



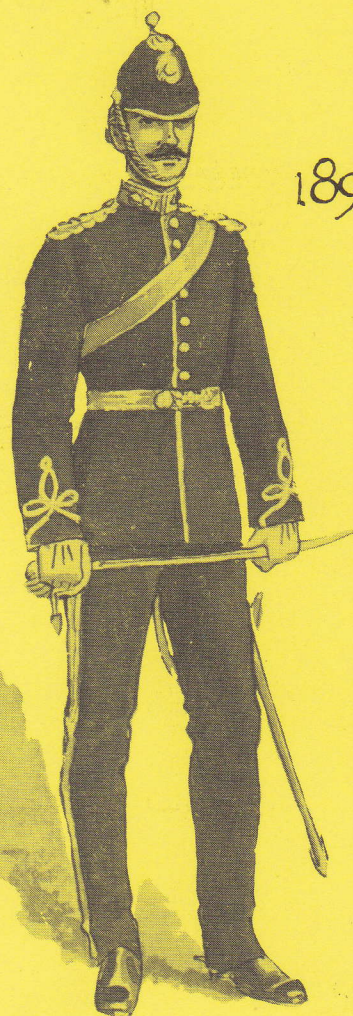
ROYAL MARINES
HISTORICAL SOCIETY



1678



1755



1890

Sheet Anchor

Volume VI Number 1

PRESIDENT

Major General J I H Owen OBE

PAST PRESIDENTS

Colonel M Archdall CBE

Colonel F B Pym

VICE PRESIDENTS

Captain G H Hennessy RM

Major A J Donald RM

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Chairman

Colonel E Potts
Passaford Farmhouse
Passaford
SIDMOUTH
Devon
EX10 ONL

Hon Secretary

L Garrett
14 Sarisbury Close
Downview Road
FELPHAM
W Sussex PO22 8JN

Hon Treasurer

P J Hayes
1 Hadrian's Close
ST ALBANS
Herts AL3 4TY

Assistant Hon Secretary

Lt R Eyre-Tanner RNR
99 Westering
ROMSEY
Hants

Hon Editor

A J Perrett
20 Brighton Avenue
GOSPORT
Hants PO12 4BX

CGRM's Representative

major A J Donald RM*
Royal Marines Eastney
Southsea
Hants PO4 9PX

Elected Members

Colonel E Potts
A E Howell
Eric Morley*
J R Cullimore

(* also Editorial Sub Committee)

THE SHEET ANCHOR

(Formerly the Royal Marines Historical Society Newsletter)

"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

VOLUME VI NUMBER 1

SUMMER 1979

CONTENTS

Marine 1805 (Dress and Equipment)	Page 2
Sea Life in Nelson's Time	Page 5
The Character of Lieutenant Price RM	Page 6
The Zeebrugge Raid	Page 8
The Founder Marine Fusiliers	Page 13
The Royal Marines	Page 14
The Personal Narrative of Major General A R Chater	Page 18
The Royal Marines Band Service	Page 22
Letters	Page 20
Extracts	Pages 4, 7, 13

(Whilst every effort is made by the Editorial Committee to ensure that the information contained in this publication is correct, the ultimate responsibility must lie with the individual author.)

Marine 1805

Dress & Equipment

By Charles C Stadden



Fig 1



Fig 2

The uniform of the Royal Marines by 1805 conformed fairly closely to that of the Army of 1798-99, the coatee lost the lapels and had now become single breasted fastened with ten pewter buttons set two by two, reinforced by loops of regimental lace, the colour white having one blue and one red stripe thereon, this lace bordered the collar, round the pocket flaps on the skirts and four lace loops and buttons set two by two on each cuff. In consequence of the Marines becoming a "Royal" Regiment in 1802 the facings were changed from white to blue, so the collar, shoulder straps and cuffs were now blue. The pocket flaps were cut straight at this time but later became nearly vertical, the coatee was cut loosely at first but later began to be more fitting and tighter. The Marine flank companies did not appear to wear wings but the shoulder straps had tufted ends like the Battalion companies. Officers of the Grenadier companies wore epaulettes and fringe only but had a grenade on the strap and likewise the Light Infantry a Bugle-horn.

The distinctive Round Hat adopted officially on 26th March 1799 for all occasions, was not a purely Marine headdress as this was the foreign service hat used by the Army that had been in vogue some years previously, but one would suppose from the role of Marines afloat this type of hat was considered the most suitable headdress for them. (A parallel today of course, the Marines are still wearing in full dress the tropical helmet.) There was a move a year or two later to try the Cap as issued to the Army (possibly the Stove Pipe Shako as this was always referred to as a Cap) but the Round Hat was found more satisfactory to use.

The Round Hat was made of black felt, the brim having a looping on each side to the crown; a band of tape ran round the base above the brim; on the left side was a cockade and button and above this a worsted tuft (feathers for Officers). The following are the distinctions in this headdress between the companies:

GRENADIER Brim bound in black tape;
White band; Looping white;
White worsted tuft.

BATTALION Brim bound in white tape; White band; Looping black; White over Red tuft.

LT INFANTRY Brim bound in black tape; White band; Looping white; Green worsted tuft.

The breeches were white, with black linen gaiters fastened with white metal buttons to come to just below the knee.

White overall pantaloons and trousers were worn on service, later grey became the norm, but on 12th December 1808 an order instructing that pantaloons and trousers were to be dyed a fast blue.

The equipment was buff leather whitened, the same pattern as the Army. This consisted of a pouch belt and a shoulder-belt from which was suspended the triangular bayonet from a frog, the pouch belt went under the bayonet belt in front but over it at the back, this had the effect of steadying, by the weight of the pouch the movement of the bayonet and its scabbard. Where the belts crossed on the breast a brass belt-plate was fixed, the design on this which was oblong in shape, appears to have been a foul anchor, above this the Crown and a scroll inscribed "ROYAL MARINES", below the anchor was a spray of laurel. (An earlier pattern was oval with an anchor without rope, and yet another oval plate had an engraved crowned anchor, it is possible that these may have been Naval plates.) Hamilton Smith in his series "Costume of the Army of the British Empire" in the plate devoted to the Royal Marines dated 1815 shows an oval plate, this may be a mistake.

The pouch badge was an eight pointed star, on a circlet in the centre was the Royal Cypher GR surrounded by a belt with the words "ET TERRAM PER MARE".

The arms of the rank and file were the land service musket and triangular bayonet.

NCO's DISTINCTIONS

It is interesting to find that the Marines were a few years behind the Army in adopting chevrons for badges of rank, in an order dated 4th September 1807 PLYMOUTH Sergeants and Corporals were ordered to wear chevrons on their right arms instead of shoulder knots previously worn.

-oOo-

FOOTNOTE

Apart from the Battle of Trafalgar, in which some 2700 Royal Marines partook and 117 gave their lives, the year 1805 was also significant for the inauguration of the RM Artillery, and the following extracts from The RMA Book (Vol 1 Page 36-7) by Edward Fraser and L G Carr-Laughton are appropriate.

"In May 1805 the first inspection of the RMA was held at Chatham by Lieutenant General Campbell. He reported to the Admiralty his 'great satisfaction at the progress of the officers in their studies.' The efficiency of the Corps, he added, 'exceeded his most sanguine expectations.'

"Then, in June, Captain Williams proposed to General Barclay the Provision of a working uniform, 'on account of the great injury which the uniform clothing of the Companies suffered from the powder when at gun and mortar practise; especially the latter'. Up to then the regulation red coat of the infantry marines had been worn on all occasions. The men, he suggested, 'should be permitted to purchase blue jackets and a pair of overalls, which they were to wear upon all fatigues, and upon such other occasions as might be necessary, in order to preserve their uniform clothing.'"

To compliment Charles Stadden's descriptive article on the RM Uniforms of the Nelson era, I chose the following extract from "Sea Life in Nelson's Time" relative to the Royal Marines, written by John Masefield and Published by Purnell Co Ltd in 190^r

Sea life in Nelson's time

By John Masefield

In addition to the complements of sailors, all ships of war carried a proportion of marines, under their proper officers. The sea regiment was founded at the end of the seventeenth century, not as a permanent force, but as a force in which the King's seamen could be trained. In the first years of the marines they were really young sailors, who went aloft, did the musketry exercise, and joined in the working of the ship. Gradually they lost their sailor craft, and became more and more a military body. They came to be employed less as sailors than as ship's police, a sort of armed guard, ready to repress any mutiny among the tarry-breeks. They were then messed and berthed apart from the sailors, who began to despise them, as an inferior and useless race. In the war years of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the marines were employed as checks upon the seamen. All ships of war carried them, the proportion varying from about 170 officers and men, in a first-rate, to 140 or 130, in a third-rate, and a dozen in command of a sergeant, in a 10-gun brig. The proportion to marines was therefore about one to every four sailors and idlers. They were usually on friendly terms with the sailors, in spite of the sailors' contempt for pipeclay. Many marines were so eager to learn the sailors' duty that they were allowed to furl the main-sail. When at sea they helped the after-guard in various light duties. They stood sentry-go outside the captain's cabin, magazine hatchways, and in various other parts of the ship, such as the galley door while dinner was cooking. In action they fell in with their muskets on the poop, quarter-deck, and gangways, to gall the enemy's sail-trimmers and topmen, and to give a hand at the braces, if occasion arose. A marine private was dressed in the scarlet tunic of a soldier, with white tight breeches and black Hessian boots. His hat was a sort of top-hat, made of black felt, with gold lace round the brim, a narrow gold band round the crown, and a smart cockade on the left side. A black japanned cartridge box was slung behind him, on two pipeclayed, crossed shoulder-straps. The marine officer wore a smart scarlet tail-coat, with elaborate cuffs and lapels, tight white breeches, low shoes, and silk stockings. In peace time, when not attached to a ship, the marines were not disbanded, but sent to barracks. They were a standing force. When a ship was commissioned they were usually the first part of the crew to come aboard. It was generally their fortune to do all the dirty work connected with the fitting out of the ship. They were at all times subject to the same discipline as the sailors. If they transgressed the rules of the service they were flogged at the gangway like the sailors. They stood no watch at sea, save the occasional sentry-go at the magazines and cabins. They were always berthed far aft on the berth-deck¹, where they would not be disturbed by the changing watches. Their officers messed in the ward-room, and had little cabins on the lower or orlop deck.

1 Or on the orlop.

The character of Lieutenant Price RM from "Mansfield Park" by Jane Austen

(Submitted by Bridget Spiers)

Chapter 1

"... Miss Frances married, in the common phrase, to disoblige her family, and by fixing on a Lieutenant of Marines, without education, fortune, or connections, did it very thoroughly".

Chapter XXXVIII

"... and lastly in walked Mr Price himself, his own loud voice preceding him, as with something of the oath kind he kicked away his son's portmanteau, and his daughter's band-box in the passage, and called out for a candle; no candle was brought, however, and he walked into the room.

Fanny, with doubting feelings, had risen to meet him, but sank down on finding herself undistinguished in the dusk, and unthought of. With a friendly shake of his son's hand, and an eager voice, he instantly began - "Ha! welcome back, my boy. Glad to see you. Have you heard the news? The Thrush went out of harbour this morning. Sharp is the word, you see! By G--, you are just in time! The doctor has been here enquiring for you; he has got one of the boats, and is to be off for Spithead by six, so you had better go with him. I have been to Turner's about your mess; it is all in a way to be done. I should not wonder if you had your orders to-morrow; but you cannot sail with this wind, if you are to cruise to the westward; and Captain Walsh thinks you will certainly have a cruise to the westward, with the Elephant. By G--, I wish you may! But old Scholey was saying just now, that he thought you would be sent first to the Texel. Well, well, we are ready, whatever happens. But by G--, you lost a fine sight by not being here in the morning to see the Thrush go out of harbour. I would not have been out of the way for a thousand pounds. Old Scholey ran in at breakfast-time, to say she had slipped her moorings and was coming out. I jumped up, and made but two steps to the platform. If ever there was a perfect beauty afloat, she is one; and there she lays at Spithead, and any body in England would take her for an eight-and-twenty. I was upon the platform two hours this afternoon, looking at her. She lays close to the Endymion, between her and the Cleopatra, just to the eastward of the sheer hulk."

"Ha!" cried William, "that's just where I should have put her myself. It's the best berth at Spithead. But here is my sister, Sir, her is Fanny;" turning and leading her forward; - "it is so dark you do not see her."

With an acknowledgement that he had quite forgot her, Mr Price now received his daughter, and having given her a cordial hug, and observed that she was grown into a woman, and he supposed would be wanting a husband soon, seemed very much inclined to forget her again.

Chapter XXXIX

"On her father, her confidence had not been sanguine, but he was more negligent of his family, his habits were worse, and his manners coarser, than she had been prepared for. He did not want abilities; but he had no curiosity, and no information beyond his profession; he read only the newspaper and the navy-list; he talked only of the dockyard; the harbour, Spithead, and the Motherbank; he swore and he drank, he was dirty and gross. She had never been able to recall

anything approaching to tenderness in his former treatment of herself. There had remained only a general impression of roughness and loudness; and now he scarcely ever noticed her, but to make her the object of a coarse joke.

Chapter XLI

It was soon pain upon pain, confusion upon confusion; for they were hardly in the High Street, before they met her father, whose appearance was not the better from its being Saturday. He stopt; and, ungentlemanlike as he looked, Fanny was obliged to introduce him to Mr Crawford. She could not have a doubt of the manner in which Mr Crawford must be struck. He must be ashamed and disgusted altogether. He must soon give her up, and cease to have the smallest inclination for the match; and yet, though she had been so much wanting his affection to be cured, this was a sort of cure that would be almost as bad as the complaint; and I believe, there is scarcely a young lady in the united kingdoms who would rather put up with the misfortune of being sought by a clever, agreeable man, than have him driven away by the vulgarity of her nearest relations.

Mr Crawford probably could not regard his future father-in-law with any idea of taking him for a model in dress; but (as Fanny instantly, and to her great relief discerned), her father was a very different man, a very different Mr Price in his behaviour to this most highly-respected stranger, from what he was in his own family at home. His manners now, though not polished, were more than passable; they were grateful, animated, manly; his expressions were those of an attached father, and a sensible man; - his loud tones did very well in the open air, and there was not a single oath to be heard. Such was his instinctive compliment to the good manners of Mr Crawford; and be the consequence what it might, Fanny's immediate feelings were infinitely soothed.

Chapter XLVI

"Fanny's last meal in her father's house was in character with her first; she was dismissed from it as hospitably as she had been welcomed."

Notes

The novel was first published in 1814 and concerns the adventures of Fanny, the eldest daughter of Lieutenant Price. If one assumes that the action of the book takes place in 1814 one deduces that Price was placed on half-pay in about 1805. His wife, expecting her ninth baby, writes to her elder sister, who has married a wealthy man, appealing for help and suggesting that she act as patron to one of her elder children. As a result, Fanny Price, then aged ten, is taken into the sister's home to be brought up with her family. Fanny, then, must have been born in 1794. She has an elder brother, one year older than herself, so her parents must have married in 1791 or 1792.

-oOo-

EXTRACT FROM 'THE GLOBE AND LAUREL' JANUARY 1909

The King of Spain's visit to Prince Louis of Battenberg's flagship, 'Prince of Wales'. King Alfonso was shown over the big battleship, and just before he took his departure the entire ship's company was mustered on deck to give him three cheers. Surveying the solid mass of brawny bluejackets, flanked by both red and blue marines, drawn up before him, he exclaimed in a loud voice, "You Marines are very beautiful". It was all the officers could do to restrain the laughter of the sailors.

This is a personal account of the Zeebrugge Raid expressed in a letter written by Mr P W Standbridge to RMHS medal collector Lieutenant A M S Bailey RM. It may prove of interest to compare this narrative from 'the ranks' to that written by the Adjutant at the time Captain A R Chater which will follow in a later edition.

The Zeebrugge Raid

By P W Standbridge

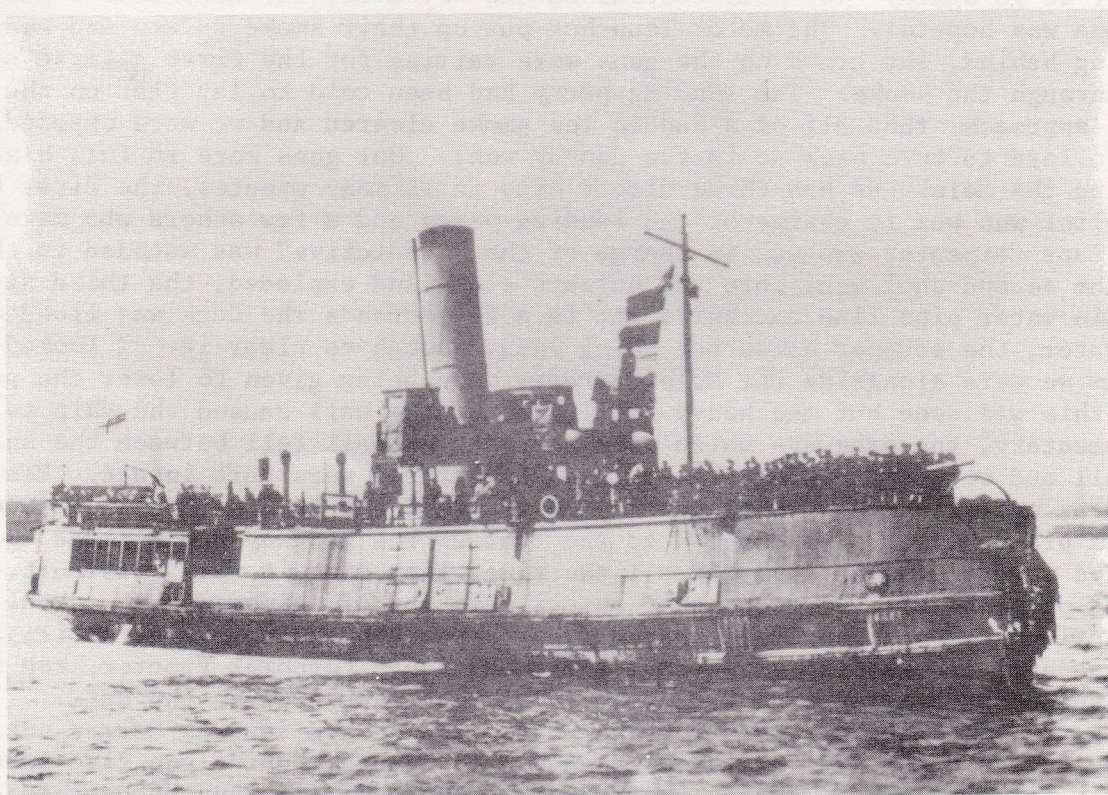
I have received your letter today and was most interested to know that you were compiling information about various medal personnel. Yes I did know a Lance Cpl Proctor and will endeavour to construct the little I know of him. As you might know the events of that night were so bewildering that it would be difficult for any man to say exactly what another was doing. As a platoon we were billeted in North Barracks Deal after leaving Gosport Barracks. Prior to leaving Gosport the platoon had been at Browndown Camp learning Mills bomb throwing and explosives. At that time we had no idea that it would soon become necessary to use that knowledge.

At Deal we met parties from Chatham and Plymouth, each day we went on Freedowns just outside Deal, in fact it was not far from the rifle range that the Marines used during training. On the Downs a whole area had been marked out with tapes and we used to line up and attack at a given point many times each day. Whatever point a platoon had been allocated we kept to. During one of these operations four Royal Marines were killed when a Stokes gun exploded, we all attended their funeral. In our attack area we were told if it was Dug Out, gun emplacements or searchlight sites. At that time we all thought it was a special job in France. After the training had been completed we were all given seven days leave. On our return we were served out with sand shoes, it seemed strange, but we did not pay much attention to it. A few days later we fell in and marched to Deal Station and in a short while we arrived in Dover. We marched down to a boat which I think, but am not positively sure, was the "Prince Edward". Once aboard we all had to go below deck, when this was done we left the dockside but once out to sea we were allowed on deck. We still thought we were off to France till someone noticed that we were heading north. We passed Deal, Ramsgate and Margate, and what was strange we signalled each ship we passed. When we arrived off the mouth of the Thames we signalled a vessel which turned out to be the Daffodil, a one time ferry from Liverpool. She evidently gave the correct signal in return to ours, because we pulled alongside of her. We were then told to embark on the "Daffodil". After this was completed the vessel we had been on left us and when it was out of sight we got under way. Things must have been very secret. Shortly afterwards we came up with a large number of ships which included the "Vindictive", "Iris", "Dominion", "Thetis" and many others. The "Daffodil" pulled alongside the "Dominion" where the Gosport section and others got aboard. This was to be our home whilst we were waiting for something to happen. This was my first time aboard a Battleship and I was surprised at its size, I was able to wander around without restriction and I was fascinated with all I saw. The following day we were told to fall in and soon afterwards Sir Roger Keys came aboard and he then informed us that the operation was the closing off of Zeebrugge and Ostend harbours with concrete laden ships. The Marines job was landing on the Mole to silence guns that controlled the entrance to Zeebrugge Harbour so that the concrete laden ships could make their way to the canal entrance, swing across it and then blow the bottoms out. This would make a complete seal off to prevent enemy submarines coming in or out. The reason so Sir Roger Keys said was that so many ships had been sunk that the feeding of the population was getting acute, and something had to be done about it. There was a canal that ran from Zeebrugge to Bruges and then out to sea again via Ostend, so if the canal was sealed both ends it would complete the blockage.

Sir Roger said the whole operation depended on wind and tide at midnight, this confined the operation to early April so the time was limited.

For security reasons all vessels that came from shore to the convoy were ordered to remain so that no information could be passed ashore. The essence of surprise was the main factor to success. We were shown aerial photographs of the Mole, where we were to land and could then see the reason for all the taped off sections that we had been training on for so long.

HMS Dominion was a hive of industry, men everywhere, messes were set up to accommodate the extra personnel, food seemed in abundance. We heard afterwards that the majority were not expected to get back and so we were being fed like criminals before execution. Whatever the reason, everyone was in good spirit waiting for the day. There did not seem to be any tension, in fact it was more like getting ready for a hunting expedition. Also on board was a detachment of sailors who were to be in the landing party and their main equipment were revolvers and cutlasses, evidently hand to hand fighting was expected. We were allowed to write letters, but we know now that none were posted till after the operation was over. A few days went by and then the order came to "Stand To", and we knew something was doing. Late afternoon we transferred from the "Dominion" to the "Vindictive" and shortly afterwards we got under way. There was quite a holiday spirit aboard, one of the fellows had a concertina and was playing it on deck and we all gathered round and sang, the sailors were sharpening their cutlasses on a grindstone nearby and sarcastic remarks were thrown across to them to cut their own throats as they were making too much noise. Darkness came down a little later, but before it did I glanced around and was impressed by the number of vessels that were with us. Motor launches by the dozen were about, these were later to be used to put up a smoke screen and to rescue personnel from the ships that were to be sunk in the canal. The concrete laden boats were astern of us, also the submarine that was loaded with explosives, this sub was later to play an important part in the operation.



MV "Daffodil" with Troops Embarked Leaving Harbour

Destroyers guarded us on the flanks and also ahead.

The "Vindictive" herself had a false deck where about a dozen gangways had been fitted, these were to be lowered against the Mole to allow speedy landing. A number of Mortars were fixed to the deck for short range firing. A fighting top had been erected containing a gun, when we were to get alongside the Mole this gun would be just above the level of the Mole and could then sweep any attack towards us. In this operation my job with a few others was to be Mills bombers. We wore a leather coat with extentions down each thigh to carry the Mills bomb. When it was approximately 11.15 the motor launches went ahead and put up a terrific smoke screen and we steamed slowly behind. The Ostend party had already left us to go to the scene of their own exploit. Guns were manned and positions taken up for landing when the order was given to return, everyone was filled with disappointment, to get so near and then to turn back was heartbreaking. Why were we returning? What had gone wrong, was on everyones lips, but information was lacking. After a depressing return to our former anchorage we heard that Sir Roger Keys was to come aboard the "Dominion". We had a late breakfast and then cleaned up. Sir Roger Keys came aboard later in the morning. We were all lined up and waiting. He then explained to us that the wind had changed round after the smoke screen had been layed and that we would have been exposed to the land batteries in a few minutes, and rather than have the whole operation smashed before it had started he thought discretion would save lives and there would be another day. I remember looking at Sir Roger Keys when he was speaking and he looked rather heartbroken. I think he felt the same as us, maybe our nerves had got to a pitch and then collasped, he left us then and we went below to get some sleep. I think a week must have passed when we had orders to go aboard "Vindictive" again. We got under way as before but had only proceeded a few miles down the coast when we were ordered to return. We were never told the reason for this. We returned to the "Dominion" and carried on as before. Plenty of food and only a little physical training to keep us fit. The days dragged on, monotony set in, waiting for something to happen was playing havoc with mens nerves. Then came 22nd April, orders to get ready to go aboard "Vindictive" again, one mad rush to get out things together and off we go again. The same routine on the way over, the weather was good and everyone was hopeful. The motor launches put up their smoke screen and we were creeping behind, the crews on the guns were waiting for the first glimpse of the Mole through the smoke. The landing party had been told to lay flat on the deck on the approach, then all of a sudden the smoke cleared and we were exposed. It was too late to turn back so in the convoy went. Our guns were in full blast sweeping the Mole. We had three direct hits in as many minutes, the first killed Col Elliot who was in charge of the landing party and a few others who were with him. Capt Carpenter who was in charge of the "Vindictive" was wounded in the arm, the second shot went into the pursers store and exploded, the third struck the main water pipe line and burst it, in a few seconds the deck was flooded with water, the scupper holes not being large enough to clear it. I looked up and saw we were alongside the Mole. Orders were being given to lower the gangways, this was done but the heavy swell against the wall caused the ship to lay off momentary, the gangways which were against the wall fell between the ship and the wall and were crushed. Only approximately three were left intact. Men began to stream over the gangways to the top of the wall and then we heard someone call out 8th platoon over. We doubled to the foot of the gangway and climbed up. The gangways were rising and falling all the time which made it very difficult. On getting onto the Mole we found that things were out of alinement due to the "Vindictive" tying up several hundred feet nearer the shore than we anticipated. I and several others, one of which I think was Lance Corporal Proctor, ran to where we had been trained to attack but could not locate it in the dark. Someones voice called out make for the boats, there were several German vessels tied up on the other side of the Mole and we could see machine gun fire sweeping the Mole from one of the ships. We rushed across and threw our bombs onto the German ship. The machine gun fire stopped so we guessed it was out of action. In what seemed a very short time we heard the siren and knew we had only about

twenty minutes before the "Vindictive" got under way. At that time there was a violent explosion as the Submarine blew the causeway that connected the Mole to the mainland. From that moment there was no order, but everyone was in a hurry to climb the ladders to the parapet; a rearguard party on board had placed them in position ready for our return. We got away quickly and the old "Vindictives" boilers must have worked overtime. When early morning came and with it daylight we could see the damage which had been done. My room mate in Gosport who was in the fighting top was killed as were all of them except Sergeant Finch who was later to be awarded the VC.

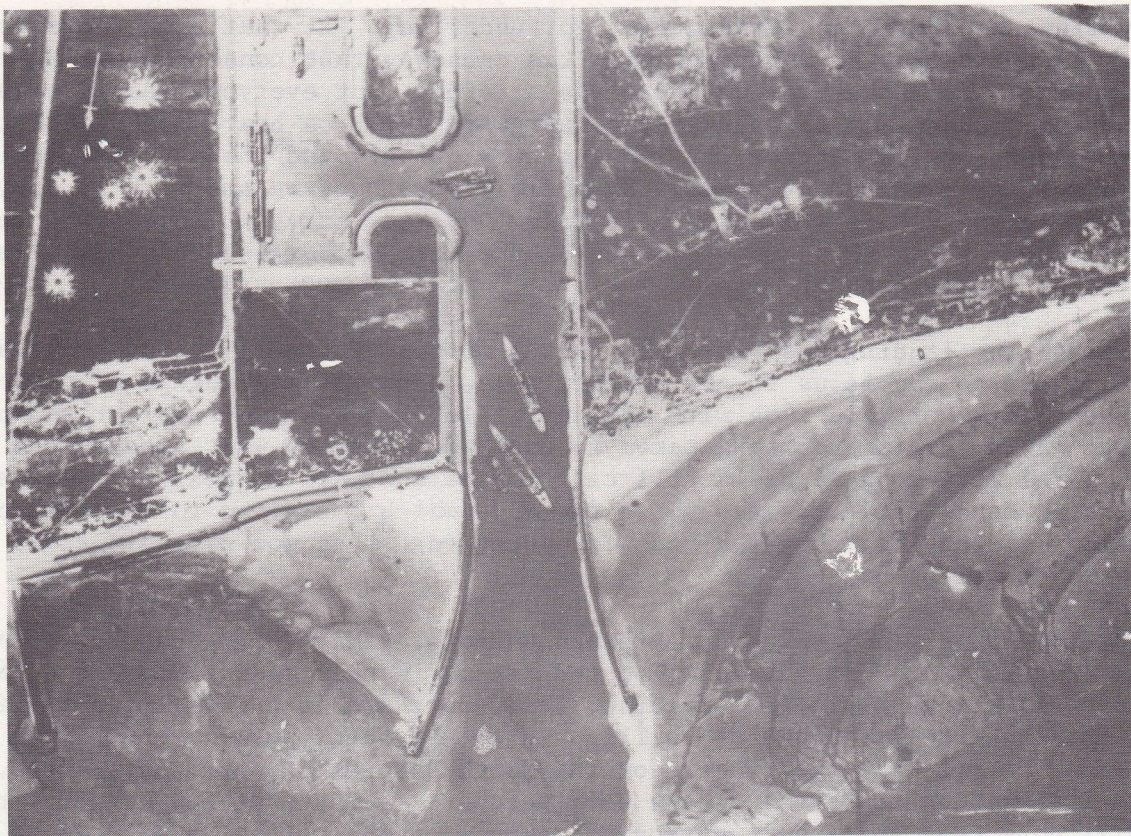
Though the landing was very important I must give credit to the stokers who kept up steam to enable us to get quickly away, also to the medical crew who must have had a horrible time with so many killed and wounded. We arrived back in Dover early morning and were taken to Deal HQ. Then we went straight to bed. Later in the afternoon we had a roll call to see who were missing and who saw the missing ones last. We also voted for a VC which was given to Capt Bamford. I remember him saying though he had been voted for it he would regard it as belonging to all of us.

At that time I never knew that Lance Corporal Proctor had been suggested for an award. It may have been allocated later, in that case I would not have known as after a weeks leave I returned to Gosport and in a few days was off to North Russia attached to HMS Glory 111. In actual fact there were 300 RMLI and some RMA. We were the forerunners of the North Russian Expeditionary Force. Though I have been unable to give a very personal account of Lance Cpl Proctor you will note that this is my personal account of the action taken from my life story that I have written. It will indicate some idea of what was experienced by the 8th platoon. I'm sure if others had made a diary, it would have been very much the same. Owing to the speed of the operation and the darkness I would say it was impossible to isolate individual acts of bravery. This must have been arrived at after the whole action had been collated. Individual men like Capt Carpenter, Sgt Finch and Lieutenant Sandford had specialised jobs that merited recognition.

Maybe this article will be of interest if only from an ordinary private outlook. Possibly there are very few diaries about now after all these years. I possess a piece of the "Vindictive's" funnel and also a piece of the Mole, a great quantity of which fell on the "Vindictive" during the shelling. I would not be surprised that Lance Cpl Proctor was given the DSM for the attack on the German ship that we bombed. I cannot now visualise the man as one meets so many people during ones life it would be impossible to remember them all.

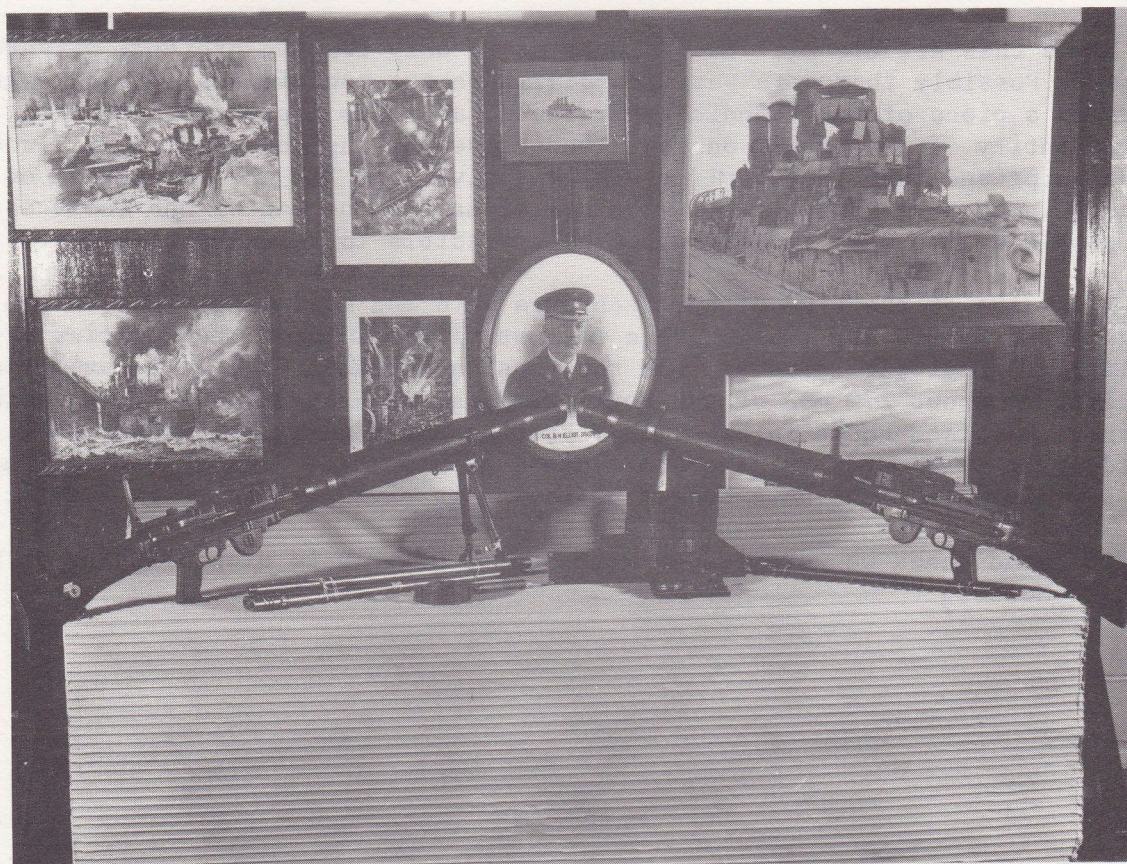
I was 18½ at the time of the Zeebrugge Raid and most likely one of the youngest. I am now 79. During this last war I was WOII of the Maritime Royal Artillery, a regiment formed to man the guns on merchant ships. I have before me a list of about 270 men of the Royal Marines and Navy who took part in the Zeebrugge Raid and there is a Thomas J Proctor Gnr Vindictive number 15286. According to my records he gave his address as Hampstead Police Station London NW3, I presume he might have been a policeman in civil life.

(' The sand shoes we were issued with had to be worn to stop slipping on the concrete Mole.)



Aerial View of Blockade Ships After The Raid

The "Zeebrugge" Display in The Old Corps Museum



THE FOUNDER MARINE FUSILIERS - BY WILFRED E DAVEY MBE BEM.

The story of the development of firearms makes fascinating reading. I found the following in "Always a Fusilier" by Northcote Parkinson, published by Sampson Lowe.

In the service of King Louis XIV of France it appears that the development of artillery had shown, as one of its side effects, the need for a body of men suitably equipped and trained for the special duty of protecting the cannon in the field.

The firearm used by the ordinary foot soldier of the time was a "matchlock" musket fired by application of a wick of smouldering tow but as cannon were loaded with gunpowder shovelled in from open casks handy to the guns, the presence nearby of burning tow would clearly be thought undesirable by the gunners!

This risk was accordingly reduced by introduction of a new force, specially formed for the purpose, equipped with the more sophisticated fusils, musket-like weapons in which many improvements in the firing operations had considerably reduced the danger of unintentional explosion.

Although the reign of this force in its special role was limited to a few years, many additional uses were soon seen for fusils, and among other developments Charles II of England saw them as an ideal weapon for the Marine regiment which he formed in 1664, as a refinement of the earlier situation in which landsmen, messing about with slow match and matchlocks on a heaving deck in a stiff breeze in action could be regarded as an unnecessary "great help" in a situation already full of problems.

Stemming from these thoughts, members of the Duke of York and Albany's Maritime Regiment of Foot became pioneers of the introduction of the fusil into the British Army, in which service it later became more widely used as a standard part of the weapons of the foot soldier.

NAVAL CHRONICAL - 1811.

Two Marines were executed on board the Zealous, at Lisbon, on the 8th of March, for the murder of a Sergeant of Marines. Their trial disclosed the following wicked, and in other respects, singular circumstances: the deceased Sergeant had been sent with the two prisoners to do duty on board one of the prison ships in the Tagus. In the course of the night they planned to call the Sergeant from his cot, under pretence of his being wanted. On his proceeding to the part of the ship requested, they way-laid him and pushed him overboard. It may be supposed that he had made himself obnoxious to them; but this did not appear. On the deceased's being missed, it obtained general belief on board the prison ship that he had jumped overboard; but it was not warranted by the man's general character, for he was a sober discreet man, and a good soldier. The first intimation of his death to his shipmates on board the Zealous, was by the sentinel upon deck seeing his hat pass by the ship in the Tagus. The sentinel instantly knew it belonged to him, and inquiry ensued; no suspicion, however, fell upon the prisoners, nor was it necessary for the ends of justice, for their consciences so lacerated them after the first hour they had committed the crime, that, as they confessed to their comrades, they had no rest day or night. Their voluntary confession led to their trial, and they told the court they had not slept since, but were constantly visited by a distempered imagination, of being in the presence of the deceased ghost. Both of them it afterwards appeared were notorious characters. The name of one of them was Brown. They died very penitent.

HM Queen Elizabeth II's Silver Jubilee came at a time when we were experiencing printing difficulties and editorial charges, therefore it slipped by without due recognition in our annals. As a form of compensation this extract expressing views on the Corps at the time of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee may help correct this omission.

The Royal Marines

By Major A F Gatliff

The Expansion of the Empire. - From the days of Elizabeth down to this Jubilee year of our Sovereign Lady Queen Victoria, the British Empire has never ceased to expand, and in the process of Empire building so markedly characteristic of this glorious reign, the Royal Marines have played a very considerable part. Whenever the realm over sea has been a-making, that force whose proud motto is "Per Mare, Per Terram" has been represented, and except on the Indian frontier, wherever hard knocks were to be given or got in any quarter of the globe, "Her Majesty's Jollies" have been strenuously engaged, bearing themselves nobly as seasoned warriors. Small wars, big wars, have been all as one to those who are "Soldiers and sailors too".

Especially has it fallen to their lot to do and die manfully in the numerous un-newspapered expeditions

"Where Afric's sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sands"

expeditions now long forgotten, whose only record is in the musty archives of the past, and in lone graves by swamp and jungle. Constant experience of warfare in divers countries and sundry places, now part of the Queen's dominions, has given them a readiness and resource proverbial throughout our Sovereign's Service.

Some Fights and a Moral. - Merely to enumerate the warlike exploits of the great Sea Regiment would fill pages, and it will only be possible to briefly refer to a few of their achievements during the past sixty years. In 1837 a battalion of Royal Marines - clad in gorgeous, tight-waisted, high stocked coatees, white trousers, and lofty, outspreading shakoes - co-operated with the Spanish Forces under Sir De Lacey Evans, and took part in the battles of Ametzagana and Eruani and Irun, on one occasion successfully withstanding an attack by the whole Carlist Army. The following extract from general orders proves that discipline was as conspicuous a Marine virtue at the beginning of the Queen's reign as now:- "The unshaken firmness of the British Royal Marines in repulsing, as they did, four times their number afforded a noble example of the irresistible force of military organisation and discipline which the Army should be proud to emulate." Two years later detachments of the corps took part in the operations about Bushire, in Persia, and helped to capture the Biblical sea-ports of Tyre and Sidon. More than half a century afterwards those historic cities which had experienced British prowess in war were witnesses of British sorrow in peace, for it was almost within sight of them that the "Victoria" sank for ever below the sun-lit waves of the Gulf of Tripoli. In that terrible disaster the splendid discipline of the Royal Marines was again manifested, and the 68 men of the corps who were drowned went to their doom like heroes. In 1842 a Marine detachment was the first to occupy the newly-acquired island of Hong Kong, which had come under British rule as a result of two years' empiring in China. Here a fight and there a fight, with operations in Burma and the taking of Prome and Pegu, filled in the time till the Russian War. In that struggle the Marines had a

brigade at Balaclava and Sebastopol, and others of them took part on ship board in the Baltic and Black Sea bombardments. For their services generally during the war the Red Marines were made Light Infantry in 1855.

Work in Asia and Africa. - During the Indian Mutiny the Marine detachment of the "Pearl" acted valiantly in the bloody fights at Bhoolpoie and Fort Belawa, while their comrades serving in China performed prodigies of valour at the Peiho, at the White Cloud Mountain and at the taking of the Taku Forts, with a welcome and lucrative interlude spent in sacking the Summer Palace at Pekin. New Zealand and the Maories at the Gate Pah, and Japan, where Simonosaki is not a pleasant memory, next occupied the attention of the corps, which in 1862 was definitely divided into two branches, the Royal Marine Artillery being established in that year and located at Eastney. Little was done in the way of fighting till 1873, when trouble arose on the West Coast of Africa. In the Ashanti War the gallant Sir Francis Festing prepared the way for the march to Coomassie and fought a battle on his own account before the chief arrived. King Koffee's sovereign red umbrella which was taken by the corps is now at Windsor Castle. Difficulties occurred at the end of the seventies with various headmen - black and white - in Perak, Zululand, and the Transvaal, and it is a satisfaction to the Royal Marines to remember that while they were successfully engaged at Rathalma, Ekowe, and Ginginhlovo, the corps took no part in the disastrous operations against the Boers.

The Egyptian Campaign. - In 1882, during the stirring events in Egypt, the Royal Marines were very much to the fore in every way. Firstly, at the bombardment of Alexandria; secondly, in the rescue of that city from fire and pillage; thirdly, in every battle up to and including the crowning victory of Tel-el-Kebir, where, alas! many fell; and finally in the reviews in Cairo and London. To mark Her Majesty's appreciation of the brilliant services of the corps in the campaign, HRH the Duke of Edinburgh was appointed its honorary colonel. Both in Egypt and in the military operations that took place three years later at Suakin and up the Nile, the Marine Force was attached to the Brigade of Guards, with whom also in peace manoeuvres a close intimacy has since been established. Teb and Tamaii, Abu-Klea and Abu-Krea, Gubat and Metemmeh, Hasheen and Tofrek, are all names well known to the corps from the experiences of the Guards' and Marines' Camel Regiment. In 1894 the brilliant little expedition against Fodi Silah on the Gambia was successfully carried through by the corps; and last year, when the advance to Dongola was decided upon, the Sirdar of the Egyptian Army confided the command of one of his brigades to a Red Marine, and the command of one of his gun-boats to a Blue Marine.

The Sea Regiment. - Finally, in this the sixtieth year of this famous epoch, the process of Empire making is still going on with unabated vigour, resource, skill, and heroism, and the recent little campaign in Benin has proved that the officers and men of the corps are just as ready and willing as ever to lay down their lives for Queen and country. In civil disturbances the Marines have rendered notable service, and were specially thanked by the Viceroy for what they did in Dublin at the time of the Invincibles. Steadfast amidst turbulence at home, foremost in honour abroad, they have proved an inspiring source of confidence wherever employed. A great leader has said of them, "There never was an appeal made to them for honour, courage, or loyalty that they did not more than realise my highest expectations." The corps will never cease to be proud of the great honour of having received new colours from the Queen's own gracious hands, and it may confidently be affirmed that Her Majesty has no more loyal and devoted servants than her Royal Marine Forces.

Extract from "Navy and Army Illustrated" 25 June 1897

(Submitted by Henry I Shaw Jr, Chief Historian USMC)

Editor's Postscript

In her twenty-five years reign, HM Queen Elizabeth II has become the first 'jet-setter' of the Royal Line, and few areas of her Commonwealth of Nations are inaccessible to her these days; yet despite the fact that her father King George VI was the first member to get his 'Wings', as a young officer through the RN Air Service during WWI, he rarely took to the air afterwards, and I think I can safely say that her grandfather King George V never once 'lifted off in one of those flying contraptions'! This in the space of fifty years.

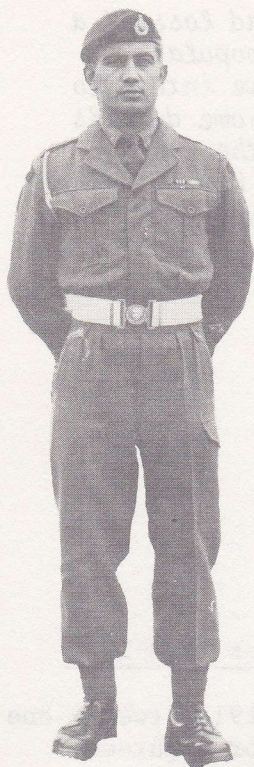
It set me wondering just how much the whole course of our history might have been completely re-shaped if only the illustrious Royal ancestors had been blessed with the same advantages....if the flying machine had been invented in early times.

Immediately there springs to mind the unfortunate episode of King George III with his rebellious American Colonies in the 18th Century; with the journey then taking about six weeks (three months to receive a return post reply) it was small wonder that things were allowed to get out of hand. But had he been able to fly over for a quick visit, without missing the London scene or his farming activities for too long, this little 'domestic tiff' might never have escalated the way it did. With North America still under the British flag, just think of the share of its vast wealth we could now cream off in taxes (tea, stamp, or whatever) to bolster our ailing economy here in the Mother Country.

In the same vein, can you imagine that famous line from Shakespeare's play "Richard the Third" reading thus... 'A helicopter, a helicopter, my Kingdom for a helicopter' as the hunchbacked monarch battled unsuccessfully at Bosworthfield in 1485. Had he lived to produce an heir, the House of York would not have been superseded by the Tudor Line (Henry VII)...which would of course resulted in having an entirely different person on the throne today! One could speculate forever.

We take so much for granted, yet when we stop to think seriously upon all that has been achieved during the span of these Silver Jubilee years the changes are quite considerable. Just one instance is the fact that television could be found in very few homes at the time of the Coronation, as it was then only emerging from the expensive experimental stage....in glorious black and white! As far as the Corps is concerned some of the notable milestones have been the phasing out of those 'grand' old troopships in favour of air charters (although recently 45 Cdo did utilise the Townsend Thoresen Ferries from Newcastle to Norway going on exercises!) There has been the drastic cut in ship's detachment complements as well as the total strength of Royal Marines; the contraction of Eastney Barracks and the setting up there of the Corps Museum; the withdrawal from the Far East, Malta, and many other corners of the globe long protected by the Corps into the new NATO concept restricted largely to the North Western hemisphere; and through this the adoption of the 'All Commando' and 'Snow-Warfare' role. During this time also the 'Globe and Laurel' journal changed from a monthly to bi-monthly publication as the Queen ascended the throne; and in the uniform structure 'Blues' became relegated to Number One Dress, 'Ginger Suits' (Battledress - khaki serge) gave way to Lovat serge and baratheas 'Officer-type' uniforms, the lovats raincoat replaced the waterproof cape and greatcoat in personal kit (though the latter is still drawn on loan for ceremonial occasions), and the blue beret disappeared from all heads save those of recruits, RM Cadets and RMR personnel. And most important of all perhaps, came the formation of the Royal Marines Historical Society!

Just a glimpse into the past twenty-five years; looking into the future is not so easy but one cannot help wondering what further changes are in store before the Queen celebrates HER Diamond Jubilee!?



OUT



IN



The Personal Narrative of Maj Gen Arthur Reginald Chater CB CVO DSO OBE

Part One



In recording here the sad loss of a fellow member and very popular distinguished officer, we intend to publish by installment some details of his early career in the Corps, which were deposited by him with the Director of the RM Museum.

With the Royal Marines 1913-1920

On 30th September 1913, twenty one young men of seventeen or eighteen, arrived at the Royal Naval College Greenwich on first appointment as Probationary Second Lieutenants in the Royal Marines. We were all rather pleased with ourselves in our new uniforms, which we wore very badly. To us at that time, wars seemed very far away. Little did we think that within two years four of us would be killed in battle. In the Mess one night I drank

with Richard Foote to "the first time we would be under fire". Within a bare year he had been killed, and I had been wounded.

After nine months at Greenwich, wasted in acquiring knowledge which we never used, we moved to Deal where our military training began. July 1914 was a perfect summer month. The AGRM carried out his annual inspection of the Depot RM. As the days passed by, excitement in the events in Europe increased. We awoke on Thursday 30th July, to be told that many of the trained soldiers were to leave the Depot that day for their mobilisation stations. On Saturday, a cricket match was being played on the South Green when between two overs about 4pm, an orderly came across the field and gave a message to the Staff Officer who was keeping wicket. This was the order for the Navy to mobilise. Within a few minutes, buglers were sounding the "General Assembly" around the town. Many of the staff and senior recruits left Deal that evening.

Church on Sunday morning was a moving and for some, a very sorrowful service. Immediately after lunch, the twenty one Second Lieutenants were called to the Commandant's office, and told that we were to leave that evening to join our RM Divisions. We were given five minutes in which to choose our Division in order of seniority. I chose Chatham because it was nearest to Germany. Five of us arrived at Chatham that night, and found the whole Division on parade under arms, as though expecting an invasion, although war was not declared until over twenty-four hours later.

Our early days at Chatham were spent watching elderly Reservists being kitted-up, and doing a little spasmodic training. When the RM Brigade was

formed to go to Ostende, we were first put under orders to go with it, and then - to our bitter grief - we were taken out again; but when after only a few days, the Brigade returned, and was reformed, we were appointed to it, and told to provide ourselves with khaki uniform and camp kit. I was proud to be in command of No 1 Platoon of A Company. I was eighteen. My Company Commander a "dug-out" Major was thirty-five years older than me. At the end of August the RM Brigade concentrated for training in camp near St Margaret's Bay. We had been there just a week, and training had barely started, when, on 7th September we marched to Dover, and embarked for France.

ANTWERP

Landing next morning at Dunkirk, the RM Brigade was first in billets and then in camp for some days, during which time the men's blue uniform was changed for khaki. The Battalion then moved to Cassal, from where we carried out patrolling - in London motor buses. On 3rd October, the Brigade entrained at short notice, and it became known that we were on the way to Antwerp. We detrained at Vieux Dieu late that evening, and slept the remainder of the night in billets. Early next morning we started marching along a typical straight Belgian road with tall poplars on either side. Also typical of those days, the men were made to carry more than was humanly possible. Some men threw away the blankets they were carrying in addition to full marching order with packs. During a halt, when we were fallen out under the trees on the right of the road, we saw our first enemy shell bursts of the war - shrapnel burst high in the air. Just then we were ordered to fall in facing the road, as the First Lord of the Admiralty was coming to look at us. When Mr Winston Churchill reached me he asked how old I was. I had to answer "Eighteen" in front of my platoon, and so thought this a tactless question.

About noon, we reached the town of Lierre, and were ordered to take over from a Belgian unit, and hold the line of the Petit Nethe which runs through the town. "A" Company was allotted the main street, the bridge in front of us having been blown up by the Belgians. My platoon was mostly in a trench dug by Belgians straight across the road. We sent a party over the river to demolish the nearest buildings, which would give cover to the enemy. The town seemed to be deserted, but an old woman arrived with a shawl over her head, and carrying her possessions in a basket on her arm. The Marines took pity on the poor old thing, and ferried her across the river and sent her on her way. We heard later that "she" was a young German spy, and that he had been shot by the Belgians. The officers dined well that night, for their Marine servants cooked some chickens they found running around, and produced a bottle of wine from the cellar of a deserted casino.

Towards the dawn there were two or three explosions in the road behind us for which we could not account. We found later that in the dark the Germans had mounted a gun in the street only some three hundred yards in front of us, and were firing ranging shots. We stood-to before dawn. As it was getting lighter, the German gun opened fire. I was looking over the top of the parapet. A shell burst in front of me and splattered me in the face. I rolled over and could see nothing, but was able to tell my platoon sergeant to take over the platoon. I was dragged into a house and bandaged up. Although I could not see, I could walk, and so I was led away to the rear, where I was examined by Dr Louis Greig, who sent me to hospital in Antwerp.

Some days later, it was decided to evacuate Antwerp. I was lucky to be taken over by the British Field Hospital for the Belgians, who took me by car to Ostende, and thence to London. My eyes were examined, and it was found that I had partially lost the sight of one eye.

After the fall of Antwerp, the RM Brigade was brought back to England. When my sight had sufficiently recovered, I rejoined the Battalion at Chatham, where training continued. Towards the end of January 1915, the Battalion moved to Dorset, where the RN Division was concentrating for training. "A" Company was billeted in the delightful village of Fontnel Magna.

Letters

Marine John Easty, who sailed with the first convict ships to Australia, sent this letter to the Right Honourable Lord Spencer.

My Lord

I here Sheweth that I, (John Easty) your Humble Petitioner, serv'd as a Private Soldier in the Second Devision of his Mejesties Marine Forces, for the space of Ten Years & Eight Months in part of which time - your Petitioner was Imploy'd on an Expedition to New South Wales, for the space of six years and three months, Commencing in the Month of Feby. 1787 and Ending in May 1793, during which time your Petitioner with the Remainder of the Colliny whare at various times on short Ration of Provisions which was Promised in His Majesty Name by Auther Philip Esqr. than Govenr. of the above Island - that such short Ration of Provisions should on our return to England be paid or settle'd for agreable to the Rules of his Majestys servise, - This Sheweth likewise that various Applications has been made by Your Petitioner and others to Auther Philip Esqr. for him to interceed with my Lords Commisions for the payment of the same and that between three & four Years has pass'd and not any Account of it more than at first - your Petitioner wish Humbly to lay it before you - Trusting your Lordships goodness to Enquire into the matter and proceed in such a manner as your Lordship thinks proper - and trusting your Lordships goodness in ordering it to be settle'd, and should your Lordship wish any proof as to your Petitioner being the Person - I am ready to give any Satisfaction (I can) Your Lordship may require if your Lordship please's to signify the same by a line - I your Petitioner am ready to shew my discharge give in writeing or person as your Lordship shall think proper to order - and shall as in Duty Bound

Ever pray for your Lordships Wellfair

I am My Lord Your Humble Petitioner

JOHN EASTY

at Waddingtons & Smith
No. 111 Minories,
LONDON.

Novr. 1796.

(Easty came to Mr Smith's on September 15th 1794 at 14 gns per year. Last entry in diary quotes ... "Recd. 3 gns. on Nov. 26th.")

-oOo-

ERRATUM

In Vol V No 3 page 8 second line from bottom, should read Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Stransham.

Letters from: Mrs Marjorie Green

The Depot Band

The following paragraph was omitted from my article about the Depot Band on page 22 of Vol V, number 3. It should have followed "the first Torchlight Tattoo in 1900."

"B/M Batson was succeeded in 1897 by Mr J S Nicholson, who came to the RMLI from the 15th King's Hussars, in which regiment he had served for 17 years. The String Band was formed during his directorship. He became one of the two senior bandmasters in 1916, and was promoted to Musical Director (Lieutenant) as provided by Order in Council of 19th May 1914. He became Director of Music when the title was changed in 1921, and retired as Captain on the disbandment of the band. Under his regime, which had lasted 26 years, the band grew in efficiency and became well known."

"A brief obituary notice of Captain Nicholson in the "Globe & Laurel" of 1946, page 198, mentions that he was an 'excellent all round sportsman and a first class musician'."

The Rambling Royal

The verses of the Rambling Royal were published in the "Globe & Laurel" in the June 1970 edition, page 193. They were sent in by Mr R E Palmer of Birmingham who wanted information about James Cronin.

My husband, (the late A C Green) had some correspondence with Mr Palmer, who said he had a tape recording of the song as it was sung by a merchant seaman sailing out of Liverpool in the late 1930s. Jimmy followed this up by writing to Sam Hanna Bell, the great authority on Irish Folk Lore, at BBC Northern Ireland. He could find no trace of James Cronin, but said that the tune was based on an old Irish Folk Song and referred us to the University Book Shop "At The Sign of The Three Candles" in Dublin, who published the original melody. The trail ended there.

Jimmy then wrote to the Editor of "Ships Monthly" and asked him to include "The Rambling Royal" in the journal with a request for information. The Editor did publish it, but added that he "did so reluctantly, as it was so ungrammatical"! He further added that "as no less a person than Captain A C Green had submitted it, he felt that he must agree to his request." Needless to say there were no replies after that!

All the relevant correspondence on this matter was sent to the Archives at Eastney in November 1970.

Editor's Note

Original Articles

It appears from this edition that many articles submitted are extracts from other publications, and whilst some good material not usually available to most members comes to light, I do feel that we should strive for more original works where possible. I am however extremely grateful to all our contributors and remain entirely subject to their individual interests.

At the 1978 AGM Lt Col Sir F Vivian Dunn CVO OBE FRAM gave a very interesting talk on the RM Band Service. For the benefit of those members unable to attend we include this abbreviated extract from his lecture notes.

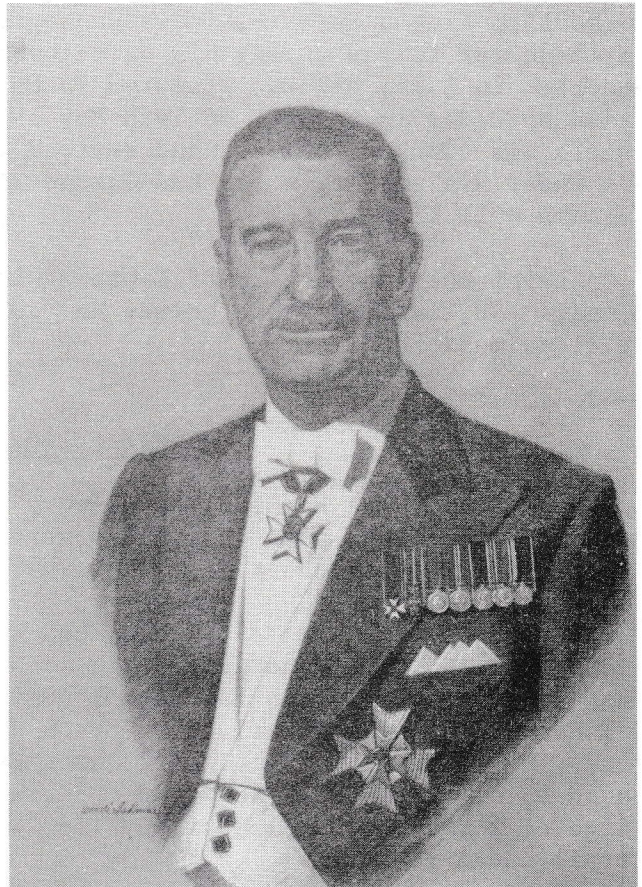
The Royal Marines Band Service

**By
LT COL Sir Vivian Dunn CVO
OBE FRAM**

1978 was the 75th anniversary of the creation of the RM Band Service in our great Corps - marvellous people with whom it was my privilege to serve.

It must be said at once that the RMBS has never been better than at present or more widely respected and how delighted I am that it should be so. I must also praise the work of my successor Lt Col Paul Neville in leading the Band Service over the last ten years and maintaining its standards of musicianship, excellence and smartness on parade, morale, application to duty, dedication through unremitting effort and pride in our name and reputation. The principles I was determined to instil into all ranks and I am also delighted that the CG asked me to assist in the sabbatical study for Major Mason, the PD of MRM elect in whose hands, I know, the well being of the Band Service will continue. Perhaps I may be forgiven for saying my greatest gratification lies in the creation of the present officer structure from which these two fine Directors of Music emerged; for leadership in the professional and command field is the very root of the security of the future.

How did all this come about? Briefly, by a combination of a prolonged critical analysis of the history and evolution of the Divisional Bands in the Corps, the founding of the RNSM at Eastney to provide bands for the Royal Navy, and the passage of time to the point when an amalgamation of these two separate entities became essential. A theory at the time that brought much condemnation upon me from unenlightened people to the extent of being considered almost traitorous. But there was the example of the amalgamation of the RMA and the RMLI in 1923, highly unpopular in some quarters, but from which the greatness of our Corps was born. Therefore such condemnation was rather like water off a duck's back to me!



How was this amalgamation to be effected? First as a visionary, by writing the blueprint that became the basis of the Leech-Porter report in 1949 which convinced the Admiralty of its wisdom. The reasoning - if the Royal Marines worked the details themselves the advantages would be considerable as distinct from eventually having such an amalgamation forced upon us with binding clauses bringing disadvantages that might be impossible to overcome. Secondly, after the amalgamation, securing the provision from public funds of first class instruments and appurtenances, facilities including a permanent civilian professorial staff by giving up a percentage from band engagements. Thirdly, the creation of a new officer structure found from students with opportunities to study at the Royal Academy of Music and ultimately a period of sabbatical study for the PD of M at the appropriate time. The benefits of this education have proved enormous - we are the only service to follow this policy - neither the Army nor the RAF wanted to know - but I venture to suggest they now recognise the efficacy of our training, albeit grudgingly. So be it! Fourthly, the decision that all officers should qualify for promotion by passing the Director of Music examination which eradicated the previous division of loyalty and bad feeling between musical officers and quartermasters - human nature being what it is.

History records I entered the hallowed precincts of Eastney on 3rd September 1931 - a memorable and fortunate day for me. What did I find?

- a. The Divisional Bands had a superior record of musical performance because of their very permanence which attracted the best instrumentalists and their Directors of Music were fine musicians - the O'Donnells, Ricketts, Hoby, Francis etc.
- b. The RNSM had a very hard road to harrow largely because of certain attitudes of their own and a lack of support through their inability to stand up for themselves in the face of authority. They lacked a champion capable of putting their case against, sometimes, illogical opposition. They had my sympathy and I was able to speak for them on many occasions although this was the basis of much suspicion through an almost pathological entrenched dislike amounting to near hatred of what was referred to as "broad stripes".

There was another factor which persisted from the 1920s until the amalgamation. This was the tragic decision in 1921 to dispense with the civilian professors and its permanent standard of teaching and influence - the reason - there were many senior ranks available after World War I who were good instructors and the dismissals were advanced as a financial economy.

What no one seemed to realise, and there was much enthusiasm for shore based "square numbers", there began what was tantamount to in-breeding. The standard fell through bad teaching subsequently to the point in the 1930s when any RNSM band could be recognised by the sheep-like vibrato of the cornets, poor thin tone, bad intonation, and indifferent performance. To some it did not seem to matter, but fortunately there were some fine officers and men who struggled against this burden; Captain Green, Major Fairfield, Major Pragnell, Major Kenward and Capt Lang, etc, but the dice were overloaded and the situation not restored until the re-introduction of the civilian professors at the amalgamation. To their everlasting credit, by diligence and sheer hard work, they earned for themselves memorable names in the history of the Band Service with pride and honour.

It was the lot in those days for promotion candidates to have to pay heavily for lessons and travel to London, swot late into the night and be on parade as usual the next morning. The solution - to see that facilities were provided, as now, whereby promotion is encouraged and gained because of the service and not in spite of it!

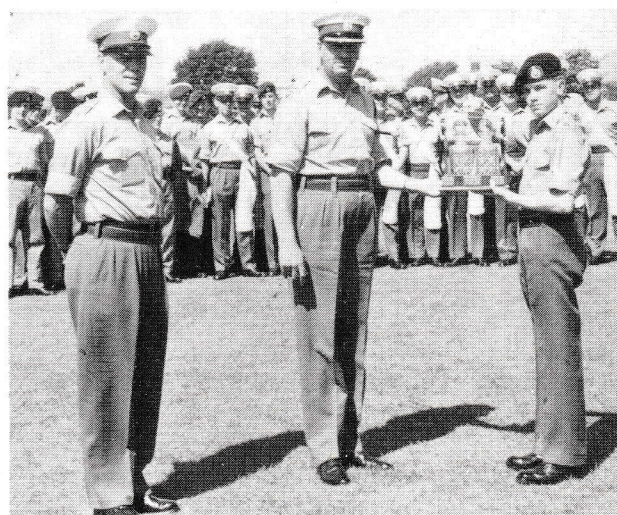
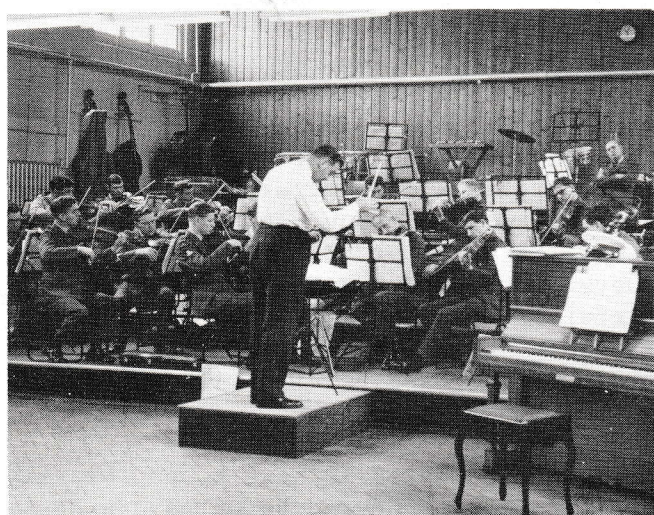
From the far off days of 75 years ago great progress has been made and our bands are more important in their own right to the Royal Navy and the Corps. Our traditions have been maintained and enhanced and recognised by the general public with support in large numbers at the ceremonial and concert occasions; and appreciating the quality of the recordings over a quarter of a century. There are more of our principal bands in demand in this highest form of the art of making music than ever before. And the broadcasts are eagerly listened to in BBC programmes.

None of this could have happened without the interest and patronage of the Royal Family; and how important is the Royal Yacht Band. The same interest and support by the Commandants General, the officers and men of the Corps and, in particular, our greatest champion, Admiral of the Fleet The Earl Mountbatten of Burma, Life Colonel Commandant Royal Marines. For this patronage and appreciation the Band Service is indeed indebted.

All qualified officers now hold appointments as Directors of Music. A timely up-grading from the days when only two officers were styled Musical Directors. But the most significant change, however, is the elevation of the Principal Director of Music Royal Marines to Commandant of the Royal Marines Band Service - a true recognition of the evolution of the merit of all that has been accomplished and for that which we stand.

In conclusion I wish to pay the warmest possible tribute to that redoubtable branch of the Corps with which the bands work hand in glove - the Buglers and Corps of Drums; and I draw many happy memories from standing in their defence at a critical time when it was mooted they should be absorbed into the Band Service. They are unique in their individuality and it is no exaggeration to say they add that expertise, finesse and panache to every ceremonial and display occasion. Many celebrated names come to mind as Drum Majors and Bugle Majors - Bowden, Dacombe, Day, Hordern, Wagstaffe and a host of others. Never was there an event when, given the problem, they did not go and beaver away and come up with the perfect answer. And it is likewise true to say that the bugling is magnificent and a model of excellence at all times. May it ever be so!

Finally, history has a habit of repeating itself and the Band Service is no exception when the move from Eastney to Deal is remembered to save bricks and mortar; and in reverse for the same reason in the near future. Many battles and arguments fought and won, as will no doubt continue, and I commend all who have served in the past so well and wish those of the present the best of Band Service luck. And I would gladly do the same all over again!



(Left) Sir Vivian rehearsing the band of CINCPACHOME and (Right) receiving a farewell presentation at DEAL in 1968.

*The Editor is grateful to the Society of Authors
for their kind permission to reprint the extract from
"Sea Life in Nelson's Time" on page 5, and to the
Director of the Corps Museum for making available the personal record of the
late Major General A. R. Chater, CB, CVO, DSO, OBE.*

*Privately Published
by
The Royal Marines Historical Society
and Printed at Eastney*

Copyright 1979

