



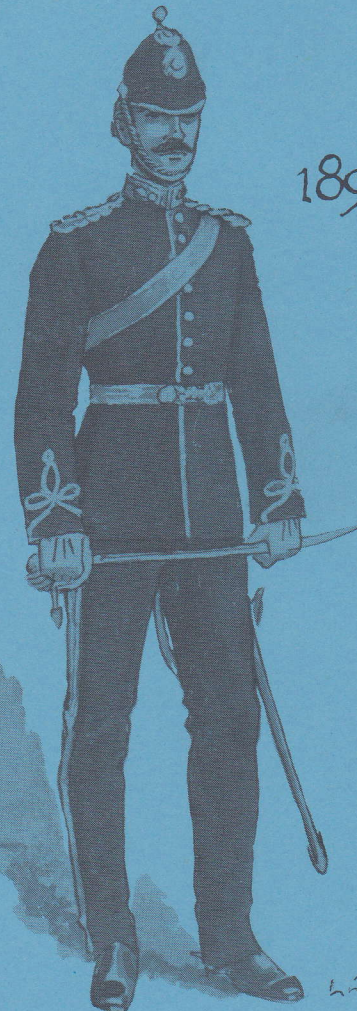
ROYAL MARINES
HISTORICAL SOCIETY



1678



1755



1890

The Sheet Anchor

Volume 5 number 2

‘The Sheet Anchor’

"In obtaining for them the distinction of "Royal" I but inefficiently did my duty. I never knew an appeal made to them for honour, courage, or loyalty, that they did not more than realize my highest expectations. If ever the hour of real danger should come to England, they will be found the country's SHEET ANCHOR."

Admiral Lord St Vincent
(General of Marines 1814-1823)
11th March 1823

THE SHEET ANCHOR

(Formerly the Royal Marines Historical Society Newsletter)

VOLUME V NUMBER 2

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A PRIVATE CENTINEL OF FOX'S MARINES

Dress and Equipment

By

Charles Stadden



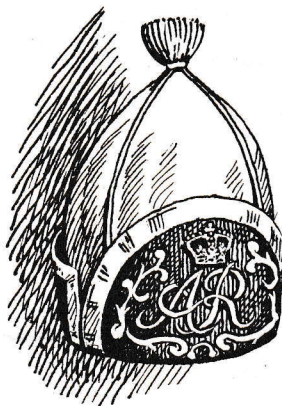
On June 1st 1702, owing to the declaration of war with France and Spain, Queen Anne ordered to be raised six Regiments of Marines and six Regiments for Sea Service.

The six Marine Regiments were known (as was the custom of the time) after the Colonel's name; these were

Colonel Thomas Saunderson's Marines	
" George Villiers	"
" Edward Fox's	"
" Harry Mordaunt's	"
" Henry Holt's	"
" Viscount Shannon's	"

The first three regiments survive to this day, Colonel Saunderson's became 30th (1st East Lancs) then part of the Queen's Lancashire Regiment 1976; Colonel Villiers became 31st (1st East Surrey) then part of 1st Batt The Queen's Regiment 1976; Colonel Fox's became 32nd (1st Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry) then part of the 1st Batt The Light Infantry 1976. The other three regiments were disbanded in 1713.

The six regiments for Sea Service were 6th (Royal Warwicks), 19th (Green Howards), 20th (Lancs Fusiliers), 34th (Border), 35th (Royal Sussex), 36th (2nd Batt Worcs). The 6th R Warwicks survive complete as 2nd Batt The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers; the 19th are still the Green Howards; the 20th were the 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, but alas have since been dis-



MARINE CAP

banded; the 34th still survive as part of the King's Own Royal Border Regiment; the brave old 35th (1st Royal Sussex) survive complete as the 3rd Batt The Queen's Regiment; the 36th are still the Worcester-shire Regiment.

Details of the dress of these Marine Regiments of this period are very much open to conjecture and most illustrations have to be pieced together

from scraps of contemporary information that is available, namely in the case of Fox's Marines from notices that have appeared in the POSTMAN 1704 regarding the apprehension of deserters. These tell us that the uniform was red, lined with light green and having pewter buttons; another notice in the same periodical dated a few months later tells of a sergeant's regimentals being red lined and faced with light green and looped with silver lace, also a private in the same clothing but looped with white.

Richard Cannon's Historical Record of the Marine Corps, published in 1830, gives the uniform as "high crowned leather caps covered with cloth of the facing colour and ornamented with devices, the same as the caps worn by Grenadiers, red waterman's coats, buff waist belts, black pouches carried in front, with bayonet attached and buff gaiters". No authorities were given for this description, it seemed to be of a later period as it closely followed the figures illustrated in the 1742 "Clothing Book".

With the very sparse material appertaining to Fox's Marines we have to look to the general appearance of all regiments of Marines and the Army at this particular period, and from this our illustration is based.

It appears that at the time of the raising of the six Marine regiments the following details were generally accepted as the dress. All Marines had a Grenadier cap or at least a version of it, similar to Fusilier Regiments of the Army. This cap would have a bag (stiffened at this time) of red cloth, piped



on the seams in most cases; the piping running up to a tassel on top; the turn-up or little flap was usually of the facing colour and was laced around the top; the ornamentation was as a rule either the Royal Cypher and Crown or the Colonel's crest, if any.

The coat was practically the same as the rest of the Infantry in cut, either buttoned and laced down the front from top to bottom or to the waist; the lace loops, if worn, were sometimes on both sides of the breast or on one side only. The coats on occasion would have a turn-down collar, but as a rule none; the coat was lined and faced with regimental colours. The buttons were either pewter or brass. The equipment follows the Army in general, the pouch belt and waist belt could be either the narrow early type or the wider type that was rapidly coming into use throughout the Army. The socket bayonet was being adopted in place of the old plug bayonet, though many regiments had not been issued with the new bayonet in 1702. Grenadiers were issued with hangers.

The following is a list of the clothing and equipment issued to the Marine Regiments in 1702.

The land kit of the Rank and File consisted of: 1 coat, 1 waistcoat, 1 pair of breeches, 1 sword for Granadeers, 1 belt, 1 cart-

ridge box, 1 pair of stockings, 1 pair of shoes, 2 shirts, 2 cravats, 1 cap. For Sea Service: an additional frock and cap of a less ornate pattern than those worn ashore. Bayonet swords, cartridge box and sling, match boxes, snapsacks (knapsack).

Colour guide to illustrations as follows:

Cap, red bag (stiffened) piped white, white tassel; green turn-up or flap; white lace edging, yellow Cypher Crown with crimson cap, white embroidery. White cravat. Red coat laced white, light green lining and cuffs, white metal buttons. Buff pouch-belt and waist-belt. Black leather cartridge box; socket bayonet hilt steel, black leather scabbard with brass stud and tip. All buckles brass. Buff gaiters with pewter buttons.

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Author's Collection MSS



-oOo-

Charles Stadden's painting of 'A Private from FOX'S MARINES' was copied in the design for the GIBRALTAR 2/- stamp issued in 1969, a limited number of which are available, from Tony Perrett 20 Brighton Avenue, Elson, Gosport, Hants PO12 4BX, at a cost of 25p each. All proceeds to the Society Funds. (Please include SAE)

Letter from A A Morrison

An Interesting Query

The following extract from "The Grenadier Guards" by R.H. Whitworth in the Famous Regiments series may be of interest to some members.

"Charles II in 1665 issued a 'decisive regulation' to infantry and cavalry. 'First as to the foot that the Regiment of Guards take place of all other Regiments and the Colonel be always reckoned and take place as the first foot Colonel; the General's Regiment (Coldstream Guards) to take place next, the Admiral's (Duke of York) immediately after and all the Regiments and Colonels to take place according to the date of their commission. Secondly as to the Horse etc. etc.' It is from this order, which gave them precedence in the field as the right of the line, repeated in 1673, that the present precedence of the Grenadier Guards as the senior regiment of infantry in the army derives."

Could the Royal Marines, following the Grenadier Guards' precedent, claim to be the third senior regiment of the army (or perhaps the 3rd Foot Guards!), being as they are the direct descendants of the Admiral's Regiment?

Joe the Marine

Submitted By

ALASTAIR DONALD

By coincidence, soon after reading the letter from F B Hughes which was published in the last issue of The Sheet Anchor, I happened to purchase a small book of songs from a second-hand book dealer.

The book is entitled A Collection of Soldiers' Songs by A Wyatt-Edgell and was published in April 1871 by Bell and Daldy of London and Henry S Eland of Exeter. I was delighted to find that No 74, published by the kind permission of Messrs Metzler and Co, told the sad tale of Joe the Marine and sweet Polly of Portsea. Unfortunately the name of the writer of the song is not given.

1 Poor Joe the Marine was at Ports-mouth well known, No lad in the
corps dress'd so smart; The lass-es ne'er look'd on the
lad with a frown, His man-li-ness won ev-'ry heart, His
man-li-ness won ev-'ry heart. Sweet Pol-ly of Port-sea he
took for his bride, And sure-ly there ne-ver was seen, A
cou-ple so gay march to Church side by side, As Pol-ly
and Joe, as Pol-ly and Joe, As Pol-ly and Joe the Ma-rine.

- 2 The bright torch of Hymen was scarce in a blaze,
When thundering drums were heard rattle;
And Joe, in an instant, was forc'd to the seas,
To give the bold enemy battle,
To give the bold enemy battle.
- 3 The fight was severe, each ship a mere wreck,
Such slaughter had sailors ne'er seen,
Two hundred brave fellows lay strew'd on the deck,
And amongst them poor Joe the Marine.
And amongst them poor Joe the Marine.
- 4 But victory, faithful to true British tars,
Soon put an end to the fight;
And homeward they stood, full of glory and scars,
And soon had fam'd Portsmouth in sight,
And soon had fam'd Portsmouth in sight.
- 5 The ramparts were crowded, those heroes to greet,
And foremost sweet Polly was seen;
The very first sailor that came in her sight,
Told the fate of poor Joe the Marine,
Told the fate of poor Joe the Marine.
- 6 The shock was severe, quick as lightning's dart,
Her poor heart with frenzy was fir'd;
She flew from the crowd, softly cried "My poor heart!"
Clasped her hands, faintly sighed, and expired,
Clasped her hands, faintly sighed, and expired.
- 7 Her body was laid 'neath a wide-spreading yew,
On a smooth stone there is to be seen,
"Drop one tear of pity you lovers so true,
On Polly of Portsea, and Joe the Marine",
On Polly of Portsea, and Joe the Marine.

THE LANDING CRAFT GUN (Medium) Part II

BY
JOHN GOOD

(Continued from page 9 of Volume 5)

LCG(M) AS A SHIP

We in LCG(M)s were a proud lot, justly so, for our craft were purpose built and had been well conceived and designed. It was the fact that they had a pointed bow that made them look more like a ship, moreover they carried equipment not previously fitted in landing craft, such as a gyro compass, pitometer log and a hefty piece of armour plate around the middle.

The accommodation was better than in other major landing craft, though that was not saying much. It varied according to the yard that refitted each LCG(M) for tropical service, being refitted by Camper and Nicholson in Southampton, LCG(M) 176 was by far the best fitted out that I saw of the thirty-odd that were eventually commissioned. We were the only LCG(M) to have a proper bath!

Before sailing to HMS TURTLE at Poole all craft were refitted for service in the Far East. As a result of the additions and modifications they sat lower in the water after leaving the dockyards. Main modifications were:

- a. Anti-roll bilge keels fitted to each side of the hull.
- b. Two extra rudders added aft of the screws for better manoeuvrability.
- c. Cold store fitted for two months supply of fresh meat and foods.
- d. A CO's cabin measuring about 7 foot by 8 foot fitted forward of the control cabin - not shown on any LCG(M) photos.
- e. Buoyancy tanks altered - believe reduced from four to two.
- f. Additional fresh water tanks fitted.
- g. Forced ventilation improved.

A fault in the equipment was the type of generator used in all LCG(M)s. Three were installed, but they were a constant source of trouble. For normal routines at sea and in harbour one generator was sufficient. Two were needed when operating the capstan. We were no exception in that we had to rely upon other craft for power occasionally when all three of our generators were out of action.

Our electric galley was small but well equipped. Our volunteer cooks produced good food. Complaints about the standard of feeding were few, there was always plenty to eat and the standard of cooking was beyond that which might be expected from untrained volunteers - and our principal cook really was a volunteer.

At sea they were not the best in heavy weather. The extra bilge keels though did reduce the tendency to roll. Having little freeboard all doors onto the upper deck had to be kept closed as the main deck was frequently awash.

Several LCG(M)s sailed through heavy seas and, in spite of some discomfort to the crew, they behaved reasonably well. Indeed the hull design was said to be good for other types of major landing craft, such as the LCS(R), a rocket craft, and the LCG(2), a more heavily armed version of the LCG(M). Only the prototype of the former was completed, and none of the latter.

As ships they were well equipped. They were designed to sail 2,500 miles at about ten knots without refuelling and to be self-sufficient in food and stores for two months. This was asking a lot from something so small and, but for the breakdown of generators, several achieved that. Being able to stand on one's own for long periods made us self-reliant and proud of the ships in which we sailed.

OFFICER TRAINING

The ten weeks or so spent training for LCG(M)s were happy ones. After Christmas leave our course assembled at Eastney, four CS officers of my batch, Geoff Kerr, Robin Graham, Alan Torrance and I, and two HOs, Ted Kirby, formerly gunnery officer in an LCF, and Tom Smallman, the "old man" of the party, a solicitor's clerk from Shropshire.

Preliminary Training at Eastney. The purpose of this course was to give us a grounding on what was to come. In the fortnight that our instructor, Captain James Agnew, had us we learnt 25 pr gun drill in a proper LCG(M) turret, revised spotting rules, how to make a watch and quarter bill, store keeping, etc. We visited one of the training craft at Poole to see what they were really like. From that moment I was completely and utterly sold on the idea of LCG(M)s - time could not pass quickly enough till I joined mine - dear old LCG(M) 176.

Field Artillery Theory in Wales. We left for Burma Camp at Llwyngwril, between Towyn and Barmouth, leaving Paddington Station on the stroke of midnight, just as my twenty-first birthday was starting on 16 January. I think we had three weeks here to learn the theory of field gunnery and how to translate army parlance into naval language for our own gun crews. We were kept busy learning our new art. Most of our time was spent in the classroom but there was at least one live firing practice somewhere in the Welsh hills near Plynlimon.

Liaison at Larkhill. Our next short course at the School of Artillery, Larkhill, was a wonderful and unforgettable experience. It was a pleasant surprise to see Stonehenge from my bedroom window on the first morning. Here at Larkhill we first met our Naval officers with whom we were to spend all our time on board for months to come. All were ex-LCT hands and had been present at D-Day so were experienced combined operators. I was indeed fortunate with the pair who were to be shipmates with me. Lieutenant George Blackburn RNVR was the CO and Sub-Lieutenant Bill Anderson from Renfrew was the First Lieutenant. We got on well together from the start and continued in the same manner, for we never had a serious argument or difference of opinion during the commission, a factor that contributed to the good spirit of the ship in the months to come.

I wondered at the time if the gunners knew what they were in for. Salisbury Plain had never before experienced the sight of pairs of self-propelled guns driving over the ranges in echelon, crewed by Naval and Marine officers, stopping from time to time to simulate an LCG(M) beached, and loosing off a salvo in the direction of Devizes. We were suitably chaperoned by our liaison officer, Major Jacobs RA, to see that we stuck to the rules as laid down by the Army Council.

That short course continues to have happy memories for me, we all thoroughly enjoyed it. Much of the credit must go to the Royal Artillery, our hosts, who made our stay so pleasant.

Pilotage at Whale Island. With regret we said farewell to Larkhill. We Royal Marines returned to Eastney to commute daily to Whale Island while the Naval officers to a course elsewhere. For two weeks we brushed up our pilotage and refreshed our memories on doubling the angle on the bow, cocked hats, etc.

HMS TURTLE and LCG(M) Firings. The last of our courses was at Poole, firing with the two LCG(M)s of the training flotilla based at Hamworthy. We were attached to the Assault Firing Establishment commanded by Major Philip Beeman RM. The course officer was "Gunner" Arthur Lazell, an old and experienced hand at anything to do with cordite, hence his nickname. We took our turn at directing the guns in the LCG(M)s, acting as FOO, and as gun crew numbers. We fired many rounds into Studland ranges and we were to fire many more from our own craft later.

Our training was over. It was an anticlimax to have to go to the holding unit at HMS ROBERTSON at Sandwich, there to wait till called forward to join our ships. Here I met our, or my, detachment for the first time. Sergeant Pillinger from Yatton in Somerset was the Sergeant Major. He and I got down to the serious business of organising the detachment.

REFITTING, COMMISSIONING AND WORKING UP

It seemed ages waiting at Sandwich, where there was little we could do, waiting for the signal telling us to join LCG(M) 176. After several letters to George Blackburn the welcome signal arrived. I felt very proud to muster my detachment, at least I would now have a say in how they were to be employed, which I could not at Sandwich. On arrival at Southampton we learnt that LCG(M) 176 had not started her refit so we could not march straight on board as I had hoped. We were "tenders to", as the Nava phrase says, to HMS SQUID, the name of the base ship in Southampton, and were quartered in various parts of the town. The men were in a hotel near the centre of the town, we officers were in a requisitioned house in Shirley for some weeks, then we moved to Elmfield Flats, not far from the station - most comfortable.

The day after arrival in Southampton I was taken to Camper and Nicholson's yard in Northam. It was a proud moment when I first set eyes on, and went aboard, HM LCG(M) 176 - I had waited a long time for this.

That day work was put in hand to start the refit straight away. Mr Nicholson himself came and showed us the plans in the Wardroom. I remember his comments on the Admiralty's plan for the Wardroom - "Looks like a third-class railway carriage, doesn't it? May I have a free hand?" George readily agreed. By the time we were ready to leave the yard we had a Wardroom fitted to the highest standard of a private yacht, our cupboards, a beautiful knee-hole desk, wardrobe, all hand-made by an artisan carpenter of the old school whose workmanship was perfect.

Within a matter of hours LCG(M) 176 was hauled up the slip and high and dry. For the next few weeks there was chaos on board and I thought we never could be straight again. Yet, as soon as the mess had come, it went, 176 was in the water and we were taking crates of stores on board. So this was what commissioning a ship was like. The next day, to the scurry of the bos'n's call, the White Ensign was hoisted and we were in business.

After a short trial run down the river we swung the compass, were degaussed, and were en route for Poole to become "tender to" HMS TURTLE. I remember my immense feeling of pleasure and elation as we signalled our identity and destination to the Port War Signal Station above the Needles and headed for the open sea for the first time. The war in Europe had finished a few weeks earlier when we were in Southampton so we could sail without AA lookouts, and the war restrictions on states of readiness had been relaxed.

On arriving at Poole we secured alongside Town Quay and took on our quota of ammunition. About six or so LCG(M)s were already in Poole and had started their working up training. Before long about 25 LCG(M)s arrived in dribs and drabs from yards all over the country. As more craft arrived so the training facilities became more congested. In that June we had our fair share of firings at Studland ranges pouring in hundreds of rounds. On return to harbour there was a railway wagon alongside from which we topped up our magazines. The system worked smoothly.

When about a dozen or so craft were mustered we started flotilla manoeuvres. These days at sea were great fun. One learnt and acquired a working knowledge of signalling by lamp, semaphore and flag quickly, and so too did we learn how to take a ship in tow and how to be taken in tow. These and other seamanship drills I certainly learnt the hard and quick way.

As Studland ranges became busier we carried out live firings at sea at targets towed by tugs, and exercised the Oerlikons by firing at sleeve targets towed by aircraft.

By the third week in July we had about reached our peak of training, having exercised all the guns and carried out procedures at sea of which I previously knew nothing. Then we started to receive extra crates of stores for which we had not indented. It was rumoured that all LCG(M)s were to be reinforced by one Sub-Lieutenant for watch-keeping duties. With all the interest that was suddenly being shown in us it was natural to suppose that we were about to leave for the Far East and join in the war there. Three LCG(M)s had already left, one of which was LCG(M) 106. Incidentally, none of these three got further than Bombay, one reached Gibraltar, one the Suez Canal (I saw it at Kabrit in December), and one to Bombay, all suffering with generator trouble.

Our sailing date arrived. Two days or so before this we heard of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki; at the time we could not know the series of events they were to trigger off. On 14 August we had a farewell party on board as we were due to sail for Falmouth in the early morning, there to form up in convoy and head for Gibraltar. Shortly after retiring to bed for a few hours sleep, just after midnight, one of the ships in Poole started blowing off its siren, to be quickly followed by others. We switched on the wireless to hear the end of the Prime Minister Attlee's speech telling us that the war was over. Within the hour a signal arrived cancelling our sailing.

After the joy of celebrating the peace had worn off, anticlimax and boredom set in. We never went out of the harbour again, never fired another round, unloaded most of our stores not needed for day-to-day maintenance, and unloaded all the ammunition. These were boring months. We had a fine ship and an efficient crew with a wonderful esprit-de-corps. Training for peace was much harder than for war.

CONCLUSION

I left LCG(M) 176 on 7 November 1945. I felt truly sorry to leave her, she was my first assignment in the Royal Marines, I had a real soft spot for her, and I still do. I had learnt more of practical seamanship and more about how a ship works than ever I did in the rest of my 21 years in the Corps. In return 176 had taught me how to accept responsibility and how to stand on my own two feet - lessons that will never be forgotten.

Looking back, I wonder how we would have fared in the Pacific War. Certainly the men and the landing craft did all that was asked of them in training. Their only test in battle was short, this was at Walcheren. Only two LCG(M)s were ready for this operation and were hastily added to the order of battle after short training. Both LCG(M) 101 and 102 were sunk in the operation but one certainly managed to beach and meted out punishment to the GERMANS (LCG(M) 101), only to sink on retracting. Lieutenant C A Flamank RNVR, its CO, was rescued and became CO of the training flotilla at Poole. If more LCG(M)s had been used at Walcheren it would be easier to reach a broader based conclusion as to their use in an assault.

It was a pity that no LCG(M)s were retained for peacetime and for use in "brush fire" wars that were to occur from time to time, but in these smaller peacetime landing operations the beaches are not heavily defended. Perhaps the need for a highly specialised ship such as the LCG(M) was not there, and the cost of keeping such small ships in commission for such an eventually was too much for the nation.

Apart from the Walcheren operation, we never hit the headlines. We were a select bunch of well-trained men who enjoyed our job and were proud of our calling. I shall always be glad that I was one of the lucky ones to serve in LCG(M)s - and particularly the best one of them all - LCG(M) 176.

FROM "THE DERBY MERCURY" FRIDAY MAY 6, 1768

PORTSMOUTH APRIL 26

A few days ago a quarrel arose between a number of the Shipwrights in our Dock Yard and Marines then on Duty there, which had like to have proved of bad consequence: it was as follows: Several of the Shipwrights had according to Custom, got ready their Bundles of Chips in order to carry them away at the ringing of the Bell, but which the Marines found means to convey into the Guard House; this so enraged the Shipwrights that they armed themselves with Axes and other offensive weapons, and marched up to the Marines to demand their Property, but the Soldiers refused giving it up; on which both Parties prepared for an engagement, the Marines drawing up in line with their Muskets and Bayonets fixed and the Shipwrights in like manner with their Axes etc. but happily the superior officers of the Yard interfering, prevented the dreadful consequences, by obliging the Soldiers to restore the Chips, several reprimanding them, and strictly forbidding them for ever interfering with the Shipwrights any more.

See also "Globe and Laurel" Volume XIV page 53.

Sir Cloudesley Shovell's Regiment

By
ALASTAIR DONALD

The reference to "Sir Cloudesley Shovell's Regiment" on page 49 of Vol III No 2 made me look up the lineage of this regiment and I felt that the result may interest members.

Sir Cloudesley Shovell's Regiment of Marines

Raised 17.1.1690 as 2nd Marines by the Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery. Became Sir Henry Killigrew's in 1691, Berkeley's in 1693 and Shovell's in 1697. Amalgamated with the Marquis of Carmarthen's Regiment of Marines on 31.7.1698.

The Marquis of Carmarthen's Regiment of Marines

Raised 16.1.1690 as the Earl of Torrington's Marines and known as the 1st Marines. Became the Earl of Danby's (later Marquis of Carmarthen) on 31.12.1690. Amalgamated with Shovell's Regiment to form Thomas Brudenell's.

Colonel Brudenell's Regiment of Marines

Raised in 1689 as the Duke of Kingston's Regiment of Foot. Became J Douglass's in 1690. Converted to Marines in 1692 as Rowe's Regiment of Marines. Became Thomas Brudenell's in 1695. Disbanded on 20.5.1699.

For those members who, like myself, have a poor knowledge of 17th and 18th century history a few "notes" on the personalities mentioned above may also be of interest.

The Earl of Torrington was First Lord of the Admiralty from 1660 to 1689 and in 1690 was still C-in-C of the Grand Fleet.

The Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery was First Lord of the Admiralty in 1690.

Sir Cloudesley Shovell became C-in-C of the Grand Fleet in 1705 and was drowned when the ASSOCIATION was lost on the rocks of the Scilly Isles in 1707.

Admiral Henry Killigrew was wounded in action in the Mediterranean in 1687 and returned to England in 1689. With Sir Cloudesley Shovell and one other was a joint Commander of the Grand Fleet in 1693, all in a single Flagship.

The Marquis of Carmarthen, previously the Earl of Danby and later Duke of Leeds, held the temporary rank of Rear Admiral in 1695.

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WILLIAM GREGORY RMLI
HIS MEDALS and THE DEFENCE OF THE LEGATIONS
AT PEKIN
BY JE GRANGER

I have in my medal collection the following group of medals awarded to Corporal (later Warrant Officer) William Gregory of the Royal Marines Light Infantry:

China 1900 with clasp Defence of Legations	- Cpl W Gregory RMLI
British War Medal 1914-18	- WOI W Gregory RM
Victory Medal 1914-19	- WOI W Gregory RMLI
Defence Medal 1939-45	- Un-named
Naval LS & GC Medal (Ed VII)	- PLY6529 Sgt William Gregory RMLI
Royal Marines MSM (Geo VI)	- PLY6529 QMS W Gregory 14.2.49

The Defence Medal 1939-45 was gained for service in the Home Guard and I understand William Gregory held commissioned rank but I have yet to verify this. It will be seen that the medals were awarded for service in the reigns of four sovereigns over a period of nearly half a century. The most interesting period of his service is undoubtedly that for which he gained his first medal - The Boxer Rebellion and the Defence of the Legations Quarter at Pekin.

The official dates of the Siege are from 20 June 1900 to 14 August 1900, but Gregory's involvement commences from 28 May 1900 when he was one of a party of one officer (Captain Wray) and 25 NCOs and men at the Depot of Wei-Hai-Wei detailed to proceed to Tientsin. The party embarked on HMS ALGERINE and arrived at Taku on 30 May. They were then transferred to a river boat and proceeded to Tientsin. Here they were joined by a party under the command of Captain Halliday, who was later to win the Victoria Cross. These two parties then joined forces with Captain Strouts and 25 Marines who had been stationed at Tientsin during the previous winter. On 31 May the RMLI party which, according to Gregory, now consisted of 3 officers and 75 men, set off by rail to Pekin accompanied by Guards of several nations making a total force of some 400.

The causes and events of the Boxer Rebellion are too complex and detailed to be described in this article and they have been written about at great length in many books. However, in practically all of these accounts very little has been written about the individual rank and file and their activities. However, we are fortunate in that Corporal D J Gownay and, to a lesser extent Gregory, kept a detailed account of the events of The Defence. The Globe and Laurel carried a series of Gownay's record but was unfortunately not completed, probably because of the start of the First World War as it was about this time the last article appeared and told of the happenings of 1 July 1900. I would here like to thank Major A J Donald of the Royal Marines Museum for providing me with copies of Gregory's and Gownay's accounts.

From these accounts it can be realised that The Defence was one of quickly changing situations and depended on the leadership and initiative of the NCOs to deal quickly and decisively with each situation as it arose. Another interesting feature was the need for co-operation of the various nationalities in helping each other out when the occasion arose. It must have been interesting indeed to listen to a west country British Marine issuing fire orders to Russian and Japanese Marines!



Part of the Legation Wall
after the Siege

On 28 June Gregory was in charge of another party detailed to report to Captain Shiba of the Japanese Guard. Whilst carrying out clearing operations Gregory was in the act of firing his rifle when a bullet grazed his knuckles, passed through the wood-work and carried away the magazine. Again he escaped with scratches. Gownay records the rifle was displayed in the Sergeants' Mess at Plymouth. I wonder if it is still there? Gregory was eventually wounded in the right foot on 3 July, which prevented his further active participation in operations and resulted in his being invalided home after the Relief.

For his part in the Defence of Legations, Corporal Gregory was mentioned in despatches by Sir Claude MacDonald, the British Minister who was in supreme command, as having come under his special notice and was worthy of the highest praise. Of the four others mentioned by Sir Claude, three were eventually awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. Captain Wray, who took over command of the RMLI Guard after Captain Strouts was killed and Captain Halliday was wounded, also mentioned Gregory and recommended him for promotion. A notice in the Naval and Military Record of 27 December 1900 which stated "Corporal W Gregory, Plymouth Division RMLI, serving at Head Quarters, has been promoted to Sergeant for special services with the Legation Guard at Pekin", confirms that Gregory's part in the Defence of Legations was recognised.

Other awards included:

Victoria Cross

Captain L Halliday

Conspicuous Gallantry Medal

Sergeant J E Preston

Leading Seaman H Swannell

Distinguished Conduct Medal

Sergeant J E Preston

Sergeant J Murphy

Corporal D J Gownay

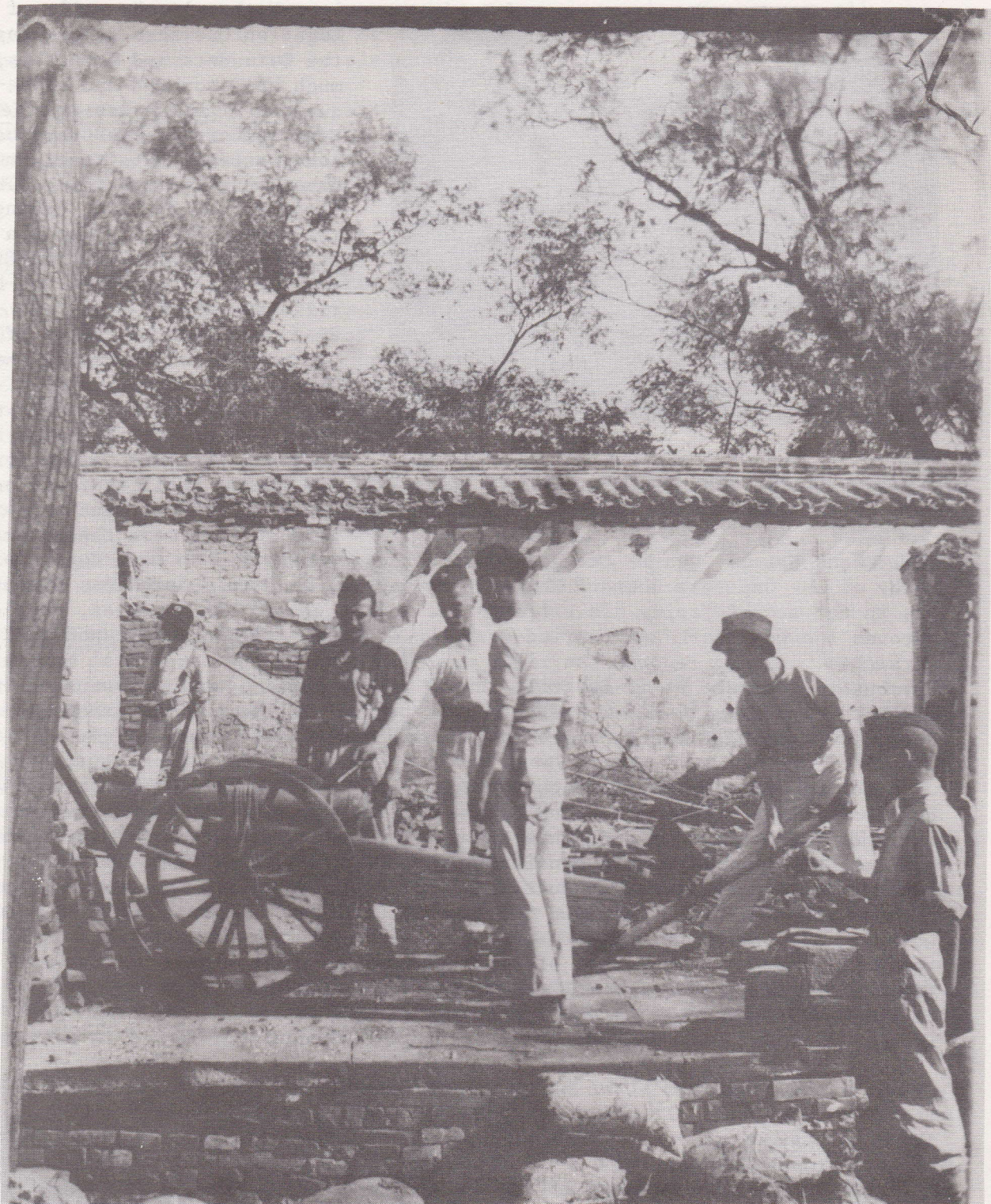
Corporal T Johnson

Private J A Myers

I remember an article in the Globe and Laurel regarding the discovery of Pte Myer's medal in a drawer.



Entrance to the R.C. Cathedral



"BETSY" the international gun fired by the
Royal Marines at Peking

The actual strength and composition of the RMLI Legation Guard varies in different sources as the following table shows. Perhaps a member who specialises in medal roll searches can confirm the exact number.

<u>Source</u>	<u>Officers</u>	<u>NCOs and Men</u>	<u>RN</u>	<u>Total</u>
Corporal Gownay's Account	3	79	3	85
Corporal Gregory's Account	3	75		78
Captain Wray's Despatch	3	76 (incl 1 Bugler)	3	82
Gordon	3	79		82
Fleming	3	79		82
Roll in my possession	3	74	3	80

On balance it is probable that Captain Wray's figure should be the most accurate. It is probable that the existence of three Royal Naval ratings may not be generally known, all three taking an important part. Leading Seaman H Swannell was awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal for attending, under close and accurate fire, a Mr Oliphant, who had been mortally wounded. In addition some 55 others, mostly civilians of the Embassy Staff, Chinese Customs and missionaries, were awarded the China 1900 medal with Defence of Legations clasp for their services in the Defence.

Bibliography

The following works will be found useful for anyone wishing to further their reading of this important episode of Royal Marines history:

Britain's Sea Soldiers, Volume II - by Colonel C Field
History of the Royal Navy, Volume VII - by Clowes
The Siege at Peking - by Peter Fleming
London Gazette Number 27255 for 11 December 1900
British Battles and Medals - by Major L L Gordon
The Globe and Laurel
A great deal of information can be gleaned from the
Naval and Military Record which was a service newspaper
publishing all manner of Naval and Military Intelligence.

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FROM "THE DERBY MERCURY" FRIDAY MAY 23, 1766

PORTSMOUTH MAY 15

Yesterday in the afternoon a duel was fought at Gosport between Major H---th (Heath?)* of the Marines, and Lieut H---th (Heath?), an engineer, in which they were both wounded. The former received a great wound in one of his thighs by his antagonist, owing to which he was obliged to yield himself vanquished and submitted to the other's mercy. He was immediately carried to surgeons in that town, and 'tis said is in a very fair way. The latter slightly wounded in one of his thumbs and thighs but it seemed of trifling consequence as he afterwards got into a wherry and came over on this side to his lodgings without assistance.

*It is suggested that this is Captain Edward Howorth. According to the list of Marine officers for 1767 he was commissioned as Captain 8 December 1755, appointed to 5 Coy (Portsmouth Division) 17 October 1764, and received his commission as Brevet Major 21 December 1764.

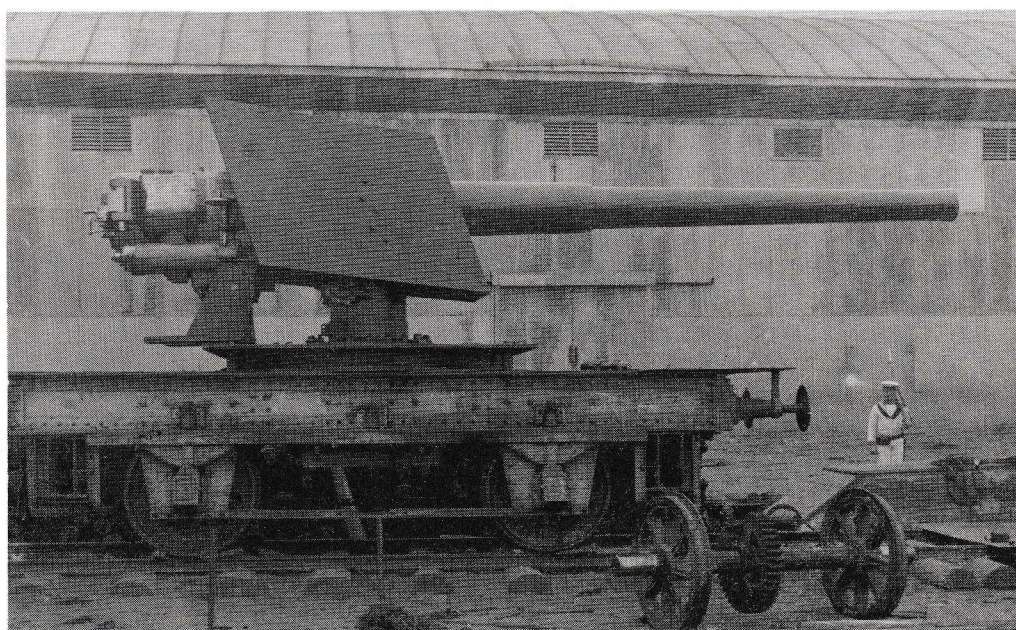
THE ROYAL MARINES ARMoured TRAIN IN SIBERIA

(Reprinted from the Portsmouth Evening News)

The epic of the Royal Marines' armoured train highlights the history of the Allies' vain campaign against the Bolsheviks following the Russian Revolution.

That train travelled twice right across Siberia and back - penetrating into European Russia on its first journey. The total distance covered was more than 24,000 miles, almost equal to a journey round the Equator.

Armament consisted of a 6" gun and four 12-pounders which were dismantled from HMS SUFFOLK at Vladivostock in August 1918 and mounted on a couple of open trucks. The fitting of steel plates completed the "do-it-yourself" job.

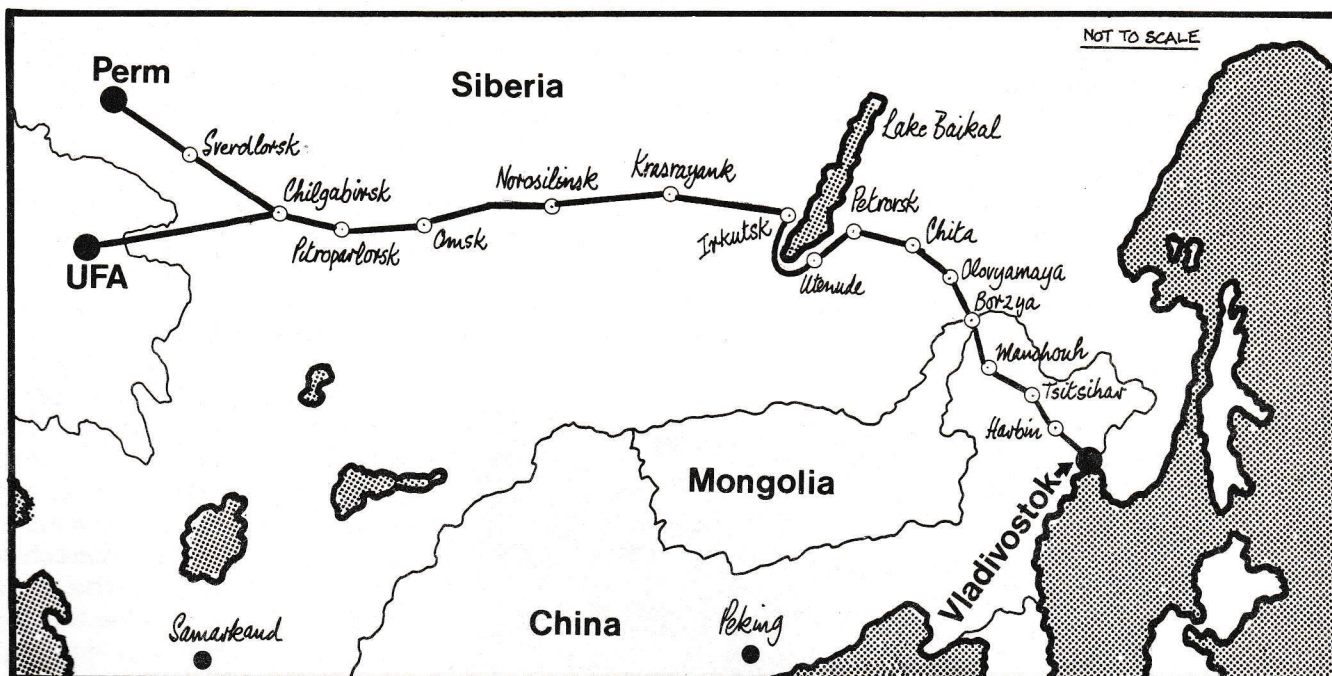


The 6" gun from HMS SUFFOLK

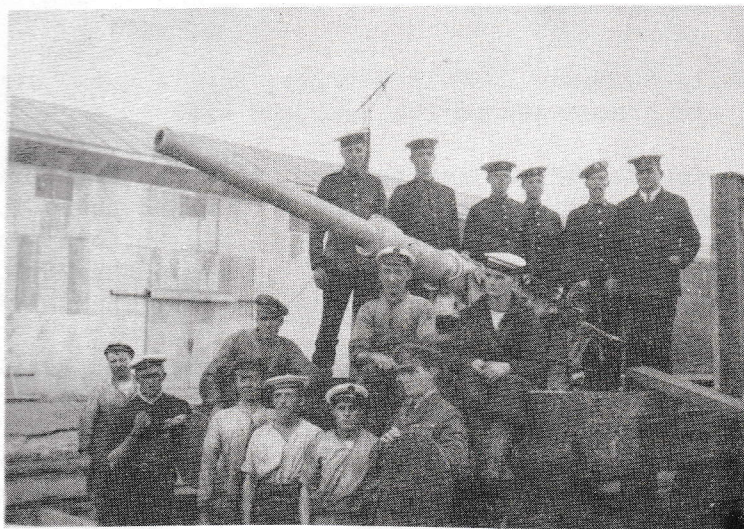
Manned by 19 Marines (RMLI) from the warship, the train left on August 29, the crew's orders being to proceed to the distant Volga front. Before Harbin was reached, the wheels of the truck carrying the 6" gun suffered a seize-up owing to overheating. This caused a fortnight's delay - one week being needed to persuade the Harbin authorities to yield another truck as a replacement, and the second week being devoted to transferring the gun and rigging the new truck with armour.

On September 28 the train reached the southern shore of Lake Baikal and the crew spent a whole day coughing smoke from their lungs as the wood-fuelled engine puffed through 34 tunnels. Two days later the expedition arrived at Irkutsk, but only a brief stop was made. The town was swarming with German prisoners who had broken camp, and who made no secret of their desire to blow up the train.

When Krasnoyarsk was reached early in November, another locomotive was procured and the 6" gun crew was sent ahead to Ufa, in European Russia. The 12-pounders joined them on November 12, and on the following day the Marines, perhaps



with mixed feelings, heard that the Armistice had been signed. On the 20th the guns went into action with the temperature 42 degrees below freezing point. They blasted away for four days in support of the White Russians, but those warriors opted for a general retreat - and the Marines had to fall back with them.



One of the 12-pounders

On Christmas Day one of the engines ran out of water and, with the Bolsheviks rapidly closing in, the Marines spent seven frantic hours up to midnight filling the boiler with buckets of snow. They escaped only by the skin of their teeth.

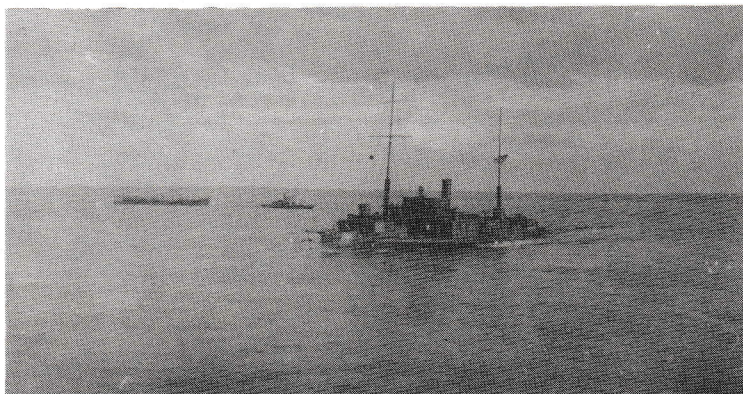
The New year was marked by an experience hardly less hair-raising. As the train was panting up a steep gradient, a coupling snapped and away down the slope careered the expedition's eight ammunition trucks - heading straight for one of the White Russian's locomotives. Miraculously, the collision did not explode the ammunition and, equally fortunate, the trucks suffered little damage.

When Omsk was reached in mid-January the temperature had dropped to 50 degrees below freezing point, and the Marines huddled into barracks with the Middlesex Regiment. They resumed their journey on March 17 and a month later were met by a relieving party of Marines from HMS KENT.

Finally, on May 6, the armoured train puffed triumphantly into Vladivostok after a round trip of 12,210 miles.

In the spring of 1919 the armoured train, manned by Marines from HMS KENT, was again on its way across the Siberian wastes. The object of this second mission was to reach faraway Perm and there transfer the 6" gun and the four 12-pounders to ships of the White Russian Naval Flotilla, which were to be manned by the British.

During the long journey, Red bandits made repeated attempts to wreck the train, but it finally staggered into Perm - where the Marines' eyes popped as they were presented with their "ships". One of these craft was a barge and the other a paddle-driven tug. It was plain that if the British armament were installed it would plunge straight through the bottom of each vessel.



The 'Suffolk' and the 'Kent'

However, the Marines strengthened the decks with a maze of props and set local carpenters making gun pedestals. The 12-pounders were mounted in the tug (which was re-named Kent) and the 6" gun was installed in the barge, which was given the name of Suffolk.

After all this effort the vessels' effective service was confined to a period of six weeks before the White Russians' front collapsed. Nevertheless, the makeshift warships were in action many

times. During one major clash with a Bolshevik flotilla Kent fired 288 rounds and Suffolk 42.

On June 26, with the White Russians in full retreat, Kent's guns, armour and ammunition were removed and placed aboard the armoured train.

In the meantime Suffolk pounded the advancing enemy with 256 rounds in two days - which was pretty good work considering that the 6" gun had to be run out by hand after each round. Having expended all her ammunition, Suffolk proceeded to Perm for dismantling, arriving at the Motavaileka shipyard on the 28th. No workmen were obtainable so the Marines had to dismantle the ship themselves.

The 6" gun weighed seven tons and the lifting limit of the only available crane at the riverside was only five tons. However, the gun was gingerly raised one end at a time and somehow bundled onto trollies ashore. Seventy muscular Siberian women helped the Marines to haul the load through the works towards the railway track, but at the halfway stage one of the trollies fell through the rails.

With this disaster the situation became critical. The Bolsheviks were on the outskirts of Perm, the Marines' lifting-jacks were too frail to raise the trolley and they had no demolition charges to blow up the stranded gun. But the Corps spirit won through aided by the exertions of the 70 Siberian Amazons. After frantic toiling, wedges and chocks were inserted under the trolley and eventually it was hauled to the track, where an arch crane swung the gun aboard the armoured train.

Crowded into two open trucks, the party of 37 started their long journey east-ward, relying on their reserve rations. Progress was painfully slow. Delays were caused by wrecked trains, breaks in the line and by walls of flame at stations which had been set ablaze.

Shortly after passing Omsk, the expedition had a smallpox case on its hands. The train rumbled on with the victim "isolated" behind a partition erected across one of the trucks. Finally the party arrived at Vladivostock on August 18 having taken 52 days to complete the journey from Perm.

They arrived in England aboard HMS COLOMBO on November 10, 1919 - and because the papers were concentrating on the first peacetime Armistice Day, the heroes' return received hardly any publicity.



The Detachment of the Gunboat 'Kent'

However, many decorations were bestowed in recognition of the two expeditions by the armoured train. Men of the Portsmouth Division RMLI who received awards were headed by Sgt A Taylor, who earned the Distinguished Service Medal. The Meritorious Service Medal was given to Cpl (Acting Sergeant) G H Odey and Privates J Brown, A Haile, J Netherway, D G Stepney, E N Stevenson and J Williamson.

Editor's Note. We are grateful to the Portsmouth Evening News for permission to reprint this account, which was originally published by them on 27 August 1965. Further details of this extraordinary adventure can be found in "Britain's Sea Soldiers" (1914-1919) pages 94 to 104.

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FROM "THE LEEDS MERCURY" TUESDAY JANUARY 1/TUESDAY JANUARY 8 1739

The Officers Cloaths of Colonel Moreton's Regiment of Marines are to be red with green velvet Cuffs, Gold shoulders, knots, and lapelle waistcoats with gold chain lace. Colonel Douglas's Red Coats with Silver Buttons and Buff waistcoats with silver lace. Colonel Lowthers Red Coats with Silver Buttons, and the waistcoats the same.

The 'Colonel Bogey' Saga

COMPILED BY
TONY PERRETT

In her article "The Pleasures of Research" (Vol 5 No 1) Marjorie Green mentions the various versions on the origin of "Colonel Bogey", Kenneth J Alford's famous march, and disputes all of them.

Does that include, we wonder, these two here submitted?! Firstly Wilfred Davey claims:

"Towards the end of the nineteenth century the members of a golf club in the Midlands of England had been engaged in the organisation of a round of games to determine who was their number one player, a process which, with a large number of members, would take up a terrific amount of time for very little real result. To the dedicated organisers this presented a very serious problem, one which, if the Empire was to be saved from going to the dogs, must be solved. At last one of them lit upon an idea which, among other advantages, made possible the placing of members in order of golfing ability without the need for each member to play a large number of matches spread over a considerable period of time.

The idea was to relate the performance of each player to a fixed standard. This yardstick took the form of an agreed and pre-determined number of strokes a good golfer might be expected to make at each hole, the number of strokes becoming known as the ground score. In effect, all players matched their skill against the prowess of the invisible ground score golfer, and in so doing matched their performance against each other.

Now it so happened that about this time a popular music hall balad, on everyone's lips at the moment, was called "Hush, hush, here comes the bogey man", and it soon became a standing joke among the golfers that the invisible ground score golfer against whom they were now pitting their skill was their "bogey man".

In the meantime the ground score idea, or, as the nickname caught on, the bogey score, spread and eventually reached a golf club in Gosport with a membership of officers of the services. Because of their background each member of this club had a rank, which appeared on their club lists, and in order to follow the practice to its logical conclusion the invisible bogey golfer was at once called Colonel Bogey! And there in due course Lieutenant F J Ricketts, Director of Music Royal Marines, better-known in the musical world as Kenneth Alford, composer, found him and was so impressed by the story that he immortalised the invisible Colonel for ever in the title of one of his world-famous marches - Colonel Bogey!"

As for the source of the "inspired theme" an "anonymous" writer states:

"Colonel Bogey! How many millions have marched to the strains of this popular march? It was in 1913 that a young Bandmaster, F J Ricketts,

of the 93rd Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders, writing under the nom-de-plume of Kenneth J Alford, composed this march. At a later date he revealed the source of the inspiration which led to its composition. Crossing a golf course - he was not a golfer in those days and did not readily understand the significance of a golfer shouting "fore" - an impatient golfer resorted to whistling two notes, C and A, to attract his attention. These two notes frequently repeated themselves in the young composer's mind, that on reaching home he made them the basis of the first subject of the march, which he felt should have for a title the well-known golfing term of "Colonel Bogey". Incidentally, these same two notes occur five times in the first subject of 32 bars."

Expanding onto other themes, this writer continues:

"It may interest readers to know how the first march came to be written by Kenneth J Alford. His appointment as Bandmaster to the 93rd Highlanders took place in 1908 and he soon learned that he had become a member of a Regiment with an exceptionally fine military history. One of the proud titles of the Regiment was the "Thin Red Line" and the march bearing this name was written in 1909 and dedicated to this famous Regiment.

The Great War of 1914-1918 brought a number of marches and several other compositions from his pen, of which mention may be made of the "Middy" - "The Voice of the Guns" - "On the Quarterdeck" - "Cavalry of the Clouds" - the latter being a tribute to the Royal Flying Corps of those days. But one that gained much popularity was "The Great Little Army". This title was inspired by the Kaiser's sneering reference to the original British Expeditionary Force of five divisions which he termed a "contemptible little army".

Perhaps the most epic composition of Kenneth Alford's was "The Vanished Army", composed as a tribute to those who fell in the First World War. It has a very poignant theme and has often been heard at the Cenotaph and other parades on Armistice Day. He himself describes this march as "poetic" and it is generally considered unsuitable as a parade march.

Major Ricketts served some 19 years with the 93rd Highlanders and shortly before leaving them to take up his appointment as Director of Music of the Royal Marines his Band was engaged to perform at the Dunedin Exhibition in New Zealand for a period of several months. The march "Dunedin" was composed in commemoration of that event. The fact that the population of Dunedin contained a considerable number of Scots may well account for the Scotch snap which is a feature of this composition.

The return of the Band from New Zealand via the Panama Canal prompted the title to the march of this name. Listeners will readily detect the Spanish style which dominates throughout the march.

The strange title of the next march has often been a source of interest and speculation. An officer of the 93rd Highlanders, noted for his courage both moral and physical, also for his eccentric and unorthodox methods, was much loved by his men, who affectionately named him "The Mad Major". This march has a very bright gaiety about it, suggestive of the exuberant spirits.

With Alford's appointment to the Band of the Royal Marines came more inspiration which brought forth the march "HM Jollies". Snatches of melodies of the sea are heard and the bugle calls of the three divisions, Chatham, Portsmouth and Plymouth are prominently featured. This march was eventually dedicated to the Royal Marines.

During the Second World War more compositions of Kenneth Alford came to light. Mention may be made of "Eagle Squadron" which was written as a tribute to the gallant Americans who voluntarily gave their services during the difficult days when Britain and the Commonwealth stood alone. Another march "Army of the Nile" was written shortly after Wavell's inspiring victories in Egypt and Libya in 1940-41."

Meanwhile in one of his record reviews for "SOLDIER" magazine RB, weighing up the merits of the two contenders for the "March King Crown", points out:

"Sousa usually writes in brighter keys than Alford, his rhythms are more varied and his melodies gay and brilliant. The harmony is plain and mostly obvious, the marches as a whole uncluttered with counter-melody and ornamentation. When he did ornament (the piccolo solo in "The Stars and Stripes Forever") he did it to unforgettable effect.

Alford chose mainly flat keys in the major and used the minor keys often (to poetic effect in "The Vanished Army"); his harmony is subtle and the melodies are far less four-square than Sousa's. He wrote with a wealth of counter-melody, some being more tuneful than the tune, and added much brilliant ornamentation."

Now there should be no doubt in anyone's mind as to which composer's work they are listening in future; but for the final word on "Colonel Bogey" (and march music in general) I quote the late revered gentleman known also under a "nom de plume" simply as "Cassandra", who stated in the July 25th "Daily Mirror" of 1966:

"At the risk of being called a spoil-war-sport, I cling to my view that, with the exception of the colliery brass band, the military band is just about the lowest manifestation of all musical sounds, excluding of course the human yawping noise that has done so much to destroy the reputation of the guitar.

I also object to these anachronisms on the grounds that music is a grotesque accompaniment to the proceedings of mass killings, whose real sound is the crash of high explosives, the thunder of nuclear bombs, and the screams of innocents being burnt to death in flaming napalm.

I suppose that military bands are all right if you like military tattoos (I don't), tea on the lawn of the Officers' Mess (I don't) and the Changing of the Guard (I don't)!"

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