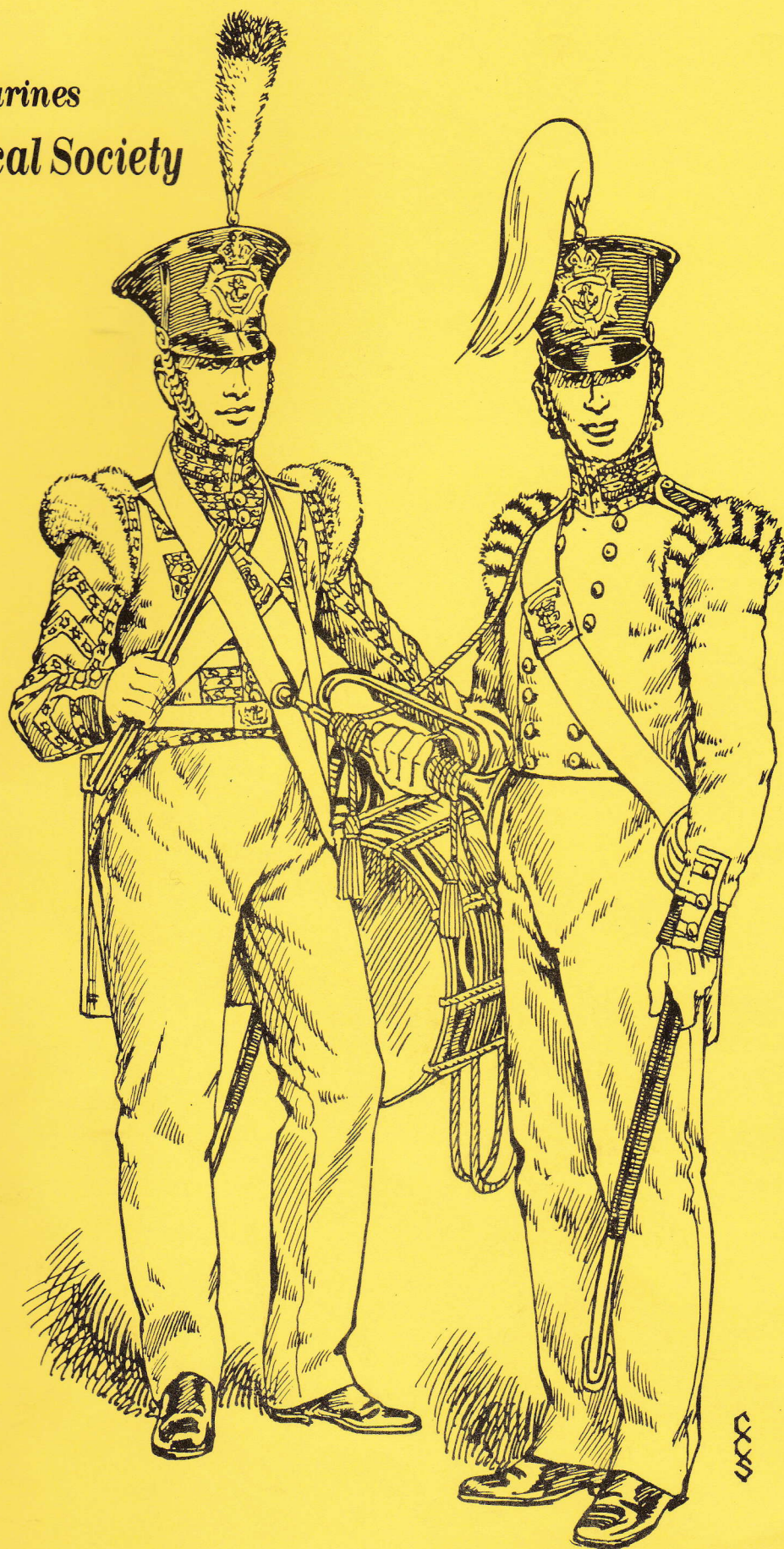




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The Editor expresses grateful thanks to those publications from which articles or extracts have been reproduced here, and to the Royal Marines Museum Photographic Library for the majority of illustrations used. Appreciation is also extended to Charles Stadden for the cover design.

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"If ever the hour of real danger should come to England,
they will be found the country's sheet anchor"

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OLD OAK

THE LIFE OF JOHN JERVIS
EARL OF ST VINCENT

By Admiral Sir William James GCB

(Extracts from this book
published in 1950 by Longmans,
Green & Co Ltd)

DEDICATED TO THE ROYAL MARINES

of which Admiral of the Fleet the
Earl of St Vincent was
Lieutenant-General from the
year 1800 to 1814 and
General from 1814 till his
death,

and who, by their loyal support,
enabled him to suppress
mutiny which threatened to
blunt the only weapon, still
unsheathed in Europe, that
could hold Napoleon in check,

and for whom he obtained the title of "Royal" after their
splendid fighting at the Battle of Copenhagen,

and of whom he wrote: "I never knew an appeal to them for honour,
courage or loyalty, that they did not more than realise my
expectations. If ever the hour of real danger should come
to England, they will be found the country's sheet anchor",

and who, in the many Colonial wars of the nineteenth century and
the two World Wars of the present century, have added lustre
to their renown and adorned British history by their conduct
in numerous sea and land battles, in amphibious operations
in all quarters of the globe, in many hazardous assaults and
many dauntless retreats, this work is dedicated by the
author.



MUTINY

The "sad work" referred to by the First Lord had begun on April 15th when on Lord Bridport making a signal to the Channel Fleet to weigh, the crew of his flagship swarmed up the shrouds and gave three cheers as the signal to the fleet to mutiny. This mutiny ended when the Admiralty met all the demands of the leaders. On May 7th another mutiny accompanied by bloodshed broke out in a squadron of the Channel Fleet lying at Spithead. Order was restored by the most respected and popular Admiral, Lord Howe, who exercised great tact.

It was these mutinies that the First Lord described as sad work; the far more serious mutiny at the Nore had not yet broken out.

Jervis was confident that the men who had served so long with him and had fought so well at St Vincent would remain loyal if untampered with by agents from England but he could not be so sure of the ships that from time to time joined him from England. He knew that if trouble arose he could rely implicitly on the Marines and so his first precaution was to berth them apart and enhance their importance by ceremonials.

"I assembled", he wrote to a captain, "all the Captains of Marines on board the VILLE DE PARIS, under pretext of informing them about uniformity of dress, in exercise, and in economy; but really to give them some sense about keeping a watchful eye, not only upon their own men, but upon the seamen. I directed that a subaltern should visit them at their meals; I exhorted them to keep up the pride and spirit in their detachments; to prevent conversation being carried on in Irish, and to call the roll at least twice a day." He then issued two orders to the fleet. One directed that whenever punishment was inflicted an officer's guard of marines was to attend with loaded arms and bayonets fixed. The other is quoted in full because it has been observed ever since in His Majesty's ships.

"Guard to be paraded on the poop every morning at half-past eight o'clock, with all the form and order practised in the best regulated parades; and, after going through exercise, to descend to the quarter-deck at nine o'clock precisely, where all the accustomed formalities are to be gone through, with respect and decorum due to the occasion (although no colours are allowed) - and, where there is a band, 'God Save the King' is to be played, while the Guard is under presented arms, and all persons present are required to stand with their hats off till the Guard shoulders." Jervis always attended this ceremony in full-dress uniform. He invariably took off his hat when speaking to an officer or sailor and if he saw any other officer not doing likewise he administered a sharp reproof, so when he saw a petty officer with his hat on during the performance of the new ceremony it was more that he could bear and he jumped off the poop on top of the man. We can well believe that after that the ceremony was very strictly carried out.

DISCIPLINARY ORDERS

Jervis became convinced that the lamentable state of discipline in the navy was partly due to the lax conditions in peacetime, and he made certain proposals to the First Lord, which if they had been accepted *in toto* would have been most beneficial to the navy.

Yachts - Should be sold as totally useless, tending to nothing but corrupt sinecures, too often given to worthless officers.

Guard-ships - So infamously rotten and corrupt, as to have sown the seeds of all the theft, false musters, and general departure from the regulations of the service; and the men in them are idle and profligate; the annihilation of this establishment, therefore, becomes absolutely necessary.

Instead, he recommended keeping some line-of-battle ships in commission which would cruise in the West Indies and Canadian waters for five or six months a year.

Mediterranean - An officer of splendour should periodically visit Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, and the Italian ports.

British Isles - Frigates and sloops, under an able, firm and virtuous Flag Officer should be employed on surveying and teaching pilotage to junior officers.

Frigates - Are grown preposterous; he never wished to see a larger one than the INCONSTANT.

Repairs of ships, and Improvements in Dockyards - To be set about with vigour, and carried on with perseverance. Much reform necessary in the Civil Department. If all the clerks in the dockyards were dismissed, with annuities, payable on one condition only, "that they reside fifty miles from any dockyard", the public would benefit exceedingly.

The artificers are all thieves - a new race would perhaps be as bad.

Transport Board - Of no use whatever.

Marines - A very considerable corps should be kept up, and I hope to see the day when there is not another foot soldier in the Kingdom, in Ireland, or the colonies, except the King's Guard and Artillery.

He pressed his views about the Marines on many occasions; in those days the British Army was mainly employed in amphibious warfare, for which Marines were, from their life aboard ship and training, better suited, and it was the view of most British statesmen that the country had not the resources in wealth and manpower to meet all the requirements of maritime war against the European powers, and also accept large continental commitments for the standing army.

During September, Jervis received a secret letter from the First Lord which told him that the Portuguese Ambassador in Paris had signed a peace treaty with the French, and that the only hope of preventing the Portuguese Government ratifying the Treaty, and thus losing the Tagus base for the fleet, would be for a "commanding naval officer of distinction" to be in the river.

So, at the end of the month, he reluctantly returned to the Tagus, leaving Collingwood with a division to watch Cadiz.

If the officers thought they would now be allowed to relax they were soon disillusioned by a series of general orders, one of which was as follows: "The Commander-in-Chief having seen several officers of the fleet on shore dressed like shopkeepers, in coloured clothes, and others wearing round hats with their uniforms, in violation of the late order from the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, does positively direct, that any officer offending against this wholesome and necessary regulation in future, is put under arrest, and reported to the Admiral, and, let the sentence of a court-martial upon such officers so offending be what it may, that he is never permitted to go ashore while under the command of the Earl of St Vincent."

He remained in the Tagus during the next few months, knowing that the Spanish Fleet would be laid up for the winter, and, though the conditions were trying for the seamen, there was no unrest. When the LONDON arrived from England her crew were soon aware that no nonsense would be tolerated. They had mutinied at Spithead, turned the admiral out of the ship, gone near to hanging a lieutenant and were still in a state of insubordination.

ROYAL MARINES

Soon after the publication of the Copenhagen dispatch he took the

opportunity to implement a long-cherished wish to raise the status of the marines, for whom he was "very partial". He approached the King who readily agreed that in view of their fine conduct they should in future be styled Royal Marines, and that their uniform, hitherto faced with white, should now be blue. There was much rejoicing at the Marine depots when this was announced. At Plymouth a great crowd turned out to see the Marines in their new royal uniform, which was the same pattern as the Foot Guards; the battalion fired volleys, and between each volley the band played "God save the King". The commandants at Portsmouth and Chatham begged Jervis to have his portrait painted for the officers' messes; he replied that though he had great repugnance to sitting for a portrait he would meet their wishes and hoped that they would approve of Sir William Beechey as artist.

He also tightened up the entry of officers: "Lord St Vincent presents his compliments to General Averne, and wishes he had confined his recommendations to the sons of the officers of the Corps."

"I fear your application in favour of Mr Steele for a Commission in the Royal Marines is too late, the list having been made out some time and chiefly composed of the sons and near relations of officers who - I am persuaded, you will agree with me - should be preferred to all others."

He was always very active in seeing that Marines who had distinguished themselves in the quelling of mutinies received priority for appointments.

When, at a later date, he was advocating the reduction of the National forces, excepting the marines, he wrote: "In obtaining for them the distinction of 'Royal' I but efficiently did my duty. I never knew an appeal to them for honour, courage or loyalty, that they did not more than realise my highest expectations. If ever the hour of real danger should come to England, they will be found the country's sheet anchor."

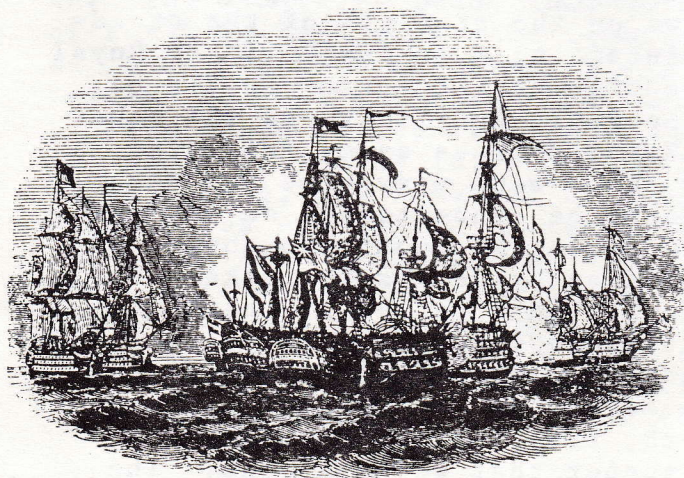
DETERIORATION IN DOCKYARDS

During his retirement he took every opportunity to keep before the Government of the day his views on the strength of the standing army and the importance of maintaining a strong Corps of Royal Marines. After two world wars his view that the army should be reduced to the King's Guard and the Royal Artillery and all other commitments should be met by the Royal Marines seems fantastic, but at that period of our history there were many wise men who held that Britain's war effort should be concentrated on the war at sea, and that military commitments on the Continent should at all costs be avoided. A letter written by Jervis to Tucker in his eighty-third year is of particular interest as at the beginning of this century the policy of employing Royal Marine Artillery to garrison overseas bases had many powerful advocates; it was some years before his wise advice on the subject of naval ordnance was followed. "The French, from the era of Louis XIV, have always equipped their fleet sooner than we have done. The *Bureau de Classe* continues in full vigour, and without a large corps of Marines, we shall be long before an efficient fleet can

be got ready. It is of great importance to our country, that the public should be kept alive upon the subject of our monstrous army, in a series of letters in *The Times* newspaper, showing that the Marine Corps is best adapted to the security of our dockyards; and that no soldier, of what is termed the line, shall approach them; our Colonies ought to have no other infantry to protect them, and the Corps of Marine Artillery should be substituted for the old artillery. The ordnance and appurtenances for His Majesty's Fleet should be vested in the Admiralty, and entirely taken away from what is termed the Ordnance Department. The futile employment ycleped *Staffs* should be totally done away, and all the frippery of the army sent to the devil."

It was perhaps inevitable that once he was safely out of the way those who had quailed before him when he was cleansing the Admiralty and dockyards should publicly give vent to their pent-up hatred of him, and also, that the bad old ways should creep back when the administration passed into less vigorous hands. On June 1, 1808, he wrote to Tucker: "I enjoy the impotent envy, hatred, and malice of the public offices connected with the navy, more than I can express - the viper biting the file is their emblem." In the same letter he wrote this interesting comment on sea battle. "The achievement of *LA VIRGINIE* was neatly done. Nothing, in my judgement, is so creditable to an English sea officer, as the capture of an enemy's ship with little carnage in his own."

In August, 1812, he was disturbed at a return to the policy of building ships by contract instead of in the dockyards, a policy he had resisted when in office. "I cannot, for the soul of me, understand the policy of reducing the number of shipwrights in the King's Yards, and making contracts to build frigates with the materials piled in these very yards, furnished to the contractors at a price below what was paid for them to other contractors. This is a mystery beyond my comprehension. How we are to stagger under the profusion existing in every department, I am at a loss to guess; with the approaching subsidies, and increased expenses of a war with the United States, which will be much more serious than people seem to be aware of."



EDITORIAL COMMENT

Volume XI comes with a new cover design (that of the Royal Marine Drummer and Royal Marine Artillery Trumpeter, circa 1930) by Charles C Stadden, to whom we are as ever greatly indebted; and also an extra eight pages.

Initially we received three editions per Volume, but this was reduced to two when the introduction of Special Publications proved sufficient to cope with our printing capabilities, and therefore this enlargement will partly compensate for this arrangement. However it must be pointed out that unless more material is forwarded to me this cannot be long maintained, for without a continual flow of items (large or small) an editor is utterly useless!

With the emphasis on 'D-DAY', a number of other anniversaries for 1984 were overlooked at the time and I promised to raise each one in turn, as with the Sudan Campaign of 1884 in the last issue, and now it is the oldest Crown Colony of Bermuda that we feature on pages 20, 21 and 22 .

Some hoped for correspondence relating to our last issue was not forthcoming, therefore I feel that I should clarify a few points which may have puzzled our readers. Firstly, on page 37 the photograph (c 1930) was in fact taken in 1927 of the Far East Battalion at Eastney, bound for Shanghai. "Come Superb and let's away" (at the top of page 39) was a song referring to Major Henry Guise Tucker RMA and his Marines onboard HMS SUPERB, also on passage to Suakim. The 'Gerald' mentioned on page 41 (line 19) by Gunner Wilkinson somewhat improperly referred to his commanding officer, Lt Gen Sir Gerald Graham KCB VC RE! Finally, on page 47 (line 37) HMS SULTAN, at the turn of this century, was one of five old floating hulks moored at the Hardway Jetty in Gosport to form the Boy Artificer Training Establishment known collectively as HMS FISGARD; the others being 'SPARTIATE', 'TERRIBLE', 'HINDUSTAN' and 'TRUANT'.

A photograph that appeared on page 47 of Volume IX No 2 issue has caused some confusion in the past that thankfully has now been sorted out by one of our members, Captain Leslie W Bridger RM. On selecting this illustration I had become aware of conflicting captions to it in other publications and therefore cautiously kept mine somewhat ambiguous, as a precaution! The site was in fact a farm compound about one mile west of Amfreville, a long way from Merville, and the men of 1 SS Brigade are from the Royal Corps of Signals.....not Royal Marines or Parachute Regiment, as variously suggested! The men in the left foreground are cipher clerks of the 1 SS Bde Intelligence Section, and the man using the hand microphone of a 22 set is now Col B A Beattie, who was then a colleague of Leslie's on Lord Lovat's H Q Staff. The photographic department of the Imperial War Museum have thanked 'our man on the spot' (one of only two Royal Marine Officers with the 1 SS Bde HQ at the time) for clarification of photograph print (85051), and hopefully no further errors will occur in future publications!

ECONOMICAL MARINES IN THE 18TH CENTURY

(Extracts from 'Military Collections and Remarks' - Published by Major Donkin - New York 1777)

MARINES - (page 215)

This corps, serving by sea and land, ought to have every encouragement in the power of government, but their constitution is so defective at present, that it is neither fish nor flesh! That admirals and captains of the navy should be generals and colonels of marines by way of *sine-cure*, is neither political or economical. These gentlemen, commanding the bulwarks of the nation very deservedly have extreme emolumentary employments in their own departments; Witness, Greenwich; guard squadrons, and ships; yachts; commissioners; comptrollers; etc etc, and I dare say, would most willingly cede all pretensions to this corps (so glaringly hurtful to the service) were they solicited to it by the commandants, whose promotion is greatly retarded, if not entirely stopped in the general rank, by this unnatural jumble.

In justice to the marines, no troops have distinguished themselves more, I have had the honour of serving on shore with them at Belleisle, Martinique, and never desired to be brigaded better. In the Massachusetts too, they dealt destruction at Bunker's Hill in return for the treacherous usage they shared from the rebels at Lexington. I would recommend this body, either to be formed into ten battalions, or 100 companies, whichever government think fittest for the real advantage of the nation, and to be in every respect on the same footing with his majesty's marching regiments of infantry. Let us suppose (by way of economy to a nation) an army in the field of twenty thousand men proportioned in the general method - (viz.)

Infantry, above 2/3	or -	15,167
Cavalry 1/5	or -	4,000
Artillery 1/24	or -	833
		20,000

(+ But 1/10 of this corps will be found necessary in war)
Besides engineers, commissaries, hospitals, bakers, waggoners, guides, Batmen etc etc.

20,000 infantry on English pay)	
at £18 per man, per annum)	360,000
officers included.)	
But 4000 cavalry and 833)	
artillery at £36 per man, per)	173,988
annum, will amount to)	

which is not much short of half the charge for 20,000 foot. And for extraordinaries of an active campaign, it will be good management if they do not exceed the personal pay of the army. The general (whatever the substance of his infantry, cavalry, and artillery comes to) always demands as much more for the operations of the field: And although the personal pay be double in some nations, to what it is in others, yet this is the invariable rule. The state therefore, that gives the highest stipend, always exceeds in extraordinary expenses of war.

By the above calculation, forty thousand foot, exclusive of the rest of the troops now serving against the rebel colonies will stand government in only, one million, four hundred and forty thousand pounds annually, and the republicans in a great deal more, from the fatal consequences that must attend their fruitless opposition. How long they can pay, feed, cloath and lodge rabble multitudes of 72,000 (their boasted number) at that rate, time must develope!

(This passage has been transcribed from the original old english text).

- oOo -

FROM "THE DERBY MERCURY" FRIDAY DECEMBER 25, 1767

PORTSMOUTH DECEMBER 17

Wednesday Evening a barbarous murder was committed on a Marine belonging to the Squadron in this Garrison. Another Marine came to the Poor Man's Quarters about six in the evening and decoyed him out, telling him that he knew of some smuggled goods upon South-Sea Common, about a Mile from this Place, near the Sea Side, and that it would be worth his while to go with him to seize them.

The next morning the Man was found murdered in the above mentioned Place. His head beat to pieces the Scalp almost tore off, stabbed in several parts of the Face and eyes, supposed with a Bayonet. The Man came home on the MONTREAL, and had received Money due to him. He had a Silver Watch, Silver Buckles and five or six guineas in his Pocket, when he left his quarters; his Pockets when he was found were turned inside out and the Marine that took him out has not been heard of since.

The Deceased was a lusty strong Man, and 'tis supposed the Murder was not committed by one Man, as there is appearance of the Deceased having made great resistance. A Publican and his wife are taken upon suspicion of the Murder. It is supposed the Body was thrown into the seas, which carried it to the Beach where it was found.

FROM "THE DERBY MERCURY" FRIDAY JANUARY 1, 1768

Extract of a letter from Portsmouth December 21

The Coroner having sat on the Body of the murdered Marine mentioned in my last, brought in their verdict "WILFUL MURDER", and supposed by the Grenadier that took him out of his quarters the evening the Murder was perpetrated. The Grenadier was taken the Evening following. He prevaricated greatly on his examination and denies the fact, but from the Strongest Circumstances everybody believes him to be the Murderer. A little time will discover, we hope, more of the barbarous Affair.

A TWO YEARS' CRUISE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

12TH JUNE 1848 - 13TH SEPTEMBER 1850

By John Hopkinson, late Private,
26th Company Royal Marines, Portsmouth Division.

I was enlisted at Leeds in the County of York on the 6th day of December 1847, at the age of 21 years and 3 months. I was attested on the 7th and left Leeds by express the same night, arriving in London about 5 o'clock the next morning. We soon set off again, for Portsmouth, where we arrived about 2 p.m., and I remained in Barracks there until my turn came to go to sea. On the 22nd May 1848, a draft came in for 40 men and I happened to be one in that number. We were called out and passed the doctor, and on the following day we embarked on board Her Britannic Majesty's Ship HOWE, 120 guns, Captain Sir James Stirling, K.T. She had then been in commission about 12 months; the first six months she was cruising in the English Channel, then she was ordered back to England to take the Queen Dowager out to Madeira. When the Queen had landed at Madeira the ship went to Lisbon and joined the Channel Squadron again, under Rear Admiral Sir Charles Napier, until the Queen was ready to return.

At this time they were augmenting all the Ships' companies. Previous to this time every three-decker that carried 120 guns had been allowed 160 Marines, and now they were augmenting them to 200 and 800 seamen, making a total of 1000 men for a ship's company. I was one in the 40 to make up her complement. In a week's time after we embarked we took the ship out to Spit Head, then we got in our lower deck gun powder and shot, provisions and water, and they served us last-comers out with a bed and blanket each. (We had had nothing to sleep on but the bare decks from coming on board.) They also served us out two hammocks each. I soon found out that ship's duty was a great deal harder than Barrack duty, for we had to turn out every morning at 4 a.m. while we were fitting out, and we had to work very hard the whole of the day getting the ship ready for sea.

On the 12th day of June we weighed anchor and got on the way about 9 o'clock in the morning. The boatswain mates piped Hands up Anchor, so we manned the capstan as many as could get to. The band was ordered on deck, and we kept time with our feet as the band played. There were a great many boats round about us, several who had come out from the harbour to take their farewell of some of the ship's company. Some had fathers and mothers, some brothers and sisters, some wives and children. It was almost heart-rending to see some, how they clung to each other up to the very last. As for me, I had nobody near to come to see me (I was 300 miles away from any of my friends, and I thought at the time it was almost as well it was so.)

All this passes away, and we find ourselves sailing on with a fair steady breeze round the Isle of Wight, watching the porpoises rolling and leaping around, and the ship's band playing every night merrily down the coast of Portugal and of Spain, and in 14 days from England we arrive at Gibraltar. It is just dusk when all hands are calling out "The Rock is in sight". There was a fair wind, so we sailed on against the strong current and we passed by, seeing very little of the Rock and we took to the Barbary Coast

keeping to the African coast all the way, never long out of sight of it. We arrived in Malta on the 17th July, and left again the following day to go in search of the Fleet. We cruised about a few days, then we fell in with the Fleet just off Palermo. When we left Malta we made for the coast of Sicily which lies straight ahead, and on the third day we came in sight of Mount Etna.

We sail on down the channel, with the most glorious scenery disclosing itself at every point, but Etna seems to absorb all till at length it disappears and we come into the beautiful Straits of Messina, also Palermo, and it is here that we fall in with the Fleet. The following are the names of all the ships belonging to the Fleet at this time:-



H.M. Ship HIBERNIA 120 guns, bearing the flag of Vice Admiral Sir William Parker, GCB, the QUEEN 116, the RODNEY 84, VANGUARD 84, VENGEANCE 84, POWERFUL 84, then there was the ship to which I belong, the HOWE 120, and there were two French line of battle ships with us, besides a few smaller ships. We sailed on together, sometimes in line of battle order and sometimes all in abreast.

A corporal in the uniform of this period
(Charles C Stadden)

We sailed on round the point of Sicily on our way to Naples, past the Lipari Islands, one of which (Stromboli) is a very active volcano. We are admiring the formation of the clouds that hang over the Sicilian coast, when we perceive there is a mountain up among them, round which they are gathered, and to our infinite surprise and delight, glorious old Etna comes out of her cloud chambers and stands there full to view for at least some 50 miles, Looking if possible grander than when we first beheld her.

The next day we sail into the Bay of Naples. It is said to be the finest and most beautiful bay in the world, and certainly it would be difficult to find another to surpass it. There is Vesuvius smoking on the one side, with vineyards and dwellings half way up the ascent. At the foot of it on the side furthest from us is Pompeii which was buried by an eruption rather less than 1800 years ago, and at its foot nearest to us is a city built on Herculaneum, another buried city, as this perhaps may be buried in its turn. There just before us in the curve of the bay is Naples itself. Its streets, as we see them from the ship, seem full of life, and its buildings rising up one above another, some of the domes and spires of the churches shining in the

sunlight like burnished gold. I, of course, had a strong desire to go on shore, but I knew I should have to wait some time for this privilege. Our officers began going on shore very shortly after we dropped anchor, and in a few weeks, after we had gone through some slight repairs, to my great delight they commenced giving leave to the men, about 3 or 4 from each mess. It was not very long before I got leave for 24 hours, and this was the first time we had been on shore since we left England. I went on shore with a good many more, and I will just mention a few things we noticed. First, all the fortifications were turned inwards, so that they could pour destruction in upon the city as well as upon an enemy without. There are four great forts, all the cannon of which are pointed upon the city, while there are government buildings surmounted by cannon in every direction, and at the ends of some of the principle streets you see loopholes and mouths of cannons peeping out at you in every direction, anything but pleasant to behold. I think we almost saw all round Naples; there is a very large Barracks which we went to look at, where we were told they could parade some 1000 soldiers on the top. I saw the King's palace, also the Opera House but I was not inside. There is also a fine museum in Naples, enriched not only with works of art but with relics from Pompeii.

We stopped at Naples and round about for more than eight months. We had not been long in the Bay of Naples before the remainder of the French Fleet joined us. There were seven English line of battle ships and eight line of battle ships of the French; there were two French Admirals and one English Admiral. There was a war going on at the time; we could see them shipping troops from Naples regularly, mostly to Palermo, it was said. But what the cause of this war was I am not prepared to say, for men in the Service never get to know much what is going on, only what they can see. When they hear anything it generally comes out from England either in their letters from home or newspapers. We were at Naples on Christmas Day, and a first-class Christmas we had. Each mess subscribed money and had a quantity of meat and other things brought from ashore, and great quantities of fruit, as fruit is very cheap in nearly all parts of the Mediterranean. Each mess made a large chandelier and filled it with candles, and when they piped to dinner we lighted all our candles and lowered all the ports, and the band played us "The Roast Beef of Old England" while we were eating the roast beef of Naples.

Sometime in January the Admiral despatched us off to different places; our ship and another went to a place called Castellamare, one to Genoa, one to Messina, one to Palermo, and the Admiral stopped at Naples. Occasionally the Admiral called us all together and exercised us, and the French Fleet also began to move off but where I cannot tell. It was said our business there was to protect our Merchants. About the middle of April, 1849, we weighed anchor, the whole of us except the VENGEANCE and we left her there.

We sailed out of the Bay very nicely without any accidents and we came down to Malta. The weather was very hot at this time, hotter than ever I had felt it in England. We had an awning spread fore and aft the upper deck the whole day long to keep the sun off. We had scarcely let go our anchors before there were scores of boats, called Bom boats, with fruit and other things to

sell; they were crowding round the ships in all directions. It is the Maltese harvest when the Fleet is there; we could buy almost anything in Malta, the same as in England.

We had not been long in Malta before we got leave to go on shore. The day I went on shore there were two of my messmates besides a comrade of mine from another mess, a native of Great Horton, the name of Jowett. With us being used to nothing but the ship's decks for about 12 months, and the weather being so warm and the roads so rough, we had no sooner landed and walked a very short distance but we had all the skin off our feet. I soon found out I should not have to do much this time on shore.

There are always two English Regiments stationed in Malta, besides a regiment of natives called Royal Malta Fencibles. At this time there were the 44th and 69th Regiments lying there and I was aware that there were several from Bradford and the neighbourhood, so we went to the St. Elmo Fort where the 69th was lying, and we met with several Yorkshiremen. At night their bands were out on the Parade Ground, which I thought sounded delightful more than 2,000 miles from Old England, playing "The Girl I Left Behind Me" and other lively tunes. So I spent most of my time on shore this time amongst the soldiers, talking of home and watching the antics of some of our sailors and marines. Some who had come on shore with me were regularly drunk in a few hours (a man who keeps sober may enjoy himself best in watching their merrymaking). You might see them sometimes with great bunches of flowers which they have bought from the flower girls, pinned in their breasts, marching 4 or 5 abreast singing with all their might. Sometimes they will hire nearly all the boats in the harbour and fasten them in a train, and fill the first with music which they make play "Rule Britannia" for hours together. Sometimes they will hire a number of horses on which they will play the wildest freaks imaginable, getting on the "upper deck" as they call the horse's back, not at all particular whether they face the head or tail, often preferring the latter, and the leader of them has a large stone tied round the horse's neck and every grog shop they come to he drops the stone and that is "dropping anchor", an example in which all the Fleet follow their Admiral.

However, night comes on and we have to look out for lodgings. I and my companions got what we considered very good lodgings, but we had not long been in bed before something came buzzing about us. We could not sleep, what with the heat and these torments flying about us; we scarcely got any sleep at all, and when we enquired in the morning they gave us to understand that they were what they called Mosquitos. After breakfast we had a walk, and I noticed that the houses are all built with flat roofs and a parapet with a staircase leading up to it, and not infrequently people seek relief from the heat below by sleeping there at night. We returned on board again at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and that was the first time ashore in Malta.

After a time I got leave again, with the same companion as before, and we were determined to go out in the country this time, so we hired a horse each and we drove out to Cevitia Vecchia. As you travel through the country you see the sheep and goats all feeding in the same flock, you look upon the trees around and you see the fig trees by the wayside, and the palm, locust, vine and pomegranate. As for orange and lemon trees, they with their golden fruit are

beyond all number. Then as you drive along you see a man ploughing with what looks like two sticks, drawn by a yoke of oxen, or an ox and ass yoked together. As for the cultivation of the island, that is peculiar in one respect, that it is mostly done in terraces, the edges of which are build up by stones.

(To be continued)



HMS HIBERNIA, Flagship of the Mediterranean Fleet, in dry dock at Malta. Launched in 1804 she was broken up in 1902

CORPS MUSEUM PRESS NOTICES

THE SAVAGE FAMILY AND THE ROYAL MARINES

Sir John Boscawen Savage joined the Marines in Portsmouth in 1777 having already sold his commission in the Army and fought a duel with his Commanding Officer. During the next 37 years, like many fighting men of his time, he was seldom out of action, having taken part in the Relief of Gibraltar, the Battles of Cape Henry and Chesapeake and the Battle of Cape St Vincent. At the Battle of the Nile, a round shot pierced his side as he was holding up his sword but making light of this he refused to be named on the wounded list after the victory had been achieved. His last action at Sea was at the Battle of Copenhagen but in 1818 he fought another duel with his Commanding Officer for which he was court martialled and dismissed the service. Quickly reinstated he went on to become the Colonel Commandant of the Chatham Division and the Deputy Adjutant General of the Royal Marines for which he was subsequently knighted.

Sir John is just one member of a very distinguished family which originated in Ireland in the 17th Century. Thanks to the generosity and help from Sir John's great great grandson, Mr Patrick Savage of Burford, Oxfordshire, the Royal Marines Museum mounted a small exhibition to highlight the connection between the Savage family and the Corps. It contained a number of fascinating artefacts belonging to Sir John as well as photographs, books and medals belonging to his grandson, Lieutenant Colonel Harry Boscawen Savage who served in the Royal Marines Artillery during the last Century.

Appropriately, the exhibition was opened by Mr Savage at 12 o'clock on Tuesday 2 July 1985.

PRESENTATION OF UN STANDARD TO ROYAL MARINES MUSEUM

A UN Standard, originally belonging to the USS PERCH, was presented to the Royal Marines Museum on board USS TICONDEROGA, alongside in Portsmouth Dockyard, at 1000 on 28 September 1985.

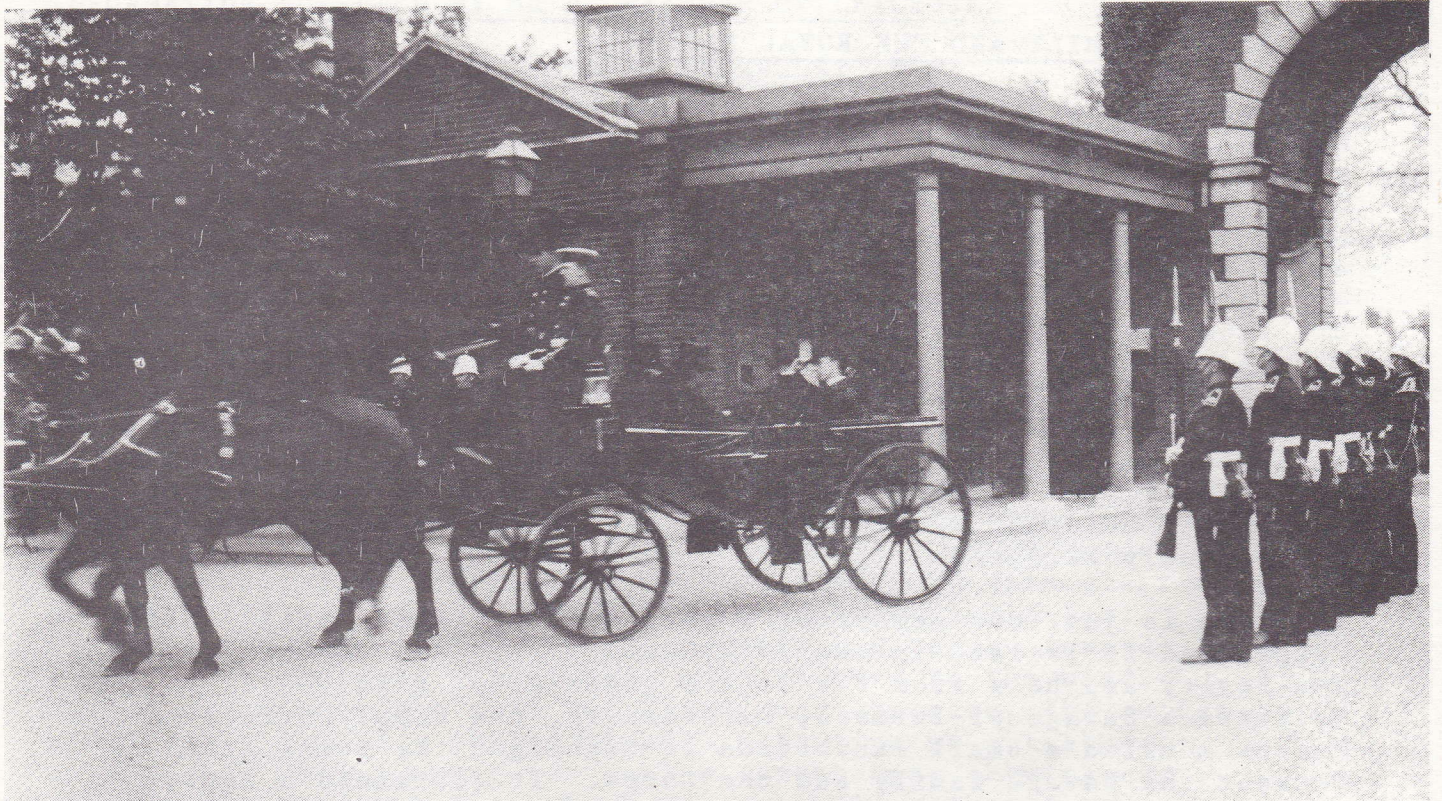
USS PERCH was a troop carrying submarine which carried men from 41 Independent Commando Royal Marines on a raid against a railway on the East coast of N Korea during the Korean War. The raid took place on 2 October 1950 and was entirely successful. The Commando subsequently took part in many other raids from US Ships and was also attached to the First Marine Division during the famed Chosin Reservoir Action for which it was awarded the US Presidential Citation.

The UN Standard was presented by Mr Alan Moody (a British Korean War Veteran) with the full co-operation of the US Navy and US Marine Corps. The presentation symbolises the unique spirit of friendship and co-operation that existed between British and American Servicemen during the Korean War and continues today.

It was attended by a number of veterans from 41 Independent Commando, some of whom took part in the PERCH raid, and provided the first opportunity they have had to get together again and renew their contacts with the US Navy and US Marine Corps.

(Reference to this action can be found in our Special Publication No 8 on '41 Independent Commando - Korea' by Lt Col Peter Thomas RM)

FORTON MEMORIES



Top - Their Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty arriving through the main gate. Barrack Guard called out. (c 1908).

Bottom - Inspection by Their Lordships.





Top - Presentation of Long Service and Good Conduct Medals. (Men are wearing the 1905 pattern white helmets and the 1902 pattern tunic. Numbers 4 & 5 are Musicians from the Divisional Band). The single story buildings fronting the main road, which include the guardroom and all to the right of this picture, are still standing, whilst the remainder has been demolished and a modern school built upon the parade ground.

Bottom - Church Parade.



INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY MR H. HEATHER OF LEICESTER

LEICESTER AND NOTTINGHAM JOURNAL 26 AUGUST 1780

Copy of a letter from Captain Pere Williams of his Majesty's Ship FLORA to Mr Stephens, dated at Falmouth, the 15th August 1780.

SIR

I beg you will communicate to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the following particulars, which I have the honour of transmitting to you from this port, where contrary winds obliged me to put in.

On Tuesday the 10th inst at half past four in the afternoon standing in under Ushant, in quest of the fleet, the wind at that time about ENE we discovered through the haze a square rigged vessel and cutter under our lee, lying to with their heads to the northward, distant from us about four miles; whereupon we made sail, beat to quarters and hedged towards them, which the ship perceiving, wore, hauled to the wind, backed her misen top sail and waited our approach, the cutter working off and on. At ten minutes past five we got abreast of her, and within about two cables length upon showing our colours received her fire which we instantly returned and continued briskly on both sides for about an hour, gradually nearing each other, when our wheel being shot away, our shrouds, backstays, and running rigging much cut, we dropped on board of her, and continued the engagement in that position about 15 minutes, the enemy then deserting their great guns attempted to board us, but were instantly repulsed with loss, our people boarded in return, sword in hand, struck their colours, and in a short time took possession of their ship, which proved to be a French Frigate, called La Nymphe, commanded by the Chevalier Du Romain, who died the same evening of the wounds he received in the action. She is 4 years old copper bottomed, mounts 22 guns, though pierced for 40, and her compliment consists of 291 men. She had been only four days out of Brest, and was employed upon reconnoitring service of that Port.

Before I conclude my letter I beg leave to add that my officers and people in general showed the greatest coolness and intrepidity, on this occasion, and indeed merit more encomiums than I can find words to express; their conduct will, I flatter myself meet with these Lordships approbation, and recommend them to their future favour.

I am etc

P WILLIAMS

Return of killed and wounded on board the FLORA

Killed Mr Bisset Midshipman 1, Seamen 6, Marines 2 Total killed 9
Wounded, Mr Creed Master 1, Seamen 13, Marines 4 Total killed and wounded 27

Seamen since died 1, Marines 2

NB. The FLORA mounted 36 guns and had on board when the action began 250 men.

On board La Nymphe. Killed first Captain, second Captain, first Lieutenant, 3 other Officers, Beamen and Marines 60 killed, 63 wounded. The second Lieutenant, two Officers of Marines, two volunteers, 5 other Officers, Seamen and Marines 63.
Total killed and wounded 131

LETTERS

Letter from D E Walsh

Whilst browsing through some Royal Marine Officers' service papers at the Public Records Office recently, I noticed the personal report on one officer's ability which struck me as being rather ironic in view of his subsequent achievements.

The report is by the commandant of the staff college in 1908: "A modest, sensitive, retiring and hard working officer, with good ability and sound commonsense.....but he will be better in an office than in the field and would do well as a staff officer in a fortress." Ref: ADM 196/62

A solid desk man judging by this report, with little hope of making his name on the battlefield. In actual fact the officer in question is Lt Col F W Lumsden RMA who secured the following distinctions in the Great War:

VC

DSO with 3 clasps

Croix de Guerre-Belgium

MID (4 times)

Promoted Lt Col for distinguished service

He was also twice wounded, and finally killed in action in June 1918 whilst in command of the 14th Infantry Brigade in France with the temporary rank of Brigadier-General. Not a bad record for a desk man! In addition, a brother officer once wrote: "He was without exception the finest leader I have ever met....All the honours he gained were in every case won over and over again."

Letter from Alderman J Patteson - Plymouth (1966)

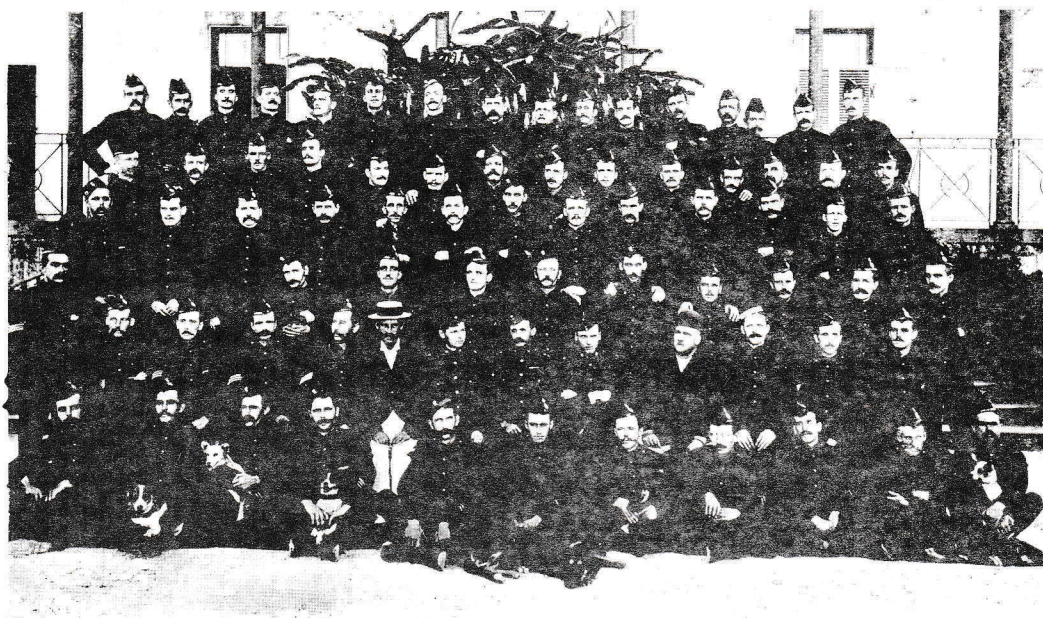
The Devon and Cornwall Royal Engineer's Band, of which I was once Band Secretary and solo clarinetist, under Lieutenant Colonel A C Rolston as Band President, purchased the scarlet tunics of the Royal Marine Band (Plymouth) when they went over to the present blue uniform. A tailor from Stonehouse then remade the tunics to fit our bandsmen, and the turnout was really smart, with royal blue collar and sleeve cuffs edged with $\frac{1}{2}$ inch gold braid and gold braid across the chest.

THE MARINES AT BERMUDA

Bermuda, Great Britain's oldest crown colony, celebrated its 275th anniversary in 1984, and this article is taken from the Navy and Army Illustrated dated 21 January 1898, a report on Bermuda's history featured in the Volume 2 No 2 edition of the original 'NEWSLETTER' prior to the renaming 'SHEET ANCHOR'.

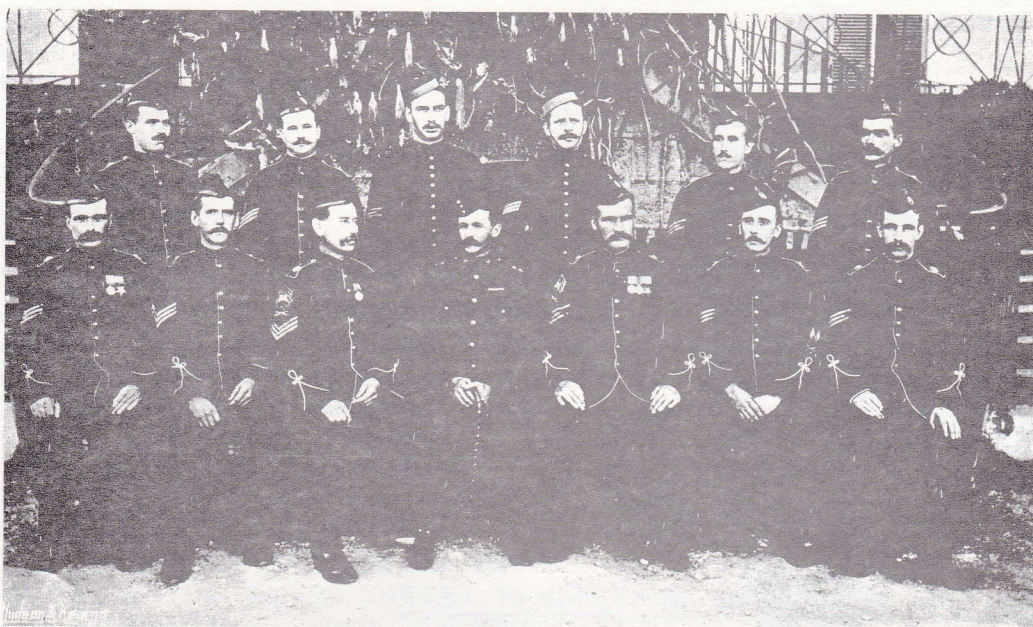
The subjects of our three illustrations are provided by the Royal Marine Detachment stationed at Commissioner's House, Bermuda. The illustrations are interesting in two ways. One for the men themselves and their billet in Bermuda, as a means of representing to the good folks at home how universally handy and useful a man the jolly Marine is, and how satisfactorily he is provided for. One reason indeed, this, why the Royal Marines are so popular a corps from the recruiting point of view. The Marines of the Bermuda Detachment that we see here are practically all men who have done active service afloat or with the Home Divisions, and are employed under the Works Department of the Admiralty. All are men selected for character, good service, and special proficiency in various trades - as carpenters, masons, smiths, plumbers, painters, sawyers, and so on. By them a great part of the work that is done on Ireland Island, Bermuda, is performed, from the construction and maintenance of houses and official buildings, skilled labour in the various shops in the dockyard, and the repair of roads and rifle ranges, down to weekly attendance at infantry and gunnery drills, and the breeding and fattening of ducks and chickens for home consumption and the market.

Our first photograph shows a group of the detachment, with three officers in the centre, and non-commissioned officers, all of the same corps, on either side. The two plain clothes men shown are members of the corps who hold the positions of foreman of works and leading hand of smiths.



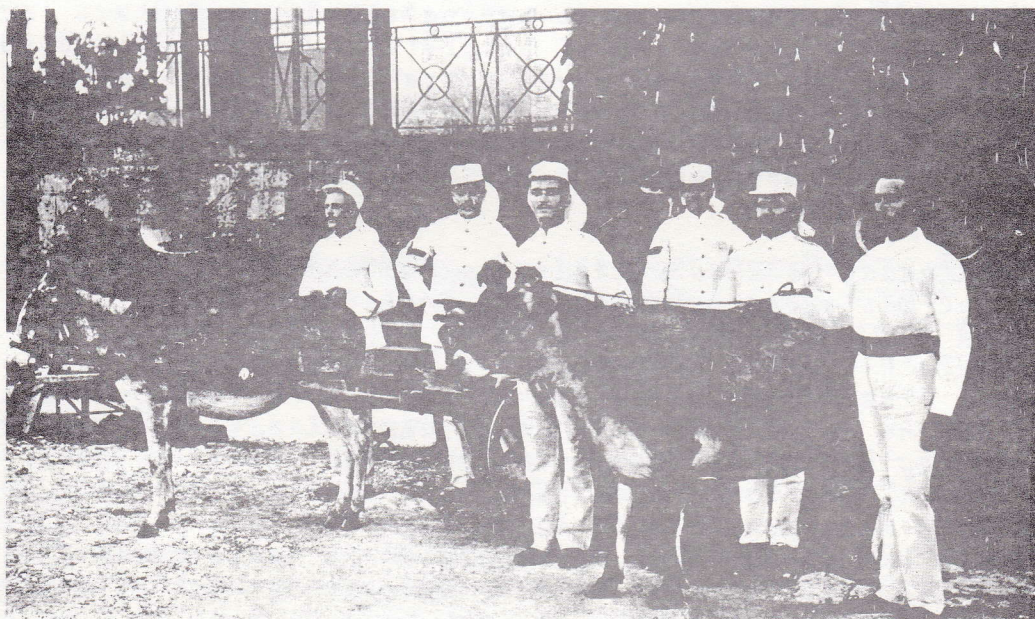
Typical group of the Marines at Bermuda

Our second illustration shows the commanding officer of the Royal Marines at Bermuda, and sergeants of Marines serving there.



The Commandant, Royal Marines, Bermuda, and Sergeants

Our third illustration shows the canteen committee of the Bermuda Marine Detachment, with the donkey and cart that is a special care of the drummer of the detachment; also one of the canteen cows, a special care of the cook, who is seen standing just behind her.



The Royal Marine Canteen Committee at Bermuda

At Bermuda island a cow is apparently an object of interest and attention that would pleasantly surprise the bovine denizens of our fields at home.

A second way in which our illustrations are of interest is more general, and, if we may so say, national. Bermuda is one of our strongest fortresses, and the principal base for the British

America squadron. The island group of the Bermudas, in addition to its magnificent strategical position in mid-ocean, is peculiarly fitted by Nature as an impregnable fortress.

It is noteworthy that quite recently special measures have been taken to add to the defences of Bermuda, and at the present time the island group has been fortified with modern guns, and by means of approved scientific appliances, until its impregnability is said to be assured.

The Naval forces at the island have also been added to, and an iron-clad ram, the "Hotspur", rearmed and refitted up-to-date, has been recently placed as guard-ship there, with a flotilla of torpedo-boats and two destroyers, and measures are at this moment in progress for adding to the dockyard accommodation at Bermuda on a large scale.

- oOo -

RECORDS OF THE BOROUGH OF NOTTINGHAM 1807

Transportation for theft

Whereas at this present General Quarter Session of the Peace Daniel Sulley was convicted of Grand Larceny (in stealing one silk handkerchief of the value of four shillings the property of George Almond the elder, George Almond the younger and William Chapman) It is now thereupon Ordered and adjudged by this Court that he...shall... be transported as soon as conveniently may be to such parts beyond the Seas as his Majesty by and with the advice of his Privy Council shall think fit for the space and term of seven years to be computed from the time of his Conviction above specified, and that in the mean time he shall be committed to the Common Gaol...there to remain in safe and secure Imprisonment until such transportation can be effected.

Sulley had already been convicted of grand larceny on 17 July 1806, when he was given permission to enlist in the Royal Marines, and was enlisted in open Court by Captain Owen, of the Portsmouth Division, having been previously adjudged fit for service. The Inspector of Recruits, however, refused to take him, and he refused to enter into general service. On 16 October, Sulley having by then volunteered to serve on board any ship of war, the Court ordered him to be taken to Hull, to be enrolled in the Navy; should he be rejected again, the Gaoler was to convey him to the Isle of Wight, to be enlisted in the Army. Evidently all these efforts to dispose of him had failed, and he had relapsed into crime.

- oOo -

EXTRACT FROM NOTES OF THE ELLIS'S OF ENGLAND, SCOTLAND AND IRELAND (1866)

1811. Obit on board HMS REPULSE Oct 24. Mr. William Ellis Lieutenant of Marines, Son of Mr John E Ellis of Birmingham 1759. Stephen Ellis Gent, appointed 1st Lieutenant in the Marines.

THE ROYAL MARINES IN THIS WAR (WW2)

By Lt Col W P Drury CBE RM

In the Officers' Mess of the Royal Marines at Chatham is a contemporary copy of an Order in Council of Charles II, dated October 28, 1664. It brought into being the Maritime Regiment of Foot, and is in effect the birth certificate of the Royal Marines of today.

Within a few months of its birthday the regiment was in action with the Dutch. During the 280 years which have passed since its baptism of fire the intervals have been rare in which it was not fighting, mainly in small units, by sea or land somewhere on the planet. In addition to countless minor engagements on both elements, its record comprises most of the historic land battles and all the naval ones of that period. As the coloured strand is twisted with dockyard rope the scarlet thread of its story has been from its beginning continuously woven with English history. To the Corps motto - *Per mare, per terram - aëremque* might now be fittingly added. For, as in the last war, Marines are fighting in the Fleet Air Arm.

So varied and world wide have been their performances in the present drama that within the compass of a magazine article they can only be pictured in random thumbnail sketches. Personal names must be omitted. Where so many of the chorus, apart from the principals, have played star turns, all or none should be mentioned, and the former is impossible.

Almost from the day they were raised it has been the recognised role of the Marines to be first in the danger zone and last to leave it - if at all. A notable feature of their story to-day is the continuance of that tradition.

After the German invasion of Norway, forces of Royal Marines and seamen, all under the command of R.M. officers, occupied Namsos, Andalsnes and Aalsund in advance of our Army. They included a searchlight unit and A.A. battery, both R.M., and in due course ensured the successful withdrawal of the British troops. The versatility of their training also enabled the Marines to help the R.A.F. to improvise air bases. For these hazardous tasks they gained several decorations.

The adventures of the Sea Regiment in Norway alone would furnish enough material for another Odyssey. Would that there were a Homer to use it! There is the hunt of the *Resolution's* Marines over snow mountains for German airmen who had made a forced landing with six British prisoners. The abandoned 'plane having been found, the enemy was eventually tracked to a distant village in the snows: and the story ends with a simultaneous frontal and rear attack, the capture of its German garrison and the rescue of the prisoners.

And there are the five Marines who added yet another leaf to the laurels of their Corps. On the last day of the British evacuation two platoons of the Royal Marines and one from the Green Howards held a position covering the retirement of an army brigade from Verma. They were commanded by a young R.M. subaltern, and his orders were to hang on till 9.30 p.m., when the final withdrawal would take place.

The little force had arrived at 4 p.m., and since the road in front of the position was reported to have been destroyed, an encounter with the Germans was not anticipated. But at six o'clock they suddenly appeared in considerable numbers. Unauthorised orders, probably by fifth column agents, caused the majority of the force, including the transport, to withdraw, leaving the subaltern, a corporal and three men alone to hold the road to Verma. Their total armament were two Lewis guns and a couple of rifles!

"For three-and-a-half hours these gallant Marines succeeded in holding up a strong enemy force and in deceiving it as to their numbers. They were under constant mortar and machine-gun fire. Yet not until the time stated in his orders - 9.30 p.m. - did the subaltern withdraw. By this action the successful evacuation of the British troops at Andalsnes with astonishingly small casualties was made possible." - *Britain's Glorious Navy* (Odham's Press Ltd.)

Another characteristic of the Corps is its perfect organisation for sudden emergency. At one-and-a-half hours' notice a detachment from Chatham held the Hook of Holland to enable an Army battalion to land and evacuate members of the Dutch Royal Family and Government. Similar lightning landings were made at Boulogne and - with heavy casualties - Calais: and within six days of receiving its entirely unexpected orders at a camp in the south of England a force of Royal Marines had occupied seventy miles of the coast of Iceland. The Faroe Islands were also held by the Corps pending the arrival of the Army.

At sea the Marines, who man a large quota of the guns of the Fleet, have shared in every major battle from the River Plate to Cape Matapan. In the *Graf Spee* fight alone they gained eight awards and five mentions in despatches. And from a hundred sea adventures one picks a Major's 250-mile voyage from Crete in an unsteerable, dangerously overcrowded boat, jury-rigged with blankets, and with relays of men going overboard to push her on course. It should rank among the notable boat voyages of history.

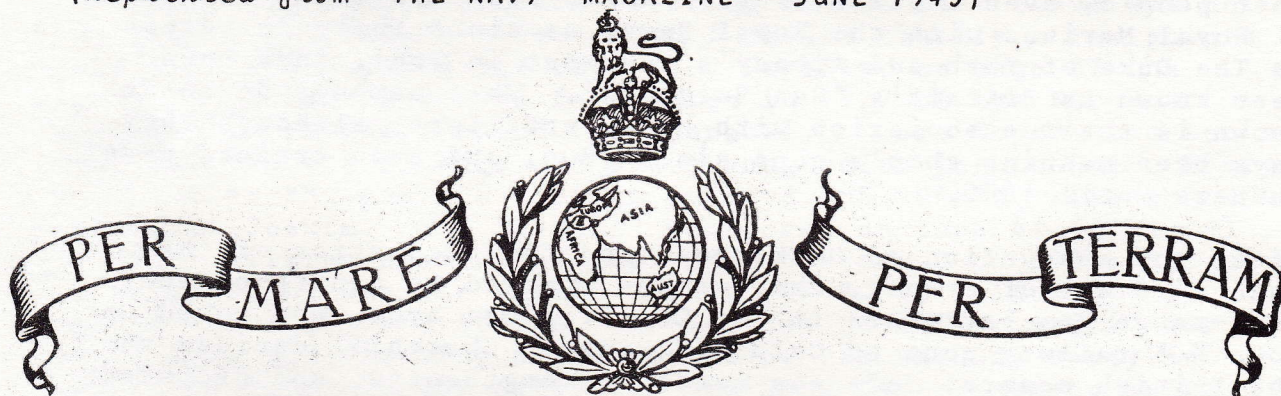
A pleasant tribute was paid to the Corps by the Colonel commanding the 2nd Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, when the 200 Royal Marine survivors from the *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse* joined that regiment in Malaya. "We never want better companions," he wrote, "or more efficient." In Burma the Royal Marines were mainly employed in denying the Irrawaddy to the enemy, and were frequently in action with the Japanese. In Madagascar fifty Marines from a battleship landed by night in rear of the French position and captured a naval headquarters, an artillery depot and several hundred prisoners. The subsequent fall of Antsirane was largely due to the surprise assault of this small force. The entire land operations were under the command of a Major-General of the Royal Marines.

Throughout their history the Marines have constantly formed the spearhead of an attacking force; to them the commando is no innovation of modern warfare. Zeebrugge was an outstanding instance in the last war: in this one they took part in the raid on Dieppe, and a battalion of the Corps made an amphibious assault on Tobruk. But their crowning feat of arms in the present drama was the epic rearguard action in Crete.

Among our troops who held that island in 1941 were 2,000 Royal Marines. All were specialists - coast defence and A.A. gunners, searchlight personnel and signallers. They were also the most highly trained infantry perhaps in the world. When their guns and searchlights were put out of action they reverted to the rifle and bayonet, which the Royal Marine, wherever he goes, whatever his job, always carries with him. Imagination was profoundly stirred by the last stand of that superb sea infantry who, fighting an overwhelmingly powerful enemy in Alpine conditions, and at the cost of more than half its numbers, enabled the bulk of the withdrawing garrison to reach safety. On the last night it was found impossible to embark the surviving Marines. They were left to their fate upon the island.

Speaking officially in London, the First Lord of the Admiralty said, "They have been tried to the limit in every quarter of the globe, and they have never failed. In the last hours of the fierce battle of Crete it was the Marines who fought the rearguard action, never flinching and never yielding. They suffered grievous losses and proudly sustained the immortal traditions of their Corps."

(Reprinted from "THE NAVY" MAGAZINE - JUNE 1943)



Troops evacuated from Crete arrive in Alexandria

WHEN THE MARINES MANNED THE GUNS By David G Collyer

The date was August 22nd 1940. Over southern England the Luftwaffe was locked in combat with the RAF to gain air supremacy prior to the mounting of Operation Sealion. In the harbours of Calais, Boulogne, Dunkerque and Ostende the lines of barges awaited the signal to set sail, while along the coast of the Pas de Calais feverish work proceeded to ready the German long-range guns to bombard the shores of Kent in support of the invasion.

In the underground War Room beneath Whitehall the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, waited for a special telephone call informing him that one of his pet anti-invasion schemes had been put into operation. When it came it was short and to the point:

"I have to inform you, Sir, that at 09.45 hours this morning 'Winnie' fired her first shot - scoring a direct hit."

"Good," came the growled reply, *"A direct hit on what?"*

"On France, Sir!"

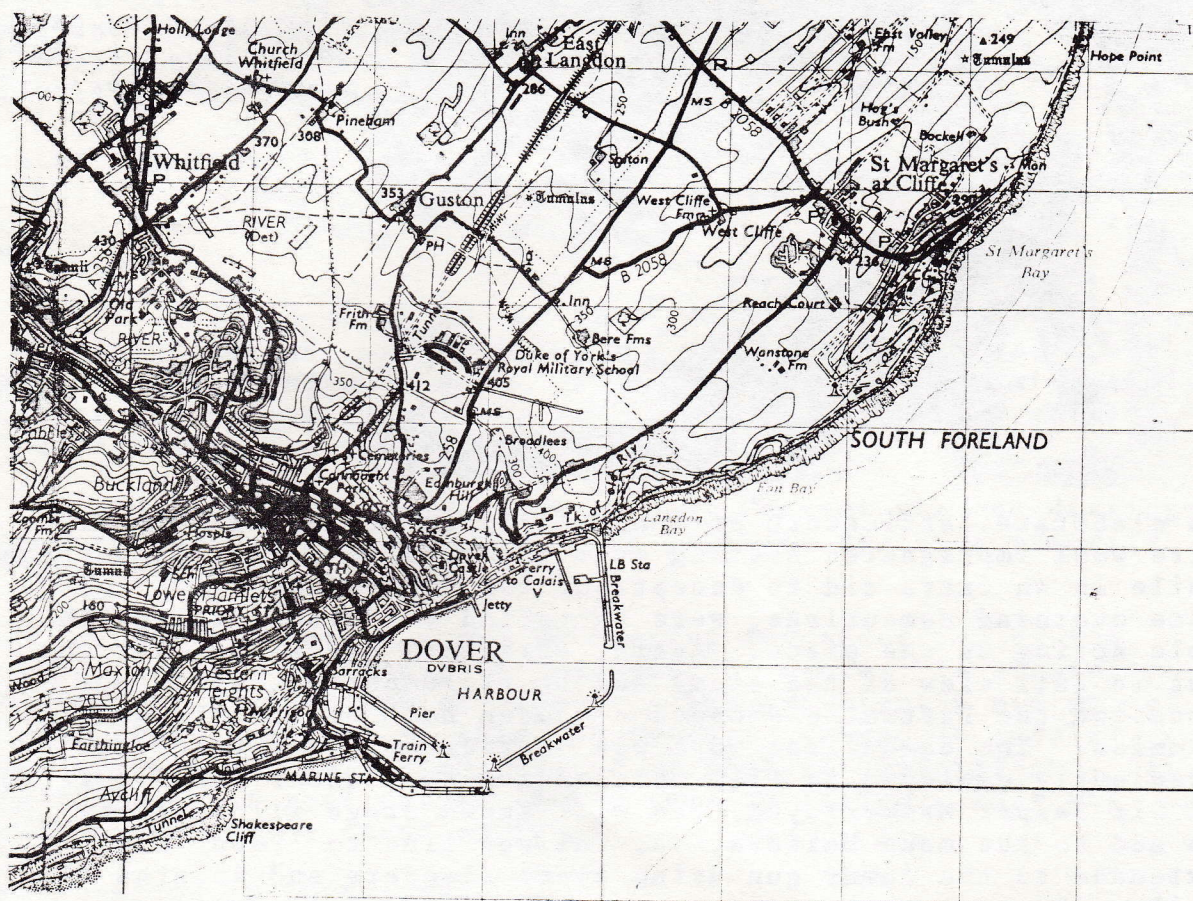
Most people, even those living in Kent, will associate the Corps of Royal Marines with the Royal Navy, as since their formation as The Duke of York and Albany's Regiment in 1664, they have been known as Britain's 'Sea Soldiers'. What may not be so well known is their association with heavy artillery, although they have been manning ship's guns since 1804, and even trained naval gunners until 1859.

After the evacuation of Dunkerque, and the occupation of the Channel Coast of France, the Germans started to construct four long-range gun batteries in the Cap Gris Nez area, and moved up some K.5 railway guns to Calais. Winston Churchill decided that the British coastal defences needed strengthening, and proposed that long-range guns be installed near Dover to provide protection against the expected invasion fleet, also for the bombardment of the German batteries. (This was first mooted in 1918 when there were plans for two 18 in. guns to be mounted at St Margaret's Bay to bombard the French coast when it looked as if the Germans would break through our defences along the coast.)

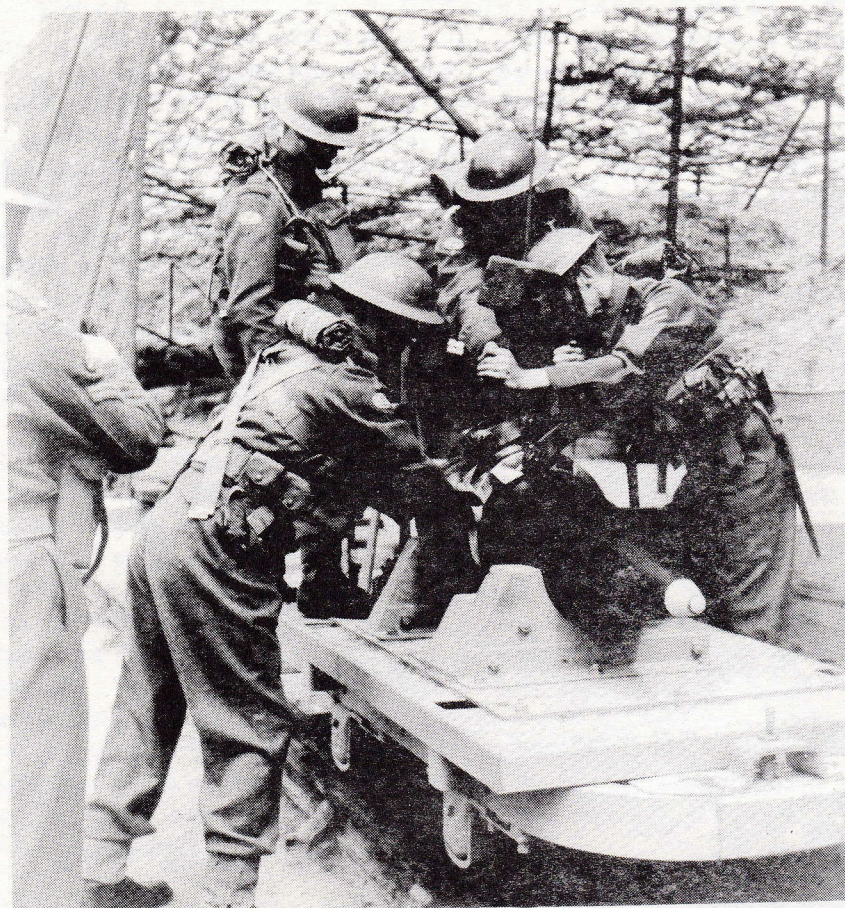
The only barrels (or pieces as they are known) available were from four 14 in. B.L. Mk VII ex-naval guns from World War One battleships. But only two mountings were available. The plans for the installation of the guns were formulated on June 14th 1940, the site being in the valley behind the village of St Margaret's at Cliffe, near Dover - the nearest point to the French coast. Work started on the old St Margaret's golf course on June 24th, while games were still being played on the course. As well as the actual guns, construction work started on observation posts, fire control buildings, shell stores, power houses, communications, shelters and living accommodation.

Because of the weight of the mountings and the pieces, a railway track was laid from the old spur line from Martin Mill station to Dover Harbour at Bere Farm, running along the valley to cross

the main road to the village near Townsend Farm. Three heavy lifting railway cranes, the only ones in the country, were employed for the erection of the guns, the mountings being delivered by rail after bridges en route had been strengthened. The pieces were delivered by gun barges 'Gog' and 'Magog' to Sittingbourne and thence by rail to St Margaret's. The mounting for the first gun (christened 'Winnie' in the PM's honour) was delivered on July 10th and the piece installed by August 7th. The second gun (called 'Pooh' by association with 'Winnie') was in position by the end of the year and ready for firing by February 8th 1941, Winston having made frequent visits to check on progress.



'Winnie' was housed in a steel barbette or gun shelter with a pitched roof, but 'Pooh' had no overhead protection. Some idea of the size of the task can be gauged from the statistics for the various parts of the installations: the mountings were in two sections each weighing 75 tons; the cradles weighed 15 tons and the pieces 97 tons each; the mounting also had a 20 ton counterweight. Loading was by a derrick mounted behind the gun which lifted the shells from small railway trolleys. The whole operation being carried out while overhead Messerschmitt fighters and Junkers dive-bombers were engaged by Spitfire and Hurricane squadrons. On more than one occasion the sites were machine-gunned and dive-bombed, luckily with only a few casualties and little damage. The German guns were in action by August 12th and added to the difficulties, and the following month 'Winnie' was shelled and civilians and servicemen killed and wounded.



*The securing grab
on a 14 inch shell
ready for hoisting.*

An elaborate latticework of scaffold poles supported painted wire-wool impregnated netting over the guns to act as camouflage, while as an extra aid to deception, two dummy guns, with the same overhead camouflage, were installed but with a telegraph pole acting as the piece. Again, this work had to be carried out in full view of the enemy and it is rumoured that on one occasion the Luftwaffe dropped a wooden bomb on one of the dummies. The camouflage work was carried out by specialists previously employed in film set construction under the direction of Sir Jaspar Maskerlayne, the well known stage illusionist. To add to the make believe, the railway line to 'Pooh' was extended to the dummy gun using spare sleepers and lengths of railway line.

When the guns were ready they were handed over to a detachment of Royal Marines under the command of Lt Col H D Fellows DSO, as 'A' Battery Royal Marine Siege Regiment. It was Lt Col Fellows who had the honour of firing the first shot from England to France and to report the fact to Winston Churchill. Normally the range of the 14 in. Mk VII B.L. gun was not sufficient to reach France, but a method of 'super-charging' using extra cordite was devised to increase the range by one-third, 'Pooh' now being able to fire some 48,000 yards (27.1 miles). However there were drawbacks, the 'super-charging' caused the rifling in the linings to wear excessively, and by the middle of December 1940 'Winnie', already well worn on the ranges before installation, had to have the piece replaced after firing only 47 rounds, this being done between 22nd-29th of the month.



Top - 'A' Battery RM Siege Regt. - 1 Troop.

Bottom - 2 Troop - December 1940.

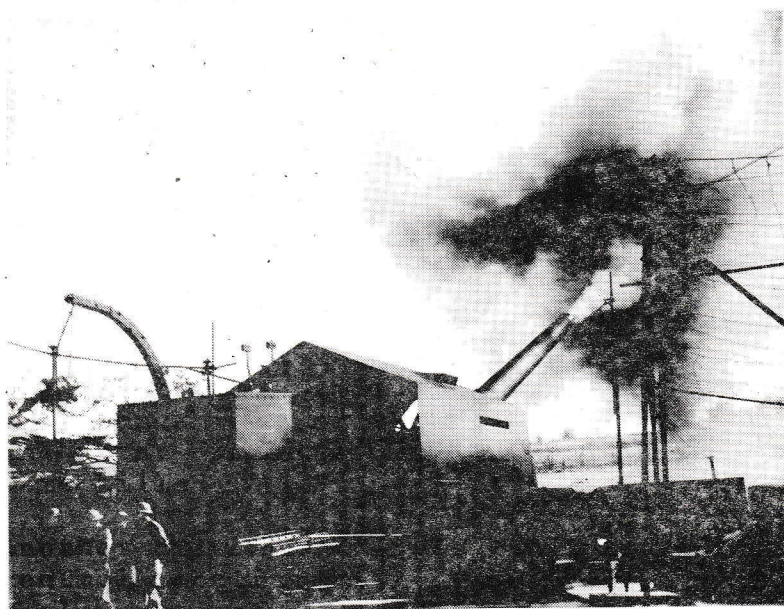


Protection for the installations was provided by two naval Pom.poms as well as Lewis machine guns and local Royal Artillery ack-ack batteries. The offer by a Royal Marine corporal to be hoisted aloft in a balloon to try and shoot down the dive-bombers with a Lewis gun was declined. A drawback to effective counter-battery work was the lack of facilities to record the fall of shot and thus adjust ranging. During the initial bombardments of the German guns an Avro Anson spotting plane was dispatched to Calais for air observation post work, but was attacked by enemy fighters and damaged so it had to carry out a forced landing behind 'Winnie'.

'Winnie' and 'Pooh' carried out counter bombardments when British convoys were being passed through the Straits of Dover, and were later used against coastal targets such as the Advanced Landing Ground at St Inglevert in September 1941 when a Lysander from No 26 Squadron was used for spotting. The Germans were equipped with more guns but had relatively little success, apart from severing the railway line to Martin Mill on August 16th 1942. The worst bombardment was on November 9th 1942 when 'Pooh's' ready magazines were hit, as was the power house for 'Winnie'. The worst damage was at the local ack-ack site where 11 soldiers were killed.

Another drawback was that the guns were not tied into the fire control plotting room situated under Dover Castle and they had a slow rate of fire. There were problems with 'Pooh's' loading and ramming gear, replaced in November 1942, and they could not be used against enemy shipping unless the vessel was stationary. Thus on 12th February 1942 when the *SCHARNHORST*, *GNEISENAU* and *PRINZ EUGEN* made their dash up the Channel from Brest, one shell from each gun was fired blind at 30,000 yards range. Also a shortage of suitable ammunition prevented them being used as effectively as they might have been.

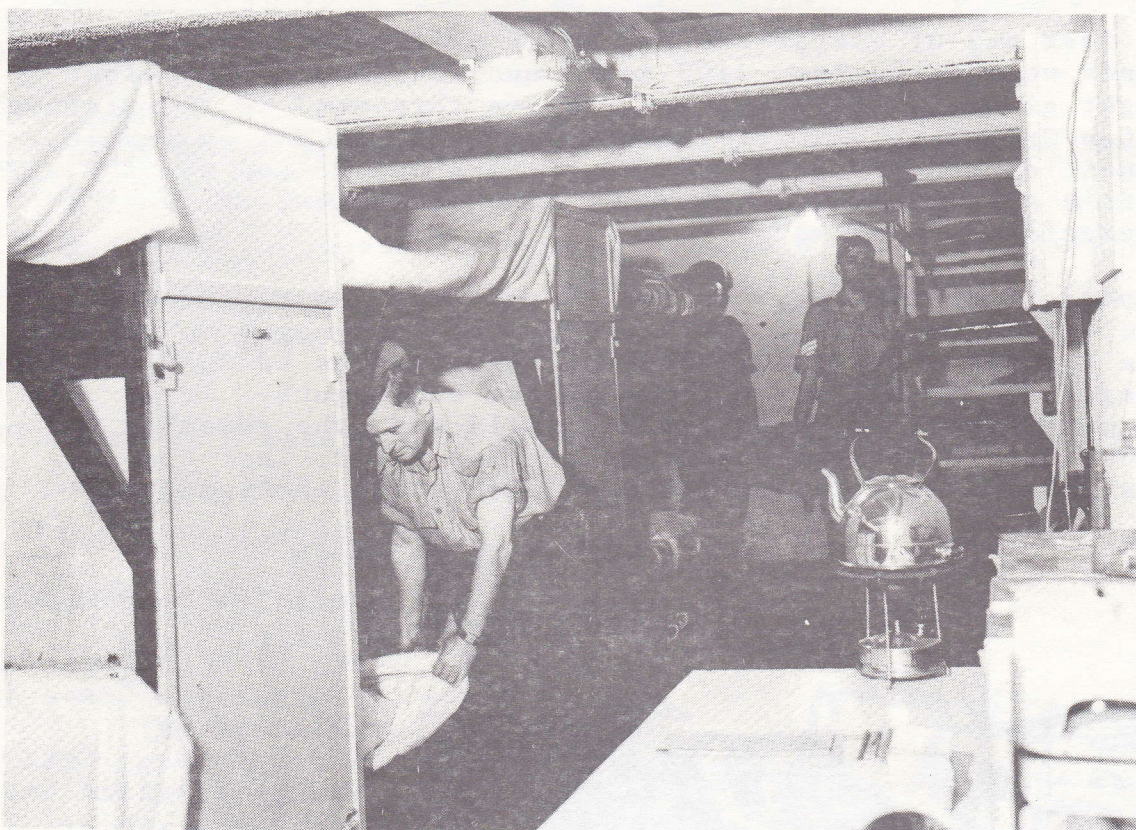
Two additional long-range guns were installed at Wanstone Farm, on the seaward side of 'Winnie', these being 15 inch B.L. guns manned by the Royal Artillery and tied into the fire control system and with radar plotting. These were ready for service by 13th August 1942 and took up counter battery work and by July 1943 the Royal Marine's guns were put into 'Care and Maintenance'. By March 1944 the Flag Officer Commanding Dover was querying the need for the retention of 140 RM personnel to man the guns when there was a requirement for 90 Royal Marines for 'Overlord' (the D-Day Invasion). But an appendix added by the Director of Local Defence to the above on the 3rd August pointed out that "The requirement will continue so long as the Germans may require to run the gauntlet of the Straits of Dover, and the more their land communications in the West are disrupted and disorganised, the more likely they are to have recourse to movement by water". In fact 'Winnie' and 'Pooh' had carried out counter battery fire while convoys for the invasion were passing through the Straits on 6th June 1944.



Winnie in action.



Officers of the RM Seige Regt. April 1942.



The Regiment's hospital in St. Margaret's at Cliffe.

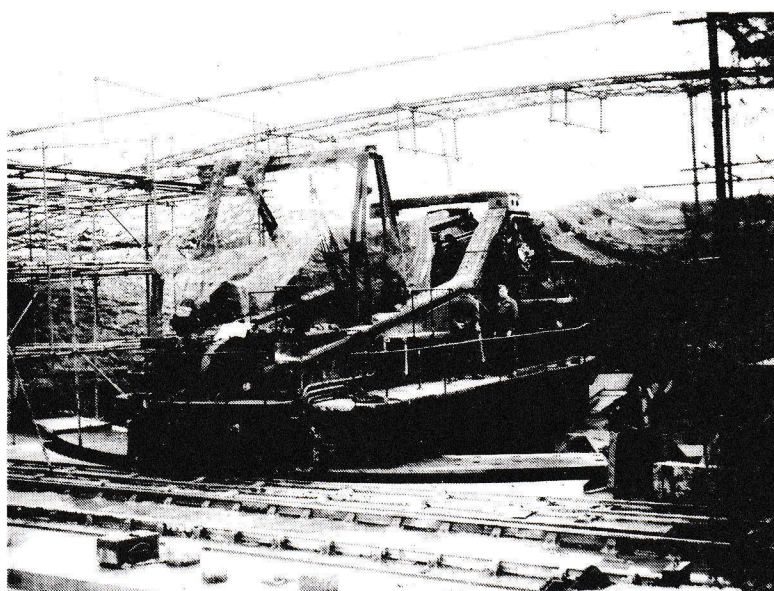
But the real moment of glory for the Royal Marine gunners was yet to come. With the retreat of the Germans along the Channel coast, the 'Channel Guns' came into their own. As the Canadian 1st Army neared the German installations both Wanstone and the

RM guns took up counter battery work with a vengeance. By now it was possible to have air observation over targets across the Channel, which the Luftwaffe had denied before, also a direct wireless contact from the AOP aircraft to the Coast Artillery Ops Room at Dover Castle was established, via 540th RA Coast Regt Ops Room to both Wanstone and the RM battery. Counter bombardment work was carried out by 'Winnie' and 'Pooh' on Calais during the German evacuation, while on the following day Wanstone joined in. On 16th August 1944 Target A.6 (German battery) was engaged with the help of an aircraft.

The following day, despite a misfire on 'Winnie's' second salvo, both targets B.12 and B.7 (railway guns) were engaged as well as gun batteries. On this occasion the Royal Marines obtained four hits and a straddle on A.6; one hit out of 15 rounds on B.12 and four hits from 18 rounds on B.7 in the morning in support of the assault on Boulogne. During the afternoon A.6 was engaged again and the RM Battery fired 55 rounds, obtaining seven hits, one of which was direct on No.2 gun. The 18th saw bad visibility during the day, so no AOP flights could be done, but on 19th, 72 rounds were fired close to target A.3 at Cap Gris Nez, some 25 hits being reported by the AOP aircraft as *"Both guns direct hits, a large explosion followed"*. Possibly this latter target was an ammunition dump and the explosion was felt on this side of the Channel.

The last day of operations was on 20th September 1944, when 42 rounds were fired from 1100 hours and 1342 hours on a close target given as 'Neverlwafer's' (Flame throwers) in the vicinity of Cap Gris Nez, six hits being obtained. As all available ammunition had now been used up, firing ceased and the AOP aircraft's concluding message read *"Congratulations to gun crews on excellent shooting"*.

Shortly after the war, the two RM guns were dismantled, and very little remains to show where they were: some power houses and Fire Command post, a pill box and vague traces of the rail lines, a magazine and the site of one of the dummy guns. It is only in the memories of the more elderly villagers, who remember having to open their windows whenever the guns fired, that the days when *'The Marines Manned the Guns'* are still cherished.



"POOH"

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