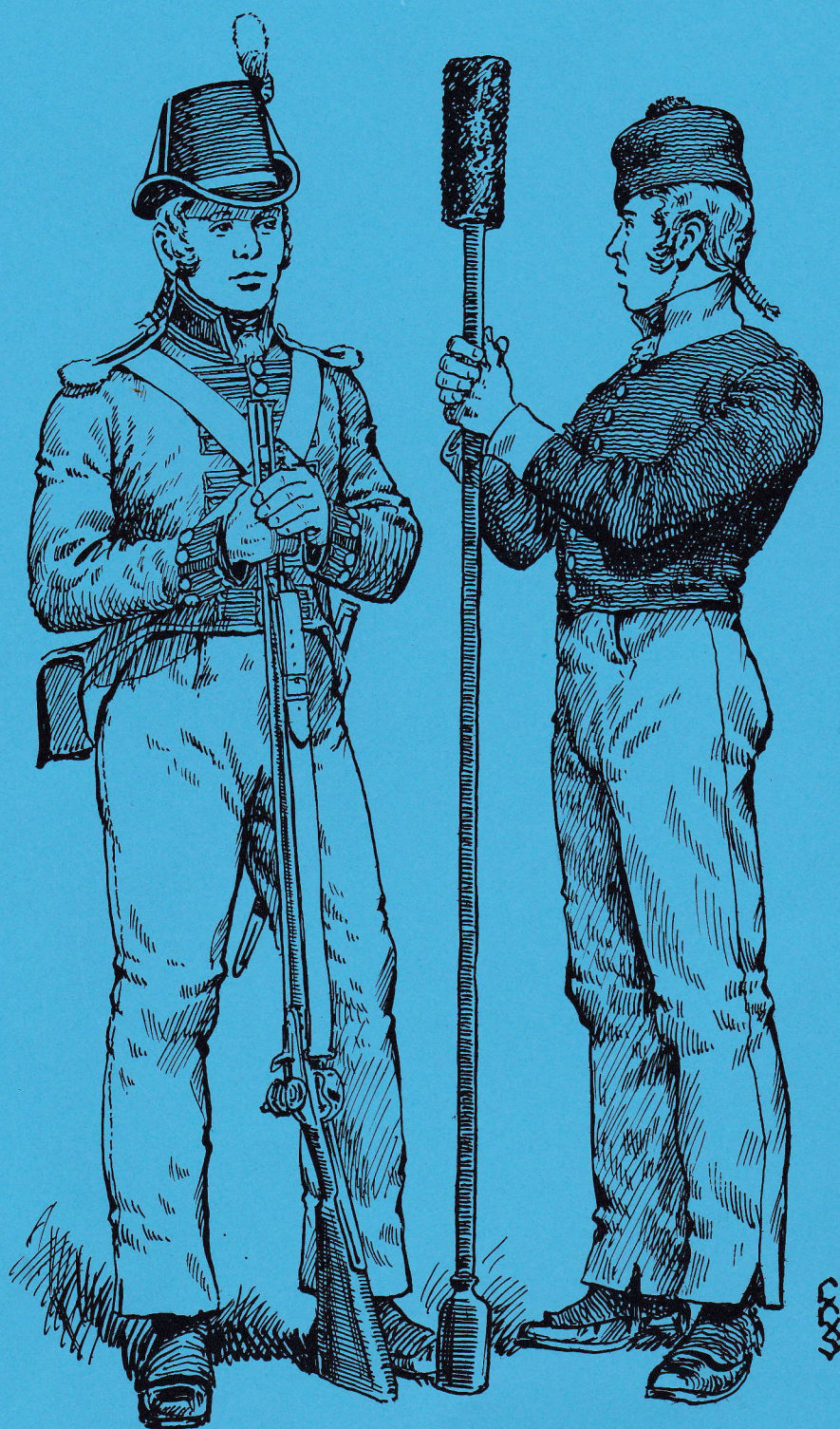




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**HISTORICAL SOCIETY**



**SHEET ANCHOR**

**Volume VIII Number 1**



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# THE SHEET ANCHOR

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(While every effort is made by the Editor to ensure that information contained in this publication is correct, contributed material is the sole responsibility and opinion of the author).

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Somewhere hard by the west door of St. Mary's Church, Swansea, lies the remains of colourful, courageous, Lewis Rotely, one of the Royal Marines' many heroes. Post-war landscaping resulted in his (and family) headstone being moved against the north wall. It is, partly, inscribed thus:

'Sacred to the memory of Lewis Roteley (sic) major in the foreign service, first lieutenant, Royal Marines, died April 21, 1861, aged 76. He served in the flagship Victory under Lord Nelson at the battle of Trafalgar and was severely wounded but kept the deck and succeeded to command of the remnant of the detachment of Marines left alive in the ship on that day ...'

For his wounds at Trafalgar he received an award from Lloyd's Patriotic Fund and Swansea citizens made him a public presentation.

Before leaving the service he saw further action commanding a detachment in the capture of the French frigate, Topaze.

As a civilian back home in Swansea 'the Major' as he was called, took up politics but failed to obtain a seat on the local council. However, with amateur dramatics he had more success. Richard III being a role he played well. His powerful voice and good delivery were always effective.

During later years in Swansea he became the butt of many a jest. Once he was 'kidnapped' by the 'Dolls' (Dolly Club - a society of mischievous young men) to prevent him appearing at a parliamentary election. Again 'the Major' was warned to beware of the 'lasso'. The old marine took detours to avoid a large

## MODEST HERO OF TRAFALGAR

by

Haydn Jenkins



*Castle Gardens, Swansea showing St. Mary's Church where Roteley's headstone now stands against the church wall, near the tree right centre.*

tree on Mount Pleasant to reach his home at May Hill.

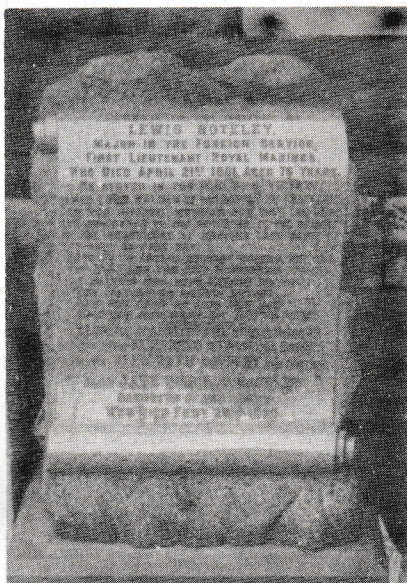
Sometimes he got into scrapes on his own account. While walking the bounds of the borough he became stuck in mud near the old pier. He and his horse had to be rescued.

Possessing many Nelson relics - breeches, stocking, lock of hair - he could recall, recount, relive nobler deeds, those of bravery and sacrifice. This was his version of the epic battle.

...Nelson fell and immediately after Captain Adair (RM) received a musket ball in the back of the neck. I now succeeded to the command of the Marines ...10 men of the original 40 now remained. The marines had thrown off their red coats and appeared in their check shirts and blue trousers so there was no distinguishing Marines from seamen. All were working like 'hosses' ... amid sulphur and fire the men appeared like devils ...'

In writing of these events he made little mention of his own part at Trafalgar or his wounds. This was typical of his modesty. He was of good nautical stock, his father, Lewis Rotely, senior, mariner, having fought against American naval hero, John Paul Jones.





*Lewis Roteley's Headstone.*

## A SWANSEA HERO OF TRAFALGAR

by BERNARD LLOYD

On recent Trafalgar Day, October 21st, the anniversary of Admiral Lord Nelson's famous naval victory in 1805 at Trafalgar, off Cadiz in Southern Spain, a victory which probably finally ended Napoleon's plans to invade Britain, it would have been most fitting to recall the considerable part a Swansea man played aboard Nelson's flagship "Victory" on that day. His name is not mentioned in published histories of the battle but his bravery can still be read of today by Swansea folk who take the trouble to look at a red granite tombstone that stands on the north side of St. Mary's Church. The inscription reads:

*Sacred to the memory of Lewis Roteley,  
Major in the Foreign Service,  
First Lieutenant of Marines,  
who died April 21st 1861, aged 76 years,  
He served in the Flagship Victory under Lord Nelson  
At the Battle of Trafalgar and was severely wounded  
but kept the deck and succeeded to the command  
of the remnant of the detachment of Marines  
left alive in the ship on that day.  
Engaged in active service during the war of 1805  
and for five succeeding years.*

*'A soldier who with Nelson fought  
The victory so dearly bought  
Now the race of life has run  
with him may hope his duty done'.*

The 100-gun "Victory" had a complement of 842 officers and men, including 1 Captain, 3 Lieutenants and 135 NCO's and red coated Marine privates. One of the Marine Lieutenants was Lewis Roteley, then only 20

## MODEST HERO OF TRAFALGAR (continued)

Beneath St. Mary's green turf rests a brave old bootneck who, as his nearby headstone states, 'with Nelson fought' - a not unworthy deed.

Roteley's Nelson relics were bequeathed to Greenwich Hospital by Roteley's daughter, Jane. His medals form part of the Sutcliffe Smith Collection of Nelsonia, National Maritime Museum, London. The museum also had his ditty box.

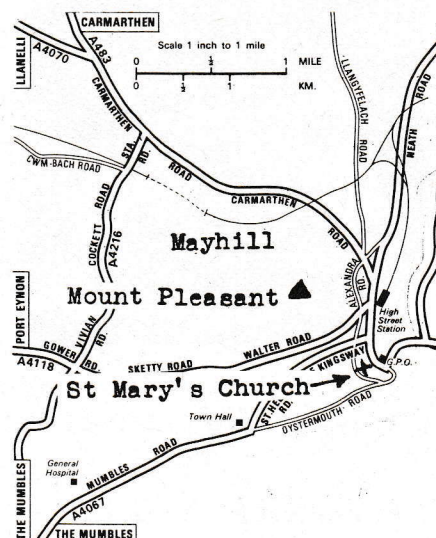


- oOo -



years of age. During the battle with the French and Spanish men o' war, the British Marines from behind the "Victory's" protective bulwarks did their best to counter with musket fire the sharpshooters stationed in the French battleship "Redoubtable's" tops. It is not easy for us now to imagine the noise of the cannon, the smoke, the crashing of masts and the cries of the wounded and dying! And it was from 15 yards away that an unknown French sharpshooter hit Admiral Nelson in the shoulder and chest, causing his death three hours later. A terrible toll was taken, too, of the Marines. Their Captain, C.W. Adair, was killed and two Lieutenants, Reeves and Peakes, badly wounded. It was then that Lewis Roteley, as the surviving Lieutenant, had to take command of the remaining Marines still actively engaged. It must have been a terrible period of the battle and a real test for such a young Lieutenant, for the "Victory" was dismasted and her rigging shot away. Nevertheless, Roteley would possibly have seen the hoisting of Nelson's famous signal "England expects", and he remained aboard at the end of the battle when the crippled "Victory" had to be towed first to Gibraltar and then to the Thames which she reached in December.

After several more years of active service Lewis Roteley, then a Major, retired in middle age to live in a house in Mayhill, then a rural area. *The Cambrian* announced his death at the end of April, 1861, in these words:-



*"On 21st at Mayhill, Swansea, Major Lewis Roteley, aged 76 years, - to the great grief of his bereaved daughter. All who knew him are aware that he was guided by the best principles, which he carried out unselfishly and independently. Of unbounded and unostentatious generosity and benevolence, and as a gallant soldier and enlightened civilian, he passed through life with probity and honour".*

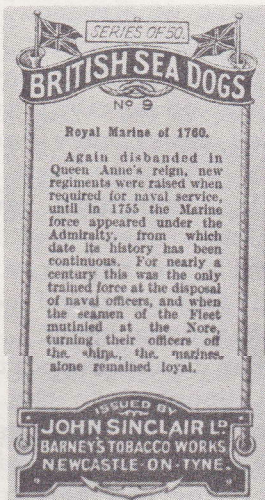
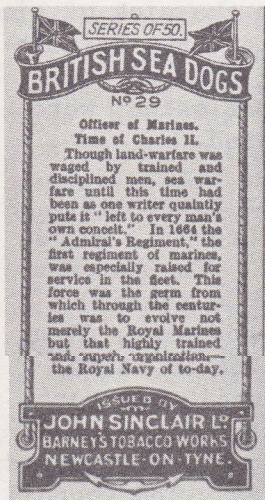
It is possible that though his only child, a daughter, Jane Douglas Roteley, died unmarried in February 1896, members of this brave man's family are to be found in Swansea today. And it is pleasing that Lewis Roteley's memorial at the side of St. Mary's Church - still providing a link with Trafalgar - escaped the damage suffered by the old church in the blitz of 1941.





# Cigarette Cards

The odd one out in this selection of cards depicting uniforms of the Royal Marines is the top example, which promotes a soap product instead of tobacco.





## HECTOR VAUGHAN AND HIS FORTY MARINES

By George S Saussy

The British 6th Regiment of Marines (49th Foot), Charleston, S.C., 1744

South Carolina has had a certain acquaintance with Marines throughout her 300 year history. United States Marines had invaded the state as well as defended her. Georgia Marines, French Marines, and Confederate Marines have each served their time on her shores. Since the first World War, our Marines have become an integral part of the state's economy and life. There was a time, however, when Marines were both an unusual sight as well as a welcome one.

The first Marines to serve in South Carolina were forerunners of the present Royal Marines of Great Britain. They formed a ship's detachment of the 6th Regiment of Marines (also known as the 49th regiment of the line) under the command of Lieutenant Hector Vaughan. The circumstances surrounding their arrival in South Carolina and their subsequent adventures read more like one of the C.S. Forester's Hornblower novels than documented history.

Within the span of one year, 1774, this detachment of Marines was shipwrecked, embattled, and ultimately enriched (monetarily). Lieutenant Vaughan and his detachment were stationed aboard the Royal Navy frigate, HMS Looe, which struck a reef in the Florida Keys on February 5 1774. The ship could not be "gotten off" the reef and the crew was ordered to abandon ship. Most of the crew were taken off on a French ship which had been captured a few days before. This ship reached Charleston, S.C. before the end of the month. The remainder of the crew were forced to trust to the Looe's barge and yawl. The two boats became separated, the barge being picked up by the sloop Providence and brought into Charleston soon after the captured French ship. The yawl, however, ran out of water and provisions and was forced to sail for the enemy port of Havanna. In the nick of time (so to speak) they were rescued, not far off the Cuban coast, by another British frigate, HMS Rose under the command of Captain Thomas Frankland. Some of these men were in poor condition from their ordeal and on arrival in Charleston, were put under the care of church parish authorities until they recovered.

On the 21s of February, soon after his arrival, Lieutenant Vaughan presented himself before the Governor of the Province, James Glen, and the Council, to enquire how his men were to be provided for while in the province. The Governor proposed that they be added to the garrison of the city and sent Lieutenant Vaughan to Fort Johnson to find quarters for his detachment. In addition, Glen proposed allowing the Marines additional pay for their support while in South Carolina. Two days later, Lieutenant Vaughan reported to the Council that Fort Johnson did not have accommodations suitable for his 44 marines but a place at Craven's Bastion at the Northeast corner of the city was lacking only a few boards and "necessaries" to make it a convenient place for his men to stay. The Council duly ordered them to go there and directed Lieutenant Hunter, the gunner of Craven's Bastion, to receive them.

The Council Journal entry for March 2, 1744 contains the only written document from Lieutenant Hector Vaughan himself. Faced with a problem familiar to anyone stranded in a strange city, he wrote the Council as follows:

*"As I have had the misfortune to be cast away in His Majesty's Ship the Looe, stationed for the service of this province, I am now obliged to continue here till such time as I receive orders how to dispose of the Marines under my command, and as my pay is too small to subsist me ashore, without the benefit of free quarters, as are allowed in Great Britain, I beg leave therefore to recommend myself to your excellency's favour for an allowance of quarters that I may thereby be enabled to subsist myself, till I am ordered for service.*

*I am, Hector Vaughan"*



The fate of the Looe, her importance to the defence of the colony, and the future employment of Vaughan and his stranded Marines were becoming entwined. Britain and her colonies had been at war with Spain in a rather desultory manner. But in the middle of 1744, France entered the conflict as an ally of Spain. French entry had been expected, especially when the French ship captured by the Looe before her wreck, had been found to be a spy ship, carrying both French and Spanish papers. The Looe under her Captain, Ashby Utting, late in the previous year, had crossed the bar into Port Royal Sound and shown that the passage was practicable for a large warship. Threats of a Spanish invasion, French belligerency, the loss of the only large frigate on station, the Looe, and an insufficiency of arms and men all coalesced into a full scale panic among the colonists. As the invasion threats grew more ominous, in June of 1744, Governor Glen sent a letter to Colonel Wigg in command of the provincial forces at Port Royal in response to an appeal for assistance and reinforcement. The letter detailed what munitions were to be sent and, as the only extra troops available, he offered to send Vaughan's detachment as follows:

"We have here 40 Marines, very good men which belonged to the Looe, which I shall immediately send down".

Lieutenant Vaughan and his Marines are not mentioned again in the Council Journals. It has not been shown that they ever actually went to Port Royal. If they did go there, however, the incident makes a nice play on History that they would have been sent to a place so familiar to modern Marines, the U.S. Marine Corps Recruit Depot at Parris Island.

The invasion panic gradually evaporated and possibly in September of 1744, Vaughan's detachment was taken aboard another ship of the Royal Navy, the frigate HMS Rose, the same that had rescued part of the Looe's crew from the yawl. The Captain of the Rose, Thomas Frankland, was already something of a naval hero for his capture of a Spanish Guarda Costas, the Juan de Bautista, and its infamous (to the British) Captain. Don Juan de Leon Fandino. Fandino was notorious for having instigated the War of Jenkin's Ear by removing the said extremity from the head of one Robert Jenkins, and English merchant captain, in 1731.

Captain Frankland had been so successful in his pursuit of French and Spanish ships during his five years on station, that he felt it necessary to purchase a wharf at Charleston on which to store the prize goods from his captures. Frankland was apparently a very luck man, an excellent commander, or more probably both. The fall cruise of the Rose was to prove financially fortuitous for Frankland and Lieutenant Vaughan's Marines.

Off the coast of Cuba, on December 1, 1744, the Rose fell in with a French treasure ship, the Conception, bound from Cartagena to Havanna. The Conception carried only 20 guns like the Rose, but had an oversized crew of soldiers and sailors, numbering 326 men. The chase began at 0500, and lasted two hours before the Rose closed with the Conception and the battle began in earnest. The details of the fight are lost but the accounts mention that the action was carried on at times at less than pistol-shot range and at other times the bows and quarters of the two ships were so close that the guns were touching.

The presence of the extra Marines aboard the Rose may have gone some way to even the odds with the Conception. The small arms fire from the Rose was particularly mentioned in the accounts. "uninterrupted volleys; fore and aft" from the tops as well as the fire of swivel guns and hand grenades created carnage on the decks of the Conception. The fifty men (presumably the Marines)



firing small arms expended 900 rounds of ammunition, some of them firing 27 or 28 times during five and a half hour battle. The Conception struck her colors only after suffering heavy casualties including her captain, 116 men killed and 45 wounded according to the account. The Rose on the other hand lost but five men killed and seven wounded. The reason for the uneven distribution of casualties is not recorded, but it can be surmised that the small arms fire from the Rose's Marine detachment had a decided effect on the outcome. The South Carolina Gazette ran perhaps the longest feature article to date on the battle and had the following to say:

*"Lieutenant Hector Vaughan, the Marines under his command, lately belonging to His Majesty's Ship Looe, and every man aboard the Rose behav'd with undaunted bravery, worthy of the great example set with them by bravery and valiant commander".*

A Mention in Despatches was not to be their sole reward, however. The prize-money awarded for the capture of the Conception was in such large amounts and sufficiently heavy to necessitate its distribution in two separate payments and these paid out by weight to save the difficulty of counting it. The riches taken from the prize included: 800 bars of gold hidden in "serons" or bales of cacao, 68 chests of silver coins containing 310,000 pieces of Eight, church plate, gold buckles and snuff boxes, a curious two-wheeled chaise of silver with wheels and axle of the same metal, a large quantity of diamonds, pearls, and other precious stones. It was impossible to give an exact accounting of the treasure aboard the Conception, since gold had been secreted in the knees, barricadoes, and other structural parts of the ship. The heels of the prisoner's shoes were found to be hollowed out and also filled with gold. In the face of such wealth, we should not be surprised to read that the officers and crew of the Rose, "unanimously resolved to present to Captain Frankland's Lady (the William Rhett) the silver chaise as a testimony of gratitude to that brave commander".

When her tour of duty on the Southern station ended, the Rose sailed from Charleston for the last time on June 1, 1745, carrying 80,000 pounds sterling in gold and silver - and presumably, the now, very much enriched detachment of the 6th Marines under Lt. Hector Vaughan.

#### NOTES:

The Sixth Regiment of Marines (49th Foot) was raised 22 November 1739 by Colonel Lewis Ducie Moreton lately of the 3rd Foot Guards. The cadre for the regiment came from men of the Foot Guard regiments, appointed sergeants and corporals in the new unit. Colonel Moreton died during the Cartagena expedition in April 1741 and command of the Sixth went to Colonel John Cottrell, who Hector Vaughan identified as being his Colonel in his presentation before the S.C. Provincial Council in February 1744. Hector Vaughan appears in the pen and ink additions to the entry for the Sixth Marines on the 1740 Army List as a Second Lieutenant commissioned 10 May 1740.

HMS Looe was the fourth British frigate so named. She was a fifth rate 44. 124½ feet in length and 36 feet in the beam, built by Snelgrove at Limehouse in 1741 and commanded by Captain Ashby (Ashley?) Utting RN. HMS Rose sailed from Charleston 17 September 1744; she was a sixth rate 24. 448 bm. 106 feet long and 31 feet in the beam, built by Brid at Rotherhithe.

There is no account of the uniform worn by Lieutenant Vaughan's detachment, but it can be surmised that they would have worn one similar to that depicted in the 1742 'Cloathing Book', as worn by the grenadiers of the period.



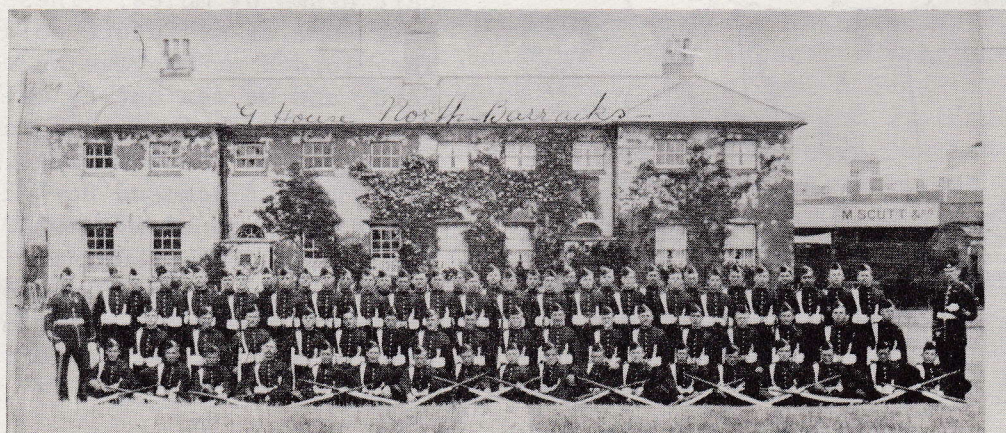
# 'DRESS AND EQUIPMENT'

'A Colour Sergeant of the RMA (1910)' which is the next subject in the Charles C Stadden series is unavoidably held over to another issue, in the meantime here is an item submitted by Mr R J Noyce which space did not allow me to insert in the Vol VII No 1 edition to complement the 'Private of the RMLI (1865)' detail.

This extract, taken from the Account Book of Private John Francis, 18 Company, Portsmouth Division RM, lists clothing and equipment, together with costs applicable when he enlisted in the Corps January 1867. (A son of Pte Francis served with the 4th Battalion RM at Zeebrugge in 1918). Editor.

## LIST OF NECESSARIES IN POSSESSION OF EACH MAN

| No. | Articles                  | Price | No. | Articles             | Price |
|-----|---------------------------|-------|-----|----------------------|-------|
| 1   | Great Coat and Slings     | 25/6  | 1   | Box of Blacking      | 2     |
| 1   | Knapsack and Slings       | 6/9   | 1   | Set of Combs         | 2     |
| 3   | Shirts (Blue striped)     | 3/4   | 1   | Button Stick         | 2     |
| 3   | Pairs of worsted socks    | 1/-   | 1   | Button Brush         | 7     |
| 3   | Pairs of Linen Trowsers   | 3/9   | 1   | Knife                | 4     |
| 1   | Duck Frock and Trowsers   | 6/8   | 1   | Fork                 | 3     |
| 2   | Pairs of Woollen Trowsers | 10/8  | 1   | Spoon                | 7     |
| 1   | Stock                     | 6     | 1   | Account Book         | 3     |
| 1   | Foraging Cap              | 1/9   | 1   | Linen Bag            | 3/9   |
| 1   | Uniform Tunic             | 19/5½ | 1   | Canteen              | 1/4   |
| 1   | White Jacket              | - -   | 1   | Canteen Strap        | 4     |
| 1   | Pair of Worsted Gloves    | 1/-   | 1   | Canteen Cover        | 7     |
| 1   | Shell Jacket              | 13/5  | 2   | Flannel Shirts       | 2/10  |
| 1   | Pair of Braces            | 1/-   | 1   | Small Article Case   | 7     |
| 2   | Pairs of Boots            | 9/-   | 1   | Uniform Cap and Ball | 4/3   |
| 1   | Clothes Brush             | 9     | 2   | Towels               | 10    |
| 1   | Set of Shoe Brushes       | 1/9   | 1   | Type for Man's name  | 6     |





# THE SUDAN 1921 - 1930

In January 1921, I left the Depot. It was a sad moment, as I had become extremely attached to the wonderful staff, and to the work there.

It was laid down that British officers must be twenty five years old before they were eligible for service in the Egyptian Army. I would be twenty five on the 7th February. Embarking on 3rd February at Liverpool with a ton of luggage, including a new uniform of a Bimbashi, I was met on arrival at Port Said by my brother-in-law Calud Douglas-Hamilton. After a fortnight with my sister and brother-in-law in Cairo, meeting people, seeing sights, and buying still more uniform, I departed on the slow journey up the Nile, then made in three different trains, and a river steamer. To me, it was wall of the greatest interest.

Arriving at Khartoum after dark on the fifth day, I was met by Colonel Darwall, who took me to the Staff Mess in which he lived. Most of the "Big Shots" were away on tour, and so next morning I could not meet them. I was told I was posted to the 14th Sudanese Battalion, then stationed across the Nile at Omdurman, a unit in which Darwall himself had served. There was then no bridge over the Nile at Omdurman, so after lunch, I was put with all my luggage into a small open steam boat, and sent on my way to join my Battalion.

In February, the Nile is low, and from a small boat one cannot see the banks. Sitting in this little open boat, dressed in breeches and boots, as one was in those days, was very hot. We eventually reached the point where the two great Niles - White and Blue - meet, and turned up-stream on the White Nile, to a point on the west bank, where the little steam boat stopped. As yet I could



not speak or understand a word of the language. There was no sign of life, but the Reis, or coxswain pointed to some low distant buildings, and motioned me to land. As I had no intention of being marooned on a deserted African river bank, I just sat fast. Some shouting ensued, and after ten minutes or so a party of jumping and laughing black men arrived with a flat cart drawn by mules. These were some of my future soldiers. They loaded my baggage on to the cart, and we set out to walk across the deeply cracked cotton soil towards the buildings. I said "Beit Blackwood Bey" that being the name of my new CO. They pointed to a bungalow in which I found Major Blackwood, lying stricken with malaria. After a short talk, he sent me



over to meet Captain Yeatman. These were the only two British officers with the Battalion. I found Yeatman busy packing up. He was going on leave for four months the next day. He had only been awaiting my arrival before he could leave. We talked pleasantly. Had I known what was about to happen I would have made him tell



me more. Next morning I was taking my time over dressing, when Yeatman arrived and said "The doctor has been, and ordered Blackwood into hospital in Khartoum. They are sending a boat for him in half an hour, and as they won't send another boat today, I must go with him. There is just time for me to turn the safe and all the funds over to you". We strode to the Orderly Room. He unlocked the safe, and took out a lot of bags of money, with different labels on them, saying "Here they are, you can count them if you like". My hands soon got very dirty trying to count the different coins of a strange currency, and I gave up the unequal task, and signed blind. Blackwood had already gone. I said "Goodbye" to Yeatman and found myself in command of a Battalion of more than a thousand officers and men.

I had a great deal to learn. Apart from a dozen or so Egyptain officers, the officers, NCOs and men were all Sudanese. The day started early. The morning parade at 6.30 am except when firing on the range, which began at 5.30 am. On parade one always wore jackets, breeches and boots and swords, which were carried drawn by all officers other than the CO. One never walked but rode everywhere, even to and from the office. Early one morning, the Pasha, who had come over from Khartoum, was surprised to find me on foot, drilling a squad of men. I explained that the best way to learn the Turkish words of command, was to do it oneself. He seemed to approve of this, but was obviously displeased that I was not wearing my medal ribbons. At first when riding on to parade, and being confronted by a sea of a thousand black faces, all looked exactly alike: but before long, one came to see every variety of feature, and

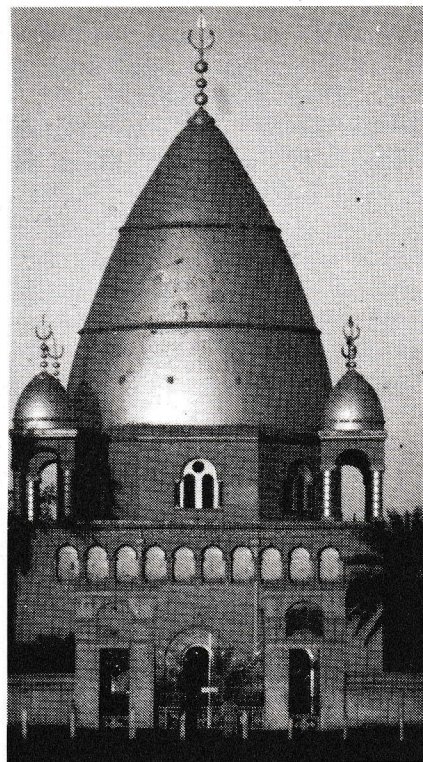


to recognise just the same characteristics as one had know in one's British troops. Most of the men were enlisted for life. Whe the Battlion moved station, the wives and families went with it. It was like a tribe on the move. The CO was the Tribal Chief. Orderly Room was a tremendous ceremony, and could go on for hours. In addition to men for disposal, there were innumerable complaints and requests, all of which had to be adjudged by the CO - wearing a tarbush. Amongst the items on the daily list produced by the translator, that I remember are - "Man requests permission to marry". "Man requests permission to divorce his wife". "Man requests permission to be remarried to his divorced wife". "Man requests permission to be circumcised". The majority of the men were of course pagan. After a few days, a man was brought to me charged with "Entering his comrade's house". The Egyptian Bimbashi advised me that I must sentence the man to be flogged, as otherwise his "comrade" might knife him. Having been brought up in the idea that under no circumstances must a soldier be struck - not even touched by an officer - I was severly shaken by this. When the sentence was carried out, I felt like the proverbial schoolmaster who said to the boy he was beating "It hurts me more that it hurts you". Women too, used to appear at the Orderly Room and shriek at each other. I wondered whether my judgements solved their problems.

After a few weeks, Blackwood returned. He had not been long back before I was sent off on a detachment. About a thousand Yemeni labourers employed on work on the great new Blue Nile dam at Sennar had given trouble. It was decided to return them to Aden, and I had the job of escorting them to Port Sudan and guarding them until they were shipped away.

That slow journey in a very long train across the desert and the time in camp at Port Sudan in May, was as hot and uncomfortable as any duty I performed before or since. The local police complained that several of the Yemenis got away during the journey. I had not taken them over by number and so firmly denied this.

Soon after I got back, Blackwood went on four months leave, and I again found myself in command. On account of my Brevit I was senior to most British Bimbashis, and so, in addition to commanding the Battalion, was "Commandant Omurman". I enjoyed going around inspecting the great store houses built in the days of Mahdia, and still used by us. Ramadan came, and then the great Bairman holiday and festivities. On the second day of the holiday, it was customary for the Sirdar and Governor General to ride round a vast assembly of the Faithful gathered in the great square besides the Mahdi't tomb in Omurman. That year the Governor General was in England, and the Acting Governor the Chief Justice, who did not appear mounted on parade. The result of this was that the Governor General was represented by the Senior Army Officer present - myself - As it happened, the senior officer of the Civil Administration was Major Bramble, Royal Marines. So two Royal Marine officers, escorted by the Sirdar's mounted escort, and followed from the bank of the Nile to the great square - As we progressed solemnly round the assembled multitude,



*Mahdi's tomb,  
Omdurman*



Now on foot, Bramble remarked "What would the chaps sitting in the mess at Forton think of us?" The Battalion had a large band which played loud, though not always tuneful music. The drumming was magnificent. I did not rate the fighting value of the troops high. They had been pampered and spoilt. They were a bad imitation of poor British troops. They had lost the attributes of African natives, without gaining the qualities of British soldiers.

Whilst at Omdurman, I learnt to play polo. I already had a parade pony. I now bought two really good old polo ponies, for which I paid a good price. They were well worth it. By the time I had to part with them, some nine months later, I was a reasonable player. In a very hot country, where the sustained effort of games on foot is a strain, polo is exhilarating, and wonderful exercise. I enjoyed polo on and off for the next eighteen years.

In September came news of a rising in the Western Suda. The great province of Darfur had, until five years before, been subject to the despotic rule of a cruel and independent Sultan. In 1916 the Sultan had been deposed, and Darfur annexed to the Anglo-Egyptain Sudan. A smaller territory (about the size of England) Dar Mesalit, situated between Darfur and French Equitorial Africa, was however, still independent. A revolt fermented in Dar Mesalit had spread into Darfur. The Government post at Nyala had been attacked and over-run. Two British officers had been killed, but this was very remote from Omdurman.

In October, Blackwood returned from leave, and I had to relinquish my elevated position! but not long after, the Political Officer at Sennar, where the dam was being built, reported that events in Darfur were reacting on the people of his district, many of whom were emigrants from the West. He feared a religious rising. He asked for troops for the protection of the large number of Europeans working on the dam. In consequence, I was ordered to take a Company, and the machine gun section of the 14th Sudanese to Sennar. Before leaving Khartoum, I said to the Pasha, "I suppose I shall receive written orders telling me what I have to do". He replied "In this country, we do not give written orders, but we expect people to do their best, and then we back them up". I thought nothing could be better.

The unrest at Sennar proved to be largely in the mind of the Political Officer, who apparently thought it time he had a little more time. After two or three weeks there, I received sudden orders to entrain my detachment and take them to El Obeid, which was at the end of the railway, and the headquarters of Kordofan Province. Owing to the poor state of the trucks provided, I had difficulty in entraining the mules in the dark, and considerably delayed the weekly "express". This was the last movement of troops by rail that I carried out during my ten years in the Sudan.

El Obeid was the headquarters of the Camel Corps, the CO and all five companies of which were five or six hundred miles away to the west. Kordofan was denuded of troops, and the Governor had in consequence applied for a garrison. I quickly saw the contract between the Camel Corps and a Sudanese Battalion. The Camel Corps soldiers were tough lightly built Arabs, who received a high rate of pay, and fed and housed and largely clothed themselves. As a result they were very independant and highly mobile "irregulars". They enlisted for only three years at a time. They had none of those interminable Orderly Room cases, and no band. I would dearly love to serve in a mounted unit. Being a Marine I had no hope of getting into the Cavalry: but the Camel Corps - why not? No British officers had experience of Camelry before coming to the Sudan. After consulting the Second-in-Command of the Camel Corps, who was at El Obeid, I wrote in, applying to be transfered. The reply from the Military Secretary said briefly that my name had



been noted, but there was a long waiting list. Less than two weeks later, a telegram came, saying that Bimbashi Chater was transferred to the Camel Corps, and was required at Geneina as soon as possible to take over command of No. 1 Caompany Geneina in Dar Mesalit, is just about the centre of the African Continent, and six hundred and thirty miles due west of El Obeid.

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THE LEICESTER CHRONICLE SATURDAY 18 JANUARY 1812

SATURDAYS LONDON GAZETTE

ADMIRALTY OFFICE JANUARY 11

(Transmitted by Sir Edward Pellew)

His Majesty's ship IMPERIEUSE in the Gulph of Salerno, October 11

Sir:- I have the honour to inform you that his Majesty's Ship under my command attacked three of the enemy's gun vessels, carrying each an eighteen pounder and thirty men, moored under the walls of a strong Fort, near the twon of Passitana in the Gulph of Salernoes the Imperieuse was anchored about eleven o'clock within the range of grope, and in a few minutes the enemy were driven from their guns and one of the gunboats was sunk.

It however became absolutely necessary to get possession of the fort, the fire of which, thought silenced, yet (form its being regularly walled round on all sides), the ship could not dislodge the soldiers and those of the vessels' crews, who had made their escape on shore and taken shelter in it.

The Marines and a party of seamen were therefore landed and led on by the first Lieutenant EATON TRAVERS, and Lieutenant PIPON of the Royal Marines forced their way into the battery in the most gallant style, under a heavy fire of Musketry, obliging more than treble their numbers to fly in all directions, leaving behind about thirty men and fifty stand of Arms.

The guns which were twenty four pounders, were then thrown over the cliff, the Magazines etc, destroyed, and the two remaining gun vessels brought off.

The zeal and gallantry of all the officers and crew in this effort could not have been exceeded, but I cannot find words to express my admiration of the manner in which Lieutenant Travers commanded, and headed the boats crews and landing party setting a most noble example of intrepidity to the officers and men under him.

Swing to buffling winds the ship was unavoidably exposed to raking fire going in, but the foxlapsull yard shot away, is the only damage of any consequence. I have to regret the loss of 1 Marine killed, and two are wounded.

I have the honour to be etc etc

HENRY DUNCAN. Capt.

Return of men belonging to his Majesty's ship Imperieus, killed and wounded in an attack upon the enemy's fort and gunboats at Possitana on the 11th October 1811.

THOMAS NORMAN. Private Marine killed.

OWEN JONES slightly wounded DAVID JONES ditto.

HENRY DUNCAN Capt.



## COCKLESHELL HERO LOCATIONS

Considerable coverage of 'Operation Frankton' has been given in the 'Globe & Laurel' of December 1982 to mark the 40th anniversary of this famous raid, and for anyone not familiar with the full story, or whose knowledge has been gained solely from the imperfect film 'Cockleshell Heroes', I prescribe the reading of C E Lucas Phillips oft reprinted book bearing the same title which presents the real facts; and having recently read through the official files in the Public Records Office, which were made available 30 years after the event, I could find nothing new to divulge.

Early in 1980 a petition organised by Ex-Royal Marine Peter Wooton to gain posthumous medal awards for those killed in the operation met with no success, despite enlisting the support of survivor Ex-Cpl Bill Sparks DSM, his MP and members of the House of Lords. A resolution that evolved from this action, 'to erect a memorial to the men somewhere in Portsmouth' has so far not materialised, however I understand that one is now planned for the SBS base at RMs Poole. There is of course the plaque in the church of St Nicholas in Bordeaux.

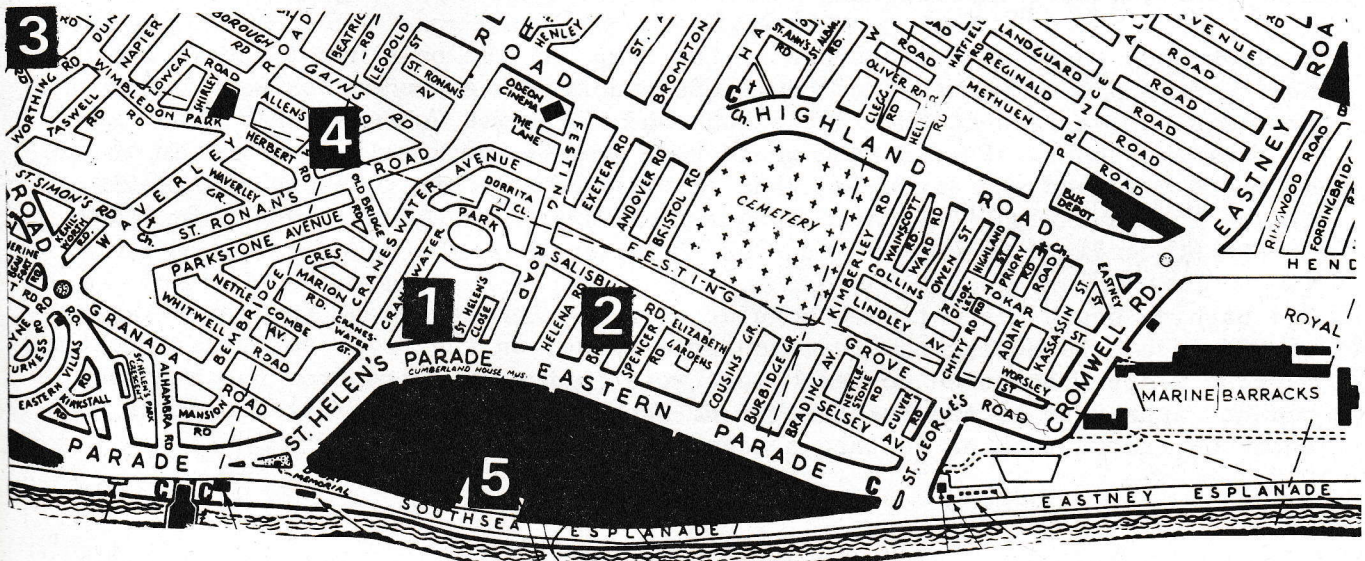
Nevertheless functional memorials to these brave men do exist all around Southsea in the form of familiar buildings, such as 'Blondie' Hasler's HQ in Dolphin Court, St Helen's Parade (Flat No. 24 on the first floor at the eastern end) although no longer to be contacted by telephoning 32277 or extension 2778 from the dockyard! There are still the billets they used and favoured public houses, the 'Grenada', 'Clarendon' and Eastney Taverns, plus the bonus of a lasting place of honour in the nearby Corps Museum.

Lt Col H G Hasler DSO OBE and Ex-Cpl Bill Sparks DSM embarked on a return trip up the Gironde River aboard the frigate HMS Yarmouth which sailed from Southampton on 2 December last year for a special commemoration ceremony at Bordeaux.

Dolphin Court (Hasler's HQ).



1. Dolphin Court (Hasler's HQ).
2. 9 Spencer Road (Officers)
3. 27 Worthing Road (No 1 Section).
4. 35 St. Ronans Road (No 2 Section).
5. Lumps Fort, and 2 nissen huts.





## SERGEANT J A EGGO RMLI *Part Two* IRELAND

One Officer who inspected our kits after arriving in Ireland made a big to-do because we had not included in those kits a tunic brush!! A tunic brush, may I explain, is a soft haired brush used expressly for brushing fluff from the Full Dress (Ceremonial) tunic, which, be it noted, had not been part of a Marine's kit since 1914. A young man once observed that Great men are not always wise. Apart from this, I am lost for an explanation as to how an Officer of the Royal Marines comes to be worried about the absence of a tunic brush in the kit of a man on active service in troubled Ireland.

We travelled from Plymouth to Cork in those two fine Battleships, 'Valiant' and 'Warspite'; spent a few hours in Cork and were then distributed round the coast of Ireland. Our lot was to take passage in a Destroyer up the West Coast with destination Buncrana on Lough Swilly.

I can well imagine lots of workers in city offices thinking how fine to enjoy a sea voyage along the West coast of Ireland on a June Day. Forget it, please and remember those words:-

'To lay aloft in a howling breeze may tickle a landman's taste ...

and be thankful you are enjoying a lot that our party of Marines would very much envy. For that Destroyer kicked up its heels like a thing possessed and if there are times when a Royal Marine would wish that the "Per Mare" part of the Corps Motto had never been introduced, this was one of them. The strict fast that most of us observed during this mercifully short voyage, owed nothing to the Church Calendar.

At last we made Buncrana; a pleasant little town in delightful country where in a happier political situation one could have really enjoyed a holiday. As it was, our leave was curtailed both as to distance from camp we were permitted to roam and as to time we were allowed to be absent.

Our camp was situated a little to the north of the town and on the shore of the Lough but separated from the bathing beach by a barbed wire fence. It was, in fact, well surrounded by barbed wire. Further north from the town and perched on top of a cliff overlooking the Lough was a local shrine, Father Haggerty's Grave. The Good Father, it seems, died a Martyr to his Faith and around the grave are some bare spots where, so they say, grass will not grow, for his blood was sprinkled there. These bare spots, be it noted, are arranged rather too symmetrically for conviction. The grave is visited by pilgrims who leave a souvenir; either of something valuable or even an empty cigarette carton.

A dinghy was supplied for the use of the camp but the only use I recall its having been put to was that of Lewis Gun practice. A wooden box was towed some distance astern of the little boat and the Lewis Gunners would shoot at it from the shore. This scheme would have worked quite well if a member of the dinghy's crew had not signalled that he wished to return to shore - urgently. It was subsequently felt that a longer tow line would have avoided this break in the proceedings.

The bathing beach did not seem popular with the locals except for three ladies who would emerge during the forenoon from houses on the front for a daily bathe. Bathing wraps from house to beach were worn; but swim suits from beach to sea did not appear to be the fashion. I am happy to note that after the first shock we troops took no further notice of them.



One of our Officers was quite the detective and soon made himself familiar with the habits of the locals so that a light burning in a bedroom at an unusual hour might find him enquiring at the door of the house in question. One morning I remarked to a colleague that a walk to Londonderry would be nice. I had no intention of making the experiment for Londonderry was out of bounds; all the same, it was not a wise remark to make. So I ought not to have been astonished when Captain "Sherlock" sent for me and demanded to know where I had been during my leave on the day when I had mentioned Londonderry. I was thankful to be innocent, otherwise I am convinced he would have had the truth out of me.

Once I did need to go to Derry, with official permission, of course. The journey was to be by rail and on the appointed morning I arrived at the Station and booked my ticket from a 'Colleen' at the Office. Now I had read that there are some things they do better in Ireland than in England and that the departure of a railway train is one of them. So, I waited until it was time for my train to leave but for all that, there was no increase in the Station Staff; no sign of any other passengers and, worst of all, no train. So I returned to the Booking Office for an explanation and was met with:- "Don't be worrying, it will not be running to day, but it will be running tomorrow all right".

Trouble developed among our troops at Buncrana as surely it will when men are bored for lack of entertainment facilities and when liquor is so very easy to obtain. So it was no surprise that when presently a party was required to man a station round the coast this party should be selected by the deliberate separation of all known boozing chums - one to go to the new station; one to remain behind.

So, back on board one of those Destroyers and round to Elly Bay on the Coast of County Mayo. Elly Bay is unmarked on many maps, but Blacksod Bay will do almost as well. This was Ireland in the raw, a wilderness wild and drear. If there was little entertainment at Buncrana, there was even less at Elly Bay. We were quartered in a Coast Guard Station close to the shore. About two miles each way from the Station was a hamlet of whitewashed cabins with thatched roofs where poultry and cattle shared the comforts of home with their owners. Bare-footed women would trudge along the Highway with shoes hanging around their necks ready to be donned on arrival in town. The town was Belmullet, some miles to the North, and it was from that town that each week day morning the Postman would arrive in a jaunting car bringing the mail and anything we had asked him to buy for us. "Pat. Did you get me that writing pad?" "I'll be after looking and if I have it I've got it". Many of the locals spoke no English at all, but, on the other hand, I recall one of our boys offering a native a cigarette and getting the reply, "Thank you kindly, Sir, I am an inveterate cigarette smoker but I invariably make my own". Why do we at times need to go to the most unlikely sources to hear our wonderful language pleasantly spoken?

Little of note occurred during our sojourn at Elly Bay; indeed that could be said of the whole of our time in Ireland - a period of about eleven months - that is, if we are thinking about violent action. I was never once called upon to fire a shot, strike a blow or in any way defend myself from the violence of others. Some inhabitants made no secret of the fact that they resented our being in Ireland in khaki service dress and would have preferred us in our blue uniforms. This seemed to imply that they favoured the Navy rather than the Army but I could never see the logic of this.

In April 1921 a Destroyer arrived with our reliefs and took us to Cork whence we sailed to Dun Laoghaire (Then known as Kingstown) and there embarked in the



ordinary passenger steamer for Holyhead and so, via Euston and Waterloo back to Forton where disappointment awaited us.

We had expected to be given leave on arrival at Headquarters but it seemed we had left one troubled country for another. There was a strike in Britain - I cannot remember the nature or extent of it - and it seems that certain Naval Reservists, who had been called up for strike duty, had mis-behaved themselves and had been placed under arrest on board warships of the Reserve Fleet in Portsmouth Harbour. The Marines returned from Ireland had, among others, to act as their gaolers; not at all an agreeable task as compared with the anticipated leave in our Home Towns. However, the time came when the Reservists were dispersed and their Royal Marine Guards returned to Headquarters - Forton Barracks - and given their deferred leave.

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LEICESTER CHRONICLE SATURDAY 3 JULY 1813

COURT MARTIAL

The Court Martial held last week at Portsmouth on Lieut DELAP of the Marines, one late of the Java, on charges of having refused to account for a sum of money due to a widow of one of the officers of the Java, who was killed in action, which he had received and was entrusted with, and for the most insolent conduct to General Elliot, of the Marines, commanding at Portsmouth, etc, finished their proceedings on Saturday, and passed the following sentence on him on the parade in the barrack-yard, viz - That he be cashiered, and rendered incapable of ever serving his Majesty in any military or civil capacity whatever, and his heirs for ever, and that his epaulette and sash should be torn from him by the Drum Major and the breaking of his sword over his head was dispensed with in consequence only of his late good conduct when in action on board the Java.

At 10 o'clock on Saturday morning, sentence was carried into execution. All the officers and men at quarters having been ordered under arms, Lieut Delap was brought from his room, in custody of the officer on guard, and placed in the centre of a hollow square, which the troops had formed. The sentence was then read by the Judge Advocate (Lieut and Adjutant PATTEN) and the Drum Major cut the epaulette from off his shoulder, and his sash from off his body, General WINTER (the President) then addressed the Corps in an impressive manner, and with the feelings worthy of the British Soldier pointed out the evils of insubordination, and adverted to the case they had just witnessed, as a proof that no rank was above the reach of the law. He informed Mr Delap that it was his good conduct in the action between the Java and Constitution that alone overted an additionally disgraceful circumstance that would have been included in the sentence, that of having his sword broke over his head.

Mr Delap was then led out of the Barracks by a Serjeants guard.

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LEICESTER CHRONICLE SATURDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 1812

By order of the Lords of the Admiralty, a distribution of the Scriptures is immediately to take place in the Royal Navy, as follows: one copy of the New Testament, two Common Prayers, with two Psalters, for every eight men, and one Bible to every two Messes.



## LETTERS

From: Mr D G Drew: 28.10.1982

'My creaking joints rejoiced and were revitalised on reading about 33 Battalion of the 117 Infantry Brigade RM, and to recall the high pressure training, the atrocious weather conditions, and true comradeship that went hand in hand to form not only 33 Battalion but the others at Dalton-in-Furness as well. I joined the 33rd from NCOs School at Deal, via Landing Craft, and was promoted to Sergeant just previous to leaving for Tilbury. From there we went on to Ostende and the dreaded camp at Boug Leapold.

The comments and source of information is so exact I was able to relive my whole tour. We were actually in the air, flying from Brussels in a Dakota piloted by a Canadian when he announced peace had been signed somewhere beneath us, and we were then dropped off near Hamburg. Then of course we went by road to Kiel where soon after arrival I took a corporal and a few marines aboard a merchant ship Ms Alsterdamm, and put it under guard. The 2nd Mate, whose cabin I was allowed to take over, gave me two pictures of German nursery rhymes which I still have, and to top everything, a week before 'Sheet Anchor' arrived we had made contact again after 37 years!

I went on to Travenmunde for a tour of duty, and had the good luck to guard a ship through the Kiel Canal to Brunsbittel, handing it over to the army for passage to the UK, whilst I travelled back to Kiel by road for further duties.

In closing, two members of our battalion worthy of mention were Reg Flewin the Portsmouth Centre-half and later Manager, who was our PTI Corporal, and Trevor Bailey, the England and Kent cricketer, who was Transport Officer'.

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From: Dep. Adj. General, Royal Marine Office.

To: Colonel Suther, CB,  
Commandant, Royal Marines,  
PLYMOUTH.

(Divisional Letter Book, Plymouth No 3)

1st August, 1871.

The power of a Commanding Officer, Naval or Marine, to summarily reduce Non-commissioned Officers to the ranks, with or without Good Conduct Badges, is clearly laid down in Art.21 of the Revised Good Conduct Regulations - without any reference to the "judgement of a Court Martial".

Private Robert Ayers, having been sentenced (while serving as a Sergeant on board HMS Iron Duke) to be reduced to the ranks without a Badge, therefore forfeiting a part of the Good Conduct Pay accruing from his former service; is not entitled to reckon his former time as a Non-Commissioned Officer towards Good Conduct Pay, or to be allowed...etc, etc.

Had this Non-Commissioned Officer been serving ashore under the Mutiny Act, and summarily reduced by order of his Commanding Officer, he might have appealed to the judgement of a Court Martial; in which case the Court would, at their discretion, have made deprivation of Badges a part of their sentence.

As, however, he was reduced when serving afloat under Naval Discipline Act, and in accordance with Naval Practice; the reduction with all its consequences, becomes final.



*At the 1982 AGM Major A E Marsh gave a talk on the part played by RM Pilots in the Fleet Air Arm up to the end of WWII. For the benefit of members unable to attend the AGM we include a resume of his talk.*

## FLYING MARINES - BY ALAN E MARSH

It all started in 1911 when a Mr F McLean, who operated his own flying establishment at Eastchurch on behalf of the Royal Aero Club, offered to lend the Admiralty two of his Short Biplanes for instructing Naval pilots, whilst a Mr George Cockburn offered to instruct them free of charge. The Admiralty took up this offer and selected 4 out of 200 volunteers. One of these was Lieutenant G V Wildman-Lushington RMA. Unfortunately he went sick and his place was taken by Lieutenant E L Gerrard RMLI who obtained his Pilot's Certificate on 2nd May 1911. When the course ended the Admiralty rented 10 acres of the airfield and so Eastchurch became the first Naval Air Station on 11 October 1911.

In April 1912 a Royal Warrant proclaimed the formation of the Royal Flying Corps with a Military Wing at Farnborough and a Naval Wing at Eastchurch. The CO of the Military Wing was a Major F H Sykes, formerly of the 15th King's Hussars. Later, in 1915, he was commissioned into the Royal Marines as a Colonel to take command of the RNAS units at Gallipoli and the Dardanelles. In August 1912 the Central Flying School was established at Upavon and the instructors included Gerrard who arrived in his own Nieuport Monoplane which had been purchased for him by the Admiralty. The first course included Captain Risk and Lieutenants G V Wildman-Lushington and I D Courtney and all were awarded their wings on 5 December 1912. The RFC Flying Certificate issued to Wildman-Lushington is on display in Eastney Museum.

By the outbreak of war in 1914, ten experienced RM pilots were in responsible appointments and were very early into action. The Naval Wing had by this time become the RN Air Service under the Admiralty on 1 July 1914.

One of the first pilots into action was Lieutenant C H Collet RMA and he gained early distinction by leading the first ever bombing raid on 22nd September 1914 against the Zeppelin sheds at Dusseldorf and Cologne. For this exploit he was awarded the DSO. A study of their dossiers shows that all the RM pilots served



*Major Marsh with the Grumman Martlet AL 246 which he flew in 802 Squadron in 1940. This aircraft is now in the FAA Museum, Yeovilton.*



with distinction in the Great War, in Germany, the Eastern Mediterranean and East Africa and between them gained 9 DSO's, 3 CMG's, 1 CBE and 2 AFC's. On the formation of the RAF in 1918, ten of them transferred to the RAF and all attained High Rank. Among these d'Albiac commanded all British Forces in Greece in 1941 as AOC and then became AOC Ceylon in 1942 and AOC Tactical Air Force in 1943. He retired as an Air Marshal in 1947. In addition, F H Sykes, who had returned to the Army, became the first Chief of the Air Staff in 1918 when Trenchard resigned before taking up the appointment.

Between the wars, Royal Marine pilots continued to volunteer for pilot training, the biggest intake being in 1924 when 19 Officers responded to AFO 1058/24 calling for volunteers. Among these one recalls, HMA Day (Wings Day the Great Escaper) whose George Cross is now on display in the RM Museum. Others were G E Wildman-Lushington, (brother of G V who was killed at Eastchurch on 2 December 1913) who had already obtained his wings in the RNAS in 1917, Cathcart-Jones, Ellison, Warren and Woolley. Among the later pilots were such well known officers as J L Moulton, B W de Courcy Ireland, G K Martyn, Partridge, Skene, Norrie Martin, Brown and others.

At the outbreak of WWII the Corps had a significant number of experienced pilots serving the Fleet Air Arm which had reverted to Admiralty control in July 1937 (not in fact fully completed until May 1939). Among these, Gerry Martyn was to play a key role in organising, training and equipping the Air Gunnery Branch, virtually from zero. Skene, Norrie Martin, Birdie Partridge, Dick Burch, Alan Newson and Francis Bird were already in Squadrons leading flights and sub-flights, whilst others, such as Griffiths, Harris, Marsh and Hay, had just completed training and were newly appointed to Squadrons. By the end of the war, 31 pilots, two observers and nine ex NCO's flew in action. Of these, eighteen commanded squadrons or wings, and eight became Commander (Flying) of aircraft carriers. In the case of Patch, Marsh and Wright two each in succession making a total of eleven aircraft carriers with RM Pilots as 'Wings'.

The first squadron into action were those from Furious, Ark Royal, and until she was sunk, the Courageous, flying patrols in the Atlantic, North Sea and Channel approaches. Guy Griffiths, flying a Skua in 803 from Ark Royal was first into action on 14 September 1939 taking part in an attack on a German U Boat (U30). Unfortunately the bombs (112 lb A.S.) used were wrongly fused, detonated prematurely, and as a result Griffiths Skua was badly damaged and crashed into the sea. Fortunately he survived to become a P O W in company with Partridge and Wings Day. On 9 April 1940 the Germans invaded Norway, and next day 16 Skuas from two Squadrons operating at extreme range from Hatston, sank the German cruiser Konigsberg at Bergen. Pilots included Captain R T Partridge commanding 800 Squadron with Captain E D McIver and Lieutenant L A Harris in 803 Squadron. On 11 April Swordfish of 816 Squadron led by Captain A R Burch made the first ever squadron torpedo attack on German destroyers in Trondheim Fjord followed by bombing attacks around Trondheim and Narvik area. Later flying from Ark Royal, Captain N R M Skene commanding 810 Squadron (Swordfish) and Captains W H N Martin and A C Newson leading flights in 810 and 820 Squadrons attacked bridges, tunnels and railways in the Narvik area, whilst Lieutenant R C Hay flew a Skua in 801 Squadron giving fighter cover to the fleet. In the course of these operations, Partridge was shot down and captured, Harris shot down, wounded but rescued, McIver killed and Captain R J W Nott and Lieutenant J R Owen lost in the Glorious when she was sunk by the Schamborst on 8 June 1940. Partridge was awarded the DSO and Skene, Burch and Harris the DSC.

The evacuation from Dunkirk which followed, saw Hay in 801 Squadron mixing it with ME 109's over North Foreland, Aston in a Swordfish of 825 Squadron mine-laying off the Dutch coast and Lieutenants Marsh, Hay and Wright flying in



804 and 808 Squadrons under 13 Group R A F in the Battle of Britain.

When Italy came into the war in June 1940 the Mediterranean became an active theatre and again RM pilots were in the thick of combat. Captain Oliver Patch led a flight of three Swordfish from the desert to sink a submarine, a depot ship, and damaging a destroyer in Bomba Bay for which he was awarded the DSO, and three months later he took part in the famous raid on the Italian Fleet at Taranto on 11 November 1940 for which he gained the DSC. Lieutenants Wright and Harris by this time were in the Mediterranean - Wright at Matapara and the Western Desert and Harris in the defence of Crete. Hay in 808 in the Ark Royal was at the sinking of the Bismark and then led an Army Co-op Squadron in the North African Campaign. Meanwhile Skene had been appointed Commander (Flying) of HMS Avenger, the first Marine to hold such an appointment. After taking part in Russian Convoys PQ18 and QP14, the ship took part in the landings at Algiers but was torpedoed on 15 November 1942 and Skene was among those lost.

In 1942 Newson commanded 821 Albacore Squadron in the Western Desert co-operating with the Desert Air Force, flare dropping for the Wellingtons and bombardment spotting for the fleet. He was awarded the DSC for this work and then took his squadron to Malta in November 1942 to reinforce attacks on Axis shipping. On one night four of his Albacores sank or seriously damaged two merchant ships and a destroyer with three torpedoes and for his work in Malta he received the DSO.

Again in the Mediterranean in 1943 Major F D G Bird led 888 Squadron (Wildcats) in operations off Sicily and Italy, and Wright led 809 Squadron at the Salerno landings. Both were mentioned in despatches. Lieutenant A C Palmer flying Seafires in 808 Squadron also took part at Salerno flying from HMS Battler where Burch was Commander (Flying).

In 1944 Lieutenant A C Palmer flew in Spitfires of No. 3 Naval Fighter Wing from Lee-on-the-Solent in support of the Allied Armies across the Channel, whilst Lieutenant O R Oakes RM led a flight of Hellcats of 800 Squadron in support of the landings in the South of France. During this period Lieutenant J O Armour was flying Mosquitoes at night in the Night Fighter Unit commanded by Captain L A Harris DSC, RM. In February 1944 he shot down a JU 188 off Newhaven and on 15 July while on intruder patrol over Belgium he shot down a ME 110 West of Antwerp.

Meanwhile on 3 April 1944 Oakes led a flight of Hellcats from Emperor in low attacks on German A A guns and was awarded the DSC. ON 17 July Cheesman commanding the new 1770 Squadron (Fireflies) led strikes against the Tirpitz in support of Barracudas from Indefatigable, Furious and Formidable and was awarded the DSO. Later in 1944 and into 1945 HMS Trumpeter took part in 13 offensive operations including a Russian convoy with Newson as Commander (F) until January 1945 when he was relieved by Patch.

In the Indian Ocean, in April 1942 at the time of the Japanese attack on Ceylon, N Martin was based ashore from Hermes in command of 814 Squadron whilst Nelson-Gracie was also there in 803 Squadron. Later in 1944, Burch in "Battler", Aston in "Ameer" and Marsh in "Rajah" - three carriers with RM Officers as "wings" were in the Indian Ocean at the same time. When 3 Commando Brigade landed at Akyab on 3 January 1945 and at Kangaw on 22 January, close support was provided by Ameer while the landing by the Fleet Marines at Chedubah was covered by "Ameer" and "Khedive" to which Marsh had transferred.

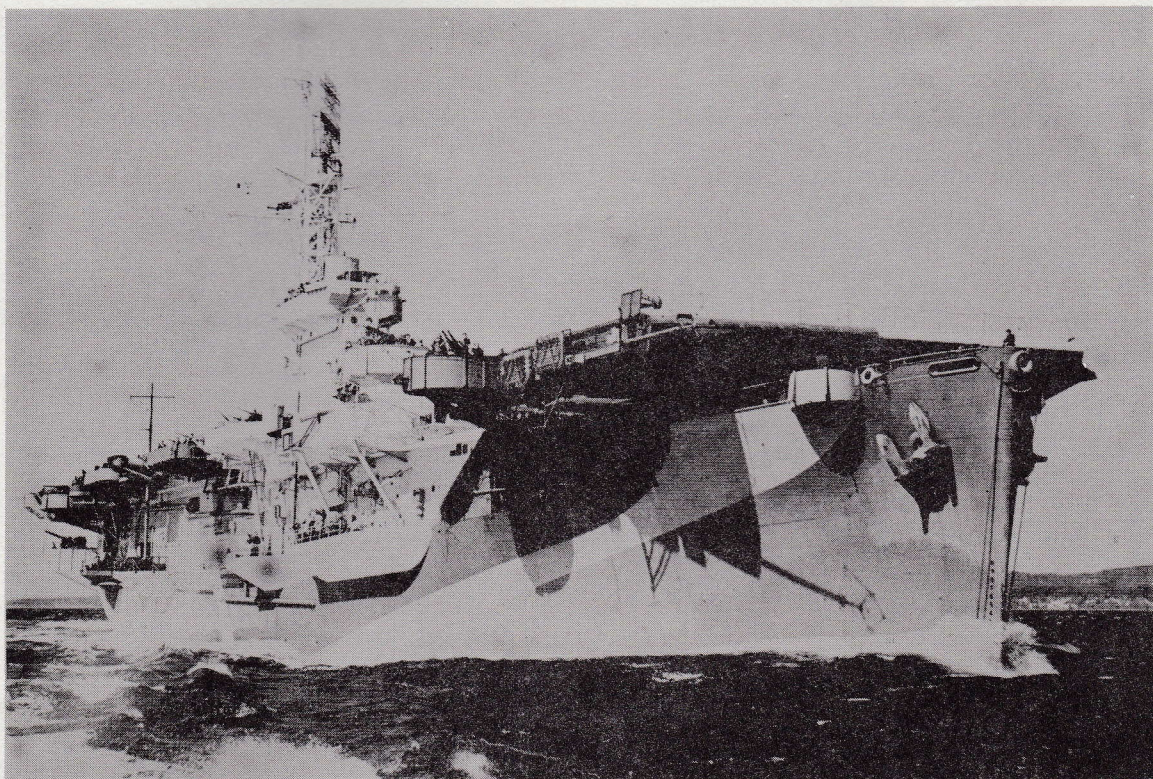
By the end of 1944 the Fleet Carriers had arrived in the Indian Ocean and



on 24 and 29 January 45 the Victorious, Indefatigable, Indomitable and Illustrious struck the Japanese oil refineries at Palembang in Sumatra. Both strikes, the two largest ever mounted by a British Carrier Force were controlled by Hay from Victorious as Air Co-ordinator leading a special flight of Corsairs. Cheesman led 1770 Squadron in close support and rocket strikes. The Fleet Carriers joined the BPF on 7 March and were then involved in continuous attacks on Japanese airfields and reinforcements until 25 May. For their services in the Indian Ocean and Pacific, Hay was awarded the DSO and a bar to the DSC he had won in the Mediterranean, whilst Cheesman added the DSC to his DSO and MBE.

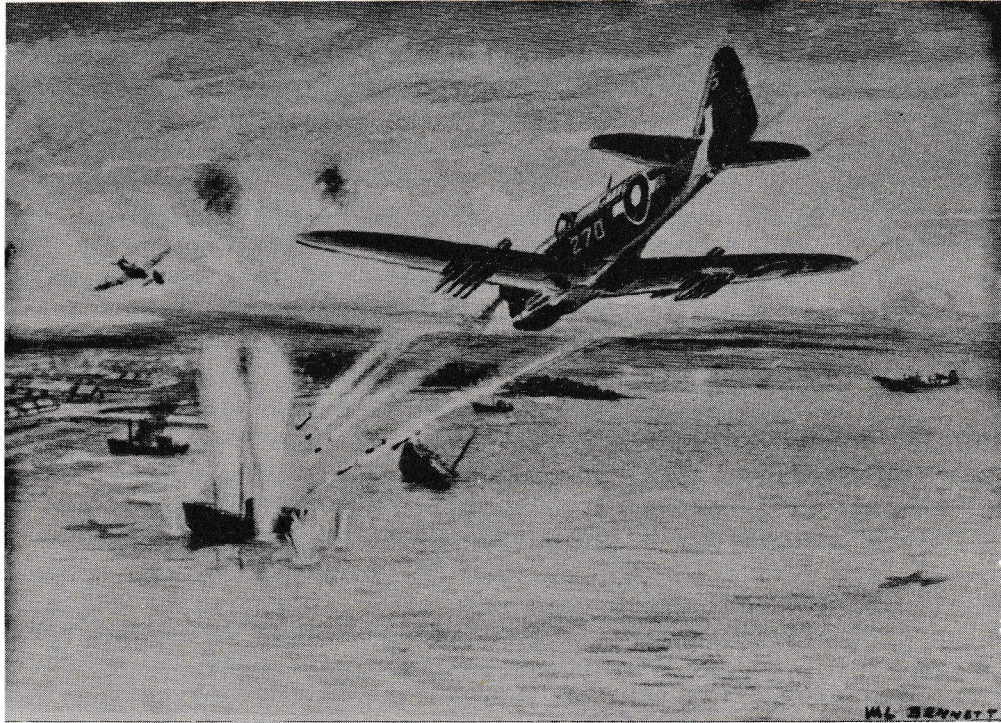
The end of the war meant a return to the old problem of a split career and unlike their predecessors of 1919 the many experienced RM pilots had no escape into a newly formed RAF. The Corps had little idea how to employ them except in their substantive ranks in general service and consequently half of them either transferred to the Navy or retired within two or three years. However, there was a revival period between 1946 and 1959 when eight new pilots were trained. By 1970 the formation of the Commando Brigade Air Squadron and the severe reductions in the Fleet Air Arm meant that entry of Marines into the Fleet Air Arm ceased so that only one, Captain Paul Belding remains serving in the Fleet Air Arm.

The pilots for the Brigade Air Squadron are of course trained by the Army Air Corps and the pilots are only qualified to wear the light aircraft wings of the Army. It is to be hoped that the traditional connection of the RM with the FAA will eventually be revived and that once more RM pilots will wear the coveted golden wings of the Fleet Air Arm.



*HMS RAJAH (1944) A typical Escort Carrier of WW2.*





*Fireflies of 1770 Squadron attack ships in Hírara Bay - 1945.*

#### Stop Press:

As a result of the Falklands operation it has emerged that four ex-Brigade Air Squadron pilots have requalified on to Wessex and Sea Kings and are now serving in Fleet Air Arm Squadrons. In fact the pilot of the Sea King which came down on a beach in Chile and was destroyed by the crew, was one of the RM pilots Lieutenant R Hutchings, and he has been awarded the DSC for carrying out several hazardous operations. Strangely, these pilots although qualified to do so have not yet been given authority to wear FAA wings and this is now being considered at the instigation of Major Marsh.

The full story RM pilots in the FAA is published in "Flying Marines" obtainable from the RM Museum price £3.50 plus 94p postage.

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#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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We are also grateful to the author Haydn Jenkins, and 'Country Quest' magazine (December 1981) for permission to reprint the article "Modest Hero of Trafalgar".

Whilst we are unable to trace the author Bernard Lloyd or 'The Gower Magazine' to which his article "A Swansea Hero of Trafalgar" is attributed (December 1981) if copyright is claimed the RMHS will be pleased to correspond with the claimant and to make any arrangements which may prove to be appropriate.



