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THE SHEET ANCHOR

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ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET

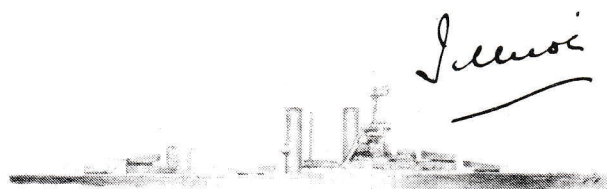
EARL JELlicOE OF SCAPA,

G.C.B., O.M., G.C.V.O., LL.D.,

"During the whole of my service in the Navy I have always felt the utmost confidence in the work of the Royal Marines; whether serving on shore with a Naval Brigade, or afloat manning guns or turrets they have been equally splendid.

*pays a tribute to
the Corps.*

The bearing and discipline of the Corps has ever been admirable."



Jellicoe
a F.



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FEMALE SOLDIERS AND MARINES By Norman Wolstencroft (RMHS)

In my last article on Lancashire Marines I mentioned that whilst Colonel Gustavus Hamilton's Regiment were serving as Marines, a Private in Captain St Clair's Company was found to be a woman. For their own very good reasons the Royal Marines, unlike other Fighting Services, do not enlist women. Although not an integral part of the Corps as such, the WRNS on attachment have in war and peace given loyal and devoted service and been proud to wear the Royal Marines cap badge with their Naval Uniform.

In the last century many European Armies, notably the French, employed Vivandieres, that is female soldiers in varying non combatant capacities. These women were "on the strength" of regiments and wore military uniform, badges and accoutrements but with a skirt replacing trousers. Their duties ranged from serving grog and food to nursing the wounded. Additionally they assisted with cooking and many domestic duties, in some cases in a purely voluntary spirit and their presence in the lines often added a further pleasant romantic dimension undreamt of by clinically minded latter day Second Echelon and Logistic Staffs. British Soldiers in the Crimea, having overrun an enemy position and been wounded often found themselves looking up at a pretty face wearing a regimental shako and badge whilst having their wounds dressed by an "allied soldier". Their compassion and cheerfulness was not confined to their own wounded alone and many a British soldier had come to remember their ministrations with gratitude to his dying day.

Many songs and fictitious stories are based on fact and for that reason I append the story of Polly Oliver in the form of a 19th Century English Folk Song. See Appendix One.

A British lady who found fame in distinguished military and public service was MIRANDA STUART. Whilst posing as a man JAMES BARRY in the mid 19th Century she qualified as a doctor and can lay claim to be technically the first woman to qualify as an MD. After serving on a Surgeon's Commission in the British Army MIRANDA reached the rank of Captain and was subsequently appointed Inspector General of HM Army Hospitals in Canada. It was only after her death that her true sex was revealed.

Another British woman CHRISTIAN WALSH joined the Army to find her soldier husband who had deserted her. In 1704 whilst taking prisoners to the rear she caught her husband "flagrante dillecte" with a Dutch woman. She ultimately forgave Sergeant Walsh of the Duke of Orkneys Regiment of Foot and returned to her own regiment. The North Lancashire Dragoons saying that she had met her brother.

CHRISTIAN fought valiantly at the siege of Landau but was unfortunate in receiving a severe head wound at Ramillies in May 1706. So badly was her skull fractured by a mortar bomb that it required the drastic and painful treatment trepanning in hospital at Melde. During her stay in hospital her sex was discovered and Brigadier Preston who

described CHRISTIAN as his "prettiest and bravest fellow" was informed and ordered that she would have to be discharged; she was to remain on Dragoons pay meanwhile. CHRISTIAN now resorted to female dress and was visited by Lord John Hayes and all her officers who contributed female clothing and presents, the principle one of which was a silk dressing gown given by Brigadier Preston. Her brother 'Sergeant Walsh' was questioned concerning their relationship and a second 'wedding' was ordered to regularise matters. The ceremony was conducted in the presence of all officers of the regiment, who, each in turn, gave the bride a kiss and several pieces of gold as a wedding present.

She then was cook to the 6th Dragoons for a while until turning sutler and being awarded special privileges as an acknowledgement for brave services rendered. Being a restless soul she would go marauding and on one occasion was captured with her mule, but persuaded a French officer to release her and she returned as cook to Mr Dupper the Chief Sutler to the British Army. Sergeant Walsh was killed at Mons in 1709 and CHRISTIAN despite her many and varied experiences of fatalities was utterly grief stricken. Her condition was such that it drew the attention of Captain Ross who befriended her and bestowed upon her the nickname Mother Ross. Her grief overcome after eleven weeks she married a Grenadier Hugh Jones who was killed the following year at St Venantin.

She returned to England and called on the Duke of Marlborough who advised her to see the Duke of Argyle with a view to petitioning the Queen regarding a pension. She was graciously received by Her Majesty who ordered a sum of £50 to be paid. After much maladministration, this sum plus a shilling a day pension (which was cut to five pence by the Earl of Oxford without reference to Higher Authority) was ultimately paid. See Appendix Two for copy of final correspondence and petition. King George I eventually raised it again to one shilling.

Another marriage took place after she returned to her native Dublin where she was selling beer. This time it was to a Welsh fusiller, just as his regiment returned to England. She set up a shop in London making money by selling liquor and pies. She purchased the discharge of her husband after he returned from fighting the Pretender at Preston. He got drunk and enlisted in the Guards shortly afterwards. Whilst CHRISTIAN kept a sutlers tent for the Life Guards and Foot Guards in Hyde Park her husbands drunken escapades caused business losses in her various public houses so that once more she returned to Dublin. Again she received privileges from the Lord Lieutenant, mainly that of having a beer tent in Phoenix Park on Review Days. Growing older she returned to England and entered Chelsea Hospital as a pensioner where she loyally found a serjeantcy for her husband on his retirement.

CHRISTIAN was always well regarded in high circles as Mother Ross, but eventually sickness and the effects of wounds took their toll and she died on 7th July 1739. She was interred with military honours at Chelsea Hospital. Thus ends the story of a wonderful fighting soldier and woman of great renown and spirit.

A woman claimed to have served in the 5th Northumberland Regiment of Foot during the reign of George IV. This regiment served as marines in the West Indies in 1778 and that year defeated French forces far superior in numbers and were subsequently awarded the privilege of wearing a red and white hackle to commemorate this victory. The woman, PHOEBE HESSEL who died at the age of 101 was buried in Brighton. She never had her claim substantiated and as George IV reigned 1820 - 30, certainly never served as a marine.

On her gravestone, where she was buried in 1821, it states that she was granted a pension by George IV. however many doubts have been cast on the service of Phoebe Hessel, but it would appear that the then Prince Regent met Phoebe whilst at Brighton and recommended that she receive a pension of 'half a guinea a week' when hearing of her bayonet wounds inflicted whilst serving under the late Duke of Cumberland at Fontenoy (May 1745).

Some doubt also exists about her true age at death, 101 and 108 years being two estimates, but on balance, taking into account regimental folklore and the pension aspect it would appear that she did serve in 'The Fighting Fifth'.

One other woman did serve as a marine, apart from the legendary HANNAH SNELL. On 1st July 1702 a force including Gustavus Hamilton's Regiment of Foot (the 20th) was embarking at Portsmouth for an expedition against Cadiz which was Admiral Sir George Rook's "great disaster" - he later redeemed his reputation at Vigo. The embarkation returns state that a private in Captain St Clairs Company was found to be a woman. The embarkation returns W055 342 of 1702 would appear to be as ill prepared as the subsequent operation and "muster rolls" of Infantry of the Line including those serving as marines were not retained prior to 1713. Thus the woman's name cannot be traced nor details of her service good, bad or indifferent.

HANNAH SNELL remains safe therefore in her legendary position as "The Female Marine" and quite rightly too. For although the other woman did serve as a marine, history will probably never disclose her military exploits, if any.

HANNAH was born in Winchester in 1723, grand daughter of a soldier who was killed in action whilst serving with the Duke of Marlborough at Malplaquet. HANNAH SUMMS to use her married name, for she married a drunken sailor in 1743 and subsequently bore him a daughter. It is a matter of conjecture as to whether, in hindsight, after service as a marine HANNAH would have married a seaman at all, let alone James Summs. In 1743 however she went after James who had deserted her and was believed to be in Coventry. Using mans clothing of her brother-in-law and taking his name James Gray she enlisted in General Guises Regiment of Foot (the 6th later the Royal Warwickshire Regiment). After joining her regiment at Carlisle she fell foul of a Sergeant Davis in her company and as a result of a web of intrigue found herself sentenced to receive six hundred lashes for neglect of duty, but part of this was remitted. Further persecution by Sergeant Davis led to her desertion and after various adventures she enlisted in Colonel Fraser's Regiment of Marines at Portsmouth. Having embarked in the "SWALLOW", part of Admiral Boscowan's Fleet, she soon came to the attention of Mr Wyegate the Lieutenant of Marines and was then employed in the Officers Mess sewing and cooking.

After rounding the Cape the marines took part in the unsuccessful attack on Mauritius. The marines then joined the British Army forces ultimately taking part in the siege of Pondicherry where HANNAH was severely wounded. Keeping silent about a severe stomach wound, she extracted the bullet herself and keeping the much prized secret of her sex entrusted only to a black woman who cared for her. After recovery she performed the duties of a seaman aboard the "TARTAR PINK". Eventually, again being wrongly charged with stealing a shirt after refusing to sing for the Lieutenant in command of the "ELTHAM", she reached England where her true sex was revealed. Thus she has enjoyed fame amongst all Royal Marines from the moment they join the Corps.

FOOTNOTE

George and Anne Forty, in their book 'They Also Served', mention a Christina Welsh as 'Mother Ross' born in Dublin 1667, daughter of a brewer called Davies; she died aged 72 on 7 July 1739 at the Royal Hospital Chelsea buried with full military honours at St Margarets Church, Westminster.

(Editor)

Appendix One

SWEET POLLY OLIVER

English Traditional Song

As sweet Polly Oliver lay musing in bed,
A sudden strange fancy came into her head,
'Nor father nor mother shall make me false prove!
I'll list for a soldier and follow my love!'

So early next morning she softly arose,
And dressed herself up in her dead brother's clothes;
She cut her hair close and she stained her face brown,
And went for a soldier to fair London town.

Then up spoke the sergeant one day at his drill;
Now who's good for nursing? A Captain lies ill!
'I'm ready,' said Polly, 'To nurse him she's gone,
And finds 'tis her true love all wasted and wan.'

The first week the doctor kept shaking his head;
No nursing, young fellow, 'can save him,' he said,
But when Polly Oliver had nursed back his life
He cried, 'You have cherished him as if you were his wife!'

Oh then Polly Oliver she burst into tears,
And told the good doctor her hopes and her fears,
And very soon after, for better for worse,
The Captain took joyfully his pretty soldier nurse.

Appendix Two

Pension warrant for CHRISTIAN WALSH

WHITEHALL 19th July 1717

My Lords and Generals

CHRISTIAN WALSH has moft humbly represented unto his Maj,y that disguised in the habit of a man she serv'd sev,el years, in the late Warr in Flanders in the Roy,l Reg of North British Dragn, then Commandered by the Earl of Porthmore & suffer'd very much by divers Wounds she receiv'd in foll'g the said Regt. His Maj,y is therefore pleas'd in Consideration thereof to order that she be placed upon the out Pention of the Royall Hospitall at Chelsea at the Allow,ce of Five Pence a Day for her future Support and Maintenance

I am
My Lords & Gent

Comm,n of Chelsea Hospitall

Your moft Obed^t humble
Serv!

J CRAGGS

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Several anniversaries occur this year, foremost of which, the 400 year commemoration of the Armada invasion threat in July came well before the formation of the Corps, but 300 years ago when King William of Orange landed at Brixham in Devon on the 5 November at the invitation of the British government, the Marines were disbanded because of their inherant loyalty to the deposed King James II, albeit for just a token year before their reformation, without the Royal connection.

200 years ago HMS BOUNTY sailed on her ill-fated voyage to the Pacific Ocean under Captain Bligh's command; if a bigger ship and more generous budget had permitted the inclusion of a Royal Marine detachment onboard the outcome might have proved entirely different, and the whole incident paled into insignificance.

70 years have elapsed since the ending of WW1 in which the Corps distinguished themselves notably, perhaps none more so than the 4th Battn at Zeebrugge in 1918; and just 40 years past came the ending of Britains mandate on Palestine when many marines found themselves in very trying circumstances controlling the influx of Jews into their promised land.

Finally, after a decade as Honorary Editor I relinquish the post this year, and hand over to the very capable Captain Derek Oakley RM. I take this opportunity of thanking all contributors for their much appreciated support. AJP.

NOTES ON THE COLOURS OF THE BRITISH MARINE CORPS DURING THE 18TH CENTURY - by Ross M. A. Wilson, Ottawa, Ontario, 1988 (RMHS)

Although the British Corps of Marines, consisting of 50 companies, were placed on the permanent establishment in 1755¹, the earliest documentation for colours, as far as is known, is 1760. At that time, a single pair consisting of a King's colour and a regimental or Divisional colour (the Marines were formed into three divisions: Portsmouth, Plymouth and Chatham) was issued probably for the battalion being sent to Belle Isle²³. The invoice for their manufacture from Messrs William Nicholson's accounts reads as follows:

"24 October 1760

To silk making one sheet of Union Colours	£ 5.15.6d.
To embroidering the Arms of the Lords High Admirals within a large ornament of thistles and roses	£ 5. 5.0d.
To silk and making the plain sheet with a small union	£ 4.14.6d.
To painting the sheet as above	£ 3. 0.0d.
To two colour staves and cases	£ 2. 6.0d.
To two pair of rich crimson & gold tassels and cords	£ 2.12.6d.
	£ 23.13.6d.

To John Tucker Esq.

Paymaster of the Marines

By Command of their Lordships

J. Cleveland

9 March 1761"

As there were no Lords High Admiral at this date, the 'Arms' mentioned can only mean the badge of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, the 'Foul Anchor'. See Illustration 'A'⁴.

As far as can be ascertained, this is the first recorded date when colours are mentioned. The regiment, however, had at this time been in existence for five years and had fought in battalion strength, or more, at the following engagements:

1756 -- Minorca - Defence of Fort Phillip⁵
1758 -- Senegal - Capture of Fort Louis⁶
1758 -- Louisbourg⁷
1759 -- Quebec⁸
1759 -- Guadeloupe⁹

and, in 1760 itself --

Capture of Carical, East Indies¹⁰
Pondicherry¹⁰

Given the prevailing fashion for awarding colours at the raising of a regiment, it would appear unusual that no colours were issued prior to this date, especially considering the number of significant actions in which the Marines were involved.

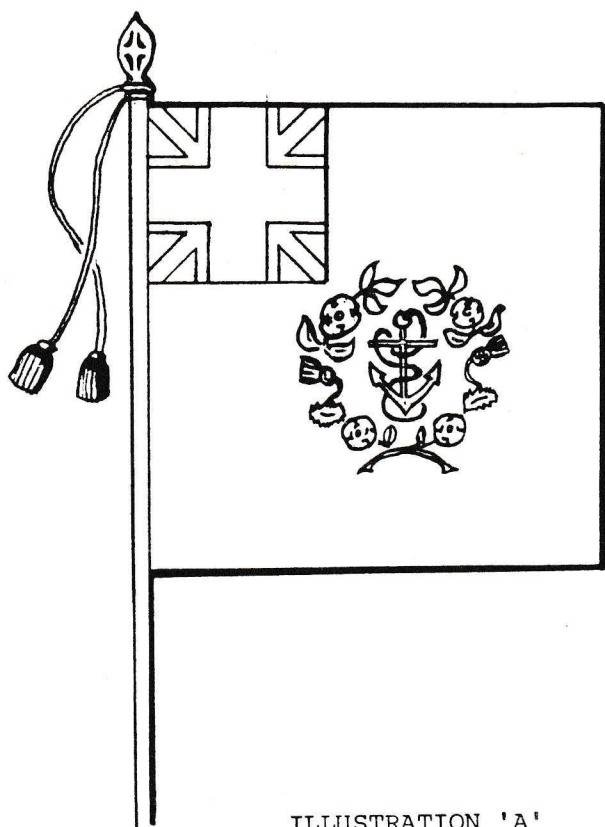


ILLUSTRATION 'A'
(Divisional Colour)

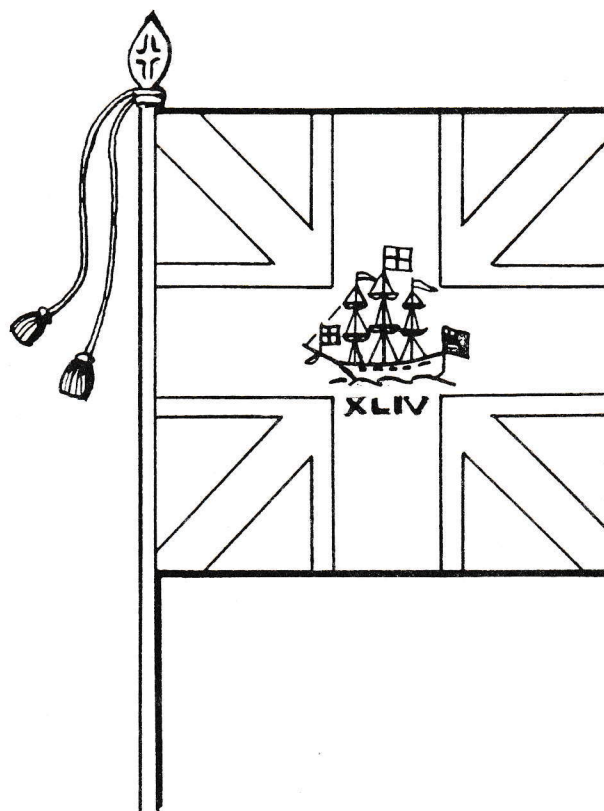


ILLUSTRATION 'B'
(King's Colour)



ILLUSTRATION 'C'

It may be that up until 1760 the Battalions carried the colours as laid down in the Army Clothing Regulations of 1747, which state:

"All the regiments of Marines to wear in the centre of their colours a ship with sails furled, the rank of the regiment underneath¹¹." See Illustration 'B'¹².

In 1765 colours were available from the Naval Storekeepers, but not everyone was aware of it, as seen when the Marine Commandant believed "that it would be an advantage that officers and men should be made acquainted with the use to be made of colours in a Battalion." Thus, on 16 July, the Naval Storekeeper at Portsmouth was ordered to deliver them to him. The Storekeeper at Deptford was likewise ordered to send a pair to the Chatham Division.

Shortly after this, on 31st July, His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester reviewed the Portsmouth Division, at which both HRH and their Lordships of the Admiralty were extremely pleased with the Division's performance. It would be inconceivable that the colours previously mentioned would not have been carried. Blumberg states that these were the first Divisional colours but there is no record of their design¹³. He further states that it is possible that they were the old 1748 colours, but does not give his reason. If so, they would have been 18 years old, have seen hard usage considering the engagements since 1748, and of unknown condition¹⁴.

The next reference to colours is for the American Revolution.

"2 Feb 1775 - Portsmouth and Plymouth to 'send the colours of your division to Boston with the Marines and to acquaint you that they will be replaced with new ones'¹⁵."

Thus the 1st and 2nd Battalions had a set each.¹⁶ They arrived at Boston on 15th and 23rd May respectively.¹⁷ Again no record of what they looked like. There is, however, a fragment of a colour in the Royal Marines Museum, Eastney, that is rather tantalising. See Illustration 'C'.

This fragment is the centre design of a King's colour, consisting of a crown over fouled anchor over a ribbon containing the motto 'Per Mare Et Terram'. This is surrounded on all but the crown side by loosely intertwining roses, thistles and a shamrock. All of this is mounted on what appears to be the centre of a Grand Union. There are two differing accounts of where it came from:

Account 'A'

That it is part of one of the old colours that was laid up in the chapel of the Royal Naval Hospital in Greenwich when the new colours were presented in 1828¹⁸. Among the colours are those said to have been carried at Bunker Hill¹⁹.

Account 'B'

At Christie's Auction House in December 1912 there was sold a letter case of embroidered silk, containing a packet with small pieces of the colours of the marines engaged at Bunker Hill. This came with a letter from a Captain Timmins 'forwarding the same'. These were sold to Messrs Spinx with a lot containing the medals and orders of an officer whose father fell at Bunker Hill.²⁰

Colonel Field dated the fragment as pre-1802²¹ because the field is white, as was the facing colour of the Regiment until 1802 when it became Royal and changed to blue²². It has, however, a shamrock included among the roses and thistles. With the union with Ireland in 1801 the cross of St Patrick was added to the Union Flag and shamrocks to the foliant clusters.²³

It appears then that the fragment would date early 1801, between the time that Ireland became part of the United Kingdom and the Marines becoming 'Royal'. This would of course rule out the Bunker Hill possibility.

However, Mr W. Y. Carman has examined the fragment quite closely, and he is of the opinion that the shamrock is a later addition. It was quite common to have the Irish embellishments added to existing colours in order to eliminate the cost of new ones. To support this, his examination of the fragment shows that the positioning of the shamrock is not as symmetrical as the thistles or the roses, and appears to be 'squeezed' in.²⁴

Stronger evidence comes from the motto 'Per Mare Et Terram' which according to Mr Matthew Little of the Royal Marines Museum, dates from 1775 and was used until 1803²⁵. This form of the motto also appears on the remains of a Marine Light Infantry cap c1775 in the Royal Marines Museum²⁶.

In summing up, it would appear that this fragment could well have a Bunker Hill connection. Certainly it seems to date from that period. It may have been a part of one of the last flags to be carried by the Marines during the 18th century, for we know that new colours were presented in 1800. What those were like and to which Division they were presented we have yet to discover²⁷.

Notes

1. "Records and Badges of the British Army" by H. M. Chichester & G. Burgess-Short; Gale & Polden, England, 1900, p. 897
2. "Britain's Sea Soldiers" by Col. C. Field R.M.L.I., Lyceam Press 1924. Vol. I, p. 113
3. Ibid. Vol. I, p. 113
4. This is based on the illustration in "Per Mare Per Terram" by Peter C. Smith, Balfour Books, 1974, p. 168
5. "Britain's Sea Soldiers", Vol. II, p. 314
6. Ibid. Vol. II, p. 315

7. "The Service of British Regiments in North America" by C. H. Stewart, Dept of National Defence Library Publication #1, 2nd edition, Ottawa, Ontario, 1964, p. 421
8. "Britain's Sea Soldiers", Vol. II, p. 317
9. Ibid. Vol. II, p. 316
10. Ibid. Vol. II, p. 317
11. Ibid. Vol. I, p. 88
12. Ibid. Vol. I, p. 75
13. Royal Marines Historical Society: Special Publication #2-1979. Being selected parts of Royal Marines Records 1755-1792 compiled by Gen. Sir H. E. Blumberg (Vol. I) p. 14. Afterwards known as R.M.H.S./S.P.#2
14. R.M.H.S./S.P.#2, p. 14
15. R.M.H.S./S.P.#2, p. 21
16. Marines file in collection of Mr W. Y. Carman, Sutton, U.K. A letter to W.Y.C. from a Mr P. Nium (no date) quoting Admiralty source. Copy obtained by R. Wilson Oct. 1984
17. R.M.H.S./S.P.#2, p. 22
18. Notes on the fragment made by Col. J. T. Hall dated 14 October 1956 and in the possession of Mr W. Y. Carman, Sutton, U.K. Copy obtained by R. Wilson October 1984
19. "Britain's Sea Soldiers", Vol. I, p. 157, see Footnote #1
20. Ibid. Vol I, p. 157, see Footnote #1
21. See Note #17
22. Navy Records Society Publication 1927, Letters of Lord St. Vincent, Vol. II, p. 148
23. Military Flags of the World 1618-1900 by T. Wise & Guido Rosignoli. Blandford Books, 1977, p. 130
24. Discussion between Mr W. Y. Carman and R. Wilson October 1984
25. Letter from Mr Mathew Little to R. Wilson dated 3 June 1986
26. "Britain's Sea Soldiers", Vol I, p. 164, also Company of Military Historians: Military Uniforms in America Plate No. 545 - 'Flank Companies, British Marines 1774-1776', and Drawing of Light Infantry cap plate in R. M. Museum, copy obtained by R. Wilson from W. Y. Carman, October 1984
27. R.M.H.S./S.P.#4 (Royal Marines Records 1793-1836 compiled [1936] by Gen. Sir H. E. Blumberg), p. 15

CAPTAIN EDWARD LAWES PYM RMLI (TESTIMONIALS OF SERVICE - 1860)

By Lt Col Donald F Bittner USMCR (RMHS)

Since Marines (whatever their name, i.e., "Marines", "Naval Infantry", "Infanteria de Marina", "Corps do Fuzilerios", etc) have been raised, they have combined unique qualities and skills which have made them invaluable for general and specialized duties. Initially combining the expertise of land soldiers and sailors of the sea, in the 20th Century they have added various skills associated directly or indirectly with the air. Thus governments or their military representatives in various operational areas or stations have used Marines in a variety of ways to accomplish diversion missions. To them has devolved many tasks not necessarily associated with their primary expertise linked to their being "soldiers of the sea". Not only have they been given such assignments, but Marines have been expected to accomplish them; these expectations come from the governments they serve, their commanders, and of course the general public.

Through the centuries, expected and unexpected missions have come in all parts of the world, in various locations, amongst various peoples, and within many cultures. As time passes, most of these have been forgotten. But the expectations, demands, and concepts remain. This was true when such missions have been assigned in America, Africa, China, Korea, the Middle East, or Europe in the 17th to 20th Centuries, or in the last decade in such diverse places as Beirut, Lebanon or Northern Ireland.

The below citations refer to duty Royal Marines performed in Canton, China, between 1858-1860. Although the reference is to their commander, the then Captain Edward Lawes Pym, the personalized praise of course is a tribute to the service of all Marines who served under him. Although the dates, places, and events described refer to a China of the mid-19th Century, in concept the tasks, dangers, and accomplishments are equally applicable to the recent past, contemporary present, or possible future.

Below are reproduced two testimonials to Captain Pym. These were found in his record of service, placed there at his request in 1875. There they have remained until today. They can be found in the Public Record Office, in the Records of Service, Royal Marine Officers, ADM 196/59, p. 121. After the two letters are details of the career of General Pym in the Royal Marines, extracted from his record of service. These present, al-be-it in abbreviated form, some sense of the type of career he had in the Corps of the 19th Century as it slowly made the transition into the "modern era" of military professionalism, warfare linked to major technological advances, and the mass conflict in which the total resources of both state and society were committed to victory or defeat.

The praise is not just diplomatic language from inexperienced officials. The British author of Testimonial 1, (Sir) Harry S Parkes, had extensive experience in Asia, especially China. His detailed biography can be found in the Dictionary of National Biography, Volume XLIII, pp. 296-304 (published in 1895). The addressee of Testimonial No 1, and the writer of Testimonial No 2, Major General Sir Charles T Van Straubenzee, KCB, likewise was experienced in colonial service and wars, to include extensive duty in India and China; his detailed biography can be found in the Dictionary of National Biography, Volume LVIII, pp. 146-147 (published in 1899).

(Note 1: in the two testimonial letters, the spelling, punctuation, and capitalization are as in the originals).

(Note 2 Royal Marine operations in China between 1857-61 are covered in Colonel Cyril Field, RMLI, Britain's Sea Soldiers: A History of the Royal Marines, Volume II, Chapter XXVII, pp. 125-144. However, most of his discussion is operational and his account does not mention Pym or his specific duties in Canton; however, on page 133 there are several descriptions of garrison and occupation life in Canton. A "Lieutenant" Pym is referenced by Field on three occasions in Volume II, once in the Crimea in 1854 and twice in India in 1857 and 1858; however, no first name is given in his accounts).

(Note 3: Pym, while stationed at Chatham, requested that copies of the letters of commendation written about him while on duty in China be included in his record of service. Pym letter of Colonel Commandant, Chatham, dated 17 June 1875, which was forwarded by the Colonel Commandant, Chatham, to the Deputy Adjutant General, Royal Marines, with background, on 18 June 1875. Copies of these letters were then subsequently entered into his record of service).



Edward Lawes Pym

"Colonel Commandant at Chatham 1877-1879"

(Testimonial number 1)

His Excellency, Major General
Sir Charles T Van Straubenzee, KCB, etc. etc.,
No 65

Canton 25 March 1860

Sir:

Hearing that your Excellency will probably shortly resign the Command in Chief we think it a duty which we owe towards Captain Pym, to bring to your Notice in a marked manner the sense we entertain of his valuable Services as an Officer of this commission.

Upon the first formation of the Allied Police in January 1858 Captain Pym was appointed by your Excellency to the Command of the English portion of the Force which commencing at first with a strength of One hundred Men, was speedily increased first to One hundred fifty and subsequently to Two hundred; a similar number of Chinese Police being always associated with them. The duties and conduct of this Force have at all times been closely watched by Your Excellency, and we feel that we can add little to Your Excellency's superior testimony as to their efficiency and the Services they have rendered. But we may be permitted to mention in brief that on these Two hundred Men, in company with forty of their French comrades, under the Command of Lieutenant Fromence, devolves the task of watching to the best of their ability, and with Political, as well as Police objects, every part of this immense city covering, as Your Excellency is aware, a walled area of Six Miles in circumference, with Suburbs of equal or greater extent, and containing a Population of fully one million Souls - they not only patrol its labyrinths of narrow Streets, lanes, and purlieus, but guarded three out of seven Gates of the Old City.

Special mention may be made of the arduous nature of the duties of the Allied Police during the four months of 1858 when the City contained many a hidden foe, and when every foreigner who walked the Streets was in peril of the Assassin's knife:-

During that time the Constabulary were never drawn in from the three Gates manned, or the other important Post which they hold at the South West Angle, nor were their duties of inspection at any time discontinued.

During this time they became exposed both to secret attack in the streets, and more open assault at their several Stations, and the fact of nineteen of their number having been killed or wounded during this period of their Service, is proof sufficient of the danger which attended it; And Your Excellency will probably consider that it is not altogether impossible that similar difficult duties may again have to be performed by this Force.

It is pleasureable however to note the Services rendered by the Allied Police in peaceable times, and to observe them contributing so materially to the order which prevails throughout this great City and its suburb.

The Chinese People are constantly seen applying to them for aid and protection, and the improved feeling on the part of the Chinese toward Foreigners generally, which has been the consequence of this occupation is in no small degree attributable to the excellent

behaviour of these Men, in common, however, we should note to add, with that of the whole Force.

If these be the result of the Allied Police Administration, which embraces, we may also remark, the surveillance of 1700 Men employed by the Chinese Authorities for Police purposes, may we not trust that the fact of Captain Pym having commanded the English Canton Constabulary, from its formation to the present date, in a manner which has throughout afforded the Allied Commissioners high satisfaction, is alone sufficient to recommend him to the favourable notice of Her Majesty's Government.

We must beg to refer to our Ex-colleague, Brigadier Holloway, to confirm or possibly to add to all that we have here stated, and if we have not entered into greater detail, it is because we know that he, in common with Your Excellency, when present with the home Authorities will be able to supply these with better effect.

We have etc.,
/s/ H Martineau des Chenez
/s/ Harry S Parkes
Allied Commissioners

(Testimonial Number 2)

Head Quarters, Hong Kong

March 30th, 1860

The Right Honorable
The Lords Commission of the Admiralty
Admiralty, London

My Lords,

It has long been my desire to bring the very effective services of Captain Pym, Royal Marines, as Commandant of the Constabulary in Canton to your Notice, and as I am about to quit my command in China, I deem this a fitting moment to do this:-

With this view I called upon the Allied Commissioners to furnish me with a letter expressive of their opinion as to the manner in which the duties of his office had been conducted by Captain Pym, and as that letter is so full and conclusive I beg to enclose a Copy of it, and at the same time to state that during a most trying and anxious period in 1858, when every treacherous mode was adopted by the Chinese for the destruction of these Police even when in their ordinary and daily duties of patrol, Captain Pym acted with such firmness and good judgment as to merit my warm approval.

Captain Pym was present at the capture of Canton, and acted as the A.D.C. to me at the siege of Chertsin, and has commanded the Canton Police from its formation to the present time, and the credit of their present very efficient state is greatly to him.

Under the circumstances, before leaving China, I feel my duty to bring Captain Pym to the favourable notice of Your Lordships, and have the honor strongly to recommend that you may be pleased to

submit this Officer's Name for a Brevet Majority.

I have etc.
/s/ C T Straubenzee, Major General
Commnd H M Forces in China

Record of service: PYM, Edward Lawes (General, Royal Marines)

Name: PYM, Edward Lawes (Gentleman Cadet)

Date of Birth: 23 March 1824

Place of Birth: W. St. Servanst, Bretagne, France

Father's Name (Occupation): Richard Elsworth Pym, Lieutenant, Royal
Navy

Date of Commission: 21 August 1843 (Royal Marine Light Infantry)

Break in Career: 9 August 1845 - 23 May 1846:

9 August 1845: Removed from the list of officers: "Absent
without leave, having been second in a duel"

23 May 1846: Restored to the list

Promoted General: 1887

Retired for Age: 1889 (65)

Died: 6 April 1892

Miscellaneous Items from the Record of Service:

Australian Station: Strongly recommended by Captain Erskine, who
visited this officer for this purpose: 5 May 1852

Passed Military Equitation of Royal Artillery Riding School, Woolwich,
1854

Recorded in record: Canton service

Served in HMS BRISTOL from 16 October to 18 November 1865

Appointed Instructor of Musketry, 27 November 1865: served until
14 June 1870*

Exchanged Division with Lieutenant Colonel DeCourey** of Chatham,
14 September 1873

* - The reports and records of this tour of duty are available in
the Royal Marines Archive, Eastney Barracks, Southsea, Portsmouth,
Hampshire.

** - As recorded in the record of service: probably Lieutenant Colonel
John Michael DeCourcy Meade, Royal Marine Light Infantry.

Promotions/Postings/Career Highlights:

Second Lieutenant: 21 August 1843 (Service: Ireland 1846-47)

First Lieutenant: 25 August 1847 (Service: Ireland, Chatham

Division HMS HAVANNATH Chatham Division

Adjutant: Woolwich Division)

Captain: 27 June 1855 (Service: Adjutant, Woolwich Division:

Recruiting York: Woolwich Division)

Brevet Major: 22 June 1860 (China 1st Bn: 14 August 1857-
24 May 1860)

{Service: China:

Recruiting Derby:

Woolwich Division:

HMS BRISTOL:

Plymouth Division:

Recruiting London)

Brevet Lieutenant Colonel: 27 May 1871 (Service: Recruiting
London)

Lieutenant Colonel: 24 May 1873 (Service: Portsmouth Division:

Chatham Division)

Lieutenant Colonel Second Commandant: 10 October 1877

(Service: Chatham Division:

change for Depot Walmer)

Colonel Commandant: 25 December 1877 (Service: Chatham Division)

Major General: 4 June 1879

Lieutenant General: 18 July 1886

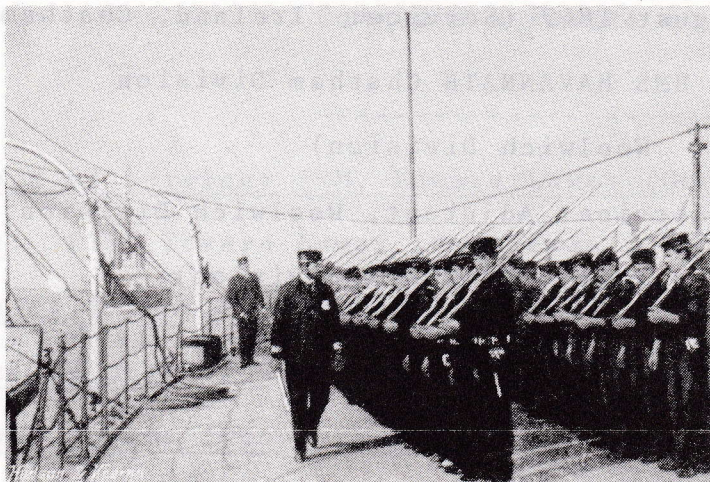
General: 22 June 1887

Retired: 23 March 1889 (65 years of age)

Died 6 April 1892

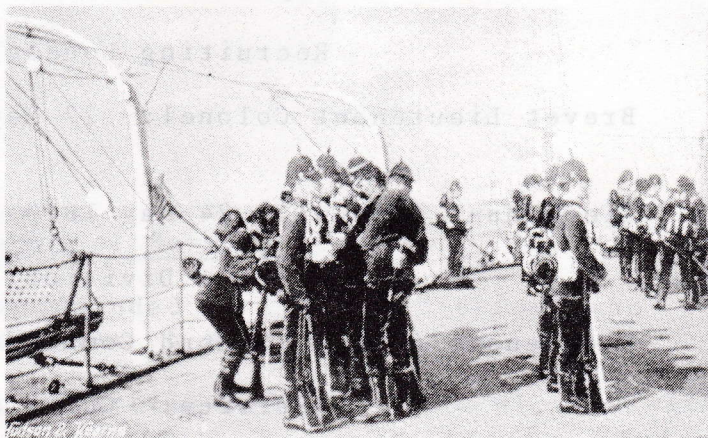
SNAP-SHOTS ON BOARD A BATTLE SHIP

(THE NAVY AND ARMY ILLUSTRATED
21 JAN 1898)



Inspecting a Bluejacket small arm party

party of bluejackets on the quarterdeck by the gunnery lieutenant. The gunnery lieutenant on board a battle-ship or cruiser is the officer specially charged with the arrangements for the serving out of small arms to the bluejackets, and their distribution and maintenance and good order, as well as the selection of the small arm men to the various services for which they are told off. To him, for one thing, is committed the task of the selection and supervision, when under arms on board, of the men appointed to form landing parties, the small arm companies of bluejackets, field-piece crews, pioneers, stretcher parties, ammunition parties, and boat guards at points of disembarkation.



Marines preparing for inspection

In this illustration we see the gunnery lieutenant passing down the ranks of a small-arm company of bluejackets - such as would

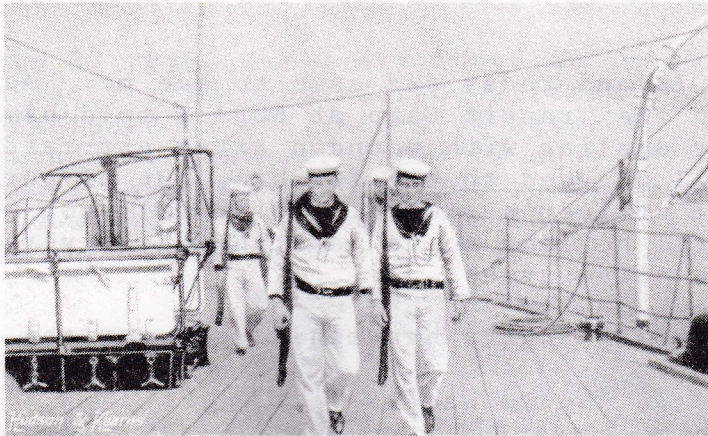


Heavy marching order for Marines

be utilised for a landing party - to inspect the men and their arms, as they stand with rifles at the slope and bayonets fixed, on parade. The rifles, of course, used in the Fleet on all stations are now magazine rifles, the Lee-Metford - exactly the same weapon as is used by the Army on shore.

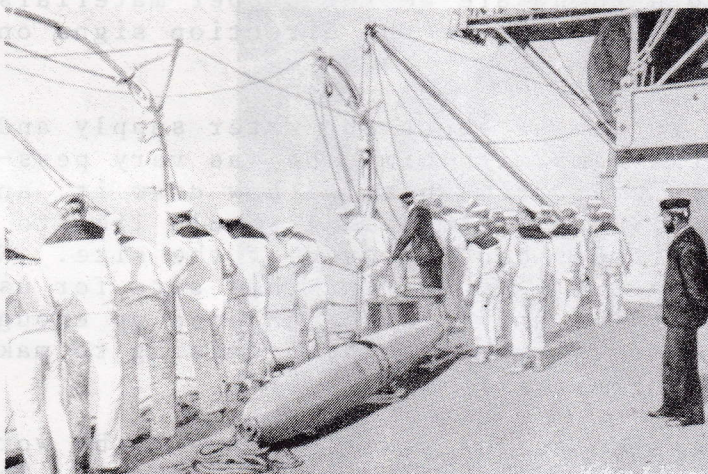
Other of our illustrations show a party of Royal Marine Light Infantry in their full shore-going kit, or, as it

is officially termed, "Heavy Marching Order". They, too, are in the rig that they would wear on going ashore to take part with their bluejacket shipmates in landing party operations, or for infantry drill, or at some review on shore. In ordinary circumstances on board ship the Marine, of course, does his duty in the much more free and easy garb of serge jumper and forage or field service cap. The brass-bound spiked helmet and cloth tunic only appear at Divisions and on occasions of State, such as Royal reviews and Admiral's inspections.



Bluejacket small arm party at drill

a torpedo must naturally follow exactly its intended course until it has effected its errand, and a torpedo incapable of floating at the depth below the surface for which it is set, or that dives to the bottom and sinks when fired, is not wanted. From the point of view of the taxpayer it is necessary also that torpedoes fired for practice should come to the surface after their run and discover themselves. If they dive and are seen no more, it means a loss to the country of anything between five hundred and a thousand pounds.



Testing torpedoes alongside

are run from ships in harbour - two runs from each tube. Quarterly also, two runs are made from each tube with the ship under way.

Another photograph shows a squad of bluejackets being drilled on board ship in their white working rig. Doubling along an unsteady deck is by no means as easy as it looks here.

Torpedoes being tested before firing is the subject of our fifth illustration, a routine practice that is necessary in the interests of efficiency and economy.

With regard to efficiency,

To make sure that torpedoes about to be run are in trustworthy condition, as a preliminary before their run they are all brought up on deck and slung over the side, under control, in order to test their floating powers. After that they are sent down for use in the submerged torpedo-tube rooms, or where required. Every month all circuits, batteries, and instruments throughout the ship are tested, and every quarter Whitehead torpedoes

15 May 41 We were asked to visit Monastery Camp, a mile and a half away from the Suda Road, and run a Sick Bay there, but when a medical officer was sent he found they were in the middle of moving off again. He reported to me, however, the filthy state of the camp. Of course I understand that when the Marines take over a camp, it is a rule to find it filthy. I blame the officers who know very little about field sanitation although they should, and should be able to teach the men. This is a constant topic of conversation and disgust among our medical officers, and we are agreed that no well trained boy Scout would live in a camp under the conditions some of these Colonial troops do.

Surgeon/Lt Ball arrived in the Island today and came to see me. As his unit of about 200 men is in the Transit Camp at SUDA I told him to start an RAP* in his camp for dealing with wounded after air-raids before sending them on to us. I managed to get for him, out of our stores, a complete Unit Medical Officer's stores. He himself got hold of two Ridge tents and until he came to us later he had a very useful First Air Post under the olive trees.

With a great deal of difficulty S/Lt Sugars has managed to get the following transport for us.

- 2 Ambulances (We should have 5)
- 1 30 Cwt Truck
- 1 Austin Van
- 2 Motor Cycles

The next day, the Austin was taken away from us together with its driver. It was my idea that everyone should be able to ride a motor cycle, and to some extent we were able to fulfil this by giving lessons when we had a spare half hour. With the original Tented Hospital, I had already done this in England, but of course we were a much larger unit now.

16 May 41 Direction signs are being made as well as we can to point the way to the hospital, but so hard up are we for proper materials that my fountain pen has to be used to write the direction signs on pieces of wood.

17 May 41 The RE Officer came to see us about our water supply and S/Lt Wallace and I went round the camp with him. He was very pessimistic about getting the supply over from where we now draw it, and hinted that the engineers would like us to move. I should like to mention that up to now this department had approved of the site. We pointed out how long it had taken the RAMC to find this site for us and the other advantages of remaining and later he cheered up enough to assure us that he would do everything he could, promising to make a start with the pipe line on Monday next.

I added to standing orders that steel helmets were always to be worn when firing was heard or there was any enemy aircraft overhead. This fell into almost complete disuse towards the end of our stay, after some patients who had been in the hands of the enemy assured us that the Germans considered a hospital was armed if the personnel wore steel helmets and was one of their excuses for firing or bombing a hospital.

We arranged for the hospital washing to be done in the village at a reasonable price. We could not have carried on without this with

any degree of sterility.

After the invasion began we made a point of collecting any steel helmets of our own or the enemies, from the dead, when we went to collect wounded. These we marked with a Red Cross and issued to the bed patients for use during air-raids, and this idea seemed to give patients some comfort and help their morale.

It was one of the most pathetic sights to see a badly wounded man trying to cover as much of himself as he could with a feather pillow.

A batch of wounded arrived this evening, which gave us a good opportunity of seeing how the theatre ran. In fact it was just the thing we wanted. By this time we also had several medical cases, mostly with Diarrhoea.

18 May 41 S/Commander Brown called. He wishes us to send an ambulance into SUDA each morning by 1100 to collect his wounded. After some discussion it was agreed that S/Lt Ball was rather redundant in SUDA because S/Commander Brown has opened a Sick Bay in the Transit Camp. It was decided that Ball and his staff should be moved here, and I sent an ambulance for him and his men.

The ambulance was bombed and machine gunned this evening whilst full of wounded. It was perhaps not the principle target as there were other trucks on the road, I have always maintained that ambulances must be painted with the largest Red Cross they will carry on the roof, but we cannot obtain the red paint.

19 May 41 Chief Stoker Barrett was sent to us for opinion as to his ability to continue at sea. He had had a pretty rough time and I put him down as a severe case of bomb hysteria, and kept him. It was very interesting to watch his progress after rest, food and a job had been given him. At first, he lived in a slit trench and slept with his steel helmet on, but gradually as he saw people working normally around, during any sort of air-raid he began to take an interest in things. In the end, he was in charge of our incinerator, and would tend it during any sort of raid without turning a hair. All this within the space of 8 days.

If it would not give rise to a lot of malingering it would be worth the experiment with these bomb hysteria cases, to just let them rest for a few days in a rest camp in a completely fresh environment with something to interest them to keep them occupied.

S/Lt Ball's staff consisting of SBA Blundell and Grey together with his MOA Marine Robertson were all to prove of exceptional value to us in a day or two. Ball also brought over his two tents, one of which we put up for an officer's ward. We now have four wounded officers, RNR.

20 May 41 Almost as soon as daylight, a very large bombardment from the air started. This gained in intensity until about 0820. We then saw parachute troops landing to the west of us and to the north of us. I think everyone of the staff came running to tell me this during the next ten minutes. Before long there were enemy troops all round us and at about 1020 I decided to send all the Marines, that is MOAs and ambulance drivers as an armed patrol under Marine Harris, telling them to keep well away from the perimeter of the hospital, so that there would appear to be no connection between themselves and the hospital. During the morning's patrol, our drivers

were ordered to retreat by the OC of a section of "S" Battery Royal Marines from the Searchlight position 60 yards away from us. Although Marine Harris, who was the senior hand told them that their duty lay with us, they left with "S" Battery, who as far as I can understand fled after smashing their lights. Harris returned at noon, having made contact with the enemy. I would not allow them to bring arms into the hospital, so they took out the bolts and hid them separately outside the hospital. After lunch, they again went out on patrol returning in the evening. I then gave them the choice of going out to fight as best they could and with whom they could join up with or else of hiding their weapons and remaining with us. After a quarter of an hour of discussion they decided to stay, and I was very glad of their decision as we needed every hand we were able to get. Looking back now, it was a very good thing for us that Harris himself decided to stay.



"German Parachute Raid on Suda Bay 20th May 1941"

At about 1100, Capt Wooller arrived and wanted to borrow our truck to get arms and ammunition for his Greek troops who were almost without either. Wooller gained our admiration by going through to bring back 400 hand grenades in the back of the truck being machine gunned from the air almost all the time he was on the road. We never saw our truck again. Later Wooller told me that by noon we were surrounded in the hospital but we ourselves were not sure of this at the time, although we could hear firing going on all round us. I decided in the forenoon to put red crosses on all the tents and trees on the perimeter of the hospital. This was in the hope that the red cross might be respected by the parachutists. We have been worked harder, but we seldom worked quicker than when we put on these red crosses.

PO (Cook) Parkes astonished everybody by giving us roast beef for dinner. He and his two cooks had worked all through the morning in the open, carrying on with their work during the heaviest blitz any of us had ever experienced. I should like to say that this was typical of the work done by Parkes and his men throughout the invasion.

This morning two Greek sailors arrived from the Wireless Station a couple of hundred yards down the road. They had been sent up by their Commanding Officer to guard the hospital. I was rather touched to think that although they themselves at the Wireless Station were throughout one of the principle targets of the enemy and had had a very severe bombardment that morning, they could still think of us being undefended. Of course, I sent the two Sailors back again at once. One spoke very excellent English and each day he made his way to us to see his wounded friends from the Wireless Station. Each day he was a few shades paler and his eyes more bloodshot, until the last day when he was carried to us as a patient. I do not think he had slept the whole time.

PO Empson volunteered to take out the ambulance as we had no driver, to collect wounded. He went with SBA Beaumont and Beddingfield, and brought back some wounded from the gun site down the road, which had had a terrible hammering all day, two gliders having landed opposite it, and all that were left of the gun's crews taken prisoners, until released by the Royal Marines under the command, I think, of Capt Laxton. Woolter told me tonight when he came in from patrol that the enemy had been mopped up to the East of us, and that those on the flanks and front were gradually being eliminated by his Greeks.

We now have so many Greek patients that I had to ask the Greek Battalion in MOURNIES if we could keep one of their stretcher bearers who spoke English to act as an interpreter. This was granted and so GEORGE KISSAMETAXAS joined the 1st RN Tented Hospital. He was to prove invaluable, and became an extra nurse doing any and every job with the utmost cheerfulness. I am glad to say that we brought him out of CRETE with us.

All the medical officers sleep in wards, partly to help reassure the patients, and partly because I do not like isolated people sleeping on the outskirts of the camp. I have made it a rule that nobody of the staff takes cover during an air-raid but spends the time with the patients in the wards.

We have been unable to get rations today.

21 May 41 A copy of a signal sent to us from "VARO" T00 1015 hrs
21 5 41,

"Can you take in patients? How Many?"

Copy of our reply, T00 1110 hrs

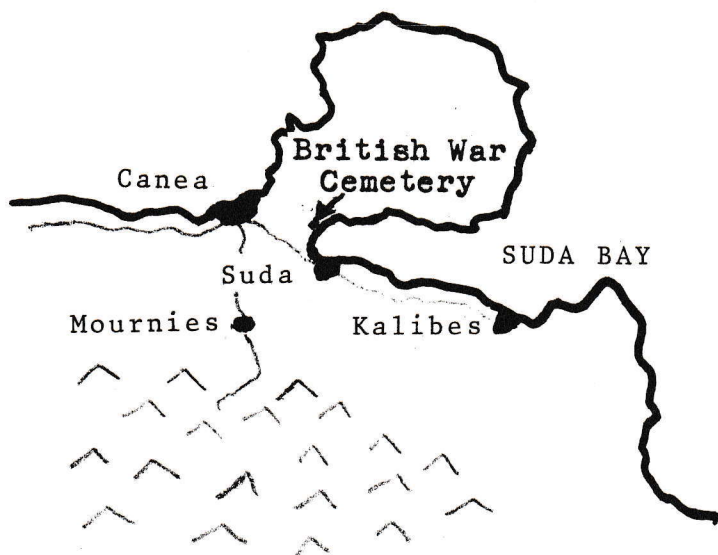
"Patients still coming in. Unable to accept evacuated patients."

At 0540 this morning S/LT Sugars and LSBA Black drove the ambulance into CANEA in an effort to get food, and they were partially successful. The Baker, for instance, in the bakery, refusing to come out of his dug-out to give bread. They were machine gunned all the way after daylight broke. I had asked Sugars to call at HQ to see if he

could get news for me, but he was unceremoniously greeted. He was, however, given a note to take to the Transit Camp in 42nd Street, and this enabled him to obtain two more ambulances for us. One of these broke down during the journey and the one we did get we were later told to send to Force HQ.

Lieut Corbett, brought in this morning from the gun site with some of his men, told me that when the gliders landed opposite him he only had one rifle to six men to defend themselves. He was full of praise for the Royal Marines who rescued him.

At 1215 a Roman Catholic Priest arrived having walked out from CANEA. He was Father Ainsworth, and we saw a lot of him later. We very much appreciated his arrival and cheering news, the first we had had since the invasion started. He promised to return at 1800 to bury a patient who had just died.



During the afternoon our drivers returned and I got a statement from the senior one. The drivers were naturally unpopular with the rest of the staff who understood them to have run away, and did not realise they were ordered to by an officer. I, therefore, gave them a chance of staying with us or returning to the Transport Coy., and I sent a note to the Transport Coy, telling them the situation. At noon the next day Lt Worrall arrived in answer to the note, and asked me to keep the drivers.

I promised to point out to the rest of the staff the true situation, that an officer had given them the order to leave, which, however misguided to our minds, was still an order. I must say, that I am very sorry this incident ever occurred because the drivers put in some very fine work after this, in the best traditions of the Royal Marines, and they more than regained their popularity with the staff.

At 1600 the Theatre light was causing some anxiety, so S/Lt Sugars and the driver Phillips drove through a very severe blitz to get our other battery which was being charged at Ordnance. At one time we were using one of the ambulance batteries for the Theatre, and before this we used the X-Ray engine for lighting, until it broke down. The Theatre was in constant use throughout the day. The ambulance brought back some bread and some wounded, including our first German patient, a Parachutist with a wound of the leg. We discharged two men from the 234 Battery who brought in patients last night on a horse drawn cart. They were in such a bad mental state that I gave them a bed for the night. At 1600 the Chaplain not having arrived, and having two corpses on my hands, I decided to bury them myself. This was our first funeral, and I was to conduct quite a number before we left. As we had no book of Common Prayer but the Bible, I used to read from Corinthians, Chapter 15. The Service got shorter and shorter during the week owing to lack of time, but we always tried to carry it out with as much dignity as we could command. I always served out alcohol to the funeral party afterwards.

Shortly before this we were being machine gunned, which enraged me so much that I went and abused the German patient to the best of my ability, pointing at the red cross on my arm. He was very shaken by the planes overhead and cowered down under the bed clothes, but he always maintained by signs, that his countrymen did not fire on the Red Cross. In future, we always had red crosses made of sheets on the ground and were never actually bombed, although machine gunned and bombed all round the edges of the hospital where a road and a path ran. Troops kept moving up these two communication lines and we never knew when we were going to get a direct hit. Being spattered by earth and stones from bombs was quite usual. I had a near escape myself, an incendiary bullet passing over my shoulder, which thank God, I did not see, but which was afterwards pointed out to me and the metal found.

Wooller arrived about 2000 and was cheerful. He told us about 5,000 parachutists had been dropped yesterday.

Whilst in the Theatre about midnight, Col Kendrick SMO called and when I had finished showed me the news and the position with the aid of a map. Whilst not very cheerful news, it was good to get something official at last. (To be Continued)

FOOTNOTE

The query about 'SERA' on page 19 (line 45) of Part One in this article (previous issue) has been clarified by two members. John Coleby suggests that the word is the plural for the Latin medical term 'SERUM' (a blood related fluid used for inoculations) and this is endorsed by Lt Col Jimmy Eagles who also points out that on page 16 reference to Colonel Lucas should read 'Lukis'. Further corrections are regrettably necessary in Patrick Ennor's article; on the bottom line of page 29 for Michael Pravite read 'Previte' and on page 31 (line 9) for Major Edwin Bowing read 'Bowring'. (EDITOR)

ERRATUM

In Volume XII No 2 on page 60 (line 45) for three hours read three 'weeks', and on page 62 the photograph caption should be dated (according to Pat Golding included in the group) as 1945, not 1943. (EDITOR).

- oOo -

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 64)

Most of these marines in the 19th RM Battalion (1940-1942) left to join various other units such as MNBD01 and 2; 40 and 41 Commando; DEMs, a few for RMBPD, then many to serve as crews for Landing Craft. They were mostly HOs, but they had a task to do which they did with credit.

FOOTNOTE

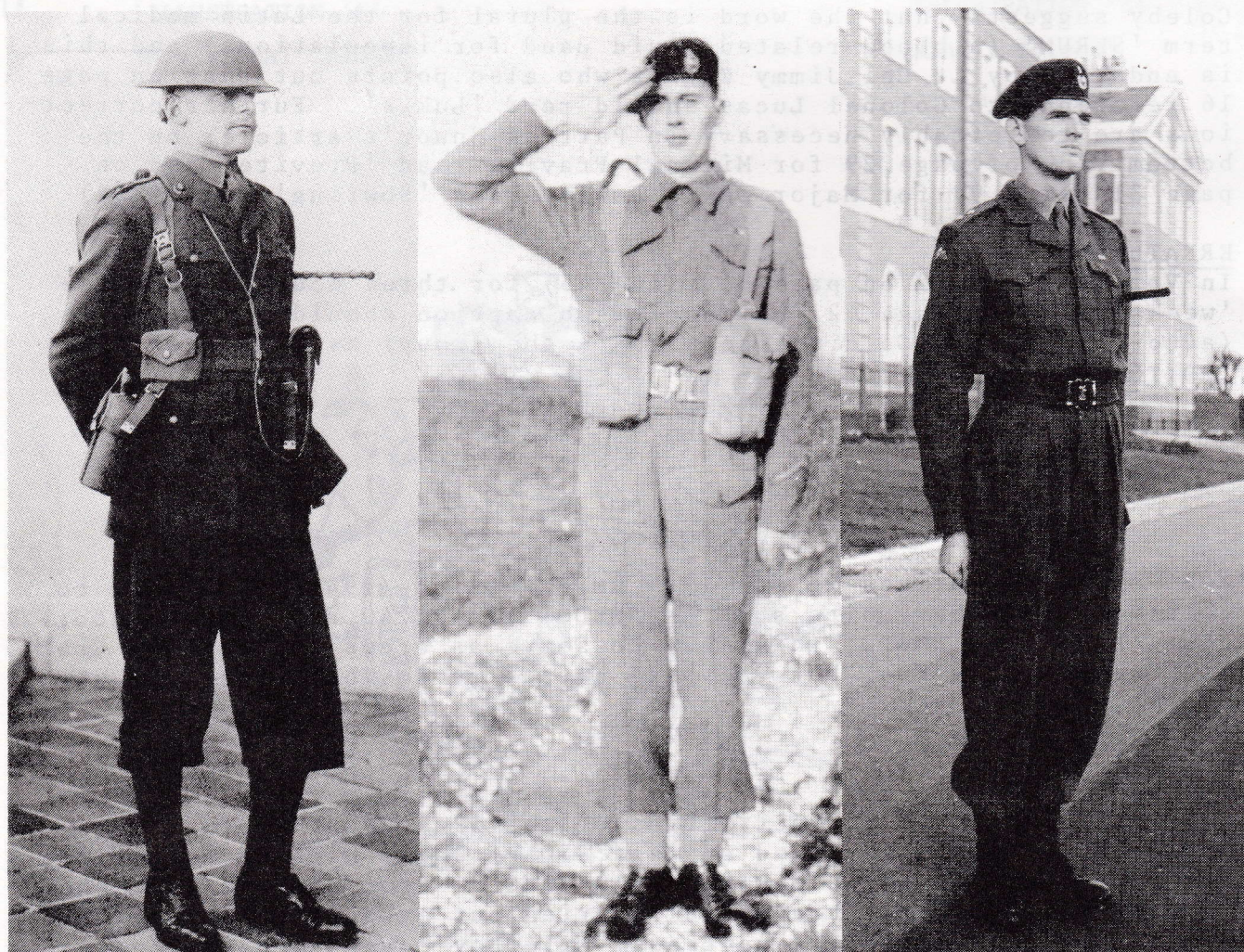
A summary report on the activities of the 19th RM Bn (formerly Auxilairy Bn) can be found on page 370 of James D Ladds authorised history book 'THE ROYAL MARINES 1919-1980'. From this we know that the battalion (mostly tradesmen) carried out extensive engineering projects, building roads, canteens, Mill Bay naval camp, a pier and storage wharf at Rinnigill, as well as drainage on Hoy and Flotta islands, and much more. (EDITOR)

REMINISCENCES OF A WARTIME OFFICER

Part II

By Major Patrick DA Ennor (RMHS)

Whoever, at the Royal Marine Office, had laid down our scale of uniform had made a considerable mistake in ordering us to provide ourselves with Khaki Service Dress but with trousers only. No doubt this was intended as an economy and in anticipation of battle dress - which had already been heard of - but even at the Depot and at the Three Headquarter Divisions a certain amount of field work was undertaken and nothing is more unsuitable for this than trousers flapping round the ankle and acquiring a plentiful dressing of mud. By the time we went to Kingsdown we had got fed up with this and most of us provided ourselves with breeches or plus-fours and puttees. It took a long time for a battledress to be accepted in the Marines and I believe that at Chatham until so late as 1941 it continued to be regarded as a type of overall and could not be worn in the mess even at luncheon. Apart from its hideous appearance it has always seemed to me that service dress, with puttees, is not only a far smarter but also a far more practicable outfit.



"Field service dress (left) and battle dress, the tunic becoming open necked (with tie) by the Wars end"

In order to protect our service dress we were issued with a very good blue canvas overall suit. which must have looked a bit odd with khaki caps. We did not always have to wear gloves but I remember 'Tigger' Phillipps, addressing us one morning, saying "We do not, as in some regiments, insist upon your wearing gloves, but if you do wear gloves they will be buttoned up. Yesterday afternoon I saw two officers in the town and one button of the left-hand glove of one of them was undone. That I will not have." As no one had even seen the Adjutant in the town, no further proof of his magic powers could be required.

A highly important problem which arose during our first days at Deal was what we were to wear at night. Mess jackets at dinner had disappeared on the outbreak of war, and the few regular subalterns in barracks generally wore blue serge for supper. We had expected that we would probably be expected to provide ourselves with blues or at least wear dinner jackets, and Geoffrey Sherman said he would refer the matter to Colonel Sturges. A characteristic answer came back: "Tell them that I don't care what they wear so long as it isn't uniform!"

During our period of preliminary instruction at Deal a very well known retired officer, Gerry De Berry, rejoined for service. He had served as a very young subaltern as Signals Officer in the famous 4th Battalion at Zeebrugge in 1918. With some difficulty he was induced to give us a talk on this famous action - and very impressive and enthralling it was. One incident which he related was that shortly before going alongside the Mole at Zeebrugge they were all told to sit down on the upper deck of the ship, under the bulwarks. As they came under fire a little drummer boy near Gerry began to snivel, whereupon the Sergeant Major came across the deck and proceeded to give the boy a good clouting about the ears. Gerry De Berry said that any tendency which he himself might also have had to display a similar feeling of "wind up" was completely dispersed by the conviction that the Sergeant Major would have been quite prepared to serve him likewise if necessary.

At Christmas 1939 we were given a few days leave. Michael Previte had his car at Deal and drove Richard Darwall and me up to London. This was a deliriously happy time. Absence had indeed made our hearts grow fonder. There was still quite a degree of glamour attached to being in uniform as many people had not yet got into the Services. We were very pleased with ourselves, proud of our Corps, and in the feeling that we should have an early opportunity to take part in offensive action against the enemy. London was crowded and gay, earlier anxiety regarding heavy air attacks had been dispelled, living and pleasures were cheap as prices had not yet started on their astronomical careers, and luxuries and comforts were still readily available. Maybe there was something of the atmosphere of the Duchess of Richmond's Waterloo ball about all this.

Shortly after our return to Deal Richard Darwell asked me if I had noticed that our pay for the period we had been on leave, had been higher than at other times. As our pay was at that time 4/10d. per day even the smallest increase in it was conspicuous, and I replied that I had and supposed that it represented some form of leave or ration allowance. Richard said that the Crown was the first employer whom he had encountered to pay one more when absent than when present at duty. Apparently the authorities preferred him to be away - as they paid him more - and as he himself found it very much more agreeable to be in London he proposed to suggest that such an arrangement

should become permanent!

Our lives and training at Kingsdown have been described by Evelyn Waugh's far abler pen than mine,* but conditions were slightly different for those of us who sought permission to live out. This was not very difficult to obtain - in fact I fancy the authorities rather welcomed the request as it reduced some of the heavy strain on the resources particularly the plumbing of Kingsdown House. Richard and I, being regarded as respectable married men, easily obtained the necessary permission which to his great annoyance was refused to Michael Previte, who, being heavily engaged, and with thoughts and eyes for no one but his affianced was the pattern of steadiness and respectability. Thanks to Margaret Clinghan who lived at Kingsdown and who kindly took us under her wing, Richard and I became the temporary proprietors of a very comfortable little sea-side house, complete with cook-housekeeper; she looked after us very well and was quite a good cook, but she was absolutely stone-deaf and how she managed to converse with my Marine Kirke remains a mystery. We were allowed to "take up" a supply of port from the Deal Mess and succeeded in making ourselves what Richard described as "very cosy" despite the laborious trudge through the snow morning and evening, to and from Kingsdown House.

One of the perpetual jokes practiced by the Medical Branch of the Royal Navy was to grade the lame, the blind, the maimed and the aged as "Fit for shore service only." This may have been satisfactory enough in the case of sailors, whose most arduous shore service was perhaps sweeping up the leaves in the Naval Barracks, it was most unsatisfactory in the case of Marines, and a man who was found to be incapable of struggling from the RM Mess deck to "X" turret in a warship might well be found in a field unit where he was required to march long distances, over protracted periods, carrying heavy equipment. Continual representations were made but the official phraseology had to be employed and it was a long time before we got this piece of nonsense remedied.

Another retired officer who joined at Deal on re-employment was Cecil Twissleton-Wykeham-Fiennes, known for short as Nogs, or Twiss. Nog Fiennes had left Marlborough during the 14-18 War, joined the Navy, under age as an ordinary seaman, and served in the operation at Antwerp. Subsequently he became a regular officer in the Marines, and served on until the 1920's. Then he came into considerable property and left the Service. Nogs was very typical of those of his class and generation who had had the unsettling experience of reaching manhood during the 14-18 War. Many such as he were to be found. When friends and I were school-boys and young men they were the cynosures of our eyes. These still youngish men, charming, poised, of good family, slightly overdressed, many of them invested with glamour and distinguished service, still with some private means (and some of them with ample) had a great zest for living but very little enthusiasm for honest toil! Hunting, shooting, fishing, racing, driving Bentleys in competition, Society - all the pleasures of life were theirs, but despite this frivolous existence most of them possessed to the full that capacity for leadership which is now so much more often discussed but so far less frequently encountered. Alas there is no place for such as them in this new world.

Nogs Fiennes certainly was a leader to us. Although he really belonged to an earlier generation he was a subaltern and very much

identified himself with us, and was a fund of information and reminiscence. He was nominally a member of the Directing Staff of Kingsdown but through his unique position he provided a valuable influence in bridging the gap between pupils and instructors. There were many young officers of those days who owed much to Nog's kindly influence, and unobstrusive word in season.

I once asked him if, having been out of the Service for a good many years, he found much difficulty in the Military problems in which he was required to instruct us. He replied that the TEWTs* and exercises were exactly the same as he himself had done over the very same terrain years before, that the position of the Bren Gun in the staff solution to the problem was under the identical bush which had formerly concealed the Lewis gun, and that all the problems were somewhat simplified as there were now only three sections per platoon to position instead of four. As the lie of the land and all geographical features were almost perpetually obscured by deep snow throughout the time we were at Kingsdown it was difficult to reconcile the ground as we saw it, with the topographical situation described in the schemes.

The Brigadier designate of the Royal Marines Brigade, which we were to join, was St Clair-Morford. He was a real fire-eater and was reputed to be equally handy with, and ready to use, pistol, fists, sword, or hunting whip. He had a most alarming appearance which I suspect he cultivated rather than endeavoured to modify. We, at the Depot, had already met him - when he came to have a look at us - but I think his first encounter with the other three batches from the Port Divisions was at Kingsdown. Brigadier A C St Clair-Morford MC used quite often to attend, and sometimes take part in, our instructional exercises. During one indoor exercise which he was conducting he wished to illustrate the wrong ways for a platoon to make an attack, and then the right. In his description the hypothetical platoon, which did the attack wrongly was "commanded by Ennor", that which did it correctly was "commanded by Podmore". This was awful. We were all desperately keen to acquit ourselves well and I immediately concluded that the Brigadier had singled me out in this invidious way because he really thought I was one of the worst. I also developed an immediate, but I am glad to say, short lived, dislike for Lawrence Podmore! Much soothing by Nogs Fiennes was required to allay my agitation after this incident and I remember years after telling Brigadier St Clair-Morford about it when he replied that he hadn't really known anything about either Ennor or Podmore but just used two of the names which he happened to remember!

Almost our last activity at Kingsdown was to visit various military field works - still in deep snow - on the Downs above Ringwould. Nogs Fiennes, who was leader of our syndicate that afternoon, indicated an excavation in the ground of which the outlines were just discernable and explained "This is a field latrine". We, suitably impressed, gazed at it intently. As we moved off I heard the leader of the next syndicate to reach the "stand" inform his charges: "This is a field oven". I wonder which of them was right!

*Tactical Exercise Without Troops

(To be Continued)

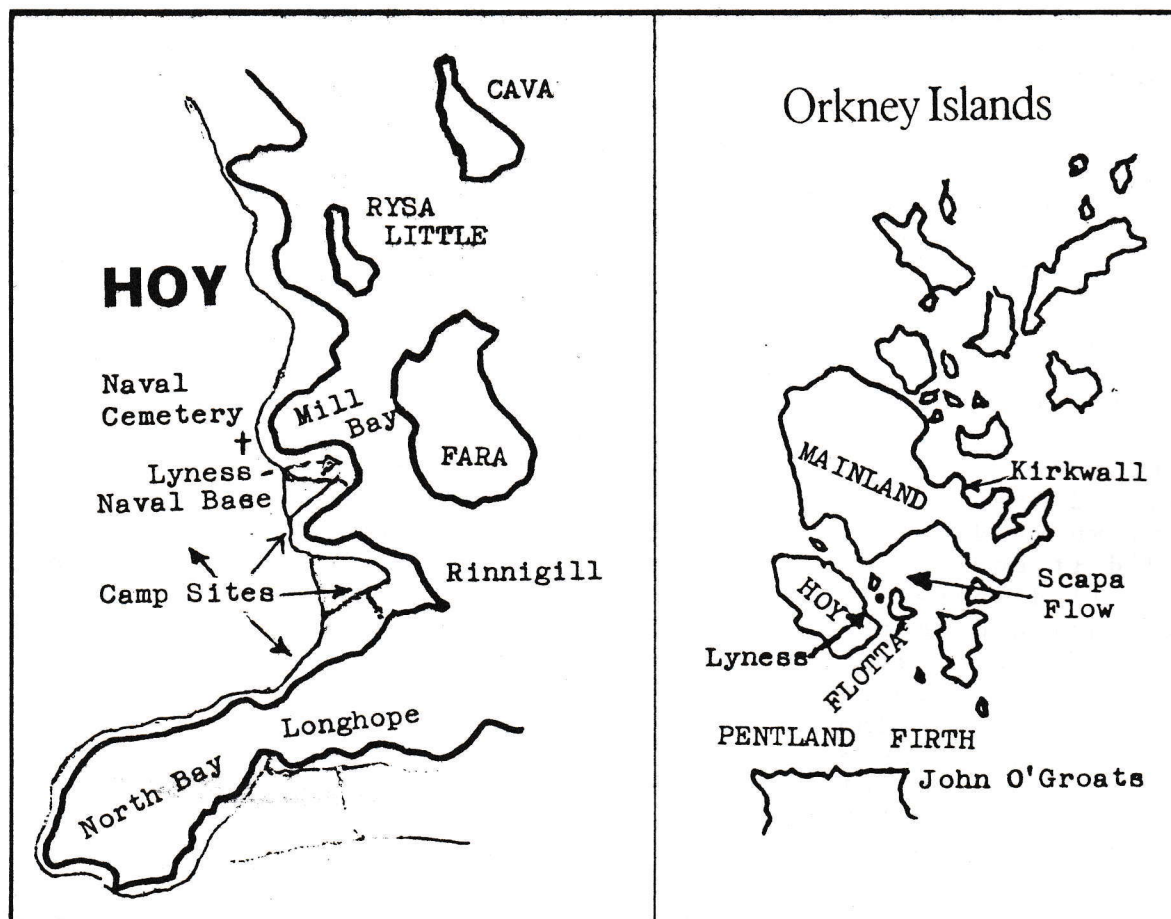
A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE RM AUXILIARY BATTALION

× FEBRUARY 1941

× By F C Adams (Ply/110352)

0600 Hours

At precisely 0600 hours the bugler sounded reveille, the strident notes echoing back from the hills above the camp that housed the Royal Marine Aux Battalion stationed at Lyness on the island of Hoy in the Orkneys. It rudely disturbed the slumbers of the 40 marines of F Company sleeping in Hut 2 who just muttered invectives and turned over again until with a crash the door of the hut swung open and the duty sergeant strode in not with the usual "Rise and Shine" but a more conciliatory tone of voice, "Now come on lads, its another day and the weather outside is still Brass Monkey".



Anyone who has experienced the Orkney Isles in winter knows what that means, so with a grumble and a curse, reluctant bodies rose from under their many blankets to face the daily trek through the dark and mud to the ablutions for the usual cold water wash and shave. It was to be months before the unit (soon to be called the 19th RM Battalion) had the pleasure of hot running water and flush toilets. For the latter it was just a large bucket each end of the hut in the lobbies for night use, but for the other bodily functions it was a night or day trip of some 100 yards to a three sided hut which housed long planks with suitable holes cut in and underneath large buckets. Woe betide the poor marine who having to go at night would stumble along in the darkness and mud, braving the elements, only to sit in misery with perhaps the wind whipping around his nether regions at 50 miles per hour.

0700 Hours

The bugler sounds off, "Mess orderlies to the Cookhouse", then the notes to tell all and sundry what gear to wear for the day. Oilskins and seaboots and stockings, (we hardly wore anything else unless it was cold and dry), then it was a call for duffle coats and balaclavas. At divisions on Sundays it was khaki dress No = and all brass highly polished, then we had the pleasure of the company of our Colonel.

0730 Hours

X Beds made, kit stowed away, and the overnight buckets slopped out, then the walk through the dark to the mess to what was generally called breakfast if that is the right work, "Herrings In" as we called them is not the ideal way to start a hard days work, heated in the tins after our complaints, then finally consigned out of the windows after being served up once more. The result was 7 days CB, not as though this mattered much as we had nowhere to go.

0800 Hours

* This time the bugle call to parade is immaterial for everyone has heeded the time worn phrase, 0800 hours on parade means 0755, so outside each company office the morning ritual begins rain or shine. Names checked, sick fall in at the rear, then the names for the various working parties called all of us praying that it is not our turn for the Heldale trip; this consisting of loading drums of oil on to tractors at Rinnigill then following them at a snails pace up the steep side of the hills until the terrain and bogs make further progress impossible. Then at this point cradles are strapped to marines backs and three gallon drums of oil are placed on them and it would be a mile or so yomping to dispose of it at the pumping station on the edge of the lake which held the water for the base.

If any new words have been invented then it was here, for slipping knee deep into a bog with a load on ones back is no picnic and by the end of the day that cradle felt like a ton weight.

The stevedores knew their role for they had been doing it for some time and the gangs were hardly ever changed but for the rest it was one different job after another.

Still we were thankful to the stevedores for they were the ones who could cadge some tea, sugar and butter, if unloading a general cargo boat, and when working a refrigerated one there was always bacon that was given as a bonus for the hard work.

So it went on until all ranks had been given their tasks, building roads and piers etc.

Many had menial jobs in camp, cleaning the ablutions, cleaning the different stores and messes, even whitewashing the coal dump.

Parties for Nissen hut building, others for erecting more huts in our own camp and to camouflage those already standing, also gangs for digging elephant pits. Scapa Flow was definitely not the place the Germans would try and take for there were always too many warships in the bay 'swinging round their buoys' as the saying went.

0820 Hours

All parties board the trucks which then proceeded to the various parts of the base and so started another day of toil with the cold creeping into the bones and all feeling lost in ears and nose.

Compared to the work involved and conditions endured on Hoy, POW camps would have been a light relief! All through the morning work went on, with maybe a break for a mug of 'char' then at 1200 hours the order to board the trucks and back to camp for dinner.

In the meantime the bugle calls for mail, rum issue and orderlies to the cookhouse had rung out; We had good buglers, for stationed in camp was a unit of the RM School of Music which seemed to be for the 19th Battalion's personal use, though it was evidently meant as a pool for Fleet bands.

1230 Hours

Bugle call for dinner and a mad scramble down to the mess to see who can get in the line first, then just the sound of ravenous men eating until the duty officer enters shouting in chorus with the sergeant, "Any Complaints", but no one in the mess takes any notice for they knew that you ate what was dished up.

1330 Hours

Once again the bugle sounds; this is to fall in and board the trucks back to work. It made one wish he had been picked for the party to go to Holm Sound to help the Italian POWs build the Churchill Barrier, at least plenty of time passed on the journey across the Flow.

So many various tasks; refuelling destroyers, escort duties to take or pick up miscreants from the Fleet who had overstayed leave or had acted in other ways detrimental to the good name of the service. Name a job and the marines did it!

1730 Hours

On the trucks again and back to camp, weary, cold and in general fed up, but at least there were no guard duties to perform as there was a permanent guard for the base raised from the 19th Battalion.

1800 Hours

Again the rush is on, but this time more orderly, for many of the men are still in the task of trying to get mud and grime, coal dust etc, off their face and hands. Tea is just bread and jam plus a wad of cake, but there is no shortage of that vital fluid tea. At least now our time is our own until reveille the following morning; not that there is much we can do in the dark cold night.

So back to the hut to stoke up the stove ready for the nightly fry-up and to make the card schools and rest our weary bodies; some would be asleep by 2100 (out to the world) and even the noise in the hut would not disturb them.

2200 Hours

The notes of the last post ring out followed by 'lights out' and we do this, but as soon as the duty sergeant has been round on they go again as no one can see from outside for the blackout is so effective, and so the various goods obtained are produced and the 'fry-up' starts. How we stayed in good health is one big surprise for by 2230 the smog from cigarettes and the cooking was so great that one could not see the end of the hut, and in this 40 tired out souls had to sleep; but sleep most of us did, no doubt either dreaming of home or of what the next day would bring.

(CONTINUED BOTTOM OF PAGE 57)



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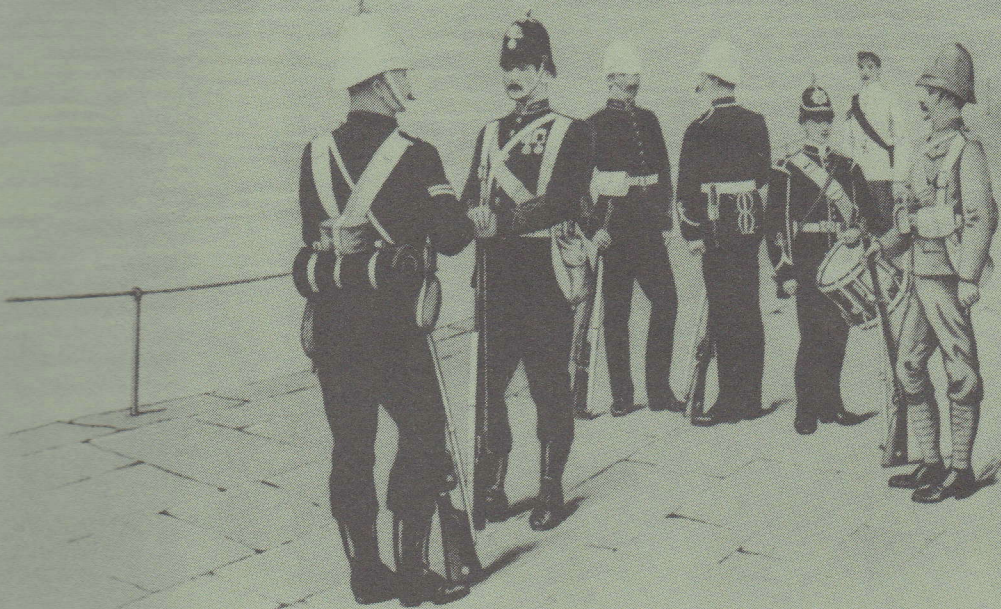
RANK	WEEKLY PAY	
	FROM	TO
Warrant Officers	1 18 9	2 2 3
Non-Commissioned Officers above the rank of Corporal	0 19 3	1 15 3
Corporals	0 14 7	
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