  
they want to, and are able. Lots to share,  
to laugh over, or in this or that occasional  
moment of seriousness, to be silent.

But not to grieve. We've done our grieving.  
The sorrow of those days in 1968 should have  
faded. Life must go on. We're not entirely  
a gathering of youth, are we? - Though  
hopefully hearts can still stay young. And  
they say that while our short term memory  
diminishes, our long-term recollections  
sharpen. So, lots left in the memory banks  
to draw upon.

We must leave it to the historians to say  
what sort of Regiment we were. We all have  
our own opinions on that, and needn't be  
afraid to share them! Today I want to pick  
out and share just two out of many good  
ways we soldiered as a Regiment in the last  
century. I can say share, because I myself am  
not quite yet history....

In the lesson read a few moments ago we  
heard these words: To act justly and to love  
mercy.

I think of the 1st Battalion in Malaya, when  
General Templar brilliantly ordered that  
all the workers on rubber and oil estates  
be moved into new, guarded, fenced-in  
villages. This made it really difficult for  
the terrorists to get regular supplies. The

move of course caused much heart-ache for workers and their families, moved from locations they had lived in for generations. But our drivers, our platoons and sections did what they could to help men, women and children get settled in the district we were responsible for.

On many patrols our sections and platoons sought out, ambushed and shot terrorists. On one occasion a terrorist, or bandit as we called them, was shot and wounded in the dark just outside one of these new villages. He was followed at first light for almost a mile by his blood trail. He sat drained and helpless, expecting to be shot



on sight, having been told by his leaders that was what would happen if the British captured him. Well, of course the first thing he received was a cigarette, a drink from someone's water-bottle, and a field dressing. Years later, we were in Aden, where stop-and-search was so necessary among the local population. And what a reputation the Battalion gained there among the locals, for politeness and courtesy, while still firmly doing its duty, including the necessity to search men at random!

None of these things gets headlines. But those qualities of attitude and behaviour say so much, where acting justly and loving mercy adds to the stature of both men and units. We've got our history, forged around the world in the horrors of war and battle. Our VCs, our battle honours. They are history we can read of and remember with pride. But today and tomorrow, life must go on. And - and we have something unique to the British Army. Our very roots, which came out of a strong belief in and acknowledgement of the living God.

Our Father God understands human pride in achievement. But in his divine love he

is concerned with what is in the heart of men and women. He longs that all should know the way to live. So I say to you, as I do to myself, that these words of our lesson are what can, and should, take us forward into the coming days: *He has showed you O man, what is good. What does the Lord require*



*of you? To act justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.*





40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Commemoration  
of the disbandment of the  
**1<sup>st</sup> Battalion  
The Cameronians**  
(Scottish Rifles)  
Sunday 11 May, 2008  
at Douglas

400



40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration  
of the disbandment of the  
**1<sup>st</sup> Battalion The Cameronians** (Scottish Rifles)  
Sunday 11 May, 2008 at Douglas

400



**Tel: (01730) 813331**

**Ashdown House  
New Road  
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GU29 9HY**

The Rt. Hon. Christopher Geidt, Esq., CVO, OBE,  
The Private Secretary to  
Her Majesty The Queen,  
Buckingham Palace,  
London,  
SW1A 1AA.

25th April 2008

Dear Sir,

We would be honoured if you would pass the enclosed message of loyal greetings to Her Majesty The Queen.

It may be useful to give you the following background notes.

Our Regiment, The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), was raised in one day close by Douglas village in Lanarkshire on 14 May 1689. As a result of Government economic cuts we chose to disband rather than amalgamate and this was carried out on 14 May 1968 at a site a few hundred yards further down Douglas Water from our "raising" spot.

Each year in May a few of us attend the Douglas village kirk service and subsequently visit our disbandment cairn.

Age takes its toll and so this year we will make the occasion one at which as many as possible can come to meet up with old friends. We expect at least 350 old Cameronians from all parts of the United Kingdom and a fair number from France, Canada, Germany, Malawi, South Africa and the USA. There will be some 30 distinguished guests and many, of course, from Douglas village. We realise that this may be our last big occasion, but our Regimental Museum in Hamilton, which flourishes, will become the focal point for information and contact.

During our last four years of service to The Crown we consecutively provided the Ballater Guards (1964 and 1965), the London Guard duties (1965), many important public duties in Edinburgh from 1966-1967 and a year of active service in Aden. We returned in time to pay our respects to South Lanarkshire before our final parade.

Yours faithfully,

**Colonel Hugh Mackay**  
Regimental Trustee  
The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)

**Tel: (01730) 813331**

**Ashdown House  
New Road  
Midhurst  
West Sussex  
GU29 9HY**



**HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN**

All ranks attending the 40th Anniversary Commemoration  
of the disbandment of the 1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)  
send their loyal greetings to Her Majesty The Queen.

11th May 2008

**Colonel Hugh Mackay, OBE**  
Regimental Trustee  
The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)



**BUCKINGHAM PALACE**

Colonel Hugh Mackay, OBE,  
Regimental Trustee,  
The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles).

Please convey my warm thanks to all ranks of the 1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) for their message of loyal greetings, sent on the occasion of the fortieth Anniversary Commemoration of their disbandment which is being held today.

I much appreciate your kind words and, in return, send my best wishes to all concerned for a most memorable and enjoyable event.

ELIZABETH R.

11th May, 2008.

# THE CAMERONIANS (SCOTTISH RIFLES) & FAMILY MEMBERS

## Royal British Legion Scotland Glasgow & Western Counties Area

Standard Bearing Competition Sunday 4th May 2008.

The Organisation Standard Bearer Mr Robert Gracie participated in the Royal British Legion Scotland Glasgow & Western Counties Area Standard Bearing Competition on Sunday the 4th May 2008 at the Territorial Army Centre of 32 (Scottish) Signal Regiment (Volunteers) at Maryhill in Glasgow. The Competition was opened by the Area Chairman Mr. Andy Bryan who welcomed all the guests and contestants. Drill Instructor Mr Ian Reat began the formalities with a tribute to the Late Cameronian William (Bill) Gough who passed away recently. Bill was a Standard Bearer alongside Robert and very well respected throughout the Organisation. The Standards Bearers dipped in homage while the Last Post was played followed by a minute's silence. Robert Gracie carrying the Organisation Standard participated in the Association Section of the competition. The quality of Standard Bearing was very high and Robert excelled and was awarded the Trophy for the Association Section, a very worthy winner.



*Major Terry O'halloran, Capt Eric Bridge, Lt Col Kevin Townsend, Woi Nick Korff, Maj Terry Milne  
Representatives of the Witwatersrand Rifles Regimental Association - South Africa, who attended our  
Regimental Gathering on 11 May 2008 as guests of the organisation*



# MEMORIES

## At the Depot

When the battalion left the Oman and Bahrein for Kenya I found myself on a posting to the Transit Camp at RAF Khormaksar in ADEN. I was not very chuffed about this so I hatched a cunning plan. After I'd been at the transit camp for a couple of months I would put in my notice to leave the Army at the end of a three year period. I reckoned this would mean that when the time came I would be returned to the Bn to be discharged and once there I would withdraw my notice, thereby getting back to HQ Coy MT Pln in under a year rather than hanging about Aden for a couple of years or until someone in Bn HQ remembered me and wondered where I was.

Of course as we all know; cunning plans have a habit of going wrong and this one was no exception. About six weeks before I would have been due to be discharged I was informed that my foster father had died but that there were no compassionate reasons for me to be sent home.

However two weeks later I was given four hours notice to get myself up to the RAF Movements Office to join a flight for the UK. This turned out to be a rather poorly old Beveley aircraft which was going back to RAF Transport Command workshops to be either rebuilt or scrapped.

It took a week to get to the UK as we had to keep diverting to RAF stations for fuelling and running repairs. So I found myself back in the UK with two weeks disembarkation and compassionate leave at the end of which I reported to the Orderly Room at Winston Barracks where ORQMS Dickson was quite happy to hear that I was withdrawing my notice to leave. Within fifteen minutes I was in front of the CO affirming this and actually getting a sort of welcome back to the fold. I wasn't daft enough to think they would just give me a ticket to Kenya and send me happily on my way but I enquired when I could expect some news; Wee Dickie (TheORQMS) told me the NS intake in training had two weeks till their passing out parade then two weeks leave before they would form a draft to go to the Bn so I should just go and make myself useful round at the MT Office.

I was pleased to find Cpl Ian McCammont in charge of the depot MT as he was the very person who had taught me to drive (and ride a motorcycle) in Buxtehude.

Ian was a big lad, rugby player and someone with a mysterious past of which he never spoke. There were delicious rumours around about him having been a military policeman who had been turfed out of the RMP for some crime or other but never any proof of that was shown. Certainly when we were on the driving cadre in Buxtehude it often happened that we would leave the barracks with quite a few full jerricans of petrol under the folded down roof of the Champ and go directly into Hamburg where he would leave us at the top of the Reeperbahn and disappear into the city; picking us up again at three o'clock. Never told us where he had gone but it must have been a hell of a distance because the jerricans were always empty when he returned!

He had a cavalier attitude to most WD equipment particularly vehicles, the depot Landrover was more or less regarded as his personal vehicle and he thought it would be a good idea to take me on a tour of the local countryside and so I found myself learning the routes to Biggar, Forth, Douglas and so on. It was incidental that he happened to have Lady friends in these places and he could do social visits at the same time. One of the odd things about him was that he was obviously well educated and spoke more like an officer than a jock which added to the speculation about his past. I was not really surprised when he told me he had applied to join the newly formed Army Air Corps had sat the entrance exam and been medical and aptitude tested. I was surprised when I saw a copy of the exam paper though, the level of maths, physics etc was well out of the secondary school league but that was when he admitted to having a University degree.

So I hung about the MT filling in time waiting for for my draft to Kenya until it dawned on me that the recruits had finished training and gone on leave and I'd not heard anything about joining them. I went round to see the ORQMS and asked him if I'd be going with them. "Oh yes" says Wee Dickie,

“But only as far as the railway Station” “Cpl McCammon’t has been accepted for flying training in the Air Corps, You will take over from him as Depot MT Cpl”.

That was it then. All my cunning plan had done was get me from one posting to another.

The Depot trucks were nothing to get excited about; a half decent Landrover, a One Ton Morris and an ancient Bedford Three tonner which was older than me and might even have seen some war service. It had crash gearbox which needed double de-clutching and gentle persuasion to get it to go up and down the gears; brakes which required five minutes notice before they would consider working and best of all there was a little handle on the dashboard above the gearbox. When you wanted to turn left; you leaned over pulled this across to the right and this pulled up a white painted metal arm with a red tip to indicate your turn to other traffic, (of course this was in the days before self cancelling flashing indicators ) but it looked so much like

a railway signal that it always got a laugh. Sometimes it stuck in the up position because it had been bent so often, then you had to stop the truck and hit it with something to knock it back down.

There was no fuel gauge either but there was a metal stick graduated in gallons that you shoved into the tank to see what you had. There was one other truck in the garage. This was a OneTon Ambulance with a canvas body and the Red Cross painted on the sides, just like the one seen in the old black and white movie “Ice Cold in Alex “ Life at the Depot was fairly easy though. The training staff got on with training the recruits; either National Service drafts or regulars and the rest of us on the staff just got on with supporting them. I was not required to do any duties or guards, there wasn’t even a muster parade for the staff so as long as you kept smart and polished as expected and got on with the job nobody bothered you.

There should have been two drivers and myself as the MT section but of course there was only one driver when I took over, Rfn Jimmy Graham, A Nashie who had been kept over after basic training as he held a driving licence. This was usually enough because there wasn’t much to do There was a twice daily Post run to Lanark PO at 0900 and 1600 hrs and trips to various stores depots at Stirling, Maryhill Bks in Glasgow,

Edinburgh etc. The recruits did not need much transport except to the ranges which were only a mile down the road.

After a few months our ancient three tonner was replaced by a Bedford RL ,not new but at least a bit more modern, Rfn Graham got posted to Kenya and Rfn Bill Brown came back from the Bn and joined me in the MT along with a recruit who’d finished training name of Cooper and therefore nicknamed Gary. Bill was a bit of a character. He had started as a junior bandsman, become a Rifleman, Regimental Policeman. MT driver in Bahrein, Oman, Jordan and Kenya which was when I knew him and had been up to the rank of Cpl a couple of times. Should have been pushing for Serjeant really but he had an unfortunate talent for getting into some odd scrapes. His last and greatest was in Kenya when after a drinking session in the NAAFI he and a couple of friends thought it would be a real laugh to borrow one of the Landrovers and take off on safari. They only got about fifty or sixty miles away before they ran out of petrol and water (you don’t plan very well when you set out on a drunken caper )

While they were residing in the regimental guardroom awaiting their fate they decided they might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb, so they broke out of the guardroom; borrowed another Landrover (this time not forgetting spare fuel and water) and took off in the general direction of Rhodesia. They got a long way this time but when they had almost run out of petrol and were near a small town they rolled into the only filling station in the place and invited the owner to fill them up and send the the bill to the British Army in Nairobi. Naturally the owner was a bit dubious and the police became involved . They spun a tale about having been on an exercise; getting lost and keeping going until they found this small place and they just needed petrol and directions. They nearly got away with it, one policeman seemed to be wearing it but the other took himself of to the Police Station to check and came back with a squad of Ascaris. The game was up. After the inevitable consequences the other two left the Army and Bill found himself at the depot where he had about ten months to do before he could terminate his service

Around the same time another old friend of mine from the Bn turned up. Rfn Terry Macaree. Terry was a London boy who

had joined us as a band boy in Buxtehude but hadn't quite made the grade with the instruments and so ended up in a Rifle Company. After the Oman business he had trouble with one of his feet which needed an operation. This couldn't be done in Bahrain or Aden so he was sent home to Cowglen Military Hospital in Glasgow (We still had military hospitals in those days) The op was a success but he had to be medically downgraded during the recovery period and they kept him at the hospital doing odd jobs, mostly shovelling coal in the boiler room. He soon got fed with this and contrived to have himself posted to Lanark where he soon got upgraded and became an assistant PTI and a very good gymnast.

Many of the training corporals and other depot staff were chosen from the best of the recruits and we had a great cpls mess including among others Iain Collinson, Eddie Wallace and Abie Little who were regulars and went on to join the WOs and Sgts Mess in the Bn. Of National Servicemen we had Bill Moyes and Guy Brown on the PT staff and Big Archie Millar ( from the Glasgow Shipyards ) as Provost Cpl and later Alex Dobie who became Post Cpl. Two others whose names I cant remember were talented table tennis players, playing at a high level in the Scottish Championships, so there was a constant competition going on in the mess and some of us became quite good enough to give the big boys a decent game.

This did not go down well with "Fag Ash Lil " the NAAFI manageress because all the furniture had to be pushed to the side to give the best players enough distance from the table and we usually forget to put the place back in order.

The Post Cpl was an old timer known to everyone as Wee Davie because he was about as wide as he was tall. One of those old timers with a full set of war ribbons and probably not less than twenty odd years service in the regiment who was a heavy drinker and gambler. After the evening post was delivered to Lanark GPO he always asked to be dropped at The Horse and Hounds pub. He reckoned he was an expert on racehorses, racing dogs and the best permutations to win the football pools and claimed to be best friends with racing trainers and jockeys, sometimes when he was well oiled in the mess he would favour us with a little inside information

on an absolute certainty running at York or wherever. Of course his certainties always fell at the first or were pulled up or baulked or something. But one day he told me of a horse called Top Hat which he claimed was going to make his fortune in the two o'clock at Newmarket or wherever. Bill Brown knew a bit about betting, looked the horse up in the paper and noted it was at 100 to 1. We had a good laugh but it was the day before payday and between us we could raise five shillings so after a bit of "Will We, Wont We" it was decided we'd throw our money away and have a bet

By this time it was One-forty five so we jumped in the Landrover and shot down to Lanark. Unfortunately it was Market day and traffic was heavier than usual, by the time we got to the Bookie the race was under starters orders and he wouldn't take the bet. I was quite pleased thinking I had saved my half crown for better things but believe it or not the damn thing won. We could have got twenty five pounds; nearly six weeks wages.

Wee Davie claimed he had not backed it either and we always wondered if he had been winding us up.

On a Thursday Davie would collect the football coupons from those who played the Littlewoods Pools along with whatever cash was required for the stake; take them to the GPO; buy the necessary postal orders and send off the coupons. One Thursday while waiting for him it occurred to me that I needed a birthday card so I went into the post office and there was Davie with a pile of coupons in one of those little privacy cubicles they had in those days. He was looking through all the coupons, deciding most of them had no chance of winning, tearing them up and pocketing the cash. I dont know how long he had been doing this but he only had a few weeks to do and I hadn't the heart to report him, he would have lost his pension and all that. I just made sure that I went into the post office with him and saw the coupons properly posted for the next couple of weeks.

There was another old timer finishing up his twenty something years of service in the staff barrack room. His name was Dusty and he was the cpl in the QM stores. He regarded the contents of the stores as the untouchable property of the MOD and trying to get a new pair of socks or an exchange of a worn out KF shirt out of him was impossible without a note signed by the

CO, the QM and probably the Minister for Defence, and a receipt from the Pay Office to say the money had been taken from your wages to pay for it. However Dusty had a strange habit. Although by no means a heavy drinker (he was rarely seen in the mess to have more than the usual beer) about once every six weeks or so he would ask me to bring him a half bottle of whisky from the pub off licence. It had to be Queen Anne whisky, nothing else would do. The bottle would be placed in his locker beside a beautiful crystal glass he kept there; possibly liberated from the Officers Mess sometime in a chequered past. Then about nine o'clock at night he would open both doors of his locker, pour himself a glass and standing almost in the locker with the doors pulled in behind; him proceed to demolish the bottle in less than an hour, then he would crash out; sometimes making it to his bed or other times just crashing on the floor. Then we'd put him face down on his cot (although he was never sick) extract the keys to the stores and get whatever was needed.

I never had much to do with the Band Boys unit apart from taking them and their kit to the Clyde for canoeing trips and and so on but a good number of them had completed most of the tasks required to gain the Duke of Edinburgh Award and were to do the final thing which was a cross country unsupported march over two days and a night. The chosen route was the difficult Lairig Ghru pass from Braemar to Aviemore. The boys would travel up by bus I would take their kit, rations etc. set up a starting camp near the Linn of Dee and see them on their way in the morning picking the kit up again in Aviemore two days later. It seemed like a nice few days in the Highlands away from camp routine although it was late Autumn and a bit chilly with fine sunny days, just what the boys needed.

The Colour Sgt at the Boys Unit in charge of their kit and accomodation etc was from Highland Bde and actually lived in Ballater not to far from Braemar so he was taking advantage of the exercise to get a free trip home and a weeks leave. Before we left I was surprised at the large amount of sheets ,blankets,rations etc we were putting on the truck also several large boxes he said was his personal stuff. After we'd seen the boys off on their trip I was to take him to Ballater; which was in exactly the opposite direction from Aviemore, but never mind, he was in

charge.

Along the way he said he knew a good short cut over the hills so if I just turned in this gate and up the track he would keep me right and we could halve the journey time. It was a serious bit of cross country driving going high up into the mountain, crossing burns and on little wooden bridges over deep ditches. I said to him half joking ,half serious "If I lose it on one of these ditches you will have to take responsibility for us being up here". "Just make sure that doesn't happen" says he "This is the Braemar Royal Estate we are on" After we were over the top and heading downhill he asked me to stop so he could have a pee, jumped out and started rummaging in the back of the Landrover. About seventy five yards away was a sloped bank with a number of pheasants wandering about on it and they started heading over to us, probably expecting to be fed. Next thing I hear is a gun firing, the pheasants scatter and there he is with a .22 rifle shooting at them ! Good God, Not only are we trespassing on the Queens Estate, Now this nutcase is poaching her birds. I couldn't think what to do, he was a C/Sgt to my Cpl for a start but apart from that I hadn't a clue where we were or how to get out of there. I couldnt just drive away and leave him and he said he was determined to have at least two birds. Problem was he had fired about eight shots and still hadn't hit one. We were going to be there all day, so I convinced him to give me a try , shot the two nearest, threw them into the truck and was off down that hill like a getaway driver from a bank.

He certainly knew his way round all those tracks though and shortly we emerged onto the road not far from Ballater where all the stuff was unloaded and taken into his house. I declined the offer of lunch and was away from the scene of the crime asp.

I never met him again but shortly after our little trip he was suddenly removed back to Highland Bde amid rumours of financial irregularities, missing stores and scams to relieve the boys of their pocket money, There was talk of court martial proceedings but I dont know if any of that happened.

When the indoor sports season started in the winter S/Sgt Spiers our PT Corps instructor decided to form a team to take part in the Scottish Command championships. We couldn't raise a full team of all the boxing

weights but we made a team of six and four of us..Sgt Alan Nelson, Sgt Davie McMillan, Rfn Murdoch and myself all won our weight, the others were runners up. We had the most number of winners so the Depot became Scottish Command Champions. A while after that I received a letter from Scottish Command inviting (?) me to join a team from the Army which would take on a team formed by the Scottish Amateur Boxing Association in aid of a huge Charity fundraising event which had been going on all year. I joined the Army team at Edinburgh and was quite surprised to see that we had quite a talented team (Lots of good amateur sportsmen doing National Service in those Days) and we were bussed over to Dunfermline where the show was to take place. All my previous boxing experience had been in Army gyms or in inter club and schoolboy championships in Glasgow which usually were held in town halls or rather poor boxing clubs but this was the full black tie affair with the ring surrounded by dinner tables at which much drink was flowing. Apparently a large sum of money had been raised from those attending.

At the weigh in it soon became obvious that we were facing not an S.A.B.A team but in fact the full Scottish National Team including ABA champions.

They did not have an opponent for me as their bantamweight had suffered an injury of some kind, but so as not to disappoint me (?) they suggested that I could do an exhibition bout with a spare lightweight they had on hand.

The result would not count in the nights scoring as it was against the rules to match opponents with such a weight difference although regarded as OK if it was an exhibition bout. I said ok because I thought it would just be an excuse for my opponent to pounce about and show off a bit (at my expense of course) since he was the well known "Spangles Hunter" with many international appearances for the Scottish team behind him.

I was sadly mistaken however because from the first bell it was obvious that the only exhibition he was interested in was one where I would be disposed off in the first minute of the first round. It took a lot of fancy footwork to keep out of his way at first but I lasted throughout the bout and even managed to land enough punches of my own to feel honours were fairly even at

the end although of course he was declared the winner. I was at least given a very fine trophy to keep but sadly I couldn't afford to have it engraved at the time.

The winter of '59 was really severe; very cold and with heavy snowfalls so of course the coalminers took the opportunity to go on strike. By this time I was married and my son Terry was a couple of months old so heating in our quarter at No 14 was pretty much essential, unfortunately though the heating system in the quarters consisted of an open fire in the sitting room and a coal fired range sort of thing in the kitchen which had a central fire grate with a small oven on one side and a larger one on the other. Pots or kettles could be heated on top of the oven part for cooking and although we did have a single electric ring on which you could boil a kettle, coal was essential for cooking and heating. Very soon it became impossible to obtain and we tried burning anything available, any scrap timber to be found, old shoes, cardboard boxes screwed up newspapers and so on. My wife Rose went home to Glasgow one weekend to visit her mother and a neighbour offered her half a bag of coal...she brought it back to Lanark on the bus in an old suitcase.

There was a large pile of coal over at the boiler house which provided the heating and hot water system for the main barrack blocks, It was crushed coal intended for high temperature boilers; every piece of it about the size of a grape and it fell down through two large open hoppers into the space in front of the furnaces where the boilermen worked.

I reckoned they wouldn't miss a few buckets so I went over late one night armed with two large metal buckets and a shovel. Through the open hoppers I could see the boilermen and I couldn't just shovel the stuff up into my bucket as they would hear me so I had to stand there in the freezing dark until one of them started to feed the boiler and then time my shovelling with his so the noise at my end was covered by the noise at his, then it was off with the goodies, but I had to pass the Sgts Mess on the way back and just as I was near it, the door opens and out comes the RSM and one of the Sgts. It was a dark night and they were under the light above the mess door. I stood stock still and pretended to be part of the landscape. The RSM had the quarter next to mine so I had to stand there with a heavy bucket hanging

from each hand until he made his leisurely way home and was safely inside. It was all to no avail, the damn stuff would not even light never mind burn. I found out later that the boilers had to be started with ordinary coal and got up to temperature before this stuff was used.

I had another idea though. In the garage was a large inspection pit covered for safety reasons with heavy duty timber boards, well impregnated with oil and grease; about four feet long; a foot wide and six inches thick. They fitted exactly the length of the pit. I enlisted the help of Bill Brown and we removed one of the boards and sawed it up into nice neat log sized pieces to fit the fireplace. Then we moved every other pit board about an inch leaving the pit still covered but with a little gap between the boards. The logs burned brilliantly and I could even bulk up the fire with some of the stuff from the boilerhouse but it only lasted one night so another board went the same way and the gap between them got wider.

After the third board had been used the gap was so ridiculous that we just cut up the rest. The law of unintended consequence operated about a week later when one of the recruits on stag in the small hours of the morning decided to nip into the dark corner of the garage for a quick smoke and fell into the pit. Luckily it wasn't too bad, he had a sprained ankle, a swollen knee and a filthy greatcoat. He also had a severe chewing out for being off his beat on guard and a week on light duty. (In today's Army he would probably get a half million pounds in compensation).

There was a great deal of looking into the pit by everyone from the training officer to the RSM but nobody mentioned the lack of covering boards and nor did I. Guard commanders were told to impress on the guard that they were not to go into the garage. I added my bit by suggesting that we could paint the inside of the pit with snowcem paint so it would be a bit more obvious at night and this was duly done. Rather nice it looked too.

It didn't end there though, a week later one of the junior nco's was taking a drill period in the garage because it was raining heavily. He had them marching towards the end wall and had given the preparatory order to "about turn" but the executive order never came and the squad were left

marking time with the front ranks faces up against the wall!. Whilst watching the squad march away from him he had been walking slowly backwards and had of course walked backwards into my beautifully painted pit. He actually fell down the steps of the pit and the only damage was to the back and elbows of his BD. After that the QM spoke to the civilian run REME workshop across the road and a few days later we had a fine set of brand new pitboards. They were safe enough though, by this time the weather had improved and the miners strike was over.

One summer day with not to much to do; Bill Brown and I decided it would be a good idea to go down to a cafe on the Biggar Rd much favoured by long distance lorry drivers for their superb steak sandwiches. This cafe stood at the junction on that road where the access track was for those wishing to walk up Tinto Hill and it seemed like a good idea to go round that way, then it seemed like a good idea to see how far up the famous hill we could get the Landrover. It wasn't too hard until we reached the old quarry about half way up but after that there was no proper track and although we got quite close to the top I (who was driving) found I'd been a bit over ambitious and was in a very dodgy situation with the truck stuck at an angle across the hill and liable to turn over at any minute, couldn't go forward or back in a straight line or turn to face downhill. We finally got away with it by creeping backwards on full lock with Bill hanging off the uphill side to add as much weight as possible until a point was reached where I could back down to the quarry in reverse gear.

Unfortunately when we came on a nice piece of open woodland near Carmichael I had another good idea; which was to have a speedy little run around the trees. It was all good fun until I charged over a low bank and ended up in a bog. The truck went right in up to the floor of the chassis and there was no chance of driving it out. Bill went down to the main road; got a lift back to camp and returned with the one tonner and a tow chain but the chain was pretty short and trying to get close enough to attach it, the front end of the One tonner sunk into the bog. I hadn't yet learned the warning phrase "When you are in a hole, Stop digging" So Bill went back to camp again and came back with the Three tonner.

It didn't even make to the stranded trucks; it was too heavy and got stuck not far into the wood. So much for being hot-shot drivers. We had to spend the night in the vehicles and were rescued by the recovery vehicle from the REME workshop in the morning. You never learn though, I found myself in the Tinto Hill situation once more during my service although this time up country in Aden on our last tour and this time I was on my own.

It wasn't all irresponsible nonsense at the Depot though. When General Murray was to visit us (I think it was prior to his going Norway to become Commander of Northern Army Group in NATO) He wanted to go down to the wonderful old saddlers shop which was in one of the closes off Lanark High Street and I was to take him in our Landrover. This was too good a chance to miss and we cleaned and polished every inch of it.

Despite our best efforts it was still just a tired looking old Landrover but then I found out that one of the recruits had just completed his apprenticeship as a coach painter. He agreed to do the business on the vehicle if we bought him the fancy brushes and things he needed but this was one crafty guy and once we had everything prepared and had all the expensive kit he wanted he then decided that if he was to give us the benefit of his training and study at night school etc etc then we had to come across with something in return. In short he wanted a driving licence and he knew it was possible for us to give him the coveted pink slip which would get him a civilian licence for free. As it turned out he had been driving his father's car since he was eighteen and was perfectly competent so Major Quinn agreed to sign a slip if the job he did was up to expectation.

The job he did was indeed excellent, nicely painted and finished with a special varnish (no laquer in those days) and once we fitted a new shiny pair of headlamps I scammed out of the good old REME workshop by "accidentally" cracking the glass in one and "losing" the chrome securing ring on the other we had a vehicle fit for a General. Well not quite, it was still let down by the well worn seating but Major Quinn fixed that by having someone make up white linen seatcovers. Come the big day I drove the General down to Lanark feeling quite proud of myself but I didn't get to put the

Generals pennant on the bonnet.

There were rumours going round that the General would be taking a piper, driver, and other staff from the Regiment with him to NATO headquarters and since the Bn was away in Kenya it would be people who were around the place who would be chosen.

As it turned out the driver chosen for the job was Davie Keen who had just finished his recruit training but was a very good driver who had worked with cars in civvy street. It must have seemed some stroke of luck to join the Regiment, finish basic training, get promoted to Cpl and be sent off to drive limousines around the Embassies and Palaces of Scandinavia.

When it came time for the Admin inspection that year it was the usual Cameronian overkill throughout the admin side of the depot and it was no different in the MT. I had the trucks polished and cleaned to Buxtehude Bullshit" standard (Anyone who was in the MT in Buxtehude will know what that means) Every tyre pressure exact, oil levels right on the mark, no stones in the tyre treads and every document in place and up to date, in short all the usual nonsense, Hell, We even painted the inside of the pit again as it would be used to inspect the trucks. It worked a treat though, the inspecting REME Tech Sgt was well impressed and gave us an excellent report.

He did note that one vehicle had worn wheelbearings and the three tonner had worn propshaft bearings but this could not be seen as a fault on our part since I'd never had any training in MT matters other than a driving cadre in Germany, anything else had to be picked up as you went along. He did surprise me by saying that he had recommended I be sent on a course and it worked because not long afterwards I went on the MT Officers and Sgts Course over three months at Bordon camp in England. The course was quite good but too much time was spent on driver training lessons and not enough on the more important aspects of being in charge of operating regimental transport in the real world, for instance, only one half day on vehicle recovery which was just a demonstration of it being done by REME and a look at the various ropes and pulleys used. Another half day on the use and maintenance of motor cycles was spent watching the instructors having fun riding in a sandpit. One hour long lesson on the storage and transport of fuel and nothing about things like the working of a water

supply truck but I got a B plus pass at the end of it and I did learn how to check for worn wheel and propshaft bearing

The MT section (all two of us at this time) managed to bring another trophy to the Depot when Scottish Command decided to start an annual vehicle rally type competition. It was to be a day long thing with teams entered being made up of three people; one of whom had to have less than two years service. It didn't look as though we could form a team but Capt David Craig was at the depot at the time and he was dead keen to get involved so the team entered was to be He and I with Gary in the back to make up the one with less than two years service. The rules of the competition said that it was to be a test of driving skills and map reading and there would be a special "against the time" test to be carried out at the mid day break location.

We tried to figure out what the special test might be and could only think that it was probably a fast wheel change. If we had guessed right we had an advantage because that was something we used to do to pass the time on boring days when there was nothing else to do, Bill Brown and I could do it in a very quick time but he was gone by now and Gary was a bit clumsy and not the sharpest knife in the drawer but he could be relied on to get out of the back of the truck with the jack quickly. Capt Craig (or WeeDavie as we called him when he was out of earshot) had a few runthroughs and soon I was confident that it would be one hell of a team who could better our time.

Just to make sure we had an edge I mounted the spare wheel on the bonnet where it was quickest to get at and tightened the holding bolt just enough to secure the wheel but so that it could be loosened by hand, the jack was greased, set to the height that would make it ready to lift as soon as it was placed under the truck and the wheelbrace stowed where I could put my hand on it as I got out of the truck. Then I made sure all the documents and tools were correct and did all the things we thought they might check like tyre pressures and so on. Anyone would have thought we were going to the Monte Carlo Rally.

Then Wee Davie came up with what seemed like a pretty crackpot idea, he had read an article in a rally enthusiast magazine about a way to ensure driving at average speed and not losing or gaining time over distance. It

involved an alarm clock from which the face was removed and replaced with a card marked with various coloured quadrants and although he tried to explain how this was going to work I just couldn't get it. When he produced this enormous brass clock with the strange face he had converted and a bell that would waken the dead I thought it was a great joke. It got even funnier when he said he thought it would probably be seen as an unfair advantage over the other competitors and we had to keep it hidden therefore we had to have twice as many maps as needed sitting on the seat between us to cover it. Trouble was the thing had the loudest tick ever and anyone standing by the truck would thought we were sitting on a time bomb.

I don't remember if this thing was only a Lowland Brigade do but when we got to the start point up at the St Margarets Drive area in Glasgow I was surprised at the large number of teams taking part and we felt rather smug when after we got our competitor number and were placed in the start line an official came round and checked all our documents, tools and the odd tyre pressure and condition of wiper blades etc but not so clever when before the off we were handed a large test paper containing about thirty questions on the Highway Code. I had done my driver training in Germany and to be honest my knowledge of the Code was little more than I needed to know so some of the more obscure rules like what hours the use of a horn was not allowed and suchlike were a bit beyond me but Gary and Wee Davie came up with most of the answers and we guessed a few more.

We were sent off at five minute intervals with Captain Craig driving and myself doing the navigation bit (Well we all know what officers are like with maps) The magic clock was set up and we headed off in the general direction of Ayrshire with two Grid references which had to be passed and a third where our card would be time stamped and another set of Grids given for the next leg. According to your start time and average speed given for any part of the route it was required that you should reach the checkpoints at an exact time (although you were not told what that time was) and penalty points were added for each minute early or late. Getting lost or missing any of the intermediate checks to make up time was not an option as that could



lead to disqualification so I concentrated completely on the maps and left the rest to Wee Davie and his clock. It was a beautiful day and was becoming a rather pleasant tour of the countryside. When we arrived at the time check exactly on time, to the surprise of the timing official and me and the delight of Captain Craig I began to think we could be in with a chance of winning the competition.

It got even better when we stopped for lunch after three checks exactly on time and took our place in the lineup for the special test, we had to drive round the side of a large building where the test was carried out of sight of other competitors, when we got there it was a lot of parking, reversing into marked spots and stopping exactly on lines, manoeuvring around cones and suchlike, absolutely no problem to Capt Craig but in one of the more rapid turns the magic clock shot out its hiding place and rattled around the floor at my feet. When I finally got hold of it it was still ticking away like a tuppenny watch and was quickly tucked out of sight again. That didn't take very long and we went on to the last test, driving up to an official with a stopwatch in his hand who said " Right Sir, When I say Go! you are to drive onto that marked square over there and change the right front wheel". "There is an allowed time of five minutes and you will be penalised for every minute over that but will get bonus points for minutes under that " Dearie me, we could have changed at least two wheels in that time and we proceeded to do a very slick job of it, even faster than when we had practiced. The guy with the stopwatch said no one had bettered our time up till that point.

The afternoon session was mainly in Lanarkshire, an area I knew so well that once I had identified the Grid References I hardly had to look at the map, but as we made our way through Glasgow town centre to the finish it was rush hour and although the traffic volume was nothing like that today there were trams which were only to be passed on the inside and not if they were at or approaching a passenger stop which certainly was slowing us down. At the start of the run up Sauchiehall Street and only a mile or so from finishing Capt Craig suddenly declared that the clock was telling him that we were going to be about five minutes late unless we got some speed on and suddenly

accelerated. We nearly lost Gary who had been hanging out the back ogling the girls on the pavement and as we shot up the road overtaking cars on the outside and trams on the inside while scattering the jaywalkers that Glasgow is well known for I just prayed that we wouldn't run up against any of Glasgows finest in a police car. We clocked in only a minute or two over time and once the all the scores were totalled, ( which took a few days ) we were declared winners by a large margin. Apparently we could have finished ten minutes late and still won since we were so far ahead and it was all down to Capt Craig and his home made magic clock.

I had another lucky break at the Depot when HMS Blackwood (I think that was its name) our affiliated Royal Navy ship down on the Clyde somewhere informed the depot that it was taking part in a "show the flag" cruise to Sweden and they would be happy to take along some soldiers. I think six men and a piper under the command of Iain Collinson were picked to go the cruise.

There would an official reception in Sweden for the group as the King of Sweden was of course our Colonel in Chief but I dont recall any officers being involved. A very nice little jolly for some lucky beggars but a few days later there was another offer. A submarine going on the same trip had an empty berth and the Captain was willing to take along one of us. It had to be a volunteer thing of course and those willing to go put their names forward to be put into a draw from which the winner would be chosen. When I was told that I had won I could only believe there had been a bit of a fix since I usually could back the loser in a two horse race but I was going to Sweden in a submarine. Not a lot of soldiers do that kind of thing. It was a wonderful experience but has to be told in another "Tale from the Barrack Room".

Finally the time came round when I was to return to the 1st Bn, something I had set out to do in Aden all that time ago and although I was looking forward to it I realised I'd better get my act together a bit better; between the time spent in Khormaksar and at the Depot it had been slightly more than three years since I had done a guard, parade or regimental duty of any kind or even fired a weapon. At the time I was preparing to leave with the next draft the Highland Light Infantry and The Royal Scots Fusiliers had been somewhat unwillingly forced

into amalgamation to create the Royal Highland Fusiliers and since both Maryhill Bks in Glasgow and Churchill Bks at Ayr were no longer required because Maryhill was a victorian slum anyway and Churchill Bks wasn't any great shakes either (both of course stood on prime development land) the recruits of the new regiment were to share with us in Winston Bks. We on the staff were not at all happy about this and I dont expect the RHF were either since it was bound to lead to all sorts of disputes about seniority and so on and who had priority for whatever. Luckily I was only there for the only first few days of their moving in and I remember how straight away they were erecting an ugly great gong thing on the hallowed grass outside our CO's office and taking over the guardroom. They wanted to move the Regimental Depot sign at the gate to the other side and put theirs in prime position. Then there would be a problem about the flagpole and which flag would be on it.

I wasn't happy when I found myself captured onto the staff at Winston Bks but now I look back on my time there as a rather happy time in my service with the regiment, and if you will bear with me I would like to finish this story with an account of what happened to my friends of the time both National Service and Regular and the dear old barracks itself..

Bill Brown our resident Kenya Safari expert left the army and eventually became a succesful businessman in the south of England and often went back to Kenya on holiday. He retired to France and we keep in contact and visit a lot.

Big Archie Millar the provost corporal went back to his beloved shipyards (they didn't last long did they)

Davie Keen who went of to be the Generals driver went on to Copenhagen when Nato Northern Group moved there and became a well known face in both the Canadian and American Embassies, marrying a local girl and becoming fluent in the Danish language, but when the Generals term was over Davie came to the Bn and it was rather difficult at first because he was a full corporal with a few years service yet absolutely no idea of what went on in the Regiment. He was soon on top of the job and became a valued member of the MT but his wife did

not like Germany in general or army life in particular. She decided to go back home which of course was only up the motorway from Minden so to speak and once she was settled back in Copenhagen, Davie went round to visit his friends in the Canadian Embassy. When they heard his story they offered him a job in their motor pool. It got better when he went round to the American Embassy because they offered him an even better job with American type wages , health and pension benefits etc.

Naturally he left the army and spent the rest of his working life at the Embassy during which time he drove two American Presidents, (Carter and Clinton I believe) and was awarded the special gold and enamel tie pin and cufflink set with the Presidential seal which is awarded to those deemed to have given personal service to a President (I've seen them and they are really rather impressive ). Finally he retired with a very nice American service pension and a very adequate Danish pension. Not a bad outcome when you think that when he walked into the army recruiting office in Glasgow the Cameronian recruiting serjeant was the first person he spoke to and that is why he became a Cam and was sent of to Norway where it all began.

Abie Little, Iain Collinson, Eddie Wallace and I all joined the Serjeants Mess in the Bn and soldiered on until the Disbandment.

Abie disappeared towards the Small Arms School and I dont know whether he joined them and rebadged or not for no one I'm in contact with knows where he got to.

Eddie Wallace was transferred to the RHF but couldn't get on with them, bought himself out and returned to his previous life in the Merchant Navy travelling the world as Bosun on those big cruise ships for a number of years before taking a shore job and finally retiring to become a computer nut.

Iain Collinson went to the Gordon Highlanders and they got amalgamated as well but he went on to become WO 1 and was one of only two of us from those days who went on to complete the full twenty two years. There was a good letter from him in last years Covenanter from his home in Australia where he seems to be happily settled.

I left the Army to set up a small business in Edinburgh which my wife Rose and I ran for thirty years and am now happily retired to my little cottage in Lanarkshire; not many miles from the barracks.

Of the PT Staff, Guy Brown emigrated to New Zealand and Bill Moyes was last seen many years ago as a Detective Sgt in the Glasgow Police

My best friend Terry Macaree went on the Assistant PTI course at Aldershot and so impressed the APTC that he was invited back to do the year long probationers course at the end of which he transferred to the Corps and went out to Malaya for a very pleasant posting in a Bde HQ. On his return to the UK he got himself in among the Para's ; first doing the infamous P Coy and qualifying as a jumper before returning to actually run P Coy. Then a series of postings and a rise through the ranks until he reached WO1 when he was offered a commission in the rank of Captain and an appointment as instructor at Sandhurst. Terry finally retired after forty odd years service when he was Director of Physical Training and Sport, London District in the rank of Lt Colonel. By that time his job was to be privatised so to speak and he left his office in Horse Guards only to return the next week as a civil servant (retired officer) and doing the same job. Since he spent a lot of time in and around the South of England his charming wife Deirdre could continue her own very successful career as personal assistant and secretary to some of the biggest international bankers in the City of London. On final retirement they went of to New Zealand to be near their daughter and grandchildren and Rose and I spent a month with them in their wonderful big house overlooking Auckland Bay. It's a hard life being retired in NZ what with playing golf, walking on the beach and checking out all those restaurants and vineyards but somebody has to do it and Terry is making a fine job of it.

Finally poor old Winston Bks. After Glencourse Bks was designated the training centre for all Lowland Bde recruits the barracks was practically abandoned by the MOD and slowly fell into disrepair. The excellent REME workshop across the road was demolished and the old Lanarkshire Yeomanry building near the front gate went the same way. Over the next thirty years the place deteriorated into a collection

of mostly derelict buildings with only the main block looking not too bad. All the married quarters, Officers and Sgts messes, Gymnasium, NAAFI, medical centre and so on were only fit to be knocked down. I suppose some bean counting civil servant got an MBE for saving the MOD maintenance money by allowing a prime property to go to fall into ruin.

Over the years I believe a number of developers tried to get hold of the site but South Lanarkshire Council didn't want or need to have a very large housing estate on the outskirts of Lanark and they kept refusing planning permission but the place was sold to a company who put in plans for a development of four hundred houses. When it was knocked back they appealed to the Scottish Executive who overruled the Council and allowed it to go ahead. The Council then slapped a historic grading on the main block and some other buildings to prevent their being demolished but the builders were quickly on site and it was amazing just how fast the place was destroyed. In about ten days everything except the Main block and the two messes had disappeared, the square was ripped up and covered in huge mountains of rubble and even the large trees fronting the main road were ripped out ( what is a small mature woodland to a builder when he might squeeze an extra house into the space). However once work was started the building company began to seem a bit more sensitive to the history of the place and I believe it's to be called Cameronian Green and the streets and avenues will have names associated with the regiment like Douglas Drive, Graham Court and so on.

I suppose it is much better for our old home to be turned into a pleasant estate where families can live and bring up children in what is a beautiful part of the countryside rather than fall into a ruined pile of brickworks which no doubt would become the haunt of vandals and junkies.

One day before the demolition started I was passing and on a whim I decided to have a little memento so I jumped over the fence at my old quarter and started to unscrew the house number from the wall. I could barely reach it and I had no tools so I was struggling to do it with my car key when a voice behind me says " Whit the F\*\*\* dae Ye think Yer daeing Pal ?" It was the biggest security guard I'd seen in a long

while but when I told him what I was about he says "Ye'll niver get it aff wi that" takes a bottle opener out of his pocket and the top edge fitted the screws a treat. We spoke for a while and he told me he'd been on the security at the camp for a good number of years and the day staff were used to having people turn up at the gate wanting to see the barracks, a great many said they'd come from South Africa, America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand as well as European countries and just wanted to see the old place where they had done their training during National Service days. He and the other guards could never understand why a lot of these old guys had tears in their eyes when they saw the state of the place. Says it all....doesn't it ?.

Best Wishes to any old "Depot Dodgers" who might read this.....Happy Days!  
Jimmy Quinn.

## A Cold Start

January 1954 – it was bleak and it was cold as the icy wind came straight off Lanark Loch, over the racecourse and chilled to the marrow the sixty-odd miserable young men who made up the latest conscription intake. From what they saw around them it was evident that civilian clothing was simply inadequate for these surroundings and the military interpretation of "short back & sides" was different from anything they had known hitherto.

As always at such times fate had thrown together a disparate bunch of individuals from urban and rural backgrounds, from all sorts of jobs and families; a few straight from school and one or two straight from jail.

Over the next few hours, as the cold took a grip and the depression ebbed and flowed through the group there emerged from the shadows the memorable characters whose role it would be in the coming weeks to take apart these sixty-odd disparate egos;-crush them just enough to make the moulding of them into a cohesive unit not only possible but effective.

At that moment the warm, welcoming, unifying family feeling which is the spirit of a Scottish infantry regiment was not much in evidence. People were bemused and bewildered. Basic training had begun.

In Q.M stores the corporal who shied two pairs of boots-ammunition at each recruit in turn, followed by "shirts, flannel, three, T.O.S one" – and so on, was watched from time to time by Major Al. Cluley whose silent presence was almost monk like and quite different from CQMS (later Lt. Col.) George Soper, an excitable and, I later found, a most charming man whose expression of pained, sustained disbelief as he listened to yet another recruits tale of woe over a lost piece of kit was a delight to behold – unless you were that recruit.

The training officer, Lt. Jim Burrell, kept everyone very busy, and behind his calm, unruffled almost languid air, participated in every aspect of the training, while the adjutant Capt. Donald Cameron was a slightly more remote figure who looked instantly recognisable and absolutely unchanged when, as the "Rev.D.Cameron", he officiated at Douglas in May 2008 at our closing service. The O.C Major Carter-Campbell touched the new recruits' lives but little, apart from a couple of C.O's parades, or a cheery salute as he hacked slowly past a midweek morning muster parade.

The man who ruled the roost and made recruits' lives what they were, was Sgt. Ken Jackman D.C.M one of the all-time-great recruits squad sergeants. Like other fine soldiers in this role he began by being almost feared or reviled, until his skill was recognised which led to his being respected, then almost revered as his squad won the best squad prize, and rewarded by their gratitude and the "whip-round" presentation and ultimately remembered by those recruits who appreciated how far he had brought them in 10-12 short weeks.

The regime was the usual one for the army, prison, public school and most other forms of incarceration – "keep the blighters busy every single working minute". From the instant they woke, dressed, ate (picking the odd piece of eggshell out of the scrambled eggs- dropped in there as a double-bluff by the cook sgt to disguise the fact that they were actually made from powdered egg) and rushed to muster parade the squad was not still for a moment in the day. Evenings were spent polishing and blancoing everything in sight and taking turns to apply to the floor of each barrack room industrial quantities of Mansion polish from a huge tin purchased by voluntary contribution (?) of all squad-

members “as a present for each other”. This was done with a buffer, a device about the size and weight of a manhole cover on a pole, by the B.R.O. (barrack room orderly) of the day, who had to take care to avoid scraping or marking the wooden surround lest he find himself charged with having “idle skirting boards” to his eternal shame.

Weeks passed. Everyone was exhausted-all the time. The same regime and diet contrived to build up the puny ones while slimming down the burly ones, and to keep everyone fed rather than fed up, although the comfort of a double egg and double chips in the NAAFI was universally enjoyed.

Although in each barrack room the strong characters emerged, the odd bullying moment was swiftly dampened down by the conciliators, while the quiet chaps got on with things and people began to help, and seek help from, others.

One late night, totally exhausted and already asleep in an almost totally darkened barrack room I was shaken awake by the chap who was steadily emerging into his chosen intimidatory role as the squad’s resident “hard man”. “What” I asked wearily “do you want?” “How do you spell” “especially?” he asked “Write it down for me” I did, and went back to sleep. But word got out and over the next few evenings as chaps wrote home more spellings were requested, forms of expression were elicited and protestations of undying love were articulated by me, through them, to a bevy of Lanarkshire and Glasgow beauties I was destined never, alas, to meet.

My old Uncle Tom, a Seaforth Highlander in WW1, had warned me about, and about becoming a “barrack-room lawyer” and counselled me to avoid the very idea. A barrack-room solicitor or scribe was something else and I soon found myself composing and occasionally actually writing letters to people other than chaps ‘girlfriends’, the crowning moment being reached when a friend and fellow-recruit returned from our first full overnight weekend pass looking totally distraught. Football-mad and with only one ambition in life-to play for Celtic one day,-he had been playing for his club in the St. Vincent de Paul league and, after a fracas, had been “sent off”. Not, it transpired, for the first time either. His disciplinary record in the

league was such, he feared, as to make a suspension “sine die” pronounced in Scotland “sin dye” which makes it sound more awful, the inevitable outcome. This would make his dream of a Celtic career, an impossibility.

We discussed the incident of the previous Saturday in some detail and my resultant plea in mitigation on his behalf would have wrung a tear from a plaster saint. It evidently worked with St. Vincent de Paul and his committee, since two weekends later he returned jubilant with the news of an admonition and a one-match ban.

The squad was now operating as a unit, helping each other. When it fell to us to mount a weekend guard practically no one went on guard wearing all his own kit. Instead those on parade had the best belts, brasses, boots, rifle slings and scabbards which the entire squad could assemble. No faults were found and the guard was commended.

Everyone knew their “room-jobs” and how to operate the rota so although the room corporal Peter Coyle was himself so diligent that he lay, writing out a new room jobs rota in a shaky hand even as he was being stretchered off to the sick bay and thence to hospital with a bad attack of recurring malaria, it proved unnecessary since everyone knew what had to be done – and did it.

Without being noticed, esprit-de-corps had come up behind and caught the squad by surprise. Suddenly it was a unit and the men in it recognised what the training was about and what had happened to them.

Soon the passing out parade came and went, with all its individual, team and squad prizes won and handed out.

A few days leave and back they all came, to learn of their postings. Aside from a couple to Eaton Hall and one or two special postings the intake went to Barnard Castle and thereafter to Buxtehude. Some did two years and left the Army, others signed on for a few years or a career. As one who did said “it’s a whole lot better than riding shotgun on a bread van out of Shieldhall Bakery”.

Over the years the attendance at reunions and the lasting interest shown in the news

of old friends featured in the Covenanter demonstrated that the camaraderie enjoyed and the fellowship fostered by service together, whether National Service and T.A. Membership or Regular Battalion service, did indeed produce the Regimental family feeling, which for those young recruits on that cold raw day at Lanark has lasted more than fifty years.

George Ferguson

## My Memories of Lanark

In October 1947, after a year as garrison band in Gibraltar, we embarked again on the ss Dunnottar Castle for our five day voyage to Southampton. Much to our surprise we boys were berthed in cabins alongside the BM and took our meals in the dining room. The bandsmen, sleeping in hammocks and needing to queue with mess tins for their meals, did not smile when we told them of our good fortune.

The warmth of Gibraltar was gradually replaced by the stormy Biscay and the eventual autumn chill on our suntanned faces as we sailed past the trans-Atlantic liners along the Solent before we docked in the late morning .

The rationing of fresh water and the need to use salt water soap for our ablutions in Gibraltar was exchanged for the abundance of fresh water in Lanark. Winston Barracks, completed in 1940, with its constant hot water, bathrooms and central heating, gave us greater comfort than most of us had experienced in our homes. After overseas posting we gladly returned to Lanark three times.

Lanark, being a small town, was the right size to be noticed, to make friends and to feel at ease. It was always a pleasant walk, past the adjacent racecourse, the Loch where



*The Military Band - Winston Barracks, Lanark - March 1948*

we danced on Saturday evenings to Hughie Devine and his music with trombonist Ivor Rioch, a former Cameronian bandsman . In 1948, we met Peggy and Bert Cassells, members of the Veitch family who owned the bakery in the High St. They invited us to their home for meals and parties. Bert, a trombonist, a pianist and string bass player played in a dance band and ensured that we had funny, singing evenings. I got to know them very well and it was not long before I was invited to the homes of their extended family and friends . A neighbour of theirs, Nellie McIlroy, included fried bananas in the meals she cooked for me. All of them became lifelong friends.

Looking down the dip of the High St one was aware of the spire of St Nicholas' s Church which seemed to rise at the Cross. Close up I noticed the statue of William Wallace placed in an enclave above the west door with a plaque reading: 'Here stood the home of William Wallace who In Lanark in 1297 first drew his sword to free his native land .' It was his misfortune that he was betrayed and executed for treason in Smithfield in 1305.

The space in front of St Nicholas's Church was the gathering point before the chimes of midnight on New Year's Eve, when everybody, looking at the statue of William Wallace, would combine the words of Robert Burns and a traditional tune and sang, 'Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled ... '. As the chimes and the singing ceased, the exchange of bottles and boozy Happy New Years would begin, leading to the vast crowd departing on their first footing which lasted throughout the night.

The band stood before St Nicholas in 1948 and 1954 to play for the ceremony of Whuppity Scoorie on the 1st March . We stood and played while the children ran around the church swinging paper balls over their heads. As soon as a handful of coins were thrown into the air, the children rushed forward to collect them, bringing the ceremony to an end. Although this custom has many origins, Paul Archibald, the Chairman of the Lanark Museum Trust suggests the following :

'Perhaps like Lanark's other festivities Whuppity Scoorie or "The Wee Bell Ceremony" this might have a more prosaic source. The ringing of the bell which had been silent throughout the winter darkness heralded the advent of spring and lighter

evenings after the days work was done. Possibly the custom grew as a spontaneous celebration on the part of the apprentices and other youth of the town to mark the onset of leisure time which could be appreciated in daylight.

In early 1953, the Cameronians were chosen to provide the guard of honour and the music for the Queen's post Coronation tour of Scotland which included a visit to Lanark. During the rehearsals at Winston Barracks Major Carter-Campbell, i/c the guard, approached us with an opened copy of Queen's Regulations at the page where it stated that the National Anthem should



*The Queen in Lanark - June 1953*

be played in 35 seconds. Holding a stop watch he asked the BM to play it. Major Carter-Campbell insisted that we played it many times because we had not played it exactly in 35 seconds. Mr. Pike, the BM, in a quiet voice told him that complete accuracy was impossible. It did have a comic effect because all movement near or on the square came to a halt. I recall a REME man, needing to go almost around the square to reach his workshop, halting at each playing as if he was being projected onto a movable screen. The long days taught us how tiring a royal tour can be, for we started early and finished late in the evening in order to fulfil our many musical duties. Our routine was to be in place to meet the royal train, with its darkened windows to allow the royal party to look out without being seen. We carried the red carpet which was placed on the platform at a spot marked exit door.

Our job was to entertain the crowd for an hour before the Queen arrived. One of the pieces was a selection of the then current musical 'South Pacific', containing the songs 'Some enchanting evening' and 'I'm gonna wash that man right out of my hair.' As soon

as the guard presented arms, the BM, facing the Queen, played the National Anthem. The Queen, petite and better dressed than everybody else, was accompanied by Prince Philip who wore different uniforms and civilian attire daily to suit the venue. One day Prince Philip said to us: 'I see you lot are here again'. With the benefit of hindsight, I could have made an appropriate, witty reply. I found the noise of the crowds difficult to bear. I assume the Queen is able to ignore it or mentally turn it off.

Our year also included playing in Crosby, Worthing and performing at the South Shields and Edinburgh Tattoos. Crosby, near Liverpool, booked us to provide the music for their Coronation Week. This made it possible for us to be on the Liverpool quayside to welcome the



*The Military Band on Tour - July 1954*

1st Battalion back from their three years of active service in the Malayan Emergency. I remember Col. Henning saluting Gen. O'Connor after he disembarked while we played 'Hail the Conquering Hero Comes'. G.F. Handel's sacred melody became an anti-Jacobite and pro loyalist song because it was sung as a tribute to the Duke of Cumberland after his victory over Prince Edward Stuart at Culloden in 1746.

As a treat after the Edinburgh Tattoo, we were taken to the King's Theatre for a special Performance of Sigmund Romberg's 'The Desert Song'; the music was familiar to all the Bandsmen because the selection from the show was then a popular item. After the final Curtain came down, I felt a sense of relief and sympathy for the cast who had had to endure the crudest of barrack room banter from all parts of the theatre in the romantic scenes. What was amazing was that the cast achieved silence by ignoring them and winning them over by their superb

performances and singing. At the end they received the most enthusiastic applause I have ever heard in a theatre, proving that culture can beat anarchy.  
Bill Coughlan.

## An Emigrant's Reminiscences on a Nostalgic and Moving Occasion

I was a subaltern in the 6/7th (Territorial) Battalion from 1960 to 1965, before emigrating to then Southern Rhodesia and attempting to transfer my commission to the then still white-officered Rhodesia African Rifles (which showed itself as a first-class unit during the UDI years up to 1980).

It was not possible for me to attend the 1968 disbandment ceremonies. After all, I was declared a rebel against the crown (not an entirely new experience for a Cameronian!). Over the intervening years, it was never "convenient" to arrange foreign travel to attend the annual commemorations, or even the annual dinners in London. However, I remained deeply interested in our regiment, as evidenced not least by Douglas tartan bedspreads and curtains in my house. Also an avid reader of "The Covenanter", in which some outstanding articles of real historical interest appeared or were attached to. As years went on, it also recorded some old friends falling off their perches.

When I read of the planned final commemoration ceremonies, I decided that I really must attend, and arranged my diary accordingly. I am very glad indeed to have done so.

The officers dinner in Edinburgh on 10 May allowed me to renew several old acquaintances. A little disappointment that none of the magnificent regimental silver remained was countered by the excellent live orchestrate throughout, but especially by the two pipers' piobroch and the first battalion's regimental march (in the 6/7th we marched to The Gathering of the Grahams).

The big day, Sunday 11 May, started inauspiciously. With the closure of the West End to Haymarket road for Tramway works, getting on to a totally unsignposted A70 that has no access from the ring road lost over half an hour and resulted into a

panting arrival at St. Bride's church midway through the opening psalm, which an adjutant or C.O. would have had some acerbic comments upon. However, things improved.

That service itself was rousing and set the scene, so to speak. A visit to the little regimental museum in the village brought back a few memories. The marquee feeding of the multitude (at astoundingly low cost for 2008), followed by peregrinations around the splendidly restored statue and the ruins of the castle were successions of (sometimes less than instant) recognition and greeting of old comrades and ladies of the regiment.

The highlight, of course, was the conventicle on that gloriously sunny afternoon. Waves of nostalgia as the piquets were reported posted and no enemy in sight reminded me not just of many church services but of the Remembrance Day church parades at Glasgow Cathedral addressed by Rev. Neville Davidson D.D., at one of which I had the honour to be the piquet officer of the 6/7th TA contingent attending, with sword, naturally. The Douglas open-air service was short, but very much to the point. It was the end that got me. The lament, the Last Post, probably for the last time before an even partly uniformed audience. All in absolute and respectful silence as an important link in the history of the country – indeed of the UK as we had been reminded by Hugh Mackay – effectively disappeared before the eyes of the assembled congregation some four hundred attendees

The following day I visited the interesting new Regimental Museum at the Low Parks in Hamilton. Not without difficulty : the road layout is totally changed, being in the wrong lane in the heavy traffic results in a long circular "tour", there is NO signposting to assist and the kids coming out of school nearby had never heard of the place. Sic transit omnia, I realised with renewed force. Just two generations on, the youngsters of the old 6/7 Battalion HQ town had never heard of The Cameronians or The Scottish Rifles (and I don't suppose have the chance to read Ian Hay's book "The First Hundred Thousand" (of 1914) partly featuring the old barracks there).

The whole occasion was immensely fulfilling, as well as by its very nature terminal. It made fitting close to 53 years of my life since



I first became an under-age drummer boy in the pipe band of our affiliated Kelvinside Academy CCF unit under the tutelage of a first war veteran who had drummed one of the several battalions of the regiment on the Somme.

I bought regimental ties at the Museum to see me out for the rest of my days, lest they become unavailable. Yes, we still wear neckties in the Malawian part of the tropics that has been my home for many years now. The tie goes well with any dark suit and white shirt, and is less depressing than a black one to sport at the increasing number of funerals one attends with advancing years!

RH (Bob) Martin

## Lasting Memories And Notable Personalities

It is over fifty years since I first wrote for the *Covenanter* and fifty-five since I was first tasked with typing out Dog Company notes – remember Able, Baker, Charlie, Dog before the NATO alphabet came in? Typical European interference! I face my contribution to what I gather will be the last *Covenanter*, feeling a bit like Richard Hannay in *Mr Standfast*: “I went to bed in the loft in a sad and reflective mood, considering how in speeding our new-fangled plough we must break down a multitude of molehills and how desirable and irreplaceable was the life of the moles”. Like moles, the Cameronians wore black and did an invaluable job; thereafter similarities cease.

This pathos may sound strange from somebody who had a love-hate relationship with the Regiment and couldn't wait to transfer to the Intelligence Corps. Yet I vividly recall my regret at handing in my dark green bonnet, TOS and Douglas tartan trews, to be handed a pale green beret and khaki trousers. Three years later I had no such compunctions about returning that lacklustre kit before commissioning. How ignorance proliferates in the modern world; my spell check disapproves of that splendid word ‘trews’. I will try to temper the sadness with a few recollections to bring smiles to readers' faces.

The trouble was that, as a youngster, I had the brains, but not the application. In the Regiment I had friends and even heroes

whom I wished to emulate in their regimental progress, but could not see how. I have in the past mentioned a number of officers who were influential in my life. Now let me tell you about some of the others, because they deserve a place in history; most will be familiar to other readers.

Ted Martin was a corporal in the Intelligence Section at Barnard Castle when I was posted in; he became one of those rare beasts, a National Service sergeant. Colonel Henry Alexander saw him as an asset and enticed him back as a regular after a few short weeks of civilian life in a job for which he was actually fully qualified. Five years later I took over from him as recruiting sergeant at Hamilton; he had been promoted to colour sergeant, a rank which generally came only after long and impatient waiting. In due course he became RSM, but when I next saw him he was a captain – we both were, but I was of the laid back RAEC variety. As we stood at the edge of the square chatting about old times, who should appear but the Commanding Officer. Ted introduced me to him, clicking his heels with that quiet dignity which most officers forget speedily after leaving Sandhurst, but which is the mark of those of us who have come up “the hard way”. Ted was the first senior NCO whom I recall having a decent motor car – a Sunbeam Talbot 90, no less. There was a bachelor RQMS earlier on with a Triumph Roadster, but he was believed to have a wealthy lady friend; I am sure Ted used his own resources.

Ian Collinson was another in the Ted Martin mould. I recall his promotion to Lance Corporal at the end of his basic training, by which time, along with Bill Thomson, he had already featured as Sandy in the Jock and Sandy photographs in the 1957 recruiting handbook. He was so keen that he not only volunteered for the Guards drill course, but even invested his own money in a couple of pairs of extra soft leather black boots for the occasion, capable of accepting the highest possible levels of ‘bulling’, whilst being able to tramp the sacred squares of Pirbright or Caterham without causing discomfort.. His wife was a nurse at the Law Hospital; perhaps the double income made privately sourced boots that much more affordable. Later he took over from me at the Hamilton office. By the disbandment he was already a WOII having had the world at his feet; however I gather that on transferring to his

new regiment he was warned that he would never make RSM there. That really was most unfortunate; such are the results of Army downsizing. He and his wife eventually emigrated; Scotland's loss was Australia's gain.

In October 1956 'A' Company provided a guard of honour for the Queen at Biggar, following her opening of the Daer Water Reservoir. Major Dick Parkes and I travelled to Biggar in his Humber Hawk; I with my 35mm Voigtlander was to take photographs. I was in No 1 dress, and I distinctly recall Her Majesty looking at me as I snapped merrily away, as if to say: "One wonders why that corporal is not lined up with the others". I was in a position to hear various remarks from the bystanders, such as: "Who is that wee man in front, Maw?"

The 'wee man in front' as the guard marched away was Sergeant Major Jimmy Murray, one of the most memorable Cameronians of his era. Jimmy was regularly one of the main behind-the-scenes drill experts rehearsing for a number of Edinburgh Tattoos in the days when the Cameronians had so much input. The compass of his voice compensated for his stature. I recall, as right marker of HQ Company on RSM's drill parades, hearing the urgent admonition, "Shtep short, Corporal Cameron! (the sibilants were due to oral re-armament or denture problems). When the medley relay result became critical to the inter-company points table in the 1956 Regimental Athletics meeting, it was Jimmy's voices transcending all other sounds which inspired me to make up a forty metre deficit.

Jimmy was good to me, even if, when I was PRI corporal, he expected me to deliver one of the Sunday papers to his front door. His wife, a Berliner like John F Kennedy, would boil me an egg and ply me with coffee. Their small son acquired a German suffix to his name as a form of endearment; she used to call him "Andrew-lein"! I never discovered whether she ever addressed her husband as "Jimmy-lein". When in Bahrain he oversaw the building of a fuel store (POL point), such was the regimental precision which he employed, that pace sticks, plumb lines and a variety of T-squares were employed to ensure that the sand bags were pleasingly symmetrical. Such was the impression made at Jufair, that Captain (later Lt Col) Alan Campbell appeared at the Christmas

fancy dress football match as a sandbag wall. I still have a photograph to prove it. When eighteen years later I was posted to Beaconsfield as OC Russian Wing, I was greeted by one of the smartest salutes and broadest smiles of my career by a very extended service RSM Jimmy Murray, then of the Royal Scots. He left the Army weeks later and I was vexed never to hear of him again, though I have a feeling he retired to Swindon and the Civil Service. How are the mighty fallen!

Paddy Mulvenna took over as provost sergeant from future RSM Jake Sneddon at Barnard Castle in 1954. Jake had in turn taken over from Sgt Connelly, who used to distinguish himself from run-of-the-mill Connellys by stressing the middle syllable of his name. All were formidable disciplinarians. It was all part of Colonel Alexander's master plan to transform a battalion of highly effective semi-autonomous warlord company commanders and jungle-hardened veterans from Malaya into a suitably cohesive and smart outfit fit for the ultra-luxurious Spey Barracks in a picturesque old Lower Saxony Market town, and for the highly mechanised Seventh Armoured Division.

Soldiers under Sentence who offended whilst undergoing detention were automatically sent directly to Commanding Officer's orders to receive their just desserts. We in the Orderly Room were inured to the foot stamping and shouting in our corridor which this entailed. On one such noisy occasion the door burst open and RSM Boreland shot into the room and almost collapsed with mirth on ORQMS Dickie's desk. Some rebellious prisoner had had the effrontery to play "The Wild Killarney Boy" or some such popular protest song on his mouth organ in his cell after lights out! Section 39 of the Army Act was immediately invoked, and the offender duly appeared before the CO. "Your evidence, Sgt Mulvenna" demanded the CO. Paddy had intended to use the technical term, harmonica; but at the critical moment his memory failed him, and all he could manage was, "He was doing his Larry Adler, Sir". Unfortunately Colonel Alexander was not cognisant with that virtuoso, and so the gravity of the charge escaped him. It was left to the RSM to maintain a straight face with difficulty and interpret with, "He means he was playing his mouth organ, Sir". I forget what the consequent sentence was.

Youthful readers (those under about 70) may raise their eyebrows at section 39 of the Army Act. Many years later, whilst swotting up Military Law for my Staff Promotion exam, I discovered that 'conduct to the prejudice' had been inflated to section 69. In the RAEC I dealt with only two disciplinary cases in seventeen years! In an earlier life as a company clerk I had typed out hundreds of AF's B 252. How evocative numbers can be! Remember the AB64 parts I and II, the AFH 1157, the B 120 and 121? Oddly enough I have forgotten the leave pass number, though I cannot think why.

I came to know Paddy better a year later when he was still provost sergeant, but had a bunk in our company block. Music comes into this story too. Coming from a sheltered background in the east of Scotland, I was unfamiliar with sectarian songs. I had a piano accordion which I used in Sunday School. Rifleman Andy Betts, 'C' Company storeman and accomplished weight lifter, not totally unrelated skills, whistled a tune and asked whether I could play it. After a few practice runs through, I felt confident enough to play it outside Paddy's door, having been assured that Paddy had recently intimated that it was his favourite song. Well, how was I to know that it wasn't? Seconds later a figure emerged precipitately from the door, but then burst out laughing. We became fast friends, and I was briefly one his training corporals at Lanark. It was quite something to be deputy to a veteran of the North West Frontier.

Some time later my brother, in a train outward bound from Edinburgh Waverley, found himself sitting opposite a trim middle-aged gentleman sporting a dark green blazer with a Cameronian badge. He enquired politely whether he had ever known me; he had. Alasdair was regaled with Cameronian stories most of the way to King's Cross, to the exclusion of fellow passengers' slumbers. Paddy was on his way to join the Chelsea Pensioners – a fitting end for one whose whole life was the Army. I know that people like Eddy Clark and Bill Coughlin used to visit him and keep his memories alive.

Others were not necessarily heroes, but were good value, and many are the episodes I recall. There was Rfn Webster, whose CSM volunteered his services as a medical orderly. Webster was a tough man, inclined

to be difficult after his pay night visit to the NAAFI. But, like quite a lot of other potential trouble makers, he was as happy as could be in any job where he was motivated. Such was his brief medical career. Sgt Tony Forrest MM was medical sergeant in Gilgil in Kenya, and was allotted this brawny Florence Nightingale for training-on-the-job.

Three incidents related by Tony convinced the authorities that this was a round peg in a square hole, and he was subsequently appointed sports groundsman. Firstly he had ground down two codeines to pour via a piece of folded paper into the orifice of a soldier with earache; secondly a soldier with an infected foot was injected with penicillin through the thickest part of his heel, and thirdly a man with 'the runs' was administered castor oil four times a day for two days whilst in the sick bay, the mistake being detected only when the patient was being hurried by ambulance to hospital in Nairobi, when the castor oil bottle was found mysteriously to be almost empty. Webster made a superb and thoroughly conscientious groundsman, whose only misdemeanour was to enter the drive-in cinema at Muthaiga with his pal, our pig farmer, on the tractor, not having disconnected the trailer with its load of swill bins. Such was the geography of the cinema that they were compelled to remain until closing time. Apparently neighbouring cars had problems hearing the sound track, as their windows had to be closed against smells and flies.

I have written on and off for the Covenanter for much of my life. Often in the RAEC in a variety of postings I found myself editing or contributing to journals great and small. Later in civilian life I sometimes wrote in professional journals. But I could never forget the Covenanter and Bahrain Bugle which got me started, often giving opportunities for gentle fun poking. Over the past fifteen years the Covenanter has been an annual light-hearted contrast to the more serious commitment of writing books, booklets and articles for 'Prophetic Witness'. It can be found via [www.pwmi.org](http://www.pwmi.org). I humbly commend it to you.

Donald CB Cameron PhD

## Snapshots from a Rifleman

All of us old soldiers have a fund of stories we like to tell when we get together to swing

the lamp and lie to each other about how clever, brave and tough we were during our time. Then there are the stories we recount when your granddaughter asks "What did You do in the War Grandpa?".

Since this is to be the final publication of the Covenanter I thought I might put down a few of my own memory snapshots of some of the lighter moments (and some of the more embarrassing ones).

In Buxtehude after completing basic training, I did a driving cadre on the good old Austin Champ and was able to drive it quite well after about four days, much to my surprise since I'd never even been in a motor car before. The Battalion was short of drivers for an up coming exercise and so I found myself scheduled to drive the Battery Delivery and Line Section of the Signals Platoon even though I didn't yet have a driving licence.

When we left camp to move to Soltau training area I was as nervous as a nun at a NAAFI dance. I'd never been in charge of a truck on my own but I concentrated grimly on staying fifty yards behind the vehicle in front and soon began to think I was doing not too badly. Until that is we reached the Autobahn when I noticed that the truck was making strange bumping noises every few seconds and I could feel vibration in the steering wheel with each bump. It took a mile or two of this before I realised that it was because we were running over the expansion joints on the road surface.

When we reached the training area and started to go across country on a small, muddy track I got all nervous again since this was all new stuff to me and I was worried about doing something wrong. At a place where there was a steep downhill run into a long flat patch of mud and water then a steep climb up through trees the rest of the convoy were lining up to tackle it one at a time. I went down far too fast showering mud and water everywhere and started up the other side with the trailer snaking about behind me and the signallers in the back declaring loudly that I was a fatherless halfwit. I didn't care, I was through the worst I thought until suddenly the truck started shuddering almost to a halt and the oil pressure and ignition lights were flashing wildly. Without the faintest idea why I was doing it I crashed her down into first gear and

floored the throttle. The Champ ( God bless her) responded instantly gripped the ground and roared up the hill like the thoroughbred she was. That's when I learned that getting up steep hills requires lower gears.

After a couple of days rushing about delivering batteries and line laying around the training area I was getting pretty confident about my driving but early one morning the Signals Officer required to go to an O Group. He and two signallers jumped into the truck, I switched on, pulled out the choke and fired her up.

The starter ground away but the engine would not start. I kept trying and soon the batteries began to lose power and the starter motor to slow right down.

The Signals Officer says "Right Lads, Out the back and We'll give him a push to get it going". So they get round the back and start pushing me along this track eventually getting fast enough to break into a run. Meanwhile I am sat behind the wheel ( with the ignition switched off) wondering how the hell pushing the truck along this track was going to make it start. Eventually we came to a gate and had to stop. By this time the boys were practically on their knees. I switched on, tried the starter and she fired up. That's when I learned not to floor the throttle when starting on the choke but I was still baffled as to how pushing a truck was meant to make it start. It was some months later I was shown how to start an engine by using the clutch when being pushed.

The Champ had two holders by the drivers right side to hold a rifle. Having neither doors nor indeed any bodywork, leaving the vehicle simply meant lifting your leg over the body sill and putting your foot onto the ground. This was fine if a Lee Enfield 303 was in the holding clips but we had been issued with the Belgian made FN Rifle (forerunner to the SLR) and it could only go in the clips upside down with the pistol grip and magazine sticking upward, perfectly placed to rip a nice gash in your thigh as you got out. It became necessary to remove the rifle from the holders when getting in or out.

The night before the last day of the exercise whilst sorting myself out to go on stag I suddenly realised with horror that I did not have a rifle. I searched everywhere in the

truck and trailer but no result. I hoped that one of the signallers had taken it by mistake or some joker had hidden it because I had left it unattended. Finally I had to admit that I had lost it and I had no clue as to where I might have left it. We had covered a lot of miles that day, supplying all the rifle companies and laying or lifting line. I was in the absolute horrors. We'd only been issued these things just before the exercise. What if a civilian found it?. Would I be in trouble with the German Police? How long would I get at my Court Martial?. I would be the first idiot to lose one of the Army's brand new rifles. I had made my mind up to report to the CSM in the morning but even before we had breakfast I was required to rush off with batteries for the COs radios and on the way back to go to A Coy.

At A Coy location one of the three ton drivers came over and said to me "Hullawrer China, Huv you loast ennythin? Cos Ah seem to huv a spare rifle in mah cab".

He'd seen me leave the rifle against a tree while unloading and drive off without it. Of course he couldn't contact me to say he had it and he didn't report it because he knew I would come back to that location. I'd not had the nerve to report it either so nobody except he and a few others ever knew I'd lost it for twenty four hours.

He was an old soldier however and he gave me a bollocking the RSM would have been proud of. For the rest of my service anytime I had a weapon in my charge it might as well have been welded to my hand.

The regimental system is the backbone of the Army and a great way to instill loyalty and cohesion into any fighting unit but I always thought that it made the various units a bit too much like closed societies. We were Cameronians and that was the Army for us. The rest of the army was out there somewhere but it wasn't much concern to us. Of course we saw other people like tankies and gunners on exercises in Germany and when we played them in sporting competition but I rarely met anyone from the South Wales Borderers or the Royal Warwickshire Regiment over in Hamelin, except for the time I spent three days with a platoon of the Warwicks when I was assistant umpire on an exercise and that was quite a revelation.

Mostly I met people from the rest of the army were on the courses I did and some

of them were real characters. When I was at Bordon on the MT Sgts course we spent a great deal of time on the roads around Hampshire on driver instruction training usually spending lunchtime in some pub or cafe of the instructors choosing (I think he must have been on commission since he was always well known at these places and never seemed to pay)

One day in a roadside cafe we met some girls of the WRAC doing driver training. One of them had a newspaper and was doing the crossword on the childrens page. It was one of those nine square crosswords for kids about seven or eight years old and she couldn't crack the first clue which was "It sat on the mat" I said she should put down "cat" but she couldn't get the connection until I explained that it was from the well known "The cat sat on the mat" sentence in the schools first reading book. "Oh That will be right" she says "How do you spell Cat?". My jaw really dropped at that one but it hit the floor when her mate said "It's K.A.T. you silly bitch, Its written all over those KitKat biscuits on the counter.

I'd never met any WRAC girls before so I had to ask why she had joined the army. She said "The judge said I could do a year in Borstal or three years in the army. You get paid in the army and they let you go out in the evening".

This was her punishment for shoplifting a bottle of cheap scent from Woolworths.

My next course was the drill course at the Guards Depot where I learned that all the things things you hear about the Guards are mostly true. Certainly there were a couple of very effete officers knocking about and the bull, bombast and rigid adherence to every petty fogging rule and regulation in the army was very irritating. The Sgts mess of the Training wing had so many rules about who could speak to whom and where to sit and so on that after the first few days of the course nobody went there except those who wanted to suck up to the instructors.

Those of us from Rifle regiments just wanted to get the course over and get back to normality. The course was required for promotion of course but it was the usual nonsense of the sixties. a ten week course with the first six weeks being treated like a new recruit being taught the very basics of foot and rifle drill.

Having said that I must admit that there were guys there from some of the Corps like RASC, REME, R.SIGS etc who definitely needed such training.

The only memorable characters I remember from this course were three Africans from the Nigerian Army who were on my squad. They were from different tribes and could only speak to each other in English, I remember one was Hutu and another Tutsi but I don't recall the other ones tribe. Although all three were sergeants as was required to be on the course the Hutu guy wasted no time in letting us know that the others were only corporals who had been jumped up to do the course and would be back down as soon as they returned home.

He was a truly nasty, arrogant piece of work and treated the other two like servants ordering them to buff his boots, press his uniforms and generally attend to all his wants and needs. Myself and others in the squad tried to encourage them to stand up to him but they were clearly terrified of him. Towards the end of the course when he had been chewed out by the instructor for something or another he showed his colours when he told the instructor that he wouldn't dare speak to him like him if they were in Nigeria. He was very well connected and as soon as Nigeria gained its independence (which was to be soon) he would be promoted to Colonel.

After Nigeria became independent and then the civil war started and the Tutsis were being slaughtered in their hundreds of thousands by the Hutus, I just knew who would have been right there up front taking a leading part in the killing. During the last week of the course we were taken up to London to see the changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace. Not like tourists but actually from the inside of the Guardroom within the gates. After it was over our instructor was absolutely delighted to be able to tell us that the RSM of the resident Guards Bn had graciously allowed us permission to enter the hallowed halls of the Sgts Mess at Chelsea Bks, not for lunch or anything, just between one o'clock and two when he would be in the place. He then started laying down all the do's and don't's to be observed during this highly privileged visit. I got the feeling this was like being invited to kiss the hem of the Pope's garment or something. Our instructor was disappointed when myself and two Sergeants' from the Rifle Brigade told him we'd pass on the big deal and go

round to a pub for our lunch.

My next and last course was at the Small Arms School in Hythe, another overlong course with the first half spent treating us as though we were raw recruits who had never laid eyes on a weapon before. This after having to demonstrate a good standard of weapon handling, safety IA's etc on the course induction.. Strangely enough some people even from Infantry regiments failed this and were RTU.

I don't recall anybody from the various Corps on the course but there may have been some who needed that kind of training. The only new thing I learned after three months on that course was how to strip and clean a Browning 9 mm pistol, a weapon I'd never handled in the army before that and probably never would again.

I even got to fire six rounds from it (every shot completely over the top of the target at a mere thirty yards).

There were six including myself in the squad under an instructor who looked hardly more than nineteen years old. Turned out he had been a star pupil at the Junior Leaders Regt, started mans service at some regimental depot, done the course we were now on, passed with A grade and was taken into the SASC.

We were housed in those big wooden buildings known as spiders where the accommodation blocks radiated off a central building where the dining hall etc was and these rooms held about thirty bed spaces. It was a big course with

people from all over the Army and in my room there were seven Welshmen of the Welsh Guards and other regiments. In the evening when we were preparing our kit for the next day the big Guardsman in the bed space across from me would start quietly humming a tune and soon it would be picked up from further down the room and before long they would all be harmonising and singing away in good style.

The Guardsmen knew each other but the others were strangers to them and yet it took no more than a week for them to form a good little choir. In my squad there was a Cpl Silver of the Rifle Brigade, a genuine East End cockney boy who could talk the hind leg off a donkey. From the moment he opened his eyes in the morning until he fell asleep he rabbit on non stop, it was

enough to give you a headache yet when he had to stand up before us and take a class he couldn't say a word. When the instructor said " Cpl Silver will now explain and demonstrate the GPMG to the class". He'd get up and go to the table but when he tried to speak not a word came out, he'd just make strangulated noises and his face would get more and more red, then his hands would start to shake and a tic would begin at the side of his eye. As soon as the instructor told him to sit down words of apology would pour out in a torrent. We tried everything with him, not looking at him when he was trying to get started, having him stand side on to us so he didn't have to look at us directly, even taking turns in the evening listening to him take a lesson. It was all to no avail though. As soon as he in the class it all fell apart. He was eventually RTU, the staff reckoned since no one could observe him taking lessons there was no way they could assess his ability as an instructor. A great pity because his weapon handling and knowledge was excellent and he was probably fine when dealing with his own men.

Then there was a Sgt of the Devon and Dorset Regiment, a real Farmer Giles type who spoke so slowly and in an unintelligible accent that not only did nobody understand him but by the time he had explained how to load a magazine we were all struggling to stay awake.

We had Cpl of Italian extraction with one those Italian names with a lot of "Cs" and "Hs" in it, pretty hard to pronounce so we just called him Dicky. This one was a real wide boy; always on the make and in pursuit of money. His regiment was in barracks at Colchester so his CO was taking the opportunity to get as many of his men on courses as possible therefore a lot of his comrades were at Hythe. He was the only one who had a car and could go home at weekends so his mates of course asked him for a lift. It was only a small car but he could cram three in the back and one in the front but instead of just asking them to chip in for the petrol he was charging them One pound ten shillings each thereby ensuring that he got a free trip home and a nice little profit to boot.

Another one was a serjeant in the Green Jackets and his hobby was heraldry. He used to sit at night drawing and painting heraldic devices into an art book and filling in all the details in beautiful calligraphy on the facing

page. I don't know what he was doing in the army because he had exceptional artistic talent and a great knowledge of the history and practice of heraldry.

Finally there was the one who became my mate during the course and he was a sergeant in the Parachute Regiment name of Sam We had already been put in our squads at the time of the weapon handling test during induction and to be honest he only just scraped through which I thought was a bit strange for a Para but he said he was the Bn Signal Sgt and only ever handled a Nine Millimetre Browning.

which proved to be true enough when we finally got hold of this weapon he was an expert with it. He was in the bed next to mine and for the first few days we didn't have much conversation but on the Saturday evening when he came back from the showers and was getting dressed he said to me "You'd better get a move on or we'll be late." I was a bit nonplussed at this then he said "We will need to be at the chapel before seven o'clock for confession."

It was not the first time I had been mistaken for a member of the catholic faith because of the name given to me at adoption and when I explained he said well I could come down the town with him and we could go for a pint after he had done his bit. I didn't really drink much and certainly not on the scale that Paras are reputed to think of as normal but I didn't want to turn down a friendly offer. Once we got into The White Swan I said I was a bit surprised at a Para rushing off to chapel on a Saturday evening. Paras are not normally known for religious zeal. He told me that from the age of fifteen to eighteen he was in a seminary training to become a priest and one day they were taken to London to visit St Pauls Cathedral after which they were let loose for the afternoon.

He was walking down the Kings Road in Chelsea ogling the girls in their miniskirts when it came into his mind that he couldn't go and be a priest dealing with the problems and confessions of his parishioners if he had no idea what life outside the priesthood was like or what it felt like to get drunk, commit crime or fornicate. He especially liked the bit about fornication. Being across the road from the Kings Road Barracks at the time he just waltzed in there and found himself in Aldershot before he had time

to give it a second thought. He was still seriously catholic though and never missed confession or mass if at all possible, could go at the Latin like an old Irish priest and observed all the obligations like Lent and so on. He had also managed to get quite a few minor crimes and few instances of assault and affray under his belt ( as well as a lot of fornication.)

He was up for anything really, a bit of shoplifting, not taxing or insuring his car, minor punchups etc. It was all to go down as life experience since he fully intended to be a priest when he left the Army. I told him it was a great excuse but I didn't think it would stand up in court and I thought he was putting it on a bit until a few weeks later when we went down to the self service Laundromat place in town to get our combat clothing washed. He charmed the lady in charge of the place into doing it for us and we went into the cafe next door to wait for the stuff to be washed and dried. The cafe was one of those places with old fashioned high back to back booths along one wall. He began fidgeting about like sliding forward in his seat and scrabbling about with his legs under it. I wondered what the hell he was doing until he reached down and came up with a ladies handbag which he opened and proceeded to search through. I thought he'd found a bag someone had forgotten or lost but then he took out the purse, emptied it, put it back in the bag and slid the bag back onto the floor under the table.

All this went on as though I wasn't there, not a word was spoken nor did he even look my way. It finally dawned on me that there were two women in the booth behind them and they had put their bags on the floor at their feet. He had either done this kind of thing before or felt the bag with his feet. In any case he managed to snag one and pull it through to his side without the woman noticing anything. I'll bet that woman never figured out how she managed to lose the money out of her purse which had been in her bag and never out of her possession. I said I needed to go out and buy cigarettes and was out of there post haste. Then I went back to the Laundromat. When the bold Sam came to collect his washing he then managed to con the lady in charge into letting us pay half price for the service. The incident of the bag was never even mentioned. It just sort of never happened.

About six weeks into the course there was a long weekend when everybody who wasn't too far away went home or up to London. My long barrack room was almost empty and then I met Sams' mate, another Para Sgt who was posted in Hythe as an instructor at the Infantry Signals place. It turned out that they were both members of the Parachute Regt Team that did demonstration jumps at Air shows and so on.

Freefall jumping was in its infancy then, but these two were right into it and Sams' mate had brought four deployed parachutes to repack since the long wooden floor of the room was ideal. I had no idea that people actually packed their own chutes but once the floor was carefully swept I got a demonstration of exactly how it was done and how the ripcord and spring released the drogue which pulled out the main chute. One of the chutes was a square panelled thing which had been brought especially from America, apparently it was the last word in technology then but nowadays its just what everybody uses. I thought these parachutes were just being packed to be handed back to stores but they belonged to Sam and his mate and they intended to use them that Sunday at some airfield in Kent somewhere as the sport jumpers of the Paras sometimes got the use of a plane which advertised Rothmans cigarettes at Air shows and County Fairs. It was suggested I might like to come along with them and they could even give me a chute so that I could have a go at the greatest sport on earth. It would be dead easy because they would arrange it so that the chute opened automatically as soon as I was clear of the plane and all I had to do was try not to break a leg on landing. and "Hey, Whats a broken leg anyway"

Naturally I thought this was all a great wind up. Nobody in charge of the Paras was going to let me anywhere near a plane with kit on or even on their premises, but I did fancy a day out watching these loonies jump out of planes with their carelessly (I thought) packed parachutes. So on the Sunday morning we were off to the airfield in Sams Mini, me stuffed in the back with the parachutes and Sams' friend driving. It was just as well I could hardly see the road as we broke every speed limit and rule of the road on the way.

I got a bit off a shock when we arrived at the place because it was no kind of military or



RAF station but a small private airfield with a lot of small planes and the De Havilland Rapide in Rothmans colours standing near a building with lots of civvy sport jumping fanatics and some Paras in civvies waiting their turn to get up in the air. It really looked as though I was going up with them when Sam went off to borrow some overalls, boots and helmet for me from his friends. I just couldn't back out now, besides some of these sport jumpers were girls. Apart from that Sam and his friend actually believed they were doing me a great favour. Only so many would be jumpers could go in the plane at one time so there was a queue list and it was sort of first come first served and we were scheduled to go at two fifteen. They had me falling and rolling about on the grass as I was supposed to do when I landed but that was OK because lots of others were doing it too.

Some of the civvies were about to make their first jump. Once I'd got my head round the idea I actually began to get quite game to do it but it wasn't to be.

The wind had been rising steadily all morning and then it started to rain, by midday the windspeed had gone over the safety limit and at one o'clock the days activities were called off. I didn't know whether to be disappointed or relieved but I was saved a bit of embarrassment by the cancellation because I didn't know that there was a fee of four pounds when getting on the plane and I didn't have anything like that to spare.

In the last week of the course a card school started up in the barrack room mostly instigated by Dicky. A lot of guys were playing at first and betting in small amounts of money but they eventually gave it up and the game came down to about six hard core gamblers who were by this time playing for high stakes with the money they had taken from the mugs. There was a Colour Sergeant from one of the Irish Regiments on the course but he lived in separate room at the end of the block and we rarely saw him. He came into the room one evening when the game was in full flow with lots of money on the table and since he was the senior rank in the we expected him to put a stop to it since gambling is not encouraged in troops accommodation. All he did was watch the game for about half an hour with no comment whatever and then left the room.

On the last night they played the game it was

down to four of them with Dicky acting as Banker and Dealer and about fifty pounds in bets floating about the table when in walks the Colour Sergeant. He watched them play until one was cleaned out and left the table whereupon he asked the players if we could join the game.

It was pointed out to him that this was the end of a game that had been going for four days, the stakes were high and he would need at least twenty pounds to get in. At this point Dicky and his mate had lost most of the money and the other player who was one of the Welsh Guards was almost out of funds. They probably thought it would be smart to take another twenty from a C/Sgt. This was turning into a scene from a Hollywood movie and even those who had lost interest in the game gathered round to watch. At first the C\Sgt was losing until he was down to less than ten pounds but the Welsh man started winning and then the C\Sgt won a couple of hands and opted to take the Bank and be Dealer. Within a short time Dicky and his mate were cleaned out. The Welshman had about fifteen pounds left and the C\Sgt called the game quits collected a large bundle of notes and went off to his room. During all this time he never uttered an unnecessary word which seemed a bit unusual for an Irishman

On the Saturday morning when the course broke up I said my goodbyes to Sam I never saw him again and I often wonder if he did really go on to be a priest.

If so he was never going to be your cuddly local clergy and I imagine he would have been found in some benighted mission up the Amazon or in Africa. Maybe in some inner city hellhole where God help any toerag he caught vandalising his church or stealing from the poor box. At least the choirboys would have been in no danger but the local young ladies would have been.

I think he honestly believed that going to confession once a week did actually absolve him of the sins committed since the last confession.

Those of us travelling to Scotland and Northern Ireland were not to be taken to the station until midday so we went down to the Sgts Mess where we were joined by the Irish C\Sgt of the card school episode. He was very affable and really good company but the best bit came when he produced a coin and began to do the most amazing tricks, having it disappear and reappear in

different places etc etc. Then he got a pack of cards and entertained us with card tricks and manipulation I've never seen bettered even on television today. We naturally thought he'd done a real job on the card school but he was quite insulted at the idea. He said he was a member of the Magic Circle and had sworn never to use his skill with cards to cheat and therefore steal from other players but he'd watched the game and saw that two of the players were cheating, quite crudely, but nobody else knew what they were doing.

Although he wouldn't cheat in any ordinary card game he had no objection to playing against those who were doing it to others and that's why he joined the game on its last night. He still claimed that he had not actually cheated. What he had done was prevent the other two from doing so until he had the cards in the order he wanted then he fed the Welshman a few winning hands and took Dicky and his mate to the cleaners. He gave us this advice though - The usual game played for stakes in barracks is Pontoon and the only skill required is the ability to memorize and follow the run of the cards. Its normally played with the cards shuffled at the start of the game and the cards simply picked up and put to the bottom of the deck after each hand. Most soldiers want to play this way because they think they will be able to learn the run of the cards. Playing like this leaves the game open to card manipulation since the dealer can pick up the cards in such a manner that he can place the winning hand back in the pack in position to ensure that he gets that hand next time it comes round.

It can't be done with every hand but a dealer doing this can make sure he has four out of five winning hands. Therefore you should insist that that the cards are shuffled every time before they are dealt.

Most soldiers except those who work in Bn HQ don't have much contact with the CO. It's generally accepted that best practice is not to bring yourself to his notice unless it's for a good reason like a decent course report and I usually took this line.

We had a new Brigadier take over when we were in Minden and he must have reckoned we didn't look too fit or something because he decided that the whole Brigade should take part in a twenty mile night march. Cooks, clerks, storemen and everybody else

included. Each unit in the Brigade was to enter teams of up to ten men (I think) led by an NCO and although I was TechStores MT Sgt at the time with a nice comfy berth hidden away behind the garage area I found myself elected to take a team of drivers on the march.

On the morning of the day that it was our turn to do the thing I received the map of the area and grid references for the halfway point and finish area. There was nothing tactical or forced about the march but there was a reasonable bogey time to beat and a bit of a bonus in that after the halfway point the team leader could decide whether to take the obvious route to the finish which simply meant staying on the small country lane or march cross country on compass bearings, taking the easy route on the road meant doing the full distance but choosing a compass route from the right place could cut a very considerable mileage off the total and since I fancied myself a bit at the navigation stuff that was for me. I'd worked out my route and waypoints and was lolling back in my comfy chair with a nice cup of tea and chocolate biccys; when the door opens and in walks the CO. Good God I nearly spilled my tea, I didn't think the CO even knew where the Techstore was. Whilst leaping to my feet, fumbling to button my jacket and look efficient and busy I was trying to think of what I might have done lately to cause a visit from on High.

He simply enquired as to whether my team was ready for the march that night and I had I received my map and instructions? had I worked out my route? Would I care to show him my proposed route on the map? etc, etc. Everybody in the Bn was doing or had already done this so I couldn't figure out why he was so interested in my little part of it. Then he told me that he was going to do the march. He would meet my team at the start that evening (We'd drawn a fairly early start so with luck we'd finish before midnight) and just sort of tag along behind us.

That was just what I needed, a long night march with a cross country compass element in it and all the opportunities that gives for getting lost and wandering about looking for the road you probably should have stayed on in the first place and the CO hovering behind me. I didn't see the CO at the Starters tent when I collected our team number and time out stamp and this bothered me a bit because although this was not a forced march there was a time to

beat which ensured that it was no gentle stroll either. I couldn't waste time looking for him among all the other teams who were getting ready to move off so we made our way down to the start gate and he just sort of appeared from nowhere and tacked himself on.

Although we were supposed to pretend he wasn't there it certainly had an effect on the Jocks.

There was none of the usual banter or joking and we just cruised along at a good speed in near silence. At the halfway point we stopped to let the Jocks top up on Mars Bars and Coca Cola. I got a cup of coffee from the COs' very own flask. After we set off cross country I began to think maybe we should have stuck to the road as it was very dark and the going underfoot was rough and broken ground particularly when we crossed a place which had been cleared of trees. There was a fair bit of falling over and muttered cursing but we managed to keep together and hit the first waypoint spot on, then the second and we were on the last stretch.

As we came into a narrow wooded defile with fairly high banks on either side I gathered the Jocks round me to give them the good news that we were only a few hundred yards from the finish. That's when the CO appeared at my side with map and torch in hand, took me aside and informed that we were well off course and should backtrack a bit and pick another route. He was showing me this on his map but was indicating that he thought we were a full kilometre east of where we actually were. Without thinking I pointed to his map and said "We are not there Sir, we are here. We only have to go up over this bank and we will see the finish point in front us". In the silence that followed as he folded his map I realised with horror that I had just told the CO his navigation was rubbish but he simply said "Very well, we'll go up here and see if you are correct". We scrambled up the bank, cleared the trees and there in front of us was nothing but a long dark empty space. In the distance were the headlights of a vehicle travelling along a small road.

At this point I was wondering if I should be making apologies to the CO and contemplating what RSM Sneddon would have to say when he heard one of his sergeants had the cheek to correct the CO

(and get it wrong). The CO was starting to unfold his map when the vehicle we could see slowed down and turned into a gate its headlights sweeping round and revealing a group of army trucks and a small marquee. The finishing point was right there.....just a little further than I had reckoned.

The CO got his own back a few weeks later though. The Bn was on exercise and we had come to a large farmhouse complex by a small river where there was a little flat bottomed ferry. The Royal Engineers had provided some of those daft wood and canvas folding "assault " boats and one of the companies was going to do a crossing. C\Sgt Robertson and myself were getting a little amusement watching the antics of the Jocks assembling the boats, getting them to the water and trying to paddle them when it seemed a better idea to take them to the narrowest part of the river by the ferry, tie them side by side pointing upstream and they could have walked across on them.

The MT Clerk came looking for us and told us that we should have been attending a meeting the Co was holding . We legged it to Bn HQ to find the CO addressing a group of Officers and Ncos. No idea what he had been talking about or how long it had been going on so we slipped quietly into the back of the group and hoped we hadn't been noticed. (never bring yourself to the COs attention, remember?)

But he looked directly at me and said "Ah, Sgt Quinn, thank you for joining us, perhaps you would like to tell us which vehicles we should put across the river first?". I couldn't think why he was asking this. It wasn't much of a river but it was too deep and muddy to ford. The ferry was out of the question as it could take a couple of small cars or a fifteen hundredweight delivery van at a push and was operated by a man pulling on a rope. The only crossing I had seen it make took almost twenty minutes to go over and bring the ferry back, so even if it could have taken our trucks it would have taken something like thirty six hours to get all our vehicles over. I was not about to tell the CO he had better start looking for a bridge because there was no way he was crossing his transport here and I could not think of a single thing to say so I stood there like the village idiot saying nothing. He left me dangling in my own embarrassed silence for a minute or two although it felt like ten and then just dismissed the group.

My last little memory is one I've never told before for obvious reasons. I was working mobile patrols with my platoon out of the old ex RoyalNavy buildings across from the Crescent area and the notorious Tawahi Police Station . It had been a long and difficult day made even more so as it was the day Rfn McLaren was killed in a grenade attack outside that very station and I had been closely involved being first on the scene as we were just across the Crescent when the grenade exploded. It was about midnight when we were finally called to stand down and once back in ( Canute Bks I think it was called ) I cleared the patrol weapons, gave them their orders to be on parade at 0500 and went round to check that the drivers had plenty of fuel etc for the next day (old MT Sgt habits diehard).

I had cleared my own Sterling SMG with the patrol Cpl by the usual method of removing the magazine, drawing back the bolt to show empty chamber and having him declare it clear. As I walked back to the Command Post my Sterling was hanging from my shoulder by its sling and the magazine in my hand. I lifted the gun pushed the magazine in and pulled the sling back onto my shoulder. With a sound like the crack of doom the in the almost silent night the gun fired. The round hit the wall to my right at an extreme angle ricocheted off; hit the high wall facing me and went on up to strike something metal on the roof of the building to my left (I swear I saw the sparks) and went zinging off skywards.

I couldn't believe what I'd done. I had forgotten to let the bolt forward after clearing to make safe. Just as bad I'd left the safety catch in the single shot position; but I was sure I'd not touched the trigger.

I just stood there waiting for the Command Post door to fly open and the whole place to go on full alert but nothing happened except the driver I'd just been speaking to came trotting round the corner and said "Hey Sarge did you hear a shot?".

I replied "Well I heard something". The driver then says "That was a gunshot and it was close". So I then say "You're right I better go and check in the Command Post if its been reported". The driver trotted happily off to get some sleep probably pleased that I hadn't decided to take him back out on the streets to investigate, while I spent ten minutes in the dark space between the two

buildings searching for the ejected case.

When I went into the Command Post (which had a big heavy door with a thick fabric curtain behind it) there sat two signallers on watch with earphones clamped on their heads. One was writing a letter and the other was reading a magazine. I asked if there was any interesting radio traffic since the OP on top of the Police Station at least should have heard the shot, but there was nothing.

That's how I got away with probably the only careless, accidental discharge by a senior NCO during our little sojourn in Sunny Aden.

That then is a few of my little snapshots (there are a lot more but not the kind suitable for publication in a respectable journal) which would long have been consigned to the dustbin of memory were it not for the welcome thump of the Covenanter on my doormat at the start of each year.

I would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank Major Leishman for his sterling work in editing the magazine and keeping it going over all these years.

It has certainly played a great part in keeping us all in touch spread all over the country and the world as we are and reminding us of the days when we were young and beautiful and the only regiment the British Army needed to stop the Red Army in its tracks.

Thanks are also due to Lt Col Mackay and Lt Col McBain for their work with the Regimental Trust and Museum and Officers like Captain Farquharson who rarely fail to turn up at Douglas each May and are prepared to give of their time and effort to help with the Association.

It was a great pleasure to see so many of our old officers at the final Conventicle and the fortieth anniversary of the Disbandment this year. Their presence was greatly appreciated by the Jocks.

Finally since this will be the last printing of the Covenanter I would like to say that it was a privilege to be a Cameronian from 1955 to 68 and to serve with as fine a group of Officers, NCOs and Men as can be found in any Army.

Best Wishes to You all.  
Jimmy Quinn.

## Taking A Chance

The car eased forward like a slug in its slime. The night was dark, damply chill. And as the headlights sought out the road it reflected wet in their glare: looking like a river stretching before us between the high banks of waving lallang grass. Where the road curved the headlights shone out across the lallang to be blanketed by the jungle. The tangle of trees and creeper had been cut back thirty yards on each side of the road as an ambush precaution, and at that distance our lights showed the jungle edge as a mysterious, patterned wall. In the car we were tired but tense. Neither the damp nor the depressing night smell of the jungle did anything to lessen the strain. Outside the beam of the headlights we could see nothing and imagine everything. I drove slowly in low gear, my head and right arm outside the window. My right hand clutched a pistol. Glancing inside and across the car I could see Charles Morgan silhouetted, white-shirted, in the passenger seat. He too was head and shoulders out of the window, cuddling a carbine close against the side of the car, trained down the yellow shaft of our lights. My carbine lay near to hand on the front seat between us. We were ready for ambush but never more vulnerable than in this civilian vehicle, a green Morris Oxford saloon. And we had reason to fear that an ambush was likely. At nine o'clock that morning, Sunday, 7th July, 1952, I had returned to base after a tenday jungle patrol with men from C Company, 1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). Charles Morgan, the assistant manager of the Voules Rubber Estate where the Company was established, had asked me to lunch with him, and later we had decided to drive the 120 miles south to Johore Bahru, the town just north of the causeway leading to Singapore. It was midnight before we started for home.

I drove back fast, finding myself following the Straits Times van, a Dodge shooting brake. The van was "terrorist conscious", and wasted no time on what was for it a daily journey: not at any rate on the first 63 miles. Then we reached the village of Yong Peng, and here we parted company.

We were stopped at the north gate in the protective wire, wire that stretched round the thatched, bamboo-walled huts of the sleeping community. As our passes were inspected the Malay police guard gathered round the car, their long eyes wide with

excitement.

Their chattering gave us the reason for the activity at the barrier before one said in singing English: "Telephone lines down, Tuan. Between here and Chaah. Dangerous maybe to go further." Morgan and I knew that if communication wires were down it meant one of two things:

a tree or an animal had fouled them, or Communist terrorists in the area were laying on an ambush. What had started as a pleasant evening jaunt was turning nastily sour. The area ahead was the hunting – and killing – ground of 7 Independent Platoon, a group of terrorists about thirty strong that was led by the notorious Goh Peng Tuan. Like his men Goh Peng Tuan was a fully-trained Chinese jungle fighter. He carried out more ambushes than any other Communist terrorist in Malaya.

The men in the Straits Times van lost no time at all on their decision. They were staying put for the night; they were wise. But I had to be back at my duties as second-in-command of the Company, and Charles was required to attend muster parade. We knew we were taking a chance, but decided to press on.

The danger spot was the fourth mile where the road cleaved through high cuttings – glorious ground for ambushes. Now we were on the second mile. Our plan in the event of ambush was simple: directly we were fired on I would stop the car and we would bail out running zig-zag into the comparative safeness of the jungle, where we could lose ourselves till morning light.

Still leaning out of our respective windows we drove on, into the third mile. It was cold now, but that was hardly noticed in our tense anticipation as our eyes fought to probe the darkness on either side of the road. Still there was nothing; and nothing even throughout that taut fourth mile; just the night and the lights of the car and the low throb of the engine. For six miles we sweated, then decided it was a false alarm. I whipped the Oxford through the gears and we roared off in top. We were doing sixty and screaming over a rise in a cutting about eleven miles north of Yong Peng when I saw it. The lights, dipping back to the road from the sky, showed a log, thick-gnarled and sinister, lying across the road just fifty yards ahead. As I shouted "ambush!" and stamped my feet on everything to try and stop, they opened fire on the car.

The jungle was a cacophony of shattered sound. Bullets from machine guns and rifles

shredded the night, screaming up the road in streams of coloured lead and gushing through the windscreen between us, beside us, and on out the back and side windows. The mutilated car, bucking and skidding, was a maelstrom of flying glass fragments. The noise and the bullets filled the air and the road and the car. The car was slowing now and Morgan jumped out as it slewed crab-wise across the wet road and hit the log. At my side the car was in the lallang. I saw Morgan jump the log and double fast up the road. I snatched my carbine from the seat beside me, opened the door and leapt out. Before I touched the ground I was hit. Shot in the left leg. The bullet ripped into my thigh just above the knee-cap. The force of the shot knocked me over and I fell into the lallang. My carbine had slipped from my grasp and I could see it just a few paces from me in the grass. I thought of trying to reach it. But suddenly there were men everywhere. I lay sprawled, flat-bellied in the grass, my face on one side. I could see the canvas shoes and tight-wrapped leggings of a terrorist move between me and the carbine. I thought he had seen me, but he moved off, short-kneed, trotting, to join the others at the car. There were about twelve of them, all shouting. Most of them were shining torches; and now they were looking for me. At any moment they'd find me. I thought again of trying to reach the carbine, so temptingly near. But the moment I moved they would have seen me.

Then my flesh froze. A foot sank into my back as one of the searchers stood on me, weight on my spine. He recoiled with a yell of fright that brought his comrades running.

Now there was only one course left: to act dead.

I was grabbed by my forelock and jerked viciously on to my back. Torches flashed in my face. They lifted me again, sharply by the hair, and again torches blinded me. But I had seen a few men shot-dead and kept my eyes staringly open: the irises rolled hard and upward to the left, almost under the lids. I was numb with shock; otherwise it would have been impossible. There was no feeling in my left leg, but my olive-green shirt and shorts were smeared and spattered with blood that clotted and spurted from the wound above my knee cap. I could see them moving around me, gibbering in Chinese. I could smell them, too, their sweat, their breath. My staring eyes picked out the triple-red stars on the prow of their peaked

caps, the tunic shirts, and the knickerbocker trousers caught in below the knee by the bound putties. Under cloth caps the flat yellow faces were slantingly swarthy; evil. Then came a sound that set the short hairs pricking at the base of my neck. One of them was cocking a carbine. It might have been mine. The mechanisms slid back and clicked home again as a round socketed into the breach.

Another face loomed from the group, bent over me, so close that I saw the pore-pocked glistening skin and his eyes, obliquely hawklike: alert, watching. Without moving my glazed irises I could just see the carbine, gleaming metallicly in his hands. Now there were just two of us in the world. The stench of death itself choked my nostrils and I knew I was going to die. He raised the muzzle almost gently against the corner of my right eye. It was a cold, and as certain as the death I smelled. Yet I did not move; even when he pressed harder and my flesh crawled alive and my belly and bowels dissolved to liquid. I lay still. My brain was blank. A whining rose from that blankness then and filled my head until there was only the whine and the gun muzzle. After an age a voice cut through the whine, saying in Malay, "Tintu mati". My tortured forelock was released and I dropped limply into the grass. The face backed into the bulk of bodies that I could see again, taking death and the smell of death with it. I was "Definitely Dead". They were not going to waste another bullet on me. But the horror had just begun. Four men dragged me on to the road. All the time about six torches shone on me. On the road I felt a hand slap on one of my epaulets; they had noticed I was an officer. Then they stripped me. They took my watch, my signet ring, my wallet with most of a month's pay, and my shirt. They argued over my shorts but left them, only because they were unserviceably soaked with blood. Now I was suffering great pain from my leg. They tore off one stocking and the agony was intense as the tightly bound garter material was hauled over my calf. As they pulled off the stocking from my wounded leg I felt my nerve give. In torment I wanted to scream, "For heaven's sake untie the garter!". But to flinch would have been death. They got it off.

Meanwhile a party was ransacking the car, preparing it for burning. Seats were gashed and the stuffing ripped out. They laid a trail of the stuffing fuse-like from the petrol tank,

bayoneting a hole in the tank. They soaked the car and the stuffing in petrol.

A whistle blew and they closed in, clustering round me. There were about twentyfive or thirty of them. The impact of shock was still mercifully numbing my brain and I hardly realised what the next horror was to be.

I was carried roughly to the car, thrown on to the road., and kicked under the petrol tank. If I had been lucky five minutes before, there was no play-act escape now. I was going to be burned alive. I wished they had shot me. I wished I had made a break for my carbine before they had found me. From under the car I watched them light the trail of stuffing, run off up the road in a group, towards the cutting we had driven through ten minutes earlier. With my last strength I rolled from beneath the petrol tank and, as I scrambled into the softly sheltering lallang, the searing heat blasted from the exploding car, knocking the wind from me and singeing my hair. For a moment I lay still.

Then there were shouts from up the road. They had seen me move in the light of the flames and they were coming back. In a queerly cool terror I crawled away from the burning car.

Its oil-fed flames showed up the log and the grass and the road. The inferno roared in my ears as I squirmed up the bank, heart pounding, leg dragging. At last I reached the cover of some dank scrub that brushed clammy on my hot sweating nakedness. I crouched there. I could hear nothing. No terrorists were in sight. My leg had gone numb again but I was still losing blood. I was beginning to think, and to shiver with reaction.

I stood it for three or four minutes, then my straining heart double-thumped as I heard a groan. Charles! It had to be Charles! I forced myself to leave the shelter of the bushes 100 and crawled back towards the car. I found that if I grasped my wounded leg above the knee I could hobble slowly, The car was still burning. I crossed the log and limped along the road. Ten yards from the log I saw lying in the roadway what had been a white shirt, Charles' white shirt. It was steeped in gore, a soaked rag of red, clinging to his body.

Charles lay face down. Blood rivulets seeped and coursed from the corner of his mouth, dripping on to the harsh black tarmac. He was in shocking pain. His voice was glutmuted as he whispered: "Bayonet ...

bayonet ..." And bayonet it had been. He had been stabbed three times through the chest, once through the small of the back. The last thrust had penetrated his lung. At the time I thought his back was broken. I pulled him close into the shelter of the log, on the far side from the glowing car. Charles did not die. He thought he was dying, and with his face in the shadow of the log fought to give me messages for his parents. We lay there together. The heat and fumes of the burning car hurt my eyes. The smell of its burning and the sickly smell of our blood was heavy in the damp air. But the blood made no sound and the car crackled like breaking bones. The other sound was the sound of the jungle. For the jungle is never still. We could see it lighted all round us, fern-fanged and frightening, disturbed and beautiful: the violent jungle.

Later Charles told me about it. He was running up the road from the car when he stumbled, a bullet knicking the inside of his thigh. He had managed to run on for another twenty yards despite the flesh-wound, before diving under a bush. It was a jagged clutching bush that caught and punctured his body till they found him. They had seen his white shirt. One crawled under the bush and looped my black lanyard round his neck. When they dragged him out he had lain as dead. They pulled him from the bush to the road, still choking his windpipe with the lanyard noose. To see if he was dead they kicked him in the face. Charles didn't pass that test. He groaned. A terrorist fixed a bayonet to his rifle, walked back five paces, and lunged, face leering grotesquely.

As the bayonet pierced him Charles had moved a shade, and the point passed through the right side of his chest. A second time the man lunged and again Charles moved, the bayonet stabbing him in the shoulder above the heart. And the third time he moved again and the point went high, almost through the centre of his chest. As the bayonet was withdrawn, Charles rose with it each time, screaming, to fall back on the ground as though the thrust had killed him.

But they were not satisfied. They had turned him on to his stab-sieved chest, and bayoneted him again in the back. And again Charles moved, rising with arched back and scream of death to collapse on his face in his own blood-pool. Only then had they left him for dead. The car was still burning

fiercely when we heard the truck. The hum of the high-pitched engine sent hope surging through me. It was coming from Chaah. I clenched my fingers round the wounded leg and shambled away from the cutting and the car to halt the truck before it hit Charles. I had gone forty yards when I realised I was moving the wrong way. The truck was coming from Yon Peng, as we had come. I tried to reach the log but was yards short as the armoured truck with mounted machine guns and a "tiger squad" of Malay police aboard came over the rise. Suddenly silhouetted in the cutting, its lights dazzled me.

They saw the burning car and the log across the road and opened fire with everything. I was in the middle of their beaten zone. Bullets spat-zinged off the tarmac and ricocheted in a blinding-whining-hail around me. I dived for the half-shelter of the lallang, and prayed. The fire lasted for two minutes. The truck halted at the log and they sprayed the road and the grass and the jungle. Live lead hosed over my head, spurted earth from the bank behind me. When they ceased it was like the hush of Heaven. I screamed out in English and lurched on to the road beside the truck. Charles was safe. The log that had trapped us in the ambush protected him from the murderous storm of police fire. Tenderly the Malays lifted him on to a stretcher, and into the front of the truck. With a bandage and bayonet I tied a tourniquet round my thigh, blade through the bandage loop, brutally twisting and tightening to throttle back the blood. Apoliceman, white-eyed with concern, handed me an ampule of morphia for Charles. I speared the needle into his arm and squirted the merciful, pain-relieving drug in and through to his blood stream. His head and shoulders were beside me as I sat in the front seat. It was a joy to watch the agony fade from his face. It took seventy-five minutes of hard driving to reach the hospital at Kluang. Day was breaking as we pulled up outside the casualty door. I jumped from the cabin. I had been able to walk before, but now the shock had worn off. My leg crumpled under me and I collapsed helplessly on the ground. They carried us into the clean white hospital to safety, and to the shattering experience of uncontrollable reaction as the life-saving shock wore off. I was there for thirty days, then went off on sick leave. Charles was out two days before me.

Two weeks after I left hospital a Communist terrorist courier was killed in the Yong Peng-Chaah area. He was carrying documents giving details of our identity, and the manner of our deaths, at the hands of 7 Independent Platoon. Two months later a patrol of the 1st Battalion Fijian Infantry Regiment killed two terrorists in the same area and recovered a carbine and shotgun. I telephoned their headquarters and asked for the number of the carbine. It was mine.

In May, 1953 I left Malaya, travelling home to the United Kingdom on a troopship with the battalion. On board a fellow passenger asked me if I was J.G.Tedford of The Cameronians. I said I was. He gave an uneasy smirk and opened a book he was carrying. It was an almanac of events in every country, on every day of the year. It had been printed in London. On the page where he jabbed his finger I read that with assistant planter Charles Morgan I had died on the night of the seventh of July, 1952..."murdered by bandits". Evidently I was living on borrowed time.

Footnote: In 1956, as the result of a successful Security Force operation, the Royal Air Force carried out an air strike in the Yang Peng area of Malaya. A1,000 lb bomb scored a direct hit on the camp of 7 Independent Platoon, killing sixteen Communist terrorists. The leader of the platoon, Goh Peng Tuan, was among the dead.

Ian Tedford

Editors Note

This article was originally published in 1957 in the book "The Unquiet Peace"

## Meeting With A Family Friend

It was a pleasant Sunday morning in May when several hundreds of us gathered at the memorial cairn at Douglas for the fortieth, and final, official commemoration of the disbandment of the 1st Bn. In 1968. During the service, at lunch and in several interviews on the excellent DVD produced after the event, mention was made of the feeling of "family" which has long existed in the Regiment (and is shared, within their ranks, by those in many other regiments).

This family-feeling forms a link with the past, with our history and with those who had been there before us. It brought back a memory.,.....



It was a pleasant Sunday morning in May, but it was more than forty years ago and we were not at Douglas but at D.O.D – or dear old Dechmont. The firing ranges on a hill outside Cambuslang were the setting that morning for the Scottish Command T.A Rifle Meeting.

6/7 Cameronians used Dechmont quite a lot over the years though it could be a dreich place, with a worn-out air to its old usually-closed buildings. The hutted camp was open as was the dining hall, while for the first time most of us could remember the officers' mess and sgt's mess huts were functioning.

As firers in the various details of the several competitions running simultaneously scuttled about, pausing to check progress of the results on the central scoreboard, I was approached by a most pleasant chap in a Glengarry whom I took to be a regular officer because of his assured manner and the fact that he spoke almost exclusively in acronyms.

"G'morning! I'm from GHQ Scotcom and for my sins I'm i/c VIPs. I understand you're the S.C.P"

"SCP?" I repeated quizzically "Senior Cameronian Present" he replied. I didn't think so but conceded that, at that precise moment I might be the S.C.V or Senior Cameronian Visible... "No matter" he said "you'll do perfectly. I'm entertaining this old chap for a couple of days who's a retired officer of your regiment who talks about the old regimental family and wants to meet some Cameronians. He's in the mess, come and meet him". Off we went.

So it came about that Lord Reith and I met for the first time.

Those who remember him well would be most likely to recall the then Sir John Reith as the first Director General of the B.B.C, though he had a stellar career after that and a pretty full life before it too. After the B.B.C he emerged as Chairman of Imperial Airways, then as Head and first Chairman of B.O.A.C. He was in great demand with many directorships and much public acclaim. He had the world at his feet where, many suspected, he felt it belonged. In his

heyday he had no delusions of false modesty or feelings of inadequacy as to his own self-worth, being, it was rumoured, a little miffed at not being considered for the job of Viceroy of India. Always an imposing figure he had continued in high-profile positions in British public life, with his height, 6'6" and craggy features ("he had a face made for Mount Rushmore", some said) making him an instantly recognisable figure in any gathering, until he retired from vice-chairmanship of British Oxygen and took up the role of "Great Man!" on a permanent basis.

Like many great men he had mastered a technique of appearing, even from a sitting position, to look down upon those standing before him. How do you talk to such a man? I soon found out as my G.H.Q friend, having introduced us, promptly sloped off for some overdue refreshment. Lord Reith and I began to chat over a pot of tea. That I found him good company and easy to talk to was down to two main factors.

Firstly, before his long period in public life John Reith had served in World War 1. As a Captain in the Cameronians he had been Transport Officer of the 5th bn in Northern France, and had written about his experiences in a book of biography "Wearing Spurs" (1966) which had been published not long before our meeting.

Secondly, by the most fortunate possible coincidence I had been reading that very book only a week or two before our meeting and so was able to get him to reminisce about those days, about his favourite charger (transport officer was a mounted role at that time) which he kept much longer than the remount system would normally allow, and like all soldiers, about the mud and bullets.

We talked, I went off to fire in my detail, we talked some more, mainly about himself, possibly, like many great men, his favourite subject. Then, full of gratitude for the respite, his escort appeared and bore him off to lunch, leaving me the lasting memory of a visit from an old family friend...

George Ferguson

## All at Sea (and under it) with The Cameronians

### “Another Tale From The Barrack Room”

The morning before I was to go on my submarine trip courtesy of the Royal Navy I went down to the Depot Orderly Room to get my instructions' which didn't amount to any more than a return ticket to Rothesay on the Isle of Bute and the suggestion that I produce my body to the Captain of HMS Truncheon by noon on the 10 June. On the train to Glasgow I wondered again at my luck in having my name drawn out of the hat to go on the trip and it dawned on me that the offer to go to sea on the boat had not exactly seen a great rush of volunteers. Indeed some of those great friends of mine in the Cpls Mess had offered to look after my motorbike if I went missing and a few more were laying claim to some of the better parts of my kit as though I was already part of a tragic story.

The ferry to Rothesay was not very busy and was soon away from the pier allowing me a good view of the harbour but I could only see a few small fishing boats and the odd yacht. Even scanning up and down the Clyde there was nothing in sight and I would have recognised a Navy ship; they are big grey things with white numbers and letters on the side and they have guns up at the front.

I reckoned that with the cold war and everything; the Navy probably kept these things hidden away up some cove or creek so the best way to find them would be to ask the local soviet spy but there were no obvious spies about and two old men fishing off the pier looked at me as though I was mad when I asked them if they had seen any submarines.

The Harbourmasters Office were bound to know about these things so that was my next port of call but inside I found only a bored looking teenager picking at his spots and a large woman behind a typewriter reading a Hollywood film magazine. It didn't look too hopeful so I asked for the Harbourmaster. The teenager sniggered and the fat lady frostily informed me that the great man was at a meeting with the “Toon Coouncil” and anyway he only spoke with Shipmasters and Yottie type people so I could address any enquiry to her. No! She didn't know where I might find a submarine even if I did know

its name.

I was getting a bit anxious by now because it was almost eleven o'clock and I'd been told to be there at noon so I checked all the streets around the harbour for any signs indicating directions to a Royal Navy office or establishment but I found nothing.

Then I spotted two sailors in uniform over at the narrow entrance to a small part of the harbour used by pleasure boats and when I got nearer they had RN Submarines on their cap ribbons. As I hove to alongside ( that's navy speak ) one of them said “Are you the pongo who is joining us on the boat?”. I said “Yes” and he said “OK Mate, just wait here” then they continued their conversation about their home leave and ignored me,

Nearly half an hour later a biggish tug/ trawler kind of thing painted in that awful muddy yellow and black colour that I now know is used by the Admiralty on civvy crewed support boats in UK Harbours swept into this little entry and sort of jammed itself up against the harbour wall. The sailor says “ Right Mate “, both of them pick up the small sports bags at their feet and disappear rapidly down onto the tug using the iron handrails set into the side of the wall. This was getting interesting because they had just thrown their little bags down onto the deck before climbing down but I had been told to take No1 dress ,No2 dress and all sorts of stuff since there would be official meetings and so on and was lumbered with my whacking big (and heavy) army suitcase. Throwing that down to the boat would see the contents spread all over the deck and beyond so I couldn't chance that.

I put the case on in its side with the handle projecting over the wall and climbed down until I could reach up; get a hold of the handle and pull the case over to hang in my right hand, the sudden weight drag could have pulled me off the wall but be sure I had a death grip with my left hand as the guy in the wheelhouse was holding the boat in position by keeping it angled into the wall against the throttles and this meant there was an ever widening gap between the front and rear of the boat and the wall, I was not about to fall into that. After that it was a case of letting go with my left hand and catching the next rail down until I could get a foot onto the side of the tug and fall in a heap onto the deck. The sailors thought the whole performance was hilarious and

the old guy in the wheelhouse just kept shaking his head in disbelief. They probably had many a drink in the pub on that story.

As soon as I was on board we were off heading down the Clyde towards the sea. The sailors got themselves tucked in behind the wheelhouse to shelter from the stiff and quite cold wind blowing up the river and as we got ever further away from shore and the boat started to pitch and roll a bit I began to wonder what I had let myself in for and realised the old saying "Never Volunteer" maybe had some merit. After about forty minutes of this the sailor nudges me and says "There she is " pointing out to sea. Despite having excellent eyesight I had to admit that I couldn't see a thing so he had me look along his arm while he pointed to it and there was a tiny upright mark on the horizon. I was well impressed with his eyesight but maybe its knowing what to look for.

As the tug and submarine approached each other head on there was not much to see, just the conning tower with some figures up in it but then the sun came out and suddenly we were alongside the forward part of the boat and I could hear the noise of the diesels and see the haze of the exhaust vents at the stern. The sea was washing through the drain holes between the hull and casing as the boat rose and fell on the swell , up in the tower three crew members wearing the iconic white rollneck woolen jumper of the submariner, one of them with his naval officers hat at a jaunty angle was a very handsome man with a magnificent redgold beard (who turned out to be the Captain). The whole picture could have been a scene from a movie or a navy recruiting poster and remains fixed in my memory as though it was yesterday.

The first sailor took his bag and his friends and jumped nimbly across the gap between the boats just at the right time as they rose and dropped on the swell. The other one who was a big lad took hold of my case and threw it to his mate who trapped it neatly; then jumped himself. They had probably taken pity on me after the shambles on the harbour wall. Both of them made off to the base of the conning tower and it was my turn.

The distance to be jumped to ensure a safe landing on the casing was probably no

more than five feet but the casing was not very wide and there was no railing ,wire or anything to stop you going straight over the other side if you got too enthusiastic and I was wearing Army boots with studded soles, also the jump had to start from a standing position with one foot on the bulwark of the tug and the other on the deck, too timid an effort could land you in the water between the two boats. All this of course was under the interested gaze of the crew in the conning tower.

Sailors do this kind of thing all the time I suppose but the honour of the Regiment and soldiers in general was at stake here so as soon as the sailors had moved out of the way I jumped, landed neatly and strolled after them as though jumping from boat to boat at sea was nothing to worry about, but I hoped I wouldn't have to do it again. One of the crew had a hatch in the base of the tower open and I was quickly shepherded down a short ladder and there I was in the control room of Her Majestys' Submarine Truncheon.



Like everyone else I suppose, my only knowledge of submarines was gleaned from films and newsreel pictures and this was about what I had imagined it would be like, packed with machinery ,dials and gauges although surprisingly narrow and cramped . There was a very fine looking mahogany chart table taking up a lot of the available space and beside it stood a little fellow who looked very like ORQMS Dickson back at the depot except that he was dressed in a collarless shirt and what looked suspiciously like pyjama trousers with carpet slippers. On top of this he had a well worn uniform jacket which I suppose showed his rank. As

this was the first thing I saw on entering the boat and only a few feet from the ladder I was a bit taken aback, even more so when he asked me the name and address of my next of kin (but not my own name) entered this in a ledger and took note of the time, date and position of the boat when myself and the other two sailors joined the boat.

All this would be sent, immediately to the Admiralty and I was now officially aboard the boat and subject to naval discipline etc. He also made it clear that it was highly unusual for me to be there at all. Then I was taken to the "fore-end" where I would bunk; along a narrow central passageway and through several hatchways which separated the boat into sealable compartments. Along the way I realised that nobody was actually wearing uniform. Shirts, rugby shirts, jeans, old trousers even shorts was the preferred style and footwear was mainly PT shoes just like the army issue but navy coloured.

The guys in the fore-end or more properly the torpedo room made me very welcome and showed me the bunk I would use which folded down from a framework on which there were seven others and this was replicated on the other side of the compartment which meant sixteen men slept in this space, no bigger than the MT office back at Winston Bks although half of them were always on watch and it never really got crowded.

The reason for the strange dress was soon explained. Inside a sub is very warm and humid with an all pervading smell of diesel fuel which soon ruins clothing, therefore they wore any old clothes of no value which could be thrown in the rubbish tip at the end of any voyage. They called this "steaming rig" Also, on the floor were little wooden lockers about the size of a small suitcase, one for each of the occupants, everything that the sailor owned had to fit inside so once washing and shaving kit and shore going uniform was in there, that was it. My big army suitcase was already creating a nuisance since there was nowhere to stack it out of the way.

Shortly after I was established in the fore-end I was called to the Captains cabin on the boats tannoy system. This was in the control room just under and to the right of the conning tower ladder and no more than ten feet from the periscopes. The CO of this boat was certainly expected to be right on top of the action. Inside it was hardly

much longer than the bunk which occupied one side, the other side was taken up with low cupboards the top of which formed a bench seat and a nice wooden table took up the space in the middle. There was a small bookshelf, HiFi with earphones and some photographs on the wall which made the place a little less spartan but it was sobering thought that this was the office and quarters of the captain of a high tech (in those days) attack submarine during its time on patrol. The whole thing was probably about the size of our COs bathroom.

The Captain welcomed me aboard and told me a bit about the boat which was an old wartime T class type but had been updated and modernised. He said we were at the moment sailing up the Minches and would go round by Cape Wrath, on to the Shetlands for a short visit then proceed across the North Sea to Gothenburg in Sweden. I was to feel free to visit any part of the boat and ask any questions I liked, the only exception being the electronics centre which was on the other side of the control room opposite his cabin and just the same size. This housed the underwater warfare sonars, radars, comms and stuff regarded as highly secret.

I was being treated more like a visiting Member of Parliament with influence on the defence budget than a buckshee soldier along for a free ride.

I did do a tour of the boat and saw everything worth seeing. The noise in the engine room was horrendous when the big diesel was pounding away but strangely enough you didn't really hear it in the rest of the boat when the hatches were closed. The engine room guys communicated with each other by hand signal and lip reading but the electric engine was practically silent and the batteries were about the size of small cars; weighed half a ton each and it took five tons of distilled water to top them up. Once I saw all this and realised the amount of kit packed into the boat to make it operate including the huge diesel fuel tanks and suchlike I began to realise why space for the human crew was at such a premium and also noted that a spare body like me hanging around in some places only got in the way so after my tour I mostly just stayed up in the fore-end.

In the front half of the boat where I was there was only one washbasin with mirror

and beside it in a small cubicle, with only a small curtain for a door was the toilet. This was a wondrous machine and I had to be instructed in its' use.

It was a nicely made affair of stainless steel, the bottom being sealed by a highly polished plate of the same material.

Once a deposit had been made the drill was to pull a lever which dropped the plate and allowed the contents to fall into a space below. If this didn't happen there was a stick with a scraper at the end with which to encourage it. The lever pulled back again sealed the base. Beside the bowl were two gauges. One showed water pressure on the outside of the hull and the other had a valve beneath it. You had to check the outside pressure gauge and use the valve on the other one to set the ejection pressure at least ten

pounds higher and pull yet another lever which sent air to the set value through the system and ejected the stuff through the hull vent. If you forgot to seal the base you could expect the contents of the toilet to be fired back at you. Too much pressure and the stuff could go airborne and too little pressure could let water into the boat. It made flushing a toilet on land a bit of a limp wisted affair.

There is no daylight in a submarine of course and it is a twenty four hour job just running the boat with the crew operating a watch system of four hours on and four hours off. I found it hard to tell what time it was. There wasn't really a concept of day time /night time, the only thing that was fairly regular was meal time and from what was served then I knew it was breakfast or dinner time. Since I had no useful purpose to serve on the boat I just slept when I thought it was bedtime . It was a bit disconcerting that first night(?) when I got into my cot and realised my head was no more than a foot away from the warhead of a whacking big torpedo. It got more interesting when I noted that I was sleeping in a steel tube lined with sixteen of them.

There were a couple of other things that gave me food for thought . One was a piece of machinery bolted to the hull which was to be used to fire messages up to the surface in the event of underwater troubles. It leaked water all the time but when I pointed this out to the crew they said it needed glands and gaskets renewed and that could only be done back at base.

The other thing was a set of what looked like old wartime gasmasks hanging in a box on the wall , the kind with a tube leading to a chest pack. These turned out to be some kind of escape breathing device. If we got stuck on the bottom; all you had to do was put this on , flood the fore-end, open the hatch in the roof and float serenely to the surface where no doubt a large rescue ship would be waiting with hot towels and a nice cup of tea. "Not to worry" they said. "We'll show you how to put it on if we need to use them."

I was getting quite used to this navy lark by now and they tried to teach me the naval ranks ( seamen, not officers ) but there were so many variations by trade or qualification and so on it was hard to get a handle on it. There didn't seem to be any similarity to army ranks and many of the ranks were more often referred to by a nick name or job description. The two guys I got to know best and even become friends with were always called Killick and Slinger.

The Killick being a rank nickname I think and Slinger being a job description. They were the main men of the torpedo section with responsibility for the weapons and all the associated tubes and firing gear. They spent much time on this but also took turns at other jobs like steering the boat when they were on watch.

Between them these two taught me everything about the boat and let me help(?) them as they went about the maintenance of their charges, which seemed to consist mostly of continual cleaning and greasing. By the time we were nearing Cape Wrath I was starting to feel like one of them, more so since I had no "steaming gear"and somebody had found me an old pair of black overalls to wear. There was a deeper level in the boat underneath the fore-end where there was storage space for various parts. Slinger was down there once and came back with an ancient Lee Enfield 303 rifle. " I think this needs a bit of looking at" he says, "Pongos know about this kind of stuff, What do you think?"

This rifle was not regarded as a weapon. It was used with an attachment in the muzzle to which a light line was tied and when a blank round was fired the thing shot across to another boat carrying the line which was then attached to a heavier one and pulled in. The idea seemed to be that once a rope was between them they could pass things

back and forth.

The poor old rifle looked as though it had just been picked up from a beach where it had been lying since D Day. The bolt took a lot of effort just to pull it back and it took ages to get it to disengage from the breech because the rotating part at the firing pin end was just not about to rotate. The brass butt plate was green and the state of the barrel would have given the RSM a heart attack. Nobody knew when or if this thing had ever been used, but it was part of the boats inventory and it just lay down in the store in a rack on the wall. This store had walls constantly running with condensation, high humidity and no air circulation. No wonder the rifle was in the state it was in.

Slinger had only brought it up as a matter of curiosity more than anything but when they realised the state of it they got a bit concerned since it would be regarded as their responsibility.

I got the butt trap open but there was no pull through and oil bottle in there. This was a challenge I couldn't refuse. I took it along to the engine room, there was a small engineering workshop behind it with all the tools I might need. The person in charge there let me use the vice and bench, produced thin oil, wire wool and fine emery paper and watched with interest while I set about the thing from magazine to muzzle. He got interested enough to find a long thin steel rod which would fit the barrel; fixed a small piece of cotton soaked in metal polish to it and had the barrel clean and shiny after ten minutes of rodding. It took about an hour's hard work, broken nails and sore fingers but finally we had a respectable looking weapon, rust free and with a smoothly operating bolt, safety catch, magazine and trigger.

I was rather pleased with it but the Engineering CPO or whatever he was called was so delighted that he insisted on taking it up to the control room and showing it to the Officer of the Watch, the Petty Officers Mess and anybody else who was around. Finally we slathered it in oil, wrapped it from the forestock to behind the trigger in two long strips of cotton (cut from one of my vests) also soaked in oil and with a couple of condoms (obtained from the medic) fixed over the muzzle it was interred back in the storeroom. I got a lot of brownie points from that little job.

When we were approaching Cape Wrath things started to get very active about the boat particularly in the fore-end. We were about to fire a live torpedo in the bombing and firing range which lies on the coast up there. This was all exciting stuff to me. First the torpedo had to be loaded into the tube. I had assumed the tubes were always loaded but not so on a jolly such as we were on at the moment. I hadn't seen the tubes because they were behind a massive bulkhead with a hatch in either side and it had always been kept sealed. I wasn't going to see them now either because loading was deemed a dangerous business and only the torpedo men were to be in the fore-end whilst it was done. Even the fore-end hatch was sealed.

Once it was all done I was allowed back in and the right side hatch was open with three large tubes one above the other but only a few feet ahead of the bulkhead. With all the pipes, tubing, dials, gauges, wheel valves and things making it very tight for anyone working in there. I guessed that the bulkhead separating all this from the fore-end must be some kind of safety wall.

By this time the Captain was manoeuvring the boat in the range and acquiring a target, Killick and Slinger motioned to me to join them at the tubes and I climbed over the hatchway (the deck in there was lower than anywhere else on the boat). A plank of wood about four feet wide was produced and positioned on brackets on the bulkhead level with the top tubes. Killick climbed up onto this seat and nodded to me to join him, Slinger was still at the tubes. They had been through all the drill of ensuring the tube doors were closed and tubes purged before loading. Now it was the drill of flooding the tube and opening the door, all of this ordered and confirmed in sequence by the warfare officer in the control room.

Slinger climbed up and squeezed onto the seat beside us and they went through a lot of visual checks on pressures and things and waited for the order to fire. I sat there between them and thought how strange a soldier's life can be... A couple of days ago I was hanging about the MT garage at Winston Bks and here I was in the North Sea at the top of Scotland (or rather slightly under it), a fully armed torpedo in its tube a few feet from my right knee waiting the order to be unleashed and, the firing button

right in front of me.

At the order, Killick gave the big mushroom shaped red button a good thump with the heel of his hand. There was a seriously loud explosion like an artillery piece firing and the whole boat jerked backwards in recoil. I hadn't expected anything like that and was nearly tipped off my perch. Suddenly it was all very quiet and I thought I heard the torpedo running but it was going away from us at something like fifty miles per hour, maybe it was just my ears ringing. In the control room the stopwatches were running. Those in the fore-end stood looking at each other, saying nothing. Then we clearly heard the explosion as the torpedo struck the target, there was a fair bit of cheering and congratulations all round. That was one of the highlights of my time in the regiment. I am probably the only one in the army who has ever been so closely involved in the firing of a live torpedo from a semi submerged Royal Navy submarine.

We were soon on our way to Shetland and at dinner in the PO's mess where I had my meals I was put in the picture about the crews pleasure in a succesful firing. Where I assumed the torpedo crew were the main people in the game it was pointed out to me that the whole crew were involved. The Captains' skill in choosing the correct position for the shot depended on the ability of the helmsman, planesmen and engine room to put and keep the boat exactly where he wanted it. The whole boat was the weapon.

Furthermore this had been an old practice torpedo which was being disposed of. Nothing in the way of homing or magnetic devices on it, so to hit a small target nearly four miles away through the rough sea and strong tides of the Pentland Firth was regarded as rather good shooting.

A rum ration was issued after dinner and there was a lot of carry on with little containers like mini milk churns and measures. Not a great deal of the stuff was actually drunk but enough to get a good conversation going and I learned enough about submarine operation to allow me to bore people for years. Some of the most interesting stuff was about what they did on "normal" patrols. No actual details of course, but apparently they went up to the Baltic or even round the top of Norway where they hung around the Red Navy's back door trying to track soviet subs

leaving their bases, collecting details of ship movements etc and trying to be invisible themselves since the Russians were rather enthusiastic about depth charging anything of which they had the slightest suspicion. I formed the opinion that these guys must have been absent on parade when the self preservation instinct was being issued.

When we arrived at Lerwick in Shetland the off watch crew were allowed to go ashore but I spent most of the day with a big bucket of bitumen type paint and a long handled brush painting the front end of the casing all round the radar dome and back to the fore hatch. It was some kind of non slip preservative paint but it was like painting with syrup.

One of the fore-end crew spotted my No1 dress uniform in my case while we were getting changed to go ashore and was fairly taken on with it. He just had to try it on and although it was a bit tight he was awfully pleased with himself in it and rushed of to some other part of the boat where someone had a camera to have his picture taken. I couldn't believe my ears when he asked to wear it going ashore and agreed because I couldn't imagine anybody in authority allowing him off the boat like that but amazingly they all thought it was highly amusing. As we got onto the quay we ran into a chap with a camera and notebook who insisted on taking photographs of four of us. Me and this nut in my No1 dress with every button straining, tartans at half mast, pale blue socks and seriously scruffy shoes, a sailor on either side of us and the boat in the background. The reporter (for that's what he was) was delighted with all this and assured us that our picture would be on the front page in the morning. I was only happy that we would be well at sea when his paper came out and it was only a local rag anyway, but somewhere there may be an archive copy of the Shetland Times with that picture in it.

Lerwick was a quiet little town with quaint narrow streets and the houses sort of huddled together against the ever present strong wind. There was a large harbour full of fishing boats of all sizes, most of them Norwegian and crewed by some of the biggest, hairiest, hard men I've ever laid eyes on who seemed intent on drinking the local pubs dry. They were great company though and we spent a pleasant evening in a pub where there were several musicians mainly

fiddle and accordian players but joined now and then by guys with guitars and bohran drums. The standard of playing was very good. I might even have heard the great Ali Bain learning his trade there before going on to take Shetland music round the world and become internationally renowned as the greatest fiddle player of his generation.

When we had left Shetland and were on our way to Gothenburg I went along to the control room where Slinger was on watch and taking his turn on the helm (steering the boat). He sat on a small seat just to the left of the conning tower stairs with a heavy blanket over his knees reading a novel. The blanket was needed because the snorkel tube above the tower pulled in huge quantities of air and forced it down into the boat but I thought the novel was a bit casual. However nobody else in the control room seemed to be bothered. I stood at the ladder looking up at the little circle of sky above when I get a dig in the ribs and Slinger says "Have a go at steering". I thought he was kidding of course but he was serious saying "Its no bother, I'll show you how". I said "OK, I'll have a go but shouldn't you get permission from somebody?". "No No It will be alright" says he and since no one else in the control room was raising any objection I found myself on the seat with the blanket over my knees.

There was a pedestal coming up from the deck with what looked like one half of a motorcycle handlebar on one side at the top, above it a large compass like a clock with only one hand pointing at the twelve o'clock position. The compass rose moved round the face so when the heading was set it sat at the end of the pointer. All I had to do was keep it there. It wasn't that easy of course. The heading would sit steady for a few minutes and then start wandering off course because of the effect of wind and wave on the hull. When it got a few degrees off course I was to push the lever up to move the boats head left or down to go right. The longer it was held up or down the more the boat moved and when you let go it self centered.

By the time I had got all this the boat was already five degrees off to the right so I pushed the lever up but by the time the rudder took effect it was ten degrees off. I corrected more and got back to the correct heading but the thing then kept going too far left. Corrected again and well over to the

right . Down with the lever and we were away back to the left, up with lever and it was off to the right again. After ten minutes of this, the course we should have been steering and the compass only had a passing acquaintance and I'd almost forgotten what it was anyway, Slinger had actually gone off to the toilet and the other sailors in the control room were in absolute stitches and offering no help whatever. They probably told tales for years afterwards about the time they let a "pongo" drive the boat and ended up going in circles.

I couldn't understand why there was no reaction to all this from the conning tower but finally from the voice tube by my head came a polite request to know who was steering. I said "It's me Sir , the soldier". "Well just hand over to Slinger and get yourself up here" was the reply. Up in the tower ( which wasn't as far above the water as I'd expected) I was invited to look back at the wake which was a pitiful sight snaking about behind us. "Any aircraft flying over and seeing that might report us as a ship in trouble" says the watch officer. Back down in the boat I watched as the job was done properly and it was a much more skilled affair than you might think. The helmsman has to be able to balance the corrections against the boats head going off, the delay before the rudder takes effect and overcorrection when it does.

I was pretty sure I'd been wound up for a bit of naval entertainment but who cares!. How many soldiers can claim to have driven a submarine?.

Shortly after this episode the boat began to get rather lively and we were running into a storm. I wasn't at all concerned , who ever heard of a submarine being sunk by bad weather, apart from the casing and tower most of it is under water anyway and there is only the one hole open to the sea which can be closed down quickly. The Captain has the perfect solution to bad weather, just go under it. Thats what we did. As the motion of the boat became a corkscrewing action the order to submerge was given. There was no big drama as preparations were made . I was in the fore-end as it happened and thought it better not to go up to the control room in case I got in the way. All I noticed was that the boat became quiet and stable in the water and the deck under my feet took on a gentle slope . Thats when I realised that



submarines dont just fill their ballast tanks and sink, they do actually dive forward and down. It was all a bit exciting at first as I lay on my bunk and watched the depth gauge (mounted above the thing that always leaked) slowly wind past the hundred foot mark and continue on past two hundred. It finally steadied on three hundred feet and I was a bit relieved because from somewhere in my memory (probably from a "Cruel Sea" type movie) I thought that was as far as subs could go down. Not so as I learned at dinner in the mess, they had been down a lot further than that. I reckoned three hundred feet would do me fine thank you.

I dont know when we surfaced again because I was asleep at the time and soon after that it was announced we were proceeding up river and would be in Gothenburg soon. The casing crew who would attend to the mooring of the boat were warned to be ready and this caused quite a bother. This crew were required to be dressed in the white submarine jumper. navy bell bottom trousers and white topped cap for this duty. As the boat moves slowly into the harbour they line up on the casing standing at ease, all "tiddley" as the Navy calls it until the order to start the rope handling and so on is given. Anyone watching from the shore sees a smart and efficient piece of naval drill and it looks impressive.

The problem was that those making up the crew simply did not have the kit to wear and there was great rummaging in lockers all through the boat to find enough jumpers etc to get them dressed up as required. It seemed that apart from their personal shore going uniform every other piece of clothing on the boat belonged to anybody who needed it. Imagine trying to dress a regimental guard from every other member of the company who might have some bits of No1 dress.

Once we were tied up safely a few hours passed while the boat was sort of shut down and cleaned up. During this time nobody was allowed out of the boat onto the casing, probably because although this was a very slick and highly professional bunch of matelots, if you had put them on shore in their steaming rig they would probably have been arrested as vagrants.

When we got out of the boat to go ashore it was to find that we were tied to two other submarines like ours which were in turn tied

to a frigate moored against the harbour wall. We had to cross from one boat to the others on long planks then climb up a ladder onto the frigate where a queue of sailors were lined up being booked out of the ship by an officer and some men whom the sailors called "regulators", sort of Regimental Provost staff. They were generally giving the sailors a good inspection and sending some back to polish shoes etc but they didn't bother those with HM Submarines on their caps and totally ignored me. I was amused to see two very large boxes of condoms on the table with the booking out ledger with a Help Yourself notice beside them. That kind of thing at army guardrooms might have saved a few young ladies a bit of bother in some garrison towns.

Gothenburg was a bit of culture shock to me. In the mid summer sunshine it was so clean and prosperous looking with wide streets, fine parks and buildings and many canals. There was an excellent tramway system and the docks where our boat was parked was more like an upmarket suburb, certainly a world away from the docks in Glasgow I was familiar with. When we went sat down at a pavement cafe to have a coffee and watch the parade of very attractive young ladies who seemed to be everywhere on the streets we came down to earth with a bang. The cost of everything here was phenomenal, four coffees and gateau cost several pounds!. Fortunately there was a welcome letter on the boats notice board from the Mayor welcoming the Royal Navy to the city and saying that entry to all museums, art galleries, public buildings and so on would be free to those in uniform, also travel on the trams, and best of all entry to the famous Liseberg Park.

There were no pubs of course, drink could only be had in places where meals were served and the cost of them ruled that out. I was not bothered because I rarely drink but the sailors were not too happy about this. We went back to the boat for dinner and to collect the little bottles the sailors were in the habit of keeping a good part of their rum issue in then it was off to a tram stop and a trip to Liseberg Park. It was a complete shock to see an advert for a soft porn magazine complete with illustration of the cover on the pole at the tramstop. I actually found myself slightly embarrassed looking at it. It was only the kind of picture seen on magazines in any newsagent nowadays but

back then it was very surprising.

The Park itself certainly lived up to its reputation, more like a large botanic garden it had a lot of (very expensive) restaurants but also a great deal of free entertainment ranging from acrobats and jugglers to open air theatres, folk singing and dancing etc and ponds for boating. Best of all there was a large night club which provided sandwiches; if you bought a plate of these that was a licence to drink all night as long as they remained on the table in full view of the management. There was non stop entertainment by various groups, comedians and so on and it was set to be a pleasant evening but our little group was joined by sailors from the other subs and soon we had about fifteen around a big round table. They managed to get three girls to join the company but sadly the combination of navy rum and swedish beer caught up with them rapidly and one guy actually threw up on the carpet before collapsing under the table. The girls departed rapidly and the management appeared with some very large back up. The table was cleared of everything on it by the waiters and we were told our custom was no longer acceptable, shown to the door and advised to get the drunk back to the ship before the police laid eyes on him.

We did have one other little discipline problem in Gothenburg.

It seemed that the widely believed story about Sweden, free love and all that rubbish didn't apply to passing sailors (although there were a fair amount of the gay brigade hanging about the docks.)

Some rather disappointed sailors thought it would be a great idea to shove all their unused condoms down the toilet, set the pressure very high and fire the lot off.

The result was a huge burst of floating white balloons above the dockside which eventually ended up floating along the streets and canals much to the displeasure of the local police and civic authorities. Jolly Jack Tar can be just as good as the Jocks at dreaming up daft things to do.

The next day my friends were on watch so I took myself for a walk around the shops where I managed to get a small gift for my wife Rose without actually breaking the bank and spent some time in a museum full of viking stuff. All this time I had never seen Iain Collinson and the other guys from

the depot who had come over on the frigate and I didn't really bother since they might be doing official things and I was quite happy floating around. When I got back to the boat I was told that they had orders to go straight back to Portsmouth which was going to cause me a little problem of getting back to Lanark. My mates in the fore-end thought it was no problem at all, I could just go with them and once in Portsmouth we would have a grand piss up. I could stay a couple of nights in the naval barracks and the boats Admin Officer or whatever he was called could give me a travel warrant to Glasgow.

I explained that my CO back at the barracks wouldn't take too kindly to me awarding myself another weeks jolly, They reckoned I could just say that I hadn't known the boat was going to Portsmouth until we were at sea and of course you can't just tell a boat to let you off at the next bus stop. I couldn't have considered anything like that anyway. I had only been able to bring a few pounds along on this trip and now I had barely five shillings to my name. So it was arranged that I would make the return trip on the frigate. Early next morning I took my kit over to the frigate after having said goodbye to the friends I'd made and thanking the Captain for having me on board during the trip.

I watched from the rail of the frigate with some sadness as HM Submarine Truncheon slipped quietly down the river and out to sea

I'd never see her or her crew again but she and they had left me with memories I'd never forget

Jimmy Quinn.

## Random Recollections

Responding to the editor's plea for sundry recollections of service to be considered for inclusion in the final edition of THE COVENANTER I decided (aged three score years and twenty) to search into my distant past. Readers will forgive me for any errors and omissions in the piece as I have forgotten many names, ranks and exact locations. Nevertheless, fond memories are there.

Conscripted into National Service in 1947 I reported to Dundonald Camp, Troon to begin two years service before returning to civilian life reading chemistry at Glasgow University. A rotund major in Royal Signals

(the resident personnel selection officer) checking my rugby football credentials shuffled me into Signals Corps training in Catterick Camp earmarked me for a trial with the formidable corps rugby team.

The winter of 1947 is on record as one of the worst ever and Catterick was Siberia come to Yorkshire! My rugby trial was a disaster as I was marked and destroyed by the famous Welsh International Bleddyn Williams. Corps training completed I was a qualified operator keyboard and cipher (OKC) and overseas postings were eagerly awaited. Only twenty out of twenty five recruits got postings overseas and with a surname towards the end of the alphabet I was an "also ran" destined to remain in Catterick camp as a "surplus to requirements" to be temporarily employed as a kitchen hand/dining room orderly! After a week of lighting fires before dawn for the cooks and washing out greasy "dixies" I exploded. At a CO's interview, I complained that since I had been press ganged into the Royal Signals by the rotund PSO major for disastrous sporting rather than military reasons, I now wished to apply for a national service commission in the infantry and no longer wished to be employed as a "skivvy" in the kitchens in Catterick

Some six months later I emerged from OCS Eaton Hall aged eighteen years to be posted to 2nd Bn The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in Gibraltar. We sailed from Southampton on a very old troopship, Empire Test (?), with the troops in hammocks. Other young national service subalterns on board were Sandy Struthers, Colin Porteous and two regulars Hugh Worthington Wilmer and John Baynes who were direct from RMA Sandhurst (Intake No1).

Reveille early on Sunday morning 27th July 1948 saw us at anchor off Gibraltar with its massive rock looming grey in the morning mist. A very efficient movement's organisation had us ashore by barge and at the mess at Buena Vista Barracks by about midday.

The five new arrivals having been allocated rooms ventured down the steep steps into the mess where all was very quiet. Everything seemed extremely well prepared in the anteroom where a large table was laid out with many gin and tonics already poured, two very smart orderlies in tartan and white mess jackets stood by ready to dispense drinks. Surely, this was not a reception party for the new arrivals?

The Mess Sgt put us right, explaining that

the officers and their guests were at Sunday Church Service and the arrangements were normal on a Sunday for "their thirst after righteousness"! Minutes later, there came a rush of officers and guests into the anteroom and the party started.

The new arrivals were still in uniform and therefore easy to recognise; we were introduced all round, made most welcome and plied with plentiful gins by such stalwarts as JMH (John) Scott and PK (Peter) Bryson. They had us party on until well after lunch (5pm) when it was suggested we change into civilian clothes as we would shortly continue the party across the border in Spain!

I duly appeared for the journey across the border dressed in a "hairy" suit (ex RW Forsyth Ltd of Glasgow) to which PK Bryson (by this time in very jovial mood) objected. He said that a Cameronian officer could not wear such a thing and, aided by Lionel Smith proceeded to strip me of the garment, pour lighter fuel over same and set it alight! I went to Spain dressed in slacks and a shirt and hasten to add that Smith, Bryson and Scott took me to town the following day and bought me a new lightweight suit! I will not bore you with the happenings in Spain ...we just made it to Four Corners Guard (at the frontier) before the gates were shut at midnight.

Commanding Officer's orders next morning saw us posted to rifle companies, in my case to A Coy at Little Bay (OC J Bunton, 2IC John Scott, CSM Kirk, C/Sgt Anderson, Sgts Burns, Mulvenna, Cpl Minns). The 2nd Bn had returned from the war in Burma and my platoon had many men with very brown knees and rows of campaign medals. How was a pink faced eighteen year old going to address them and say that if they had any problems "to let me be their father?"

I soon discovered that the majority of them could not wait a day longer to be shipped home for discharge after war service (I think it was called "Going on Python"). Reorganisation took place in August 1948 with many men shipping home for demob and new recruits as replacements. We were renamed 1st Bn (COs changing, Lt Col Buchanan Dunlop for Lt Col Brinkman). Training and sports continued Aug/Nov 1948 with the Bn fielding excellent teams at football, hockey, athletics and boxing. Hockey was particularly strong with the military band providing many of the players under Leslie Dow who organised the team, other names of players such

as Donald Cameron, Sgts Galloway and Sneddon come to mind. The athletics team also did well with the sprint team to the fore (Worthington-Wilmer, Wilberforce, On 1 Dec 1948, the Bn embarked on HMT Empire Test (?) for Trieste on posting to British Element Trieste Force (BETFOR). The voyage was merely along the Med, turn left up the side of Italy to our destination but the ancient troopship took many days to get there. Activities on board included boxing (OIC was CSM Godfrey himself an ex ABA champion). All young officers were ordered to box and most of us were entered in the novice class where I was pitted against my batman (Rfn Neave) who knocked me out with three blows in the first round! CSM Godfrey gave "wee Neavey" a one to one interview later when it was discovered that he had been a pro sparring partner in a Glasgow gym! The Bn boxing team won the inter unit trophy in Trieste under the direction of CSM Godfrey with Leslie Dow, Donald Cameron and Jake Sneddon leading the way. BETFOR consisted of 5000 British and 5000 American Troops, a post war arrangement to cope with the Balkans problems. We were to share a barracks with 1st Bn The Kings Own Regiment where all ranks made many good friends, Scots/English cooperation flourished! The visit of the Bn WOs/Sgts to the mess for Christmas drinks comes to mind, I was detailed to look after Sgt Burns my platoon Sgt and the Pipe Major (John Matheson). When I asked the Pipe Major what he would like to drink, he replied, "I'll have a whisky sir" I then asked him if he would prefer water or soda ...to which he swiftly replied "I'll have a whisky sir"!

Instruction in highland dancing for officers was compulsory, I had already learned the steps at home and I much enjoyed watching in particular Messrs Smith, Bryson and Scott on a cold Trieste morning kicking themselves to death trying to master the various steps. The Pipes and Drums had some splendid characters in their ranks, I recall having a few drams with the pipe corporal whose name escapes me (Cpl Porteous?) although I know he wore lots of campaign medals. He told me a tale about "When we were in the war in Germany and doing a bit of "collecting" odds and ends from empty estates. I had a few of the band struggling to load a grand piano into a three tonner, when I noticed a small figure about the size of a jockey and wearing a regimental bonnet disappearing round the corner with a roll of maps under

his arm....maps or masterpieces...who knows? I thought to myself what are we doing with a grand piano!"

All good things must end and alas 18 Oct 1949 saw my return to UK for release from National Service and seeing before me a term of chemistry at University, I reckoned I would soon be making/selling soap for Lever Bros! I therefore asked the Regiment if they would have me back. I was lucky to be accepted and via RCB I rejoined in Trieste in time to embark on HMT Lancashire "The slow boat to China", taking many weeks to make the passage to Hong Kong. We called at Singapore en route where a dockside parade took place to mark the amalgamation of the Regiment with 7th Gurkha Rifles. Lt Col Bill Henning was now in command and two guards of honour faced each other for the occasion when trophies were exchanged (see photo). Then on to Hong Kong where we were to join the garrison and be brigaded with Kings Own Scottish Borderers and Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders...indeed a very North British mixture! Some very serious inter unit rivalry ensued and it took the confining to camps of all three Bns followed by a "fixed" tri-unit highland games to sort out the differences. Each Bn won an event and honour was satisfied! KOSB and A&SH were both destined to go to war in Korea while we were to join 26Gurkha Inf Bde on anti terrorist operations in Malaya.

Staging through Singapore was necessary in order to acclimatize for a few weeks and be lectured on the importance of personal hygiene in the tropics; we were also warned of the evils of the flesh spots and red light areas of Singapore! The Union Jack other ranks club was a popular watering hole however the private clubs throughout the colony were a closed shop. Messrs Rodger and Baynes settled themselves at a table in the smart members only Singapore Swimming Club and ordered drinks. A very haughty and excitable manager was unnecessarily rude when ordering them to leave. The manager was to regret his actions which prompted Messrs R&B to lift him off his feet and deposit him in the pool! The grapevine subsequently signalled to us that it would not be politic for others to apply for membership of the SSC!

After a few months training, the Bn moved to Malaya to have two very successful years anti terrorist operations, which have been well documented in the Regimental history. Commanding a platoon on jungle operations was a great experience...one

particular incident comes to mind where the CO had some top grade information concerning an informer who had a brother within a group of terrorists. This informer was (for a reward) willing to give details of a forthcoming meeting in order that we could lay on an ambush and kill amongst others his own brother! Detailed plans were made and after many days and nights spent in ambush on radio silence, the enemy appeared. Not where the informer had indicated, but over three hundred yards distant and moving away, rather than towards the ambush position. To move would have given the game away and, with a five-foot fence in front of us, a decision was made to take aim with the Bren gun, fire and leap over the fence after the fast disappearing enemy. A burst of three aimed rounds was fired and we all ran to where the meeting had taken place between the informer and the terrorists (which group included his brother). Alas we had shot the informer, who gave us a very questioning look as he expired...The jock who had fired the Bren remarked "It serves the bugger right for shopping his brother "Radio silence was broken and Bill Henning was on the blower asking "Well lad what have you got?" When I said we had shot his informer he informed me that I was earmarked for a dog handlers course! The best laid schemes..etc...

It was not to be a dog handlers but an Anti-Tank course. The Bn was due to return to UK at the end of a very successful tour of active service and not having anti tank guns in Malaya I was off to Netheravon for a course on the 17pdr gun.

Twenty students made up the course, all from UK/Nato units (except the Cameronian from Malaya) and all previously trained and coached for the Passing In Exam on the gun for which a 75 percent pass was obligatory to remain on the course. I had never seen or read about the gun before and I came last with a score of one point out of fifty! Doomed for RTU as a failure I was ordered for interview by the Commandant...One Lt Col John Frost DSO MC who had commanded the Parachute Battalion at Arnhem Bridge... and he was a Cameronian! After a talk about keeping the good name of the Regiment etc he said he would make an exception to the RTU rule and allow me to stay .....Moreover, I had better do well!

Lt Col Henry Alexander took over from Bill Henning and the Bn was now stationed at Barnard Castle We had not seen HTA since our few months stay in Hong Kong in 1949

when he was GSO 1 Trg and riding racehorses at Happy Valley. I was given a platoon of regular soldiers to train from scratch as anti tank crews, I needed a miniature range for sub calibre firing and to this end HTA spoke to higher HQ and had a brand new half Nissen hut range with miniature moving targets etc., built near the barracks. The 17pdr weighs in at two and a half tonnes and it was necessary to ease the gun down a steep incline into the firing position by holding on to drag ropes attached to the wheels. With six Jocks, hanging on to the ropes the very heavy long trail legs began to sway dangerously out of control. The men let go the ropes and two and a half tonnes of gun raced down the hill smashing the new range and Nissen hut to rubble! On returning to the mess for lunch, I found HTA warming his backside at the fire after a morning horse ride. "Well lad how did you like the new range I had made for you?" he asked. My reply got me another posting! Jockey HTA and I crossed paths again during my career but not in Cameronian days. Happy days- much fun and laughter but best of all, great friends and comrades. "A HAS BEEN"- who was proud to have been, in his time, A CAMERONIAN.

## Memories And Books

Challenged by the Editor to write some copy for the final edition of the Covenanter, I was almost stumped because most of my own experiences are so admirably covered in John Baynes's excellent volume of the regimental history. But then it is often books which stir the memory, and so here is a rag-bag of reminiscences, and books, which I hope may stir similar memories in others.

My father, Colonel Robert Buchanan-Dunlop, was a Cameronian, so some of my earliest memories are bound up with the regiment. His war service was in Persia, Sicily and Italy. By one of those wartime quirks he commanded a Seaforth but not a Cameronian battalion, whilst his younger brother, a Royal Scots Fusilier, commanded the 6th Battalion during the operations in Walcheren. Later, in 1946, my father briefly commanded the 6th Battalion himself before it was disbanded. At the end of that year he took over command of the Depot. The second-in-command was Major John Buntin, a veteran of the Burma Campaign with the 1st Battalion. Much later I came to know Piper Donald Porteous who had been

a mule leader in Burma and was for many years, until disbandment, a pillar of the Pipes and Drums. The Cameronians feature briefly in John Master's autobiographical *Bugles and a Tiger*, but the best book by far about the Burma campaign, written at section level, is *Quartered Safe Out Here* by the creator of *Flashman*, George Macdonald Fraser.

My main memories then of Winston Barracks are of the ferocious winters of 1946 and 1947 with seemingly endless fatigue parties shovelling snow, and of my father's batman, Rifleman Wrigley. A small wiry man, Wrigley had been a renowned regimental boxer in his day, although looking at the records he was not part of the famous 1st Battalion boxing team which had won the All India Cup in 1938. But seeing photographs of him in fighting stance with his torso covered in tattoos, he was a hero to a small boy. 1938 had been a halcyon sporting year for the 1st Battalion in India, winning the Infantry Cup for polo as well. One member of that polo team whom I recall visiting the Depot was Major Sir Edward Bradford. He was later to command the Depot himself, but was then tragically killed riding in a point-to-point race. The other members of the team whom I was to meet later in life were Lieutenant General Sir George Collingwood, the last Colonel of the Regiment, Major General Henry Alexander who was to fall foul of Nkrumah in Ghana, and Lieutenant Colonel Duncan Carter-Campbell who commanded the Battalion in Bahrein and Oman.

In 1948 my father took over command of the 1st Battalion in Gibraltar. The battalion then moved to Trieste as part of 24 Infantry Brigade. Trieste was something of an enigma. It had once been the major port for the Austro-Hungarian Empire, but was then ceded to Italy after the First World War. At the end of the Second World War, Tito, whose partisans had wrested control of Yugoslavia, laid claim to it and it was declared a Free Territory with sectors controlled by the Americans, the British and the Yugoslavs. Jan Morris, the travel writer, who served there as a young cavalry officer at that time, has written a marvellously elegaic book about it, *Trieste and the Meaning of Nowhere*. The Battalion was quartered in Rossetti Barracks, which I remember as a series of large gaunt buildings with a vast parade ground, shared with 1st Battalion The King's Own with whom the Battalion got on remarkably

well. Somewhere there is a photograph of the battalion officers in which a youthful Lieutenant Bill Rodger and Lieutenant Ian Tedford feature – both of whom attended the final officers' dinner in Edinburgh in May this year. It must have been an excellent station with all the attractions of an Italian coastal city and the added bonus of being able to train in Austria. Rather surprisingly I was allowed to visit for my school holidays. This entailed a three-day journey there and back again. I was delivered into the maw of the Movements system at Liverpool Street Station with a label tied to my lapel like Paddington Bear. An overnight crossing from Harwich to Hook of Holland, a familiar route for anyone serving in Germany until the advent of air trooping, was followed by a two-day rail journey to Villach, a major railhead in what was still occupied Austria. Despite familiarity with bomb damage in London, I recall being shocked seeing Cologne flattened except for its cathedral. Finally, there was a coach journey down to Trieste, which was a feast of colour and sunshine after grey austerity Britain. But Trieste had its problems too. Typhoid was rife, and my mother was warned never to buy a rabbit in the market without seeing its skin, otherwise it would be a cat! The Battalion was to spend only a year there before sailing to Hong Kong.

Some years later I was working for the Ben Line shipping company, and about to be posted to the Far East, when a small buff form came through the post instructing me to report to Winston Barracks or be listed as a deserter - a small surprise as National Service was waning fast. Winston Barracks as a National Service recruit was far cry from being the commanding officer's son. By then it was commanded by Major David Riddell-Webster, with Captain Dudley Lucas as the Adjutant and Captain Donald Cameron in charge of training assisted by CSM Mackintosh, the former Bugle Major. A week after my arrival I was sitting on the floor of the barrack room along with the other 19 members of Lynedoch Squad gingerly bulling my best boots; the former because it had been impressed on us that only idiots slept on their beds the night before a kit inspection, and the latter because we had just been inoculated in both arms for every eventuality the Army could think of. It was a low point in life, when I walked God in the shape of Sgt Collinson, our squad instructor. "The Army is looking for volunteers who

“speak French,” he said. “Anyone here speak French?” Naively imagining that escape was at hand, I painfully raised an arm. “Right, you’re for cookhouse fatigues this weekend,” came the swift response. I had walked blindly into a carefully baited trap!

After basic training I rose to the dizzy heights of Lance Corporal, Acting, Unpaid. I could have done with the pay. A National Service recruit’s pay was 27/6d a week, which after the inevitable stoppages meant £1 in the hand on payday. Later I took the last draft from the Depot to the Battalion in Kenya. We travelled in one of the ill-starred Comets via Benghazi. The Battalion, once again part of 24 Brigade, had by then finished its odyssey around the Middle East and was quartered in Muthaiga Camp on the outskirts of Nairobi. I was posted to B Company under Major Leslie Dow, with WO2 Jackman who had won an excellent DCM in Malaya as the company sergeant major. The Battalion was not enjoying the happiest of times in Nairobi from a disciplinary point of view, but, caught almost in a time warp between the end of the Mau Mau emergency and independence a few years ahead, Kenya was undoubtedly a marvellous place to be. It ended all too quickly and the Battalion was on its way home by troopship, curiously run by the RAF. We called in briefly at Malta on a cold, grey February day. There had been a debate as to whether the Battalion should be allowed ashore, which ended with the gnomonic decision that it could do so provided that it was confined to a conducted tour of the island. Naturally the Battalion volunteered to a man. Outside Valetta there is not much to Malta in February other than churches, lots of them. After half a dozen churches my bus was near mutiny, and so we headed for Valetta, as did every other bus. Somewhere in the labyrinth of the Grand Knights’ Palace carefully laid plans came unstuck, as one by one riflemen cunningly detached themselves to head for the notorious Gut. Amazingly we sailed that evening only two men short.

We spent a few weeks in a hutted camp outside Edinburgh before moving to Germany. One day I and a few other officers had to collect some things from a gnarled stores sergeant who came from south of the border. “My word, you young gentlemen is lucky,” he said. “Now in France the girls gives you \*\*\*\*s for money, but in Germany they gives you \*\*\*\*s because they loves it.

Oh my word, yes!” Believing he spoke from deep experience we went away heartened, only to discover later that whatever benefits Minden had to offer as a station, and they were few, free love was certainly not amongst them. I wish at this point I could describe effectively the innate humour of the Cameronian, but it was mainly instant repartee which could lighten even the darkest of moments. In his *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer*, Siegfried Sassoon recalls an episode in 1917 when he is put in charge of a 100 bombers to act as reserve for the Cameronians, having just moved up into the line after a lengthy night march in the rain and mud during which their guides from another regiment had comprehensively lost their way: ‘Ruminating on the comfortless responsibility imposed upon me by this enterprise, I waited until nightfall. Then a superbly cheerful little guide hustled me along a maze of waterlogged ditches until I found myself in a small dug-out with some friendly Scotch officers.’ I can easily imagine that guide.

After my National Service and a brief spell back in shipping I rejoined the Battalion as a regular officer and became Assistant Adjutant to Major Jim Burrell. If 1938 had been a halcyon sporting year for the regiment, so was the season of 1961/62. The Battalion won the BAOR football cup in a fiercely fought competition. In the current controversy over foreign players in the Premier League, it is interesting to recall that in the days of National Service each Army team was limited to two professionals. Hockey was also played to a very high standard, and although we were not known as a rugger regiment the Battalion team reached the finals of the BAOR seven-a-side competition, much to the fury of more fancied teams. Amongst others we were fortunate in having Second Lieutenant Douglas Hathorn, an Army player, at fly-half, with Pipe Major Tom Anderson as a very combative scrum-half and Lieutenant David Nisbet at hooker.

A recent newspaper article about new ration packs for the Army reminded me that the Battalion had carried out a cold weather trial on a proposed new ration pack in 1962. The rations were freeze dried and needed water to cook them, which was a problem as the weather was bitterly cold and we still had felt covered waterbottles which promptly froze. As a member of battalion headquarters I

fortunately escaped many of the indignities such as being weighed daily in the buff in the frozen open wastes of Westphalia, or worse still being a member of the euphemistically named 'water balance platoon'. We were to experience a much more serious problem later in the spring when, after a loose remark by Jack Profumo, the Defence Minister, the press were allowed to descend on the Battalion, with devastating effect. One cannot imagine that today it would be quite so badly handled. We were undoubtedly fall guys for the press's pursuit of Profumo over his affair with Christine Keeler, and perhaps the only good things to come out of it all was that marvellously iconic photograph of Miss Keeler in her chair and the myriad jokes which appeared at the time (the cleanest of which I can remember is the invention of a new verb to profume: meaning to lie or lie with). Not that long ago I saw Profumo at a memorial service in Westminster Abbey. He was pale husk of a man in a wheelchair, and as he passed me I wondered if he realised the damage he had done by his flippant remark in the Commons that 'the Press had missed a trick'.

Before the Battalion ended its tour in Minden I left to become ADC to Major General John Frost, a remarkable man and a staunch Cameronian despite having spent most of his service with the Parachute Regiment. I heard his various war exploits at first hand many times. He is best remembered for having held the bridge at Arnhem for 48 hours against overwhelming odds whilst commanding 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, a feat well chronicled in Cornelius Ryan's book *A Bridge Too Far*, which became a film in 1977 with Anthony Hopkins playing Frost. But he also commanded, as a major, the first successful parachute operation of the war when his force captured vital radar equipment in the Bruneval Raid. As you might imagine, life with General Johnny was never dull!

Back with the Battalion again I found myself appointed adjutant and joining a formidable team. Lieutenant Colonel David Riddell-Webster demanded the highest of standards, which was the Battalion's bedrock not only for the goldfish bowl of public duties in Edinburgh, but also for the operational tour which lay ahead. He was ably assisted by RSM Jake Sneddon who will always be for me every inch the archetypal regimental sergeant major, with a marvellous

sense of humour. In the orderly room WO2 Ansdell was a wise and generous mentor to a young and inexperienced adjutant. At the end of 1965 the Battalion was tasked with assisting with public duties in London. Two guards, commanded by Captains Colin Lindsay and George Stephen, were sent down and acquitted themselves with considerable panache. In later years I was to take part in London duties on many occasions, but the memory of seeing a Cameronian guard advancing at 140 paces to the minute towards the Old Guard drawn up in the forecourt of Buckingham Palace is an abiding one. Then it was Aden. The Battalion was quartered in Radfan Camp to the north of the town. Somewhere to the east was a fish-drying factory which made its presence unpleasantly noticeable when the wind was blowing in the wrong direction. To the north was desert and a wire fence known as the Scrubber Line, named after Major 'Scrubber' Stewart Richardson of the Coldstream Guards whom I remembered as a famously ferocious senior instructor of the platoon commanders' division at Warminster. The tents had walls of sandbags around them against mortar attack. The sandbags quickly rotted in the sun and needed constant replacement, a tedious and unpleasant chore. The Battalion's main task was maintaining security in Maalla, where Services' families were quartered, and in Steamer Point, the main commercial and shopping district. One of the company operational bases was nicknamed the 'Yellow Submarine' after the Beatles' song, and another recording not surprisingly popular at the time was Tom Jones's 'Green, green grass of home'. It was unglamorous, hot, unremitting work. Operational intelligence was virtually non-existent and members of the two main terrorist organisations simply melted into the general population. Apart from sporadic grenade attacks there was little terrorist activity until towards the end of the Battalion's tour, some nine months before the final British withdrawal, and the highlight of the tour was undoubtedly a six-week rotation up-country based at Habilayn. In Julian Paget's history of the campaign, *Last Post: Aden 1964-67*, the Battalion gets only two cursory mentions; it is not possible to quarrel with that, but it does disguise the high professionalism displayed by all ranks.

Back at Redford Barracks I handed over to Captain David Christie as adjutant. Neither of us realised that he would be the last to hold



that appointment. I was then ADC to Lord Reith, the first Director General of the BBC, during his time as Lord High Commissioner of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. John Reith had joined the 5th Battalion Scottish Rifles, known popularly as 5th SR, as a territorial before the First World War, and on the outbreak of war went to the front with the battalion as Transport Officer. By all accounts he was a prickly young officer with his own set of values and he chose to pick a fight with the adjutant, Captain Croft. The feud which was mutual is documented in Reith's autobiography *Wearing Spurs*, and came to a head over a horse, aptly named *Sailaway*. The result was that Reith was sacked as Transport Officer, and in high dudgeon he requested and was granted a transfer to the Royal Engineers with whom he was later badly wounded. Croft went on to win no less than four DSOs. Despite all this Reith maintained a great fondness for the regiment. However, his reputation as a stickler for protocol preceded him to Edinburgh and we were not to be disappointed. The Purse Bearer and I met him at Waverley Station with a large black, shiny limousine, complete with uniformed chauffeur, which had been hired for the occasion. Just about to enter it, Reith swung round and demanded, "Why isn't the driver wearing a cockade in his cap?" to which there was no adequate answer. The drive to Holyrood was a frosty one. I nevertheless got on remarkably well with him and he was kind enough to ask for me again the following year, but by that time I was in Berlin and the MOD dug its toes in much to Reith's fury. Two years later he was dead and Pipe Major Tom Anderson played *The Flowers of the Forest* at his memorial service in Westminster Abbey.

I had arrived in Berlin as a Cameronian. I left as a Scots Guardsman. A year later I was with 1st Battalion Scots Guards in Sharjah. That part of the Gulf could have changed little since the Cameronians were there a dozen years before. My company included the Reconnaissance Platoon commanded by Jeremy Cox who had transferred to the Scots Guards with me. Next door was a squadron of the Royal Scots Greys, its armoured cars painted in dusty pink, the desert camouflage colour then in vogue, which was commanded by my old friend Major George Stephen. I recall one memorable and wild evening with Jeremy Cox at the Trucial Oman Scouts fort at Buraimi. Near by Colonel Sir Hugh

Boustead was in charge of the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi's stud. Boustead's own life and career beat fiction, but his autobiography *The Wind of Morning* paints an evocative picture of the Arab world, now fast changing, in the immediate post-war years. At the time the war in Dhofar was still running and we sent down occasional patrols to assist the Sultan's Armed Forces. Flying down over the Jebel Akhdar to visit a patrol I thought of the Battalion's part in the operations further south to put down the Imam's Revolt in 1957. I also remembered Sultan Qaboos Bin Said, who had just succeeded his father in a coup d'état, as a young officer fresh from Sandhurst with the Battalion in Minden.

Fast forward another dozen years and I was at Edinburgh Castle. One of my responsibilities was to oversee the military support for the Edinburgh Military Tattoo. In an office a floor above me was the Tattoo Producer Colonel Dow, who had been my first company commander and my last commanding officer as a Cameronian. Down the hill, as Business Manager of the Tattoo, was your Editor, Major Brian Leishman, whom I had first met as the Battalion's mortar platoon commander. There is a saying that 'History is the science of what never happens twice'. Looking back, it can sometimes seem a close run thing.

Robin Buchanan-Dunlop

## My Last Year in the Band,

In 1953, we joined the battalion in Barnard Castle, Co. Durham. Like Lanark in size and appearance, it was an attractive small market town on the banks of the River Tees, containing the Bowes Museum. Like Winston Barracks, Streatlam Camp was a short distance from the town and this is where the comparison ends with Lanark. Streatlam Camp lived up to its name by providing wartime huts heated by coke stoves. The battalion had to make the transition from the trauma of jungle warfare to being prepared for their next posting to Germany.

Our new CO was H.T. Alexander, a small man with pronounced dark eyebrows, a large array of medal ribbons, confirming he had served in almost every campaign in the war. My initial impression of him was that he looked like a steeplechase jockey which was confirmed when I learnt that he was a very good polo player and had won the

Foxhunter Chase by riding one round of the Aintree Grand National Course. The most frequent remark I heard said about him was: "Henry knows his kit", predicting correctly that he would become a general. I recall in about 1960 looking up from my book on the Underground and seeing H.T.'s face looking at me beneath a general's cap from the front page of a newspaper with the word Congo in the headlines. My instant reaction was, 'What has he done?'

To the band H.T. was both a Mr Nice and a Mr Nasty. After mess nights he spoke to us in a friendly way, praised our sporting achievements and on one occasion led a duty company into our barrack room to show them how ideal kit inspection should be laid. In April 1954, we played at a passing out parade at Churchill Barracks, Ayr when H.T. was the inspecting officer. Later in June, when we were under canvas rehearsing for the Leeds Tattoo at Roundhay Park, we were told by the B/Sgt that H.T. had decided that our turnout at Ayr was not good enough. As our turnout was always of the highest standard, we were both surprised and hurt by this statement.

Both the B/Sgt and the BM inspected us many times and on the Friday of that week we finished on a high note, for we were invited to appear live with the pipe band by BBC Children's TV to play our polished performance of 'Scotland the Brave' in which we alternately slow marched and quick marched through one another's ranks.

Meeting other Massed bands gave us the opportunity to meet again some of the bandsmen we had trained with at Kneller Hall. We were glad that the Leeds Tattoo was unsuitable for the usual playing of the 1812 Overture with fireworks. It ended with a spirited performance of the Hallelujah Chorus in recognition that the Messiah was sung regularly in that part of England.

After the Leeds Tattoo we continued our long summer tour of eleven weeks, taking us to Glasgow, Scarborough, Bognor Regis, Tunbridge Wells, Bournemouth, London and Edinburgh. We rehearsed enough music to cover fourteen programmes to ensure that each performance was different. Having a kilted Highland Dancing Group within the band, a choir and Piper Donald Porteous to play solo pieces, allowed us to play less than other bands. Although we played sometimes

for special events, our total playing time for two daily concerts was five hours. Like the sailor who has a girl in every port, we had girls at every bandstand, wishing to discover if we matched our romantic music. We were carrying on the tradition, before recordings and radio, of bands taking the oldest and newest music to the public. Almost every programme someone asked us to play the 1954 hit tune, 'The Happy Wanderer.' Everybody was in a holiday mood so we met friendliness everywhere including meeting ex-Cameronians. Added to our feeling of well-being was the fact we were being paid for civilian engagements and would receive a supplement to our army pay at the end of the season.

In Scarborough, we performed our afternoon concerts on a floating bandstand in Peasholm Park which required us being rowed across the lake. Some afternoons there were crowds of football ground size to see the naval battle between the British and Gennan fleets performed by realistically looking miniature warships with smoking funnels. While the noise of the battle was going on, rather like a naval 1812 Overture, we played the appropriate nautical music, ending with 'Rule Britannia' to note the British victory.

The lake was shallow so there was no danger to our plan to topple B/Sgt Stormy Gale into it. I noticed that the final overloaded boat was approaching the bandstand with Stormy Gale on board; I could see that in the rush to get on the bandstand it would be easy to push Stormy into the water. Stormy, no fool, jumped off first and destabilised the boat, resulting in the rest of them falling in the water. Dave Davis describes the scene as follows: 'George Burrows, in Highland dress, fell backwards into the water, becoming completely submerged only to find on resurfacing that the others were in the water also. Lofty Hammond stood waist deep, draining the water out of the boat to stop it from sinking. As Mr Pike, the BM, was rowed across in splendid isolation, the large crowd laughed and applauded. To complete the amusement he told us to play the barcarole from the Tales of Hoffman.'

When we reached the Embankment Gardens in London we had the feared 'Dance of the Tumblers' on the programme. We clarinets thought we may not get through it and, in particular, were afraid of the beginning.

Cliff Pike, the BM, wishing to be humorous, pointed his baton at the railway lines behind the bandstand and said: "I am waiting for a train or trains to pass," I recall saying to him: "Have you got a timetable,"

Our final concert took place in Princes' St gardens in Edinburgh. We could hardly believe

the size of the crowd, for all the seats in the enclosure were full and people were standing in large numbers around the perimeter. Although the crowd appreciated our playing, we knew that they were not there to hear us. As soon as we played off, we noticed that Jimmy Shand and his Scottish Country Music Band were about to replace us on the stage.

Back in Lanark we had just a week to prepare for our Kneller Hall Inspiration when our abilities as a parade band, a concert band, a dance band, a choir, or anything else we would like to present, would be examined and graded. Svedsen's Carnival in Pais was the piece we were told to rehearse in advance. The hardest task fell to the B/Sgt who, without

rehearsal, was asked to conduct a piece neither he nor we had played before. Having

completed successfully the continuous playing of a long summer tour, we had the confidence to play well enough to be awarded an outstanding grade. For me it was like the Lost Chord because I was soon on my way to the RAPC to exchange my musical notes for the figures on the acquittance rolls..

Bill Coughlan

## On Behalf Of 'The Attached'

In an earlier edition of the Covenanter shortly after the 1939/45 War, an article written by an 'Attached' Officer, appeared under the title 'Thank You For Having Me'. In the final edition of the Regimental Journal, it would be remiss, some sixty years onward, and even after the Regiment has disappeared from the Army List, if a further tribute to the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) did not appear under the name of another of that number.

Every Regiment in the British Army holds itself proud of its peculiar traditions and background, and in its time through force of circumstances has numbered in its ranks many members of other Regiments. Equally, it is true to say that there have been successes and failures.

In the case of Scottish Regiments - even up to the present, and more so in wartime it has proved impossible to maintain the proper establishment by reliance on recruitment from Scotland alone. Until 1968 excluding the Scots Guards, there were no less than five Highland and five Lowland Regiments, and until 1948, each having two Regular Battalions. Casualties could not be replaced from Scotland alone the additional demands upon Scotland of The Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force, apart from other branches of the Army, made this impossible.

Many members of expatriate Scottish families opted to serve with a specific Scottish Regiment either as Regular Soldiers or in Units of the Territorial Army, such as The London Scottish or Tyneside and Liverpool Scottish. Others joined on the recommendation of friends. It was by these routes that many soldiers found their way to the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). However in wartime, when Regiments needed to be made up to strength, postings often were made quite arbitrarily, purely on the basis of the exigencies of the circumstances. It was in this latter way that towards the conclusion of the Second World War, I found myself an 'Attached' Cameronian. Despite, the undoubted misgivings which must have accompanied the arrival of so many, and often by no means fully trained reinforcements, and the serious concern that our many errors caused, I am proud to have been one of that number.

For Regular Soldiers of pre war standing and indeed for Territorial's who had considerable wartime service, and thus were steeped in Regimental tradition, the influx of involuntary Cameronians, at first, must have been traumatic. This must have been the case, particularly in the later stages of the 1939/45 conflict, as the supply of fully trained reinforcements began to run dry. After the end of the on German Blitzes on Britain, many Royal Artillerymen who had manned the guns of the Country's aerial defences became surplus to requirement, and formed an ideal pool of reserve for conversion to infantry. Many were not the most willing of converts. A short conversion course was all that was possible given the urgency to fill vacancies, which were occurring with alarming speed among regiments of the line.

My own arrival as a Cameronian had

followed a somewhat different route. At the end of 1942, the shortage of miners had become as equally acute as that of infantrymen. Ernest Bevin, then Minister of Labour in the National Coalition Government, introduced legislation which provided that every tenth man liable to be conscripted into H.M. Forces, instead, would be sent to work in the mining industry. Selection was at random, and once one's 'name came up' there was no appeal. However, if one was a volunteer, the threat of becoming a Bevin Boy (as became the title of those who were named) was lifted, as one had the choice of Service. Usually, if one opted for the infantry, subject to physical fitness, acceptance was almost automatic. The prospect of becoming a Bevin Boy and spending the remainder of the war as a miner held no appeal. To become an Infantryman had always been my wish--I was at that time CSM of the local Cadet Force. Along with several others similarly placed, I volunteered for service. Having passed the not too stringent medical examination, I started life as a Private in a newly formed 1st Battalion Young Soldier Training Corps, Markeaton Park, Derby-a unit I was given to understand created specifically to identify and train potential leaders. There, one received six months initial training as a member of The General Service Corps, before being posted to a Regiment. In the course of that training, I was promoted to the heights of Acting Unpaid Lance Corporal and selected for posting to Officer Cadet training, to commence at its conclusion.

Other ranks then progressed to a reserve division for three months 'advanced' field training, after which, posting normally followed to a 'line' battalion. As I was to discover later to my cost, and even more so to the detriment of the Cameronians, the term 'advanced' was little more than a euphemism. This also was the case with newly commissioned officers. After six weeks at Pre-OCTU (Officer Cadet Training Unit) and four months at OCTU proper, they were posted to their Regimental Depots for six weeks. They then were posted to a reserve division to command a Platoon of trainee soldiers under the supervision of an experienced Officer. The soldiers likewise, were under command of experienced NCOs. At the conclusion of the Reserve Divisional training, both Officers and other ranks were then posted to a service battalion.

I can speak only of the quality of training and instruction subjectively. To my knowledge, many of my newly commissioned colleagues were in full agreement with me, that while physically hardening in technical terms, we arrived at regiments in the line, with little experience of battle command training other than the execution of several Battle Drill attacks. We were wholly inexperienced beyond Platoon level. To criticise this situation at so late a stage in the war, in all probability is unfair. The shortage of reinforcements had reached crisis point. The need to provide replacements dictated that insufficient time was available for full training, and indeed there was an increasing shortfall of trainers who could be freed from line units. There was no extensive training in the use of radio equipment; I never worked with tanks. The art of tactical withdrawal (possibly deemed to, be otiose at that stage of the War) was never addressed- likewise the possibility that one might at some stage be required to take over command should one's superiors become casualties. None of us had been trained in the control troops in the advance behind a creeping barrage.

Prior to the Army's return to the continent on D Day, Units were up to strength, and had enjoyed the benefit of several months -in some cases years - of training and operating together. The redoubtable and battle experienced 50th (Tyne Tees) and 51st (Highland) Divisions had been brought back from Middle Eastern operations. It is little wonder that many of the veterans who had fought through the 1944 battles of Europe and Burma expressed concern about the quality of soldier now filling their ranks. The real problem in my opinion lay with the lack of time available for adequate training rather than the basic quality of the men themselves.

Quality of training apart, as 2nd Lieutenants of three month's inexperience, some fifty of us of a similar state, we gathered at a holding camp near Sunningdale, prior to being flown in Dakotas to Lille to join 21st Army Group as reinforcements. The Dakotas, normally used for the transport of goods, did not boast any seating, resulting in our sitting in lines with our backs against the sides of the compartment, with our valises and other equipment stacked in the centre of floor. All proceed smoothly until the pilot set the plane to descend to the airfield at Lille, when it struck an air pocket, sending passengers

and equipment sprawling in to a tangled mass. Just as order was being restored, and the landing had taken place, the Dakota skidded off the metal mesh of the runway, caught one wheel of the landing gear in soft ground creating even further confusion, as the plane spun twice in full one hundred sand eighty degree circles.

This in itself would have been a warm enough welcome to 21st Army Group, had it not been for the fact our personal valises were packed on trolleys by Belgian porters, whom with their vehicles were last seen disappearing behind a nearby hanger. It was the last sight we were to have both of them and kit, despite vain attempts to recover it, before we were whisked away to the Holding Camp at Bourg Leopold, in Belgium, bereft of most our personal goods. This is remembered by most as a particularly muddy unattractive town, to be left as soon as possible. The centre dealt with the provision of reinforcements for the whole of 1" Army Group. By this time, unless there was a requirement in a particular regiment for replacements that by chance happened to coincide with the availability on the spot of men from that regiment, soldiers were fed piecemeal to the unit in need, irrespective of Regiment. Officers were interviewed by a Postings Officer, who discussed one's preference, but did not necessarily accede to it.

In my case I had been commissioned to the Border Regiment, with its Depot at Carlisle Castle. The Border Regiment at that time did not have a battalion in Northern Europe – the 1st Battalion was recovering in England from having virtually ceased to exist as one of the glider-borne Battalions of 1" Airborne Division at Arnhem, while the remaining Battalions were serving in Burma (two) and the other in Italy. The Posting Officer asked for my preference. As a Northumbrian, I had no wish to end with other than a North Country Regiment. Living close to the Scottish Border, and already with relatives serving and having served in both World wars with Scottish regiments, I asked if any such Regiment had any vacancies? I was informed that vacancies existed in The Cameronians (sic) - a Regiment of which I knew by name only, boasted a tough reputation. I was posted on the spot, and along with two other 2" Lieutenants ( I think Lawther and Nixon) from my UK Draft. Within two days we were

bound for Helmond, in Holland, then the location of B Echelon of 6th Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) of 156 Brigade of 52nd (Lowland) Division.

The Officers of this Battalion comprised a mix of Regular, Territorial and Wartime Soldiers, several of whom were to rise to prominence in post-war soldiering. It contained a larger remnant of Territorial's than in many battalions of 21st Army Group, due to the fact that 52nd (Lowland) Division had not seen action until November 1944, after being withdrawn from France immediately before the French capitulation in July 1940. It had been kept in reserve Scotland, training in mountain warfare, and latterly in England as part of 1st Airborne Army. Its first operation in the European campaign had been participation in the clearance of the Scheld Estuary to allow access to the port of Antwerp. Paradoxically, this operation was carried out below sea level at South Beveland and Walcheren, where the 6th had executed a legendary outflanking assault across mud flats to ensure the collapse of resistance at the East side of Walcheren Island.

It was shortly after this that the supply of reinforcements to 21" Army Group from UK became so acute that 50th (Tyne-Tees) Division was broken up, its Battalions mostly being disbanded, with the soldiers posted at random to other Regiments in need of battle experienced replacements. The 6th Battalion had received several officers and about one hundred other ranks from The Durham Light Infantry. The mixture and the battle hardened Geordies proved most successful, and I was soon aware even before proceeding beyond B Echelon, that I was fortunate to join both a happy and efficient battalion. It was commanded by Lieut. Col. Eric Southward, a Glasgow businessman and a pre-war Territorial who had taken over command after Walcheren, having previously risen to Second in Command of the 7th Battalion in the same Brigade. His officers included the newly Major David Riddell-Webster (Later Brigadier) and Major Stanley (Sandy) Storm M.C.(later Lieut. Colonel) and Capt Alf Cluley, all regular soldiers. The remaining senior officers were Territorials, while most junior officers had arrived as replacements, and came from no fewer than eight Regiments, only one of which was Scottish. Therefore, I was not

alone in being relatively new to exposure to the traditions and ways of Scottish Regiments and in particular to the foibles of The Cameronians S.R.).

I joined the 6th just before its move to take part in Operations 'Veritable' and 'Blockbuster' between the rivers Maas and Rhine. At this stage in the hostilities, Platoon Commanders were in short supply - in most cases only two of the three rifle platoons per company were commanded by Lieutenants, the third by a Sergeant. My Company Commander was Major Storm - a former R.S.M., and a strict disciplinarian. He must have worried over the comparative lack of training his reinforcement had received; in retrospect, I can but admire the way in which, as far as possible, he 'shepherded' by initially giving me the simpler tasks. As the battalion was on short notice to move into the line, each platoon Commander slept with his Platoon - in my case this was in an almost roofless cottage at Gennep on the Dutch side of the German border. The conditions were miserably damp and cold. I settled down on some sparse straw, and pulled my blanket over my head to shut out the light from the only source, a storm lamp. I then heard at the far end of the room one of the Jocks unaware of my presence, giving a passable imitation of my first parade encounter with the platoon, to the apparent embarrassment of the rest, who were frantically whispering that I was under my blanket. I realised that I had much to learn, kept my head down to save embarrassing the performer, and altered my approach the next day!

Within days, I contrived to lose my revolver. On an overnight stay in a commandeered German farm cottage, I left it in my room on a visit to an outside toilet, only to find it missing on my return. The German occupant, despite threats, denied all knowledge of the matter, and I was forced to report its loss - an inauspicious beginning. This could well have been a court martial offence, and at the very least the subject of a disciplinary enquiry. However events were moving at a fast pace, with fortunately no time for a formal enquiry. Al Cluley as Regimental Quartermaster came to the rescue by supplying a replacement, and luckily for me no more was heard of the incident. He never told me how he dealt with the loss in his indent!

My first experience of the sight of violent death came days after, when once again, immediately behind the front, the Battalion was brought forward in reserve. Stanley Storm our Company Commander allocated another semi-ruined barn as our Platoon billet for the night. We had marched several miles with freezing rain lashing our faces, and were thankful to grab what little space remained on the barn floor, most of which was occupied by another unknown unit, that appeared already to have bedded down for the night, each man covered by his blanket. In the middle of the night we were ordered to take over a section of the line, some one mile away. I moved to assist the Platoon Sergeant (Bernard Kilpatrick) in rousing the Jocks, by pulling off their blankets to ensure they were thoroughly awake. It was only after I removed one blanket, which I assumed covered one of the Platoon, that I discovered we had joined the dead in a temporary mortuary. I had uncovered a legless torso, and subsequently stumbled on others as in my haste, I was forced to ensure that I had missed none of my platoon!

At that point we were still under sporadic shellfire. Some hours later when the front had not advanced more than a few hundred yards, I recall a mobile canteen arrived that was run by the Church of Scotland. Throughout the whole of my relatively short time in action up to YE Day, it is difficult to express one's gratitude to those who operated that canteen - it always seemed to be there, as close to the front as permissible, with a char and a wad when the Jocks most needed it.

My introduction to the ways of Scottish religious differences came in an unusual manner. On 9th March 1945, 6th Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) suffered the loss of one hundred and seventy three of its number in the final battle to clear the Wehrmacht out of the Rhineland strip between the Rivers Maas and Rhine.

The Cameronian Regiment, of course, was founded on staunch Protestantism (a fact of which I had been made aware at B Echelon). All received dire warnings from the Regimental Quartermaster Al Cluley - a South Country Englishman and regular soldier who continued a distinguished career with the Regiment after the war about the procedure for the Loyal Toast. Over the years of its existence religious attitudes had

become more enlightened to the extent that, for sheer practical reasons alone, Roman Catholics had been admitted to its numbers. Recruiting as it did from Glasgow and the Lanarkshire district, it was impossible from time to time to avoid an occasional flare up of the animosity between the religions that has existed in that area for many years. One such occurred a few days before the Rhine crossing.

Due to the need to absorb reinforcements, 6th Battalion did not take part in the assault, but was allocated to cover a section of the Rhine bank opposite Wesel the main city to be targeted, no more than a mile upstream be targeted, no more than a mile upstream. My Company occupied virtually the whole of a hamlet named Werrich that consisted of a farmhouse with cottages normally occupied by farm workers. Company HQ was located in the farmhouse.

The reinforcements posted to the Company comprised a mixed batch of religions, among them being a good number of Roman Catholics, who, when added to the few already serving, totalled about thirty. They had been in the Company only a matter of ten days, so that until the weekly church parade their numbers were unknown to the 'Prots'

As a nineteen-year-old English former schoolboy, whose period of history had not taken in the sectarian troubles of Western Scotland, I had been completely innocent of the religious divisions that existed there. One morning my Platoon Sergeant, likewise, English (part of batch of DL1 men posted earlier) equally ignorant of the situation, dashed into the Company Headquarters exclaiming, "You'd better get yourself down to the lines, Sir, I think there is going to be some trouble!" I grabbed My belt and revolver and ran the roughly one hundred yards to the farm cottages.

There I was confronted with a sight that was totally foreign to me. An impromptu and entirely unofficial parade seemed to be taking place. Behind an orange petticoat that had been nailed to two broomsticks being carried by two of the Jocks, walked a crowd of Cameronians, the whole preceeded by another Jock playing a tin whistle who was performing (as I later found out) the Protestant anthem 'It's the sash my father wore at the Battle of the Boyne'. On either

side of the parade was a line of Jocks all shouting imprecations and jeering. Clearly rouble was in store, and I moved forward to break up the party, only to be taken aside by one of the senior Riflemen who quietly and in no way disrespectfully said... 'If I was you Sir, I'd get yoursel' out of here, its got bugger all to do with you!"

At that moment the two lines of shouting Jocks (who later I found to be the Roman Catholic element of the company) weighed into the parade, and a fracas ensued. It lasted only a matter of a minute, and honour satisfied, peace and quiet reigned. It was only later that both my Sergeant and myself were informed that it was nothing unusual to any Glaswegian - it appeared that we had witnessed the kind of sectarian brawling that occurred regularly on Saturday nights in that city. I never encountered any further sectarian problems in what I found to be an efficient and well-run Battalion, superior to other regiments with which I served both before and afterwards - and in the following two years I had occasion to observe and serve with several - both English and Scottish.

I recounted this incident in an interview with Sir Max Hastings while he was researching material for his recent book 'Armageddon- The Battle For Germany 1944/45. I regret that Max Hastings used a little journalistic imagination when he described it in his necessarily abbreviated version of the story. He took notes only at the time, and with the wealth of detail he was forced to amass in the preparation of his book, it is understandable that the incident did not appear in print 'wholly as I described it to him - he had described it as if I had been told to 'Bugger off. Unfortunately, it appeared in a passage dealing with morale, thus giving the impression that there was a lack of discipline. This was incorrect - the Senior Rifleman only meant to explain that matters would calm down again shortly, and had best be left to take their course, as indeed they did, having no effect whatsoever on Regimental discipline. He had realised that the Sergeant and myself both Sassenachs, required a succinct explanation of what was transpiring. It was the only occasion that I ever encountered any demonstration of religious differences.

It was while patrolling the Rhine banks prior to the crossing that I witnessed a

German act of bravery that remained fixed in my memory. The enemy from time to time sent patrols over the Rhine at night. The Rhine was in flood at this time, running a current of about six knots. To maintain silence, the enemy used paddles as the only means of propulsion. This meant that the rubber dinghies used must be launched at a point well upstream from the intended landing point, and the return trip forced the dinghy to be swept downstream, again for some length. The Rhine is some three to four hundred yards wide in that area, and because of 'Monty's Moonlight', the crossing could not be made in full darkness. Often it was possible to lay an ambush for the German patrol, and on one occasion we were able to capture some of the enemy. The battalion manned the flood banks some two hundred yards from the river's edge. Unknown to us, and because we were forbidden to go beyond the flood banks to the river itself, a wounded member of the German patrol, lay over the lip of the river bank - visible from the mans side of the Rhine, but not to us. One mid-morning and therefore in full view, a motor- powered rubber dingy was manhandled the river's edge by four of the enemy. It then proceeded, under fire, downstream, landed under the shelter of the lip of the collected the wounded comrade and proceeded downstream, successfully to the opposite bank under heavy fire, despite being hit several times. Sir Max Hastings referred to the incident in his book, but by describing it as having taken place over 'a river', he entirely missed the point of the length of time of exposure and the difficulty of navigation in the circumstances.

It was only in late April that I ventured to hope, at last, I was beginning to pass muster. The battalion was allocated a flank protection role in the assault on Bremen, the object being to keep, open a corridor and communications along the banks of the river Weser through which the attack on the city could be mounted. Some ten miles from the city, a counter-attack threatened, that if successful, could sever the line of communication. 6th were ordered to eliminate the danger by a sudden assault on a wood, over open ground. The enemy were seen to be assembling, and speed was imperative. We had the good fortune to catch the enemy off balance and a well planned and artillery-backed action was successful with minimum casualties. After overrunning the enemy, Maj Storm sent me on a further

reconnaissance from which it became clear the threat had been eliminated. On my return, Rifleman Bolton presented me with the binoculars he had removed from the commander of the defeated enemy. I have them to this day - prized as one of many memories of days with the Regiment, some happy, others tragic through losses.

Later, immediately before VE Day, I was able to see the mental toughness and also the compassionate side of the Regiment. The Battalion was faced with firstly, dealing with a newly captured concentration camp Sandbostel north-east of Bremen, and secondly in Magdeberg within about four weeks after, charged with the repatriation of non-German forced labour from almost every European country, to their country of origin. The dignified restraint exercised against the German nationals in the vicinity of Sandbostel, despite the surge of anti-German feeling in the hearts of all who witnessed it, spoke volumes for the discipline and self-control of the Regiment, when one considers the reprisals visited upon their former captors by the inmates. Sympathy for the victims of the concentration camp, anxious to avenge themselves for their suffering yet ensuring humane treatment for the civilian German population, required a delicate balance that was never allowed to get out of hand. Emotions could so easily have gained the upper hand. General Sir Brian Horrocks, then Corps Commander, visited the camp during the Cm-eronians' tom of duty. He was so badly affected, that soon after, when accepting the surrender of German troops in his sector of Northern Germany, he quoted his experience to his German counterparts with considerable force. At Magdeberg, after VEDay, controlling the released forced labourers from attacking German military units, brought to forcibly clean the former barracks, required an understanding of the primitive habits of many Eastern Europeans, who seized the slightest opportunity to avenge themselves upon their former conquerors. Whilst sympathy always was with the repatriates, the normal tenets of civilisation had to be maintained without recourse to seeming to be biased towards the former enemy. As with many others of my age, whatever rank, the forbearance and help received from one's seniors, aided a traumatic process of necessity: the transformation from youth to adulthood forced upon one by the peculiar circumstances of the time.



That so many of us, like myself, were at pains not to lose touch with the Regiment after our service ended, speaks volumes for the regard in which the Cameronian name is held at all parts of the United Kingdom. Therefore, it is with pride that I am certain that I speak for the large majority of the 'Attached', for as to able to say we were proud to have been 'Cameronians, by whatever means. The no nonsense approach to solving difficulties by simply 'getting on with it' in the manner of the Cameronian tradition, has stood me, and I sure some many of us in good stead in our future lives whether military or civilian. The late Dr. George Jolly, one of us 'Attached', who served as Medical Officer of the 7th Battalion in the later stages of the North West European campaign, summed it up succinctly in an article written shortly before his death three years ago - 'May I wish good luck to all you Cameronians, you are the Salt of the Earth'.  
Cliff Pettit

## The 2nd Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)

**Spionkop and Greylingstad 1900 - 1901  
Revisited over one hundred years later**

The South African War began on the 12th October 1899. The 90th united with the 26th in 1881 were renamed The 2nd Battalion The Cameronians (Scotch Rifles) later to become (Scottish Rifles) At this time they were known as the 2nd Scottish Rifles. Their adventures are recorded briefly in Volume I of the Regimental History.

More recently: Major Hugh Worthington Wilmer writes "I have been lucky enough to spend part of the winter months of the last few years in South Africa, escaping from the cold and icy winters of Canada. I have had a life long ambition to visit the Boer War battlefields, and follow in the footsteps of my father who was serving with the 2nd Battalion the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), referred to, and I believe officially in 1899 and 1901, as the Scottish Rifles".

(Formerly the 90th of Foot or the Perthshire Volunteers)

"This ambition was prompted by photographs taken by my father while he was serving as a subaltern with the Scottish

Rifles and mounted in a unique album, which has been in my family archives all this time. The old brown and white photographs, which are very clear and in excellent condition, mainly show the regiment in camp at a place called Greylingstad, where they were stationed after the relief of Ladysmith to protect the main railway line on which the British Army relied to support the Natal army's advance to Johannesburg and Pretoria. In 2001 my wife and I, together with our eldest son went to Natal, ostensibly to visit Spionkop, to retrace my father's footsteps. We spent two days in the area, staying near Ladysmith in B&Bs, and visited Colenso and Vaalkrans, the sites of two battles in which the Regiment was engaged, most of our time was spent on Spionkop at which battle the Scottish Rifles had suffered heavily."

(3 officers and 23 men killed, 7 officers and 54 men wounded)

"In March the following year we returned, this time to re-visit Greylingstad, having found it quite by accident the preceding year, with the aim on this occasion, of honouring the retired South African Veterans who not only knew about the Scottish Rifles but also call themselves the SR Moths and hold monthly meetings on the site. The fact that the hillside bears the large letters SR in white painted stones was for me a cause of much excitement, not least because those stalwart South African veterans had kept the Regiment's name alive for so many years. In a letter to the Chairman of the SR Moths I proposed, on behalf of the Regiment, that we should honour the SR Moths by organising a commemorative ceremony to be conducted by Captain The Reverend David Christie, an ex regular officer of the Regiment. During the ceremony, we proposed the replacement of the Star of Douglas now missing from the cairn erected by the Scottish Rifles in memory of their stay there, so many years ago.



The Regiment was always very much a family Regiment. For example my grandfather served with them in the Crimean War and the relief of Lucknow during the Indian Mutiny. My father also served for 24 years, it was he that took the photographs which started all this off and I too served. Other families of note were represented at the gathering The Graham family whose grandfather Major



*'Gathering of the Grahams and Wilmers'*

*Robert Graham, ggs, Sue Harvie, daughter, Becky Harvie, ggd, Chris Harvie, s-in-l, Juliet Worthington-Wilmer, Hugh Worthington-Wilmer, Phillippa Worthington Wilmer, Charles Graham, son, Andy Graham ggs, James Harvie, Philip Worthington Wilmer, kneeling.*

General Douglas Graham CB CBE DSO MC Colonel of the Regiment from 1954-1958 and Major Mungo Graham their father. We were fortunate on the day to have with us Wing Commander Tony Harper and his wife from the British High Commission, Michael Callender who served with the Regiment in Kenya, in relatively recent times and Major Malcolm MacNeil."

Hugh Worthington- Wilmer

## In Grandfathers Footsteps

It was only after recruit training at Penicuik, returning to the Drill Hall, as Rifleman Terris, with the odd distinction of "The Most Improved Recruit", that my father mentioned there was a Cameronian connection in the family. (Prior to that point, my only vague memory of such matters was via a small Queen Victoria Coronation tin, containing an issued Bible and jam packed, full of medals which we used to pin to ourselves and play 'soldgees' in the local woods as wee boys did in these days – especially whilst armed with a Johnny 7 machine gun.

My Grandfather had enlisted into the

Cameronians and apparently held the record time for the fastest promotion from Rfn to SNCO within the British Army – perhaps still the case. Days after enlistment, on board ship, bound for India, Rfn JB Terris had the audacity to query his pay amount. After a severe blast from the RSM for such impertinence, the Paymaster halted proceedings and gracefully received a lesson on the Rupee and Sterling exchange rate mechanisms; all on board ship had been under paid – including the RSM. My Grandfather left the ship as RQSM. The story only bore relevance to me over time.

After a perfect stint as a Rifleman under the steady stare of WO2 Robb and grateful care of the local Burma Star Association, although conscious that I was mere by-product of a unique regiment disbanded some twenty years past, there was no doubting the same unique values and standards were being instilled into the Soldiers and Officers of 4 Coy, 2/52Lowland. We knew we were unique, we knew we were special and we knew it was our job to continue the traditions. The evidence was in our results, whether the flouncing of the RAF Regt at Cameron Barracks, our ability to repeatedly out match the 'Regs' at ASSAM, far less mere inter Battalion rivalry with the Royal Scots. If there remained any doubt, the Regimental silverware bore the truth – and we dare not touch it.

I was shot off to RMAS, blissfully unaware that a pair of puttees could jeopardize eight months of Officer Cadet Training at Redford. It was a close call between Cameronian tradition or a Queen's Commission. "Cameronian Tradition Sir!"

I successfully returned back to Hamilton, reporting to OC Fred Tait, with the not so proud accolade; 'Record Number of Show Parades', a record that cannot be beaten– as it lasted every day of the course, however the puttees stayed put. Platoon Sergeant Joe King was suitably impressed and took me under his wing.

The search of civilian employment took me south, as a Captain on the Anglo Scottish List, attached to the England's Senior Regiment of Foot. On my first Queen's Mess night I felt deeply insulted as I partook in the "Silent Toast", the antithesis of our own Loyal Toast tradition. As I learned of the traitors who were found out over the centuries and summarily hung drawn and quartered, I can

say I found the Silent Toast as penetrative as our own tradition. However I never felt quite so comfortable with "A Farmer's Boy" as I still do with "Bonnie Mary".

I last used my Grandfather's Cameronian cane, a few years back, as Company Commander 3PWRR D Company during a Remembrance Sunday, wreath laying ceremony, in Portsmouth. My 2IC, being Capt Gordy Welsh also ex- 4Coy - in pure Cameronian spirit we ran the standards straight through the Battalion – there was no match.

As the wall came tumbling down, I asked my CO for leave for adventure in Russia, there was no specific Army policy at the time and he simply told me to 'use my initiative'. Russian military personnel were too afraid of any contact in the early days – however as perestroika rolled over they presented bear hug after bear hug and just as many vodka shots and toasts. For reasons better known to others rather than myself I was humbled on quite a few occasions in their appreciation of my small interests and activities. Perhaps the most notable being a medal from Russia's Nuclear Artillery Corps awarded by Maj Gen N Svartelov - a long way from my days at NBCD school. As the medal was presented, it was whispered in my ear, 'this is your get out of jail free card-you can use it - but only once'. Although somewhat startled by such advice, it was kindly meant and I can say it has yet to be used and trustfully never will.

I run an active Scottish Club in Saint Petersburg with a notable Saint Andrew's Ball, each year the Astoria's Winter Garden resounds to the Black Bear.

My civilian work now finds me commuting heavily between Ukraine and Russia. When I left Wishaw, the Craig was closing down its furnaces, now the great steel mills of Ukraine are doing likewise. Russia is threatening to cut the gas supplies and hit on Crimea, future unpredictability causing good concern for the local folk. Also back then, it was Russia in Afghanistan, ironically as I returned my 'Annual Reporting Letter' I understood there is more chance of visiting Afghanistan now than there was 20 odd years ago.

I am no sentimentalist but can say the memories that I have of my connection with the Cameronians are an integral part of my life and therefore I do my best to act

on these standards – and share them with those around me both in social and business life. The Cameronian tradition lives on and not simply through memories – believe me, Adrian Terris

## Memories of National Service

Half way through the course at Eaton Hall, we needed to arrange our regiments after we were commissioned. In conversation with one of my fellow cadets, Ronnie Gardiner, who was in the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), I hoped that they would accept me, and they were in an interesting part of the world. They were in the Persian Gulf, with two rifle companies in Bahrain, two rifle companies in Sharjah in what is now the United Arab Emirates, and a company in Kenya, where the battalion was going to be reunited. The HQ and Company units were divided up everywhere.

I wrote to the Cameronians, and was accepted. So after we passed out, I hung up my Black Watch uniform. Sadly, I never saw Ronnie Gardiner again. I do not know what happened to his military career thereafter. After his military days, he became a very distinguished solicitor in Edinburgh, but I have never spoken to him since those days. Eventually, the course ended, and we paraded for the last time. I still have the group photograph framed and hanging on my library wall. Then home for leave, before reporting in a new uniform to Lanark. I recall the trepidation as I put on the uniform for the first time. Had I got it right? All the little bits and pieces were important.

The subaltern - 455369 Second Lieutenant Cain, C.A.

On 25th January 1958, I was formally commissioned, and the world read it in the London

Gazette on 25th March 1958. I was the first form of commissioned life, a Second Lieutenant, joining a new regiment. After a week's leave at home in the Isle of Man, I travelled across the Irish Sea, and then by train from Liverpool, to report to the depot of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) at Lanark. I had barely a couple of weeks to learn all about my new regiment before starting my journey to join the 1st Battalion of the regiment, with the companies based in Bahrain. I had to try to learn the regimental history, learn rifle regimental drill, learn how the uniform was worn, as well as to get

to know my new colleagues.

The first thing that I had to do on arrival in Lanark was to hand in my former 'other rank' equipment. With huge reluctance, I produced my Black Watch kilt, but the quartermaster had told me that he had no use for it, and why did I not simply keep it, at least for the time being. So I did. I still have it, fifty years later. Indeed, I kept my whole Highland uniform, although the white spats and the white leather sporran decayed with time and had to be disposed of. It is now many years ago, and I have forgotten many of the names of those new Cameronian colleagues. Second Lieutenant George Stephens, however, I remember well. He had joined the Seaforth Highlanders as a National Serviceman, and had also found his way as a commissioned officer into the Cameronians. He later became a regular soldier, but I cannot recall whether he had made the decision when I met him. I believe he was still thinking of it, as indeed was I, for I had immensely enjoyed the army. It would have been serious mistake, however, had I done so, for I am naturally a somewhat anarchic character. George Stephens was immensely helpful and by the time I started my journey I was passably knowledgeable about my new regiment.

While waiting for my travel orders, I helped with training recruits. I remember going to the rifle range to teach weapon training, after it had snowed heavily. It was the first and last time in my life that I ever had a pair of skis on my feet! But then I began my journey. first to London and to a military airport (I forget which one) for a flight in a RAF Hastings to Cyprus. There I stayed for three or four days in a transit camp called Wayne's Keep outside Nicosia. I recall walking through Nicosia with a side arm (the EOKA rebels were still active) and cashing a cheque at the Ottoman bank. Then it was another RAF Hastings to Habbaniyah in Iraq, then a big RAF airbase. In 1958, Iraq was still under British control. I was there for a couple of days. Then it was a civilian very small plane in a small local airline called Gulf Aviation, and a flight down the Gulf to Bahrain, landing at RAF Muharraq. The airfield was a very simple airfield with very basic RAF huts. today, of course it is a major airport, and Gulf Aviation is the flag carrier for the Emirate of Bahrain. Finally, I arrived at the barracks at Jufair. I was assigned to, I

think, D company as a platoon commander under the company commander, Captain Donald Cameron. My platoon sergeant was Sergeant Attwell. I think he was unimpressed by me! The rawest National Service second lieutenant in the battalion was hardly a catch for a career regular soldier like Sergeant Attwell. I would love to meet him again. I owed him a great deal, he was a fine man.

I recall well the route marches across the desert; simulated platoon actions, and night exercises stumbling through the desert. Night fighting was a bit of specialty of the battalion. They had discovered in Oman, when fighting a rebellious bunch of Arabs in a small war shortly before I arrived, that Arabs did not like to fight at night. (There were still a couple of companies based at Sharjah ready to assist the Sultan of Oman again if required). I recall driving into the desert with the Landrover festooned by canvas bags tied to the Landrover. The canvas bags were full of fresh water which as it seeped through the canvas and evaporated, acted like a refrigerator and kept the water cool and fresh.

Many years later on a cruise in the Gulf, I met both Sir Donald Hawley, who became the British Ambassador to Oman, and Colin Richardson, who at the time was a young fighter pilot, but latterly became head of the Sultan of Oman's air force. His book, 'Masirah, tales from a desert island', describes the history of RAF Masirah, and describes in detail the Jebel Akhdar campaign in 1957 in which the Cameronians had played such a significant part. Alas, it was all over by the time that I arrived, but I drank in all the stories and tales of the action. From the two of them, on that cruise over forty years later, I learnt a great deal of the historical evolution and diplomacy then happening, which as a mere subaltern, I had no idea of at the time.

In Bahrain, that spring, I well recall the massive curry lunches on a Sunday. I recall learning to drink whisky seriously, a habit that stayed with me for a great many years until, lying in hospital after a major heart problem, I was told that my whisky drinking was doing me serious damage. I recall one of my men, Rifleman MacAtasney (I believe I have spelt it correctly) who was a bit of a tear-away. He got in trouble with the local authorities - I think he got drunk, stole a car and piled it up driving into Manama,

the main town of Bahrain. The British High Commission had jurisdiction over British subjects, and I recall going to the subsequent trial, and acting as his defending counsel. I actually rather liked him, but he was definitely a handful. Then there were the football games. Football was a religion. I think it was the first time I had ever come across sport being treated as a religion.

Religion itself, curiously, was not very significant, as I recall. The Cameronians were raised from an ultra-Presbyterian covenanting movement in the seventeenth century led by Richard Cameron. They actually fought pitched battles with the British army at the time. signing of the Good Friday peace agreement in Northern Ireland, a new British Army regiment had been raised from the IRA men, called the IRA Grenadiers. In any event, by the time we got to the mid-twentieth century, the religious devotion of the regiment was largely confined to some fierce traditions (the Queen was never toasted after dinner at the officers' mess, merely acknowledged) and every year on the anniversary of the raising of the regiment on 14th May, a presbyterian covenanting conventicle was held in the open air, with armed sentries posted about. But the regiment's recruiting area of Lanarkshire included the industrial centres of Motherwell and Coatbridge, where many Irish immigrants had arrived to work in the nineteenth century. Their descendants were Catholic, and National Service took them into this most protestant of all regiments, where a bible was standard issue to all recruits. But it was never a problem as I recall. One was aware that about a third of the regiment was Catholic because of the numbers attending services on a Sunday, but I never recall it being an issue. My own religious affiliation was Church of England, in which I had been brought up. I had been a chorister at King's College chapel in Cambridge. Most Manx people were and are Methodist, a tradition I well understand and respect. The Cameronians introduced me to Presbyterianism much more strongly than had the Black Watch. I cannot say I liked it very much. It seemed to me that the Minister was far too powerful, and the religious philosophy was not one that appealed to me. Eventually, many years later, I became a Catholic, or rather, I became a heretic, which is what a free thinking Catholic is. I accept the authority and demands of the Catholic Church, but I do not believe in

magic, and any article of faith that cannot be reconciled with reason I accept only as an allegory or as revealing a truth other than a literal truth. In any event, as a twenty year old soldier who, like all twenty year olds, was immortal, to me religion at that time seemed very unimportant.

Bahrain was a very hot and humid place. The officers' mess did not have any air conditioning. I remember sleeping in the nude with a fan blowing continuously over my body. We did a lot of route marches through the desert in the south of the island; always in the heat of the day. I remember them well. I learnt about brewing tea with a Benghazi Burner, a can filled with sand and petrol and setting fire to the petrol fumes. Then there were the tinned 'compo' rations. The labels always fell off, so one had no idea what the cans contained. Some contained loo paper, with four pieces per man per day (One up, one down one across and one polish!).

Ramadan took place that year while we were in Bahrain. There was some concern that it might end in anti-British riots. Nothing happened, but I recall being briefed and doing some training and then turning out for riot control duties. Bahrain, at the time was a pretty poor place. Oil had only just been found and exploitation was only just beginning. Manama was a place of largely single storey buildings. There was no causeway to Saudi Arabia, and the port was small. Large ships could not get in because of the shallow seas. However, US frigates could get in, and once a month a US navy frigate arrived. That caused some excitement. In those days, there were only two places in Bahrain where alcohol was to be found. The first was the RAF base at Muharraq, and the second was the Cameronian base at Jufair. US Navy ships are dry. But US sailors make up for lost time when they reach port. When we heard that a US navy ship was arriving, preparations were made for an invasion of thirsty Americans. Another event when US ships arrived was a game of softball. The Americans played softball. We played rounders. I recall well the disgust of the Americans when we beat them! But everything comes to an end. And orders came for the companies in Bahrain to take a troopship. We prepared to leave Bahrain. The relieving regiment was the Royal Fusiliers, all Londoners. The difference in culture between the two regiments was

profound. The Londoners were very proper, and there was a class gulf between officers and men that simply did not exist in the Cameronians. In later years, I used to say that the Cameronian Jocks had to be led. They could not be ordered, unless they believed in their officers. Led properly, the Scots make the finest troops in the world. In any event, I was made the deputy baggage officer, which basically meant doing what I was told. The SS Dunera was the troopship. I spent my 20th birthday, 28' April 1958, on a lighter taking the regimental baggage from the shore to the ship, anchored off in those shallow waters. We sailed on 3rd May, a week later. A day or so later, we stopped off Sharjah to embark the companies based there. Then we sailed to Bombay. Bombay? The ship belonged to the B&I shipping line, and had an all Indian crew (sometimes, in those days called a 'Lascar' crew). They went to Bombay to change the crew. So we went there too. This caused some excitement as we were the first British military unit to visit India since Indian independence 11 years before. We were not allowed to disembark, and had to look at India from the quayside. Colonel Mackinnon, the Commanding Officer, went ashore: an Indian limousine collected him and took him for lunch with the British Consul and the local Indian army senior officer (I believe). Then we sailed again, making for Mombasa across the Indian Ocean. The voyage had the usual elements. We crossed the equator, and so Father Neptune made his appearance. Nowadays, flying around in aeroplanes, the tradition of the crossing-of-the-line ceremony has virtually vanished. But then it was very much alive. Every day we exercised around the decks. We shot at targets over the stern. The only young lady aboard was the daughter of Lt (QM) Spiers whose family was with him, so needless to say she received a lot of attention from the junior subalterns. Nowadays people pay a fortune for such an experience. It is called a 'cruise'. We arrived at Mombasa on 1 6th May. My brother had been to Mombasa when he had done his army service, taking African troops home. They had been serving in the Seychelles Guard in the Suez Canal Zone. When he came home he had taught me half a dozen words of Swahili. I was very pleased to discover that my few words of Swahili actually worked! I was still the Assistant Baggage Officer, and so was now involved in the transshipment of the regimental baggage from the SS Dunera to the train that

was to take the battalion to Nairobi. That was a memorable train journey which took 24 hours. There is a photograph in the Low Parks Museum at Hamilton of several happy soldiers looking out of a railway carriage window. It was 17th May 1958. Even though I subsequently lived in Kenya and Uganda from 1963 to 1969, that rail journey was the first and last time I ever travelled by train in East Africa, on the metre gauge rail system of East African Railways and Harbours. On that train I lost my guitar! At Eaton Hall Officer Cadet School, I had acquired a cheap classical guitar, which I had learnt to strum. It had been very useful subsequently. I recall well singing (diddle-dum etc) the tune for an eightsome reel while strumming the guitar in a rhythmic accompaniment while my fellow officers danced an eightsome reel on the SS Dunera. The loss was serious, but a few months later, at University, I bought a beautiful flamenco guitar from a fellow student (a Miguel Rodriguez of Cordoba instrument) and took lessons to become a highly proficient classical guitarist.

At Nairobi, we embussed to our new home, at Muthaiga, on the Thika Road. It was a field with a tented camp, which we shared with myriads of fleas bugs and other entomological specimens. A few years later, when I was branch manager of Barclays Bank DCO, Thika, I used to drive past that field, and wonder if the little gold shirt stud that I lost was still there in the mud! It probably is yet! I also remember being interested in the local politics, and hearing Tom Mboya speak at a political rally. He was an amazingly charismatic man and a powerful speaker. When I returned to Kenya some years later, I met him as indeed I met Mwai Kibaki, the current President of Kenya. Life in barracks was humdrum. But the social life was anything but. I had a friend, who was a Regular soldier, and who was a Lieutenant (so probably a couple of years older than I). He had been in Sharjah, and so I had not met him before we went to Kenya. He was a good dancer. The two of us developed a social life where we used to be invited to parties in Nairobi, and would go kilted and carrying swords, and with a piper in tow. We became very popular in Nairobi social circles for dancing the Gillie Chalum or the Argyll Broadswords. Time has not helped my memory, but I am sure that his name was Ron Gibson. I believe that the Captain R.E.B.C. Gibson who transferred to the Gordon Highlanders in 1968 was

he. He subsequently went back to Arabia in the Trucial Oman Scouts, and died a decade ago.

On 14<sup>th</sup> May, the battalion held its traditional armed conventicle. We marched into the bush close by (it might have actually been in the Nairobi National Park) and there, to the

surprise of the resident giraffes and warthogs, we sang hymns. During my time in Nairobi, the regiment had a boxing tournament. It was the last boxing tournament that I ever fought in. I had learnt to box as a small boy, and had boxed through school. I recall when I was a recruit in the Black Watch being singled out to do a demonstration bout with another chap. I also remember discovering drive-in cinemas. The management was a bit upset when we took a three ton truck filled with soldiers into the cinema! Before the regiment was reunited in Nairobi, there had been a company of Cameronians already in Kenya at Gilgil in the Rift Valley. It had been a training company, training the new arrivals sent from Scotland to join the battalion. I recall going down to Gilgil on several occasions in connection with the former camp there, which was closed when the battalion reunited. It was a superb drive, down the escarpment into the Rift Valley, and the giraffes running beside the truck as we drove along.

But all good things come to an end. The battalion received orders to fly to Aden for a temporary move in response to an international crisis in Jordan. There was a rear party left behind in Nairobi to keep the barracks ready, and those of us whose military service was coming to a close were left behind in Nairobi. A month later, I was on a Lockheed Constellation airplane, along with about 30 others from the battalion, on our way home to

be 'demobbed'. The plane flew an unusual route, to avoid flying over Egypt. We flew across Uganda, Central African Republic (then still a French colony) and the Cameroons, to Nigeria, landing at Kano, where we stayed the night. We went for a walk, to the local market, and there I bought a ferocious dagger, which I still have, and use as a paper knife. Then we flew across the Sahara desert, and after a refuelling stop in Malta, we flew

through the night to Gatwick, thence by train to Lanark. There after a couple of days I was told that I could go home. And so home I went. But even though I had left the army, I never forgot the army, nor the wonderful men with whom I had served. I have been a passionate Scotophile ever since. In later years I have also come to know the west coast of Scotland well, by sea. My time in the army had been a wonderful two years, and I continue to be intensely proud of my two regiments.

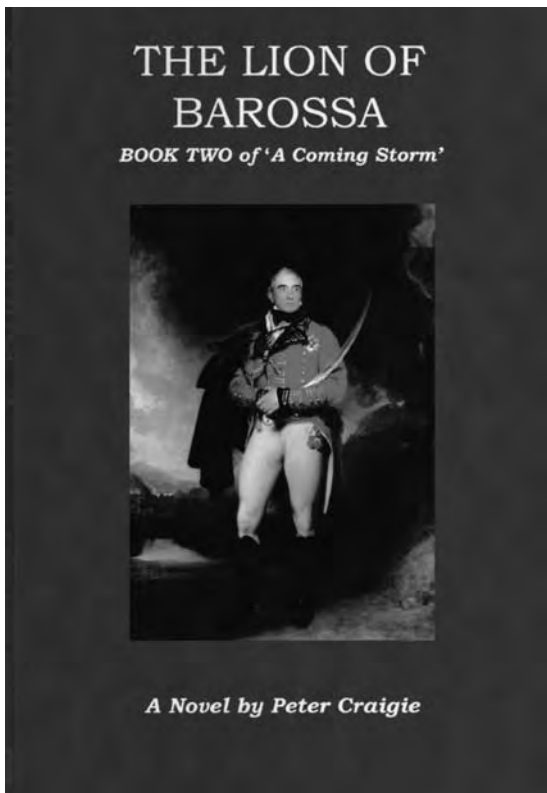
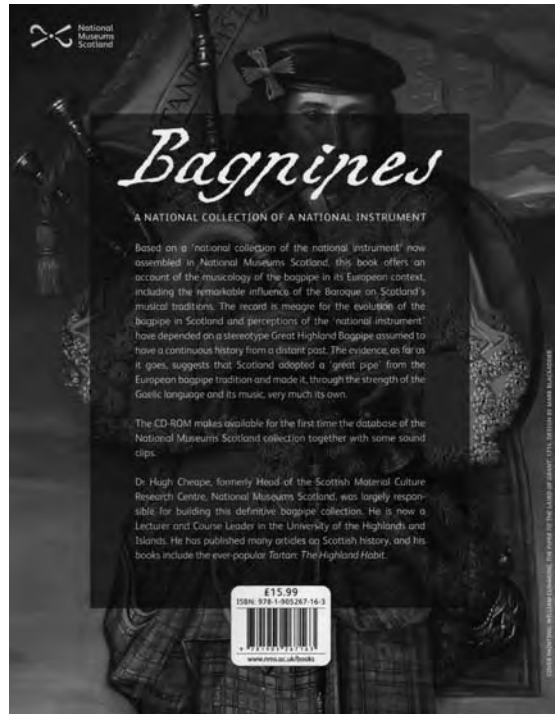
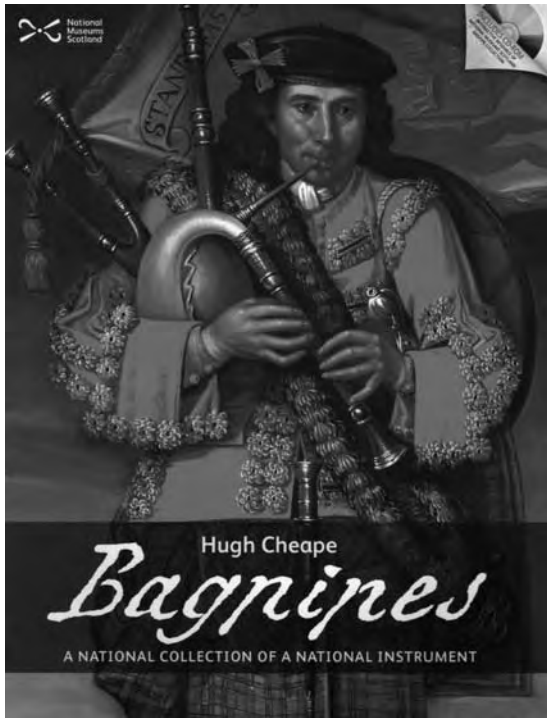
Charles A Cain

### **General Jack's Valediction to the Cameronians**

..."For nearly eighteen years I lived with officers and other ranks who faithfully and unostentatiously performed all their duties, whose instincts were those of gentlemen, whose interests of duty lay with manly sports, whose grumbles were superficial, who met set backs with a smile, danger and death without flinching. It is a great privilege to have served in a company of such high quality, a privilege realised perhaps more fully as time rolls on and one meets at gatherings of old comrades so many who express the ardent wish that they were back with the Regiment"

Sentiments we can all share no matter how long or short a time we had the good fortune to serve as Cameronians. (extracted from General Jack's Diary edited and introduced by John Terraine and published by Cassell & Co)

## MISCELLANEOUS





# OFFICERS DINNER NIGHT -



- RECEPTION 10 MAY 2008



All pictures courtesy of Scottish Field and Roy Summers

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir

It is with very great sadness that we hear of your decision to have a final formal gathering of the Regiment on the 10th and 11 May 2008.

We in the 7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles Regimental Association look back with great pride on our affiliation with you .

It was 1949 and we had just been rescued from being a Gunner Regiment when we received the momentous telegram from your then Colonel, General Riddell -Webster agreeing to the affiliation. Our association in fact dates back to the 1920s when both Regiments served side by side in Quetta. However the real bond was formed in 1942 when your 1st Bn commanded by Lt Col Thomas formed part of 7th Armoured Brigade behind whose shield our battered remnants of the 1st and 3rd Bns 7GR reformed after the fateful Sittang crossing in Burma. Later Brigadier Collingwood of the Cameronians was 63 Brigade Commander in Malaya in which 7 GR was serving, when the announcement of the Affiliation was made: He was a very good friend to the Regiment .

Later in 1949, your 1st Bn passed through Singapore en route to Hong Kong. A small party of both 7GR Bns drove down to the docks where our pipers played the ship in. A simple but impressive ceremony was held on the quay attended by Brigadier Collingwood. 7GR presented a silver Kukri to the Cameronians to mark this historic affiliation and then you presented us with a silver salver in return .



The Cameronians returned to Malaya in 1951 when we saw more of you and met your new Colonel, General O'Connor of Cyrenaica fame. Field Marshal Slim (Our Colonel) was especially pleased with the affiliation as he had commanded the Corps in which both Regiments served during the retreat from Burma.

We wish you all the very best of luck and health for the future, and while memory serves will always remember you and be grateful for all the help you gave us.

Jai Cameronians

With very best wishes,

Lt Col Keith Robinson

Hon Secretary and Treasurer

7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles

Surgeon Anthony Home VC

Sir,

Robin Buchanan-Dunlop writes generously about my article, *The Bravest of the Brave*, and we are all indebted to him for the new and interesting link which he uncovers between his own family and that of Surgeon Anthony Home VC. He hopes that I will not take amiss a quibble which he has over the suggestion that Home and his assistant, Assistant Surgeon William Bradshaw VC, were never commissioned into the regiment and were never 'cap-badged'. I in turn hope that he will not take amiss my quibble about his views (*Letters to the Editor, The Covenanter 2007* – page 36).

My source for all of the information in my article was the library of the Imperial War Museum and the two principal books consulted there were *The Victoria Cross and Distinguished Service Order (Volume I, VC's)* and *The Register of the Victoria Cross* (© This England 1988). Both of the surgeons were listed there as being of the 90th Perthshire Light Infantry. There was no mention of Army Medical Services (or any variation of that name). I also cited Lt Col Evelyn Wood VC's comment that Home was '...a former brother officer in the 90th Light Infantry (2nd Scottish Rifles) ...'

I have referred now to two further primary sources. At [www.army.mod.uk/medical](http://www.army.mod.uk/medical) etc one finds Royal Army Medical Corps and A Brief Historical Tour of Army Medicine. I quote:

'Following the restoration of Charles II in 1660, the Standing Regular Army was formed. For the first time, a career was provided for a medical officer, both in peacetime and war. The Army was formed entirely on a regimental basis ... and a medical officer with a warrant officer as his assistant was appointed to the regiment which also provided a hospital. The regimental basis of appointment for medical officers continued until it was abolished in 1873....

Emerging from this fiasco (the Crimean War) was the formation in 1855 of "The Medical Staff Corps" composed of "...men able to read and write, of regular habits and good temper and of a kindly disposition". In 1857 the Medical Staff Corps was reorganised into the "Army Hospital Corps" a title it held until 1884 when it reverted to its former name.'

It seems almost certain then that both Home and Bradshaw, whose wonderful deeds took place on 26 September 1857, were regimental surgeons. Whether they later transferred to the Medical Staff Corps is not known.

There is one further source too: the National Archives ([www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documentsonline](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documentsonline) etc). Here is the entry:

#### Description

Medal listing of: Home, Anthony Dickson

Rank: Surgeon

Regiment: 90th Regiment

Date of Act Of Bravery: 26 September 1857

Campaign: India

Locale: Lucknow

Date - 1856 Feb 20 - 1864 Aug 06

Catalogue reference - WO 98/3

Dept - Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies

Series - War Office: Correspondence and Papers Concerning the Victoria Cross

Piece - Victoria Cross Register

May I suggest that we leave the matter there? I agree that we should not be in the business of garnering any more greatness than is our regimental due. There is no need. There are enough wonderful tales to be told without adding any which are not fully merited. In my view Home VC and Bradshaw VC should stay where they are: firmly in the regimental

fold.

However, one last point: would Robin Buchanan-Dunlop now like to join me in a campaign to get those two VC's back from the Army Medical Services Museum in Aldershot and into the Cameronian Museum in Hamilton where they clearly belong?

Yours etc

Philip R Grant

Sir,

I would be obliged if you would be good enough to publish this letter addressed to all members of our Regiment.

Yours etc

DO Christie

May 2008

Dear Cameronian Friends,

Jan and I are so sad that we cannot be with you this weekend, at what may be the last major gathering of the Regiment.

I count having served as in The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) as one of the greatest privileges of my life. I am sure you many of you do too.

On that very sad day, 14th May 1968, when the Rev Donald MacDonald said:

"To most of us here, and many not here, so long as life lasts, this Regiment will never die," he indeed spoke the truth.

But I believe it goes even farther than that. The Cameronians have left a legacy to Scotland, which in my opinion, surpasses that of all other Regiments, significant though these might be. Having looked carefully at the behaviour of the forefathers of our Regiment, and our very early service, it seems that the battle of Dunkeld may have been as critical to eventual genuine religious freedom in Scotland, as Bannockburn was to Scots'

independence. If this is so, after we are all dead and gone, our heritage will still endure.

What other Regiment can claim that?

Jan and I send not only our good wishes, but also a Blessing for this weekend, and for the years that lie ahead. "May The Lord bless and keep you all, everyone of you."

David Christie.

Sir,

Since this is to be the last edition of The Covenanter, may I crave your indulgence over a few personal thoughts.

Some readers may remember that as Adjutant at the time of disbandment, I was commended by some of the press, (Scotsman and Herald, I think), for my obedient reaction to the very unwelcome order we had received. I have to confess that I was following William Cleland's advice before Dunkeld. "A soldier's business is to obey orders and fight the enemy – not to murmur and question." So that is what I did, although it seemed quite clear to me that the enemy was in fact Whitehall! But I must confess at a remove of forty years, that inwardly I was seething with a desire to fight this disbandment tooth and nail.

Over the years I have heard many men whom I respect greatly say, "We did the right thing." I am still not sure that we did! The Argylls were ordered to disband at the same time as us, and had we fought the decision, might we not also have survived? My son now commands a company of Argylls, albeit in the guise of 5 SCOTS. He was KOSB, and when I visited 1 KOSB in Omagh some years ago, soldiers kept coming up to me and saying, "Hello, sir. You don't know me, but you know my father." It turned out that 60% of 1 KOSB were from Lanarkshire!

But as Philip Grant has put it so well, "some Regiments are more unique than others," and I suppose there is no way that The Cameronians, with our fiercely independent origins could have been part of a Royal Regiment?

A far as I can ascertain, the Peter Christie who appears on the 1689 Muster Roll of the Lt-Col's Company was my great x 7, grandfather, so I may lay claim to a family connection with the Regiment, quite literally from the first day to the last. I only discovered this whilst researching the pre-regimental Cameronians and earliest days of the Regiment, for I really wanted to know the truth. Were the earliest Cameronians a bunch of religious bigots, or did they make a meaningful difference? My conclusion, (which I realise will be hotly resisted by most of academia, the Kirk, and all Jacobite enthusiasts), was that Dunkeld was as pivotal to ultimate religious freedom in Scotland, as Bannockburn was to Scottish independence. So my conclusion is that we have indeed a heritage to boast of.

This was confirmed for me on my last visit to Edinburgh. I had just endured the great

sadness of being at the last drumhead service of my son's Regiment, The KOSB, and sung the same psalms as at Douglas on 14th May 1968. I felt desolate! That weekend Ian Farquharson took me to communion at St Giles. There occurred an incident which went un-noticed by the rest of the world, but set my heart at rest. The communion elements were processed into the Cathedral, led by an officer of the Cameronians, none other than my friend Ian. (And this in the same Kirk in which Jenny Geddes had thrown her stool in 1637!) That would not have happened even in 1689, but that it finally came about in 2004, seemed to say to me that it had all been worthwhile, and all the sacrifice from Drumclog in 1679, to Aden in 1967, had not been wasted.

Call it an old soldier's rambling if you like, but now I understand what Gen Sir George Collingwood and Col Leslie Dow meant when they talked about our "ghosts." They are still around!

yours etc,  
DAVID CHRISTIE.

#### **Editors Note:**

Many readers will recall that this is covered in depth by Lt Col JCM Baynes in Volume IV of the Regimental History. It says {page 211}:

'Within the battalion, questionnaires were sent down to the rank of corporal to obtain the opinion of serving members about what should be done in the event of the Cameronians becoming involved [in the expected reduction in the number of battalions]. When these questionnaires had been returned and analysed the Colonel of the Regiment visited the battalion and held discussions with officers and non-commissioned officers. Eventually, after much heart-searching, it was decided that, in the circumstances as they then pertained, the Colonel of the Regiment would recommend that the Cameronians preferred disbandment to amalgamation with any other regiment.'

Whatever the view now it was clear that the majority then saw this as the only or anyway the least objectionable option. With hind-sight some might now have chosen otherwise but, in view of the treatment meted out in recent years to the remains of the Scottish army, surely we were right to take our leave when we did and with our heads

held high. It is barely conceivable that the unique character of the Cameronians would have survived now in any recognisable or acceptable form.

Sir,  
A Final Tribute

In 1950 I was a member of C Company stationed on the Craigielea Rubber Estate near the town of Muar, Malaya. From this location, our company sent out patrols in search of bandits, or terrorists as they are known today.

I was then a young section commander in charge of a section I have always regarded as one of the finest in the British Army. The section was part of eight platoon which at that time was commanded by Sgt Danny Brown who proved to be a first class platoon commander.

The object of this article is simply to pay tribute to three young men who died on operations whilst serving members of my section. They were:

Rfn Thomas Holland  
Rfn James Vallance  
Rfn Robert Shaw

Tommy Holland who hailed from Kilmarnock, could be described as a dwarf like in stature (not of the poison dwarf variety, I hasten to add). He was a small very likeable lad with a terrific sense of humour. I used to worry about him on patrol in case he would disappear without trace in the Bakri Swamps. I therefore would always detail someone to be near Tommy to be able to grab him if he appeared to get into difficulty. Thankfully, this only happened on one occasion and rescue was swiftly at hand.

Jimmy Vallance, another Ayrshire lad was much taller than Tommy Holland but very similar in temperament, with a broad Ayrshire accent and a wonderful sense of humour. From what I can remember Jimmy's death was a terrible tragedy owing to the fact that he had only been married for two or three weeks prior to leaving home to join the battalion several months earlier. Jimmy loved to drink tea and was always a frequent customer of the company char wallah. (There was no NAAFI in up country Malaya in those days. I took his loss very badly.

Finally I come to Robert Shaw. Bob Shaw came from Manchester and was the oldest member of the section. Bob had seen action in North West Europe in the latter [part of] WWII. He was a quietly spoken reserved man. I would say he was very much a loner but he had a canny sense of humour and was very well liked in the platoon. On occasions, I would sit-down and have a chat with Bob and I always felt that deep down there had been some sadness in his life which he never wanted to aljk about.

Tommy and Jimmy were both National Service men whilst Bob was a regular soldier

My memories of these three wonderful young men are everlasting.

Yours etc,  
Eddie Clark

Sir,

Alas, the dreaded moment has arrived - I have now commenced writing what will be my last items for our illustrious journal. I do not use the word illustrious lightly as I am sure many of you, like myself have enjoyed reading and contributing to this publication during our lifetime. since it's inception in May 192 1 (vol. 1 No 1) , The Covenanter has been a brilliant production where every contribution was made by people writing from the heart about experiences in their lives and times whilst serving in the Regiment.

The first Editor of the Covenanter was Lt. Eric M. H .Galbraith and in the Journal's first editorial he wrote movingly about the aims and ambitions for the future of the Journal. His was a very inspirational and stirring piece which I am sure paved the way for future heart warming publications.

The first volume of the Covenanter was published in May 1921, when the 1st Bn The Cameronians were stationed in Gough Barracks, The Curragh, Co. Kildare, Ireland. The first issue was understandably pretty slim and relatively lacking in in content owing to it's new birth. However like all healthy infant, it grew and matured into the fine and healthy journal that we have enjoyed so much during our lifetime.

On reading 'The Battalion Notes' I couldn't help but notice several familiar names leaping from the page at me, For example:

Arrivals: Capt. A Galloway MC.and 2Lt E. Brickman. .. Departures:: Major Sir T. 8. Riddell- Webster DS0 I find it incredible that these officers were in the regiment before I was even born, yet. I was personally associated with them in later life.

Another name I recognised was that of RQMS Lucarotti whom I believe eventually rose to the rank of Major. When I was a schoolboy I was great friends with John Luarotti, the son of Major Lucarotti..

I joined The Regiment in February 1946 and became an avid reader of, and in later life a regular contributor to the Covenanter. I hme loved every moment of reading and writing for the journal and as you can imagine I am heartbroken at the demise of this illustrious publication.

In conclusion, I wish to offer my heartfelt thanks to Major Brian Leishman MBE for his magnificent work as Editor during the past twenty one years. he must also be highly commended fur his years devoted to his managerial role in connection with the Edinburgh Military Tattoo, and finally as a member of the Regimental Trustees for many years.

You will have noticed that I have singled out only two editors for mention; the first and the last. This is simply because had I written about all the other Editors involved during the lifetime of the Covenanter, it would have taken me another lifetime! To the Covenanter Goodbye .and thanks for all the happy hours of reading and writing.  
Your etc,  
Eddie Clark

Sir,  
I attach below a transcript of some email correspondence which I have had recently with the Editor of the 'Explore Highland Perthshire' guide.

Although the Battle of Killiecrankie is given prominence in the guide, there is only the briefest of references to the ensuing battle of Dunkeld. No Cameronian will be unaware of the significance of the latter on both Jacobite (Scottish), indeed the British crown's (English), history and on Regimental history. On drawing the editor's attention to what I am sure was an inadvertent omission, I had an immediate, friendly, and positive

response.

The editors are very keen to get an input from the Regiment and to include details of the battle of Dunkeld both on the website and in the guide, which is re-printed annually, in time for publication at Easter. Every year (last weekend in July) there is a commemoration of the Battle of Killiecrankie and it has been suggested that a representative(s) of the Regiment might like to take part.

It will be seen in addition that the editors have suggested that 'it would be great to have you talk, a wee bit about the Battle of Dunkeld at the end of the walk.'

May I through the pages of the Covenanter publicise this interesting subject. Might I propose that it would be appropriate that the Regimental Trustees, rather than an individual, should accept the offer both to provide material for the website and the guide and hopefully arrange for attendance at the annual Killiecrankie event, if possible?

I had in mind that the entry for the guide might be either David Christie's excellent recent account of the battle (as quoted in the accompanying email traffic) or an extract from Volume I of the Regimental history. I am sure that the editors would give favourable consideration to the attachment of a link between their site and the Regimental website; and also to the attachment of a Regimental history. Philip Grant's script for his talk during the service at our 40th Anniversary would seem to fit the bill admirably. Approval for the use of any such material should, of course, properly be by the Trustees.



The guide is edited by James and Kathleen Rattray. The website that they run for 'Explore Highland Perthshire' is: <http://www.explore-highland-perthshire.com/> and the guide is at:

[http://www.explore-highland-perthshire.com/images/guides/Highland\\_Perthshire\\_Guide\\_2008-9.pdf](http://www.explore-highland-perthshire.com/images/guides/Highland_Perthshire_Guide_2008-9.pdf)

Clan Rattray is an ancient Perthshire clan. James drew my attention to the family's renowned Indian Army associations – see: <http://www.clanrattray.org/sikhregiment.html>

James and Kathleen's address is:

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[james@explorescotland.net](mailto:james@explorescotland.net)  
Yours etc,  
Mike Sixsmith

Sir,  
As I also happened to be serving with "C" Company in 1952/3, Ronald Henderson's graphic description of life at Awat Camp, Jahore in the 2007 issue of The Covenanter certainly brought back a flood of memories and prompted me to go through my miscellany of photographs taken while in Malaya around that time. I have selected the accompanying pictures partly to illustrate a number of points he made but also to identify some of the personalities serving with the Company at the time.

The assigned operational zone for the Battalion, roughly the area of one of our medium sized counties, was in upper Jahore State with Bn HQ situated roughly centrally and its northernmost detachment based at Awat Camp approximately 25 miles to the NW, close to neighbouring Malacca. Located remotely on a rubber estate and largely housed in tents and purpose-designed huts clad in corrugated metal sheet panels, Awat was essentially a self contained outpost. Our operational terrain was generally hilly and interspersed by fast flowing streams subject to flash flooding in the Monsoon season: as Ronald Henderson noted, predominantly

covered in primary and secondary jungle adjoined mainly with mature rubber and some palm oil plantations interspersed with areas of mixed cultivation and paddy fields. Being in support of a civil power our remit ranged widely from security patrolling of enclosed settlements ("New Villages") to deep jungle penetration patrols. At that time maps of remoter parts were remarkably lacking in any detail and, when in jungle areas, I clearly recall numerous occasions when finding out our precise location would have much benefited from satellite navigation systems!

By 1953 the policy of settling all the landless rubber tappers and estate workers in the New Villages was beginning to pay off and the civil police together with the armed forces had gained the initiative in eradicating the terrorist factions throughout Malaya. The armed forces in particular had played a vital role in paving-the-way from its being a British protectorate to what eventually became the fully independent and democratic Federation of Malaysia in 1957 and, in their two tours of duty, the Cameronians had played a significant part in this transition. With regard to its contribution in the Malayan Emergency, the Regiment could hardly have received a better complement than that from Field-Marshal Sir Gerald Templer when he remarked that "I had the privilege of having them under my command in Malaya in 1952 and 1953 and a better battalion would have been difficult to find. Good not only in the jungle, but also in their civil relationships".

Yours etc.,  
John Weir



*2/Lt Douglas Robertson about to depart on patrol*





*Lt Ian Tedford (Rt on truck) and the three Coy. Ibans.*



*2nd Lt. Bob Ramage aboard 'C' Coy scout car - Malplaquet*



*Tree felling for DZ. Sgt Hutton supervising, Rfn Mills sawing.*



*Jungle Catering*



*Rubber tree felling competition*

**IN MEMORIAM***To those they leave behind may their memories be happy ones***Cecil Edwin James Bryant (Jim)**

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Jim Bryant who died on the 16th February 2008. and record here the letter from his sister Ann Storkey –“ Jim served with the Regiment over the period 1942 – 1947 and had always wanted to follow in his fathers footsteps. His father became RSM and served with the Regiment over the period 1908 – 1921. He and my mother had seven children and I am the youngest at 71 years.. Brother Jim had purchased three tickets for the 40th Anniversary Commemoration of the disbandment of the Regiment on 11 May , he had hoped that together with his wife Peggy and me we would be able to attend, but that was not to be so my son and I will be attending. We are really looking forward to the day and hope that perhaps we may meet some of Jim’s old friends”

We send our sincere condolences to his wife Peggy and other members of his family.

**The Rev William Downie**

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Bill Downie who died at home on the 27th November. Bill had ministered for thirty years in Falkirk, Dumbarton and Carluke and had been chaplain to many organisations including the Cameronian (Scottish Rifles) and Family members. He was known to the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and Family Members Organisation as a nephew of a Cameronian who went to war in 1942 and never came home. He joined the Organisation in January 2001 offering his ministerial services which were warmly accepted. In 2005 he accepted nomination for Committee Member. He conducted many services on behalf of the Organisation from marriages, funerals, and Memorials he was always willing to oblige. At his own service in St Machan’s in Larkhall and South Lanark Crematorium the tributes were many to Willie the wee man with a big heart! Willie was born and bred in Larkhall. His participation and achievements make a long list which includes the following: Boy Scout, Sunday school, Bible class, Youth fellowship, keen sportsman, lifelong and faithful supporter of Larkhall Thistle. More

activities include: Drama Group and the Community Players starring alongside Una McLean in a production of “Apron Strings.” Willie’s call to the Ministry began when he was still a young man sharing and leading at the Larkhall Congregational Church. He preached for the very first time at the very first Christmas Eve service in Larkhall which took place in Trinity Church. His first job was as a trainee motor mechanic with Skelly’s in Motherwell. Moving on Willie then served his time as an electrician with Frank Craig’s here in Larkhall. In the middle of his career as an electrician Willie served his country with the RAF in the early 1950’s. Serving as a radio operator and with the signals at Hednesford, Wattisham, Dumfries and Compton-Bassett. Willie began as a Minister in Falkirk and continued to serve the community by serving in the following organisations: The Citizens Advice Bureau, The Samaritans for 17 years, The peace initiative in Ireland, The Scottish Pensioners Forum, The Health Council at Argyll and Clyde, The University, Hospital and School Chaplaincies, The Bellshill and the Blantyre Curling Clubs and the 2000 Scottish Rotary Curling team tour of Canada. The Monday nights spent with the Carluke Rotary at the Cartland Bridge Hotel. One area in which Willie maintained a tremendous interest was the support of former service personnel: He has given an enormous amount of his time and effort in supporting; The Royal British Legion Scotland, The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and Family Members Organisation. The events surrounding Remembrance Sunday both locally and nationally and of course the RAF Regiment Association. During his many services he reflected on his life experiences. Whether it is at the Cameronians Cairn in Douglas Dale or at the Cameronians Memorial at Kelvingrove his message was always one of sincerity. Fittingly at his service one of the hymns was Psalm 23: “The Lord’s my Shepherd” a hymn particular to the Cams. Memories remain of the Padre who would travel to RAF Brize Norton to carry out the solemn task of escorting a war hero’s cortege from the Lockheed Hercules Transport Plane, the

coffin draped with the Union Flag. Laying a wreath in Berlin remembering Cameronians killed by friendly fire in 1945. The member who would speak at meetings his mind with the judgement of Solomon. His sermon in the Covenanters Prison at Greyfriars Kirkyard is especially noteworthy. He is survived by his wife Sarah (Cissie), their four sons and nine grandchildren to whom we send our sincere condolences.

### **Captain DRA Hotchkis**

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Dunmore Hotchkis who died on the 16th August 2008. We record here the letter from his son James Hotchkis – “Dunmore Richard Alexander Hotchkis was born in Paisley on 19th December 1909. After school he attended Oxford University where in 1931 he graduated Bachelor of Arts. Thereafter he joined a Law Firm in Leith and did a Legal Apprenticeship with that Firm attending Scots Law evening classes at Edinburgh University, graduating LLB in 1933. He joined the Writers to the Signet Society in 1934. Prior to the outbreak of war he was a keen mountaineer and frequently climbed in the Cuillins, Isle of Skye and on occasions on Ben Nevis. He volunteered for his Majesty Forces before the outbreak of war in 1939 and he served with the Cameronians for six years, in the UK, Madagascar, India, Persia (now Iran), Iraq, the invasion of Sicily and Italy and later Germany. I think the years when my father served with the Cameronians were some of the most memorable of his life. He made long lasting friends and attended regularly the Officers Reunion at Drymen. He was of course one of the lucky ones although he was wounded by a land mine in Italy. I recall a number of stories my father had about the war. I remember he enjoyed bouts of malaria in Italy albeit it took him out of the front line. Towards the very end of the war when his unit met the Russians in what became East Germany, the Russians invited some officers for dinner in their mess. My father was left in charge of the battalion and surmised this might become a permanent appointment if the Russians interred the other Officers!

After the war in 1946 my father returned to the legal profession and took over the Law Firm of his uncle James Napier Hotchkis WS in St Andrews. He married Betsy Dishington Scott in 1953 and imparted to his three sons his love of the hills, wild places and his abiding interest in the environment, birds,

wild flowers, geology, astronomy and history. He was an Elder at Holy Trinity Church St Andrews and became the Session Clerk to fill in on a temporary basis, but remained Session Clerk for over twenty years. He read widely and remained extremely alert mentally in to old age. He continued to enjoy the hills particularly with his sons. He did short sections of the Cuillin Ridge into his early eighties. He dealt stoically and bravely with failing sight in later years. His wife Betsy and his three sons James, Robert and Michael survive him and to them we send our most sincere condolences.

### **Major David Oswald Liddell, MC**

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Major David Liddell, who died on the 20th March 2008 aged 91 and record here the letter from his son BRD Liddell:



“ He was awarded an immediate MC while in command of the leading company of the 12th Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), which was attached to the 5th Essex Regiment, during an attack on Villa Grande near Termoli, Italy on 23 December 1943. During this period of the fighting, his regiment was involved in capturing villages in the mountains heavily defended by the fanatical Herman Goring Parachute Division. Liddell skilfully advanced and his company gained a footing in the houses which formed part of the objective but in doing so platoons became separated by 100 yards of open bullet-swept ground. The leading platoon suffered heavy casualties, including the platoon commander, and Liddell decided to take reinforcements to it himself. On the way his party was pinned down by machine gun fire from the flank and was unable to advance. Regardless of his own safety Liddell assaulted the machine

gun post single handed and liquidated it with grenades thereby enabling his men to proceed. In doing so he was wounded in the left eye but insisted on carrying on to the isolated platoon, which he reorganised. Wearing gym shoes, so as not to alert the Germans next door, he reported back to his CO, but refused to be evacuated for twelve hours until he

was satisfied his men were in an adequate defensive position and had been fed.

On return to his battalion from hospital Liddell found the battalion, just six houses up the village consisting of only five officers and twenty-seven men, his own company scarcely existed. On his 27th birthday, whilst sheltering in a cow shed a shell fell amongst his party killing three and severely wounding Liddell. He returned to hospital in Barletta and was repatriated home thus ending his active war service. After a year of rehabilitation, during which pieces of shrapnel were removed, Liddell was posted to a training camp in Scotland where recruits for the war against Japan were being trained and ex-prisoners of war from the 51st Highland Division were rehabilitated.

His younger brother Ian, serving with the 5th Battalion Coldstream Guards, won the VC capturing a bridge over the river Ems near Lingen in Germany on the 3rd April 1945 and killed in action two weeks later.

David Liddell, the eldest son of five children born to a well-known family of China merchants, Liddell Brothers founded by his grandfather, was born on 9th January 1917 in Hankow. The family moved to Shanghai where he attended his first school in the company of Margot Fonteyn and Mary Hayley Bell, who was to marry John Mills, the film star. Aged eight he returned to England and school at St Andrews, Eastbourne where he was later to be a Governor, and then Harrow where he excelled in all sports and represented the school in boxing. He also led the school orchestra and on occasion played under the direction of Sir Thomas Beecham. Summer holidays were spent in Vancouver Island where his family from China met half way. The young Liddell, escorted by his godmother, travelled from Liverpool to Quebec by Canadian Pacific liner followed by a three day train journey to Vancouver. After the war Liddell returned to insurance Brokers, Chandler Hargreaves Whittall, becoming a member of Lloyd's and a partner in the firm, eventually becoming Chairman and Managing Director. Now married with two children he set up home in Beaconsfield

where he became a leading figure with local youth

clubs, In 1955, his family grew with the addition of a daughter to add to his two boys. His war wounds. brought early retirement, and farming the family estate at Shirenewton which he inherited from his father in 1968. His Friesian herd of cattle won many national championships and prizes, notably the Supreme Champion at the London Dairy Show.

War wounds led him to decline the invitation to become High Sheriff of Monmouth having been "pricked" by the Queen and a second retirement to Dorset at Manston and then Swanage with fishing in Scotland. The turmoil at Lloyd's in the early nineties also took its toll. David Liddell married Joan Russell in 1942. She played squash racquets for England and represented Hampshire at lawn tennis. She predeceased him in 2004." He is survived by two sons, a daughter and five grandchildren, to whom we send our sincere condolences.

#### **Mrs. Patricia (Pat) Mary Sutherland**

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Pat Sutherland who died peacefully at her home on 6th May aged 97 years. She was the dearest wife of the late Lt Col WH (Jock) Sutherland The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and was greatly loved by her family and friends. We send our sincere condolences to her daughters, Jill and Joanna, her son in law John, her grandchildren William, John and Rachel and her great grandchildren Alexander, Liberty and Phoebe

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

