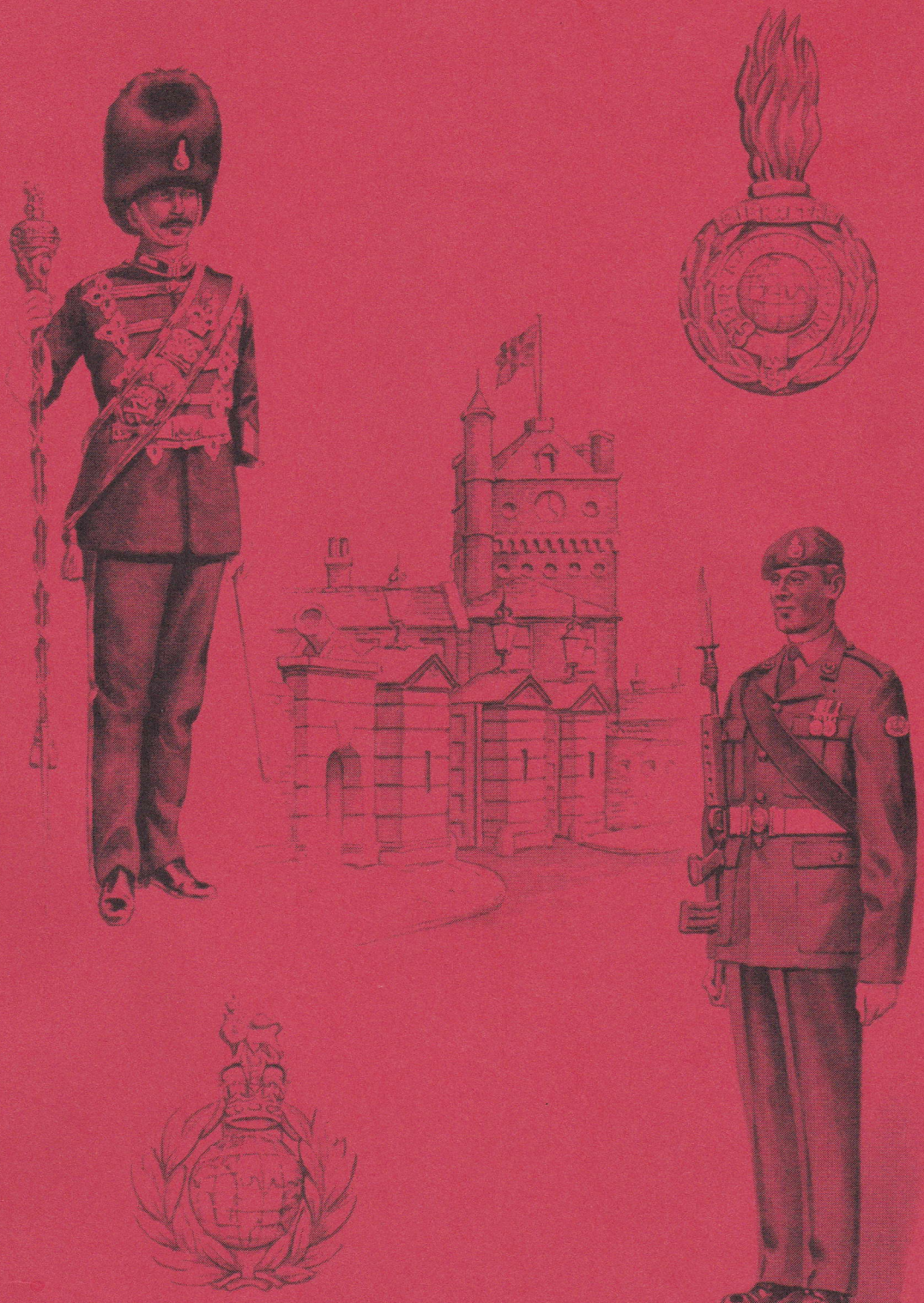
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HISTORICAL SOCIETY



SHEET ANCHOR

Volume XVII Number 1

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THE SHEET ANCHOR

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Royal Marines Military Police 1944–1948

by Les Coote *(RMHS)* **Part 1**

At this late date, on researching the activities of the Royal Marines Provost, I find they must have done their duties remarkably well as very little information is available as to their involvement in the various theatres of the last war. As I was a member of this very professional unit for the last year of the war up to the final disbandment in February 1948 I would like to put on record my own observations to extend and add to the meagre information at present available.

I joined No 1 Provost Company in August 1944 when the Headquarters and Training Establishment was at Exmouth, Devon, in the Imperial Hotel and various other billets in the town. The training staff had a nucleus drawn fom sources with police and such like connections. I can recall that we had a professional wrestler who instructed us in many weird and wonderful attack and defence holds, and an explosives expert who I felt sure was an ex-con as he showed us some ingenious ways of gaining entry. The training was very comprehensive, physical and mental, with the study of KR & AIs prominent. Training in Beach Control Party duties, Traffic Control, Motor Cycling and Convoy duties took place at Sandbanks, near Poole, where the terrain and soil were similar to what we might expect in Belgium and Holland where the Allied armies were engaged at that time.

I joined a section at Ripon in Yorkshire where 116 Infantry Brigade was being earmarked for service in Holland. The formation of our section nearly approached the ideal which was:

Personnel:
1 Sergeant
2 Corporals
12 Lance Corporals
1 or 2 Drivers (not Military Police)

Vehicles:
1 15cwt (for stores)
2 Jeeps
10 Motor cycles (BSA M20 500cc)

Clothing and Equipment:

Battledress	Cap and red covers
Shirts, underwear, socks	MP arm band
Leather Jerkin	Khaki waterproof trench coat
Despatch rider coat	Handcuffs
Despatch rider trousers	Truncheon
Despatch rider boots	Whistle
MC crash helmet and goggles	Pistol holster, ammo pouch
Respirator and gas cape	Belt and cross strap
Boots and gaiters	Mess tin, etc.

Other personal kit was retained in store at Exmouth

Personal weapons: Pistol (Smith & Wesson .38 or Webley .38)
9mm Sten Gun and magazines

The working up period at Ripon, spread over a couple of weeks, enabled us to collect the other equipment which we required to carry out our duties. For instance, stencils, notice boards, paints (different colours), tapes, lanterns and many other items, together with blankets, rations, spare ammunition and explosives loaded into the 15cwt and jeeps.

The Brigade moved in convoy to Tilbury for the sea crossing, then moved up through Belgium and Holland into the area near to S-Hertogen Bosch. Our Military Police section moved into a small school building at Vught where we were immediately called upon to operate marshalling and convoy duties in preparation for the Rhine crossing. Very simple duties on paper but identification of vehicles, and in particular tanks, to send in the right direction presented many problems, chief of which were missing vehicles which had to be located as the loads and personnel, if missing from the correct destination, could cause foul-ups. It is interesting to note that, in the stores which we had brought from UK, were



Holland 1944. Royal Marines Provost resting at a mobile washplace and cookhouse

the white arm covers which were worn on the forearm for traffic control; these needless to say, were not used for the purpose intended - we were conspicuous enough as it was on point duty at a crossroad where we stood out like a sore thumb directing an army on the move, with the enemy attempting to do the opposite!

During this period before the Rhine crossing we were detached in twos and threes over a wide area with the Commandos and other units to the west from Bergen op Zoom up to the Oosterhout-Willenstaht area, and to the south east to Canadian units with their HQ at Helmond.

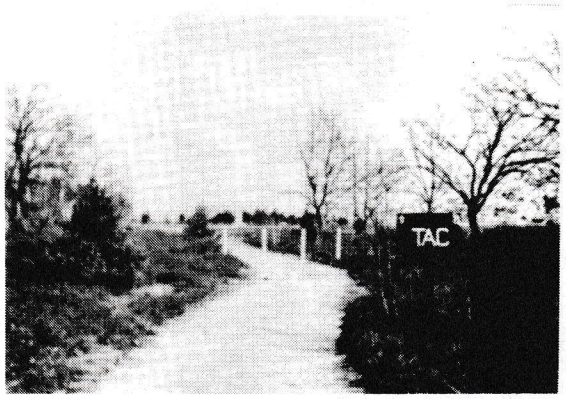
We were also given advice and instruction on what documentation to look for to obtain intelligence from the official German records which had to be salvaged when towns and units were overrun and captured during the final advance into Germany. Again, on paper, a simple exercise but in practise much more difficult as we found later on when we were faced with the reality of doing it.

Being diverse in the execution of our duties enabled us to take advantage of the mobile showers and wash units which were often set up, in many cases combined with a mobile kitchen. This enabled us to keep well fed and clean. We soon discovered that the Canadian units offered better facilities, the exchanging of clean underwear, socks, and shirts, etc, were up to a very good standard compared with that offered by British army units. Being constantly on the move, we had to rely on the units with whom we were operating for cooking arrangements.

With the final assault on Germany - the crossing of the Rhine - in the latter part of March 1945, we were always on the move as a section with small groups once again being despatched to help maintain and direct the army on the move; we were also required to go up ahead to enter captured headquarters, town halls and civil police stations to safeguard and remove records for safe keeping. In many cases, efforts had been made to destroy them, mainly by fire, and so we soon found fire extinguishers became part of our equipment ready to hand. Surprisingly very little was actually destroyed by fire as paper files, bundled together, were very difficult to destroy, and except for charred outsides, the contents were usually reclaimable.

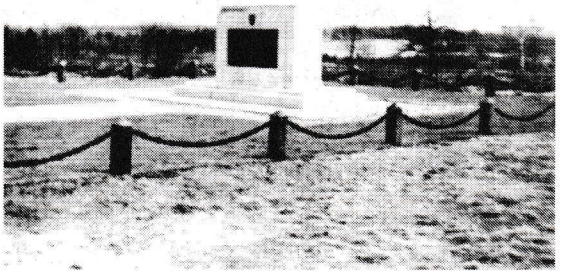
A large number of the towns were very badly damaged, making movement very difficult, and there was the ever present danger of mines and booby traps which discouraged souvenir

gathering, but was a further hazard to intelligence gathering. We moved through Germany north until early May found us near Huxtehude, about six miles from the river Elbe, short of Hamburg. By this time most of the resistance had ceased and we received the signal that the final surrender had been signed at Luneburg on 8 May 1945 - VE Day.



A Divisional sign on the approach to Luneburg Heath

The monument commemorating the signing of the German surrender on 4th May 1945



Contrary to our expectations we found ourselves even more committed with prisoners and a very large number of the forced labour personnel, both male and female, mainly from the Baltic States wandering around without food or shelter. They had left the German camps and work places, and with nowhere to go, were starting to create serious problems. Our priority was therefore to set up centres so that medical, food and shelter could be provided as well as documentation with a view to repatriation. Typhus was rampant and hundreds were dying each week. This could only be stamped out by good sanitation and medical facilities. For all of us involved this was a very distressing period, for in the early days we had no facilities or equipment to cope with the problem. For us the war was over but this was not victory in Europe. I can recall that a welcome break was a visit to Harburg, Blumen-voss shipyard to supervise the collecting and crating up of material connected with U-boat design and construction.

The war in the Far East against Japan was still going on, and in early July we made our way back to the United Kingdom to report to Exmouth. I went to Chelsea Barracks in London on a course and whilst there the war in the Far East ended, so by the end of the month I was back in Germany reporting to No 3 Company, Royal Marine Provost whose HQ was situated in a building in the Ballindamm, Hamburg. The Naval Provost Marshal, NW Europe was, at that time, Lieut Col E H Nicholson RM and the RSM was Ron Yates. I took over as Sergeant in charge of the Hamburg Section, operating from a house in Blumen Strauss, which was situated at the northern end of the Alster Lake.

At that time No 3 Coy also had police sections in Germany at Cuxhaven, Wilhemshaven and Kiel with sub sections at Travemunde, Bremerhaven and Berlin. At the Hamburg section, as well as a police complement which varied between twenty and thirty at any one time, we carried civilian cooks, cleaning staff and a couple of motor mechanics. We also had two civilian interpreters attached, one German, the other Belgian.

We were required to give 24 hour cover each day with continous patrols from 0600 to 2359. We found that the best patrol pattern was to have each jeep out with one driver and three Lance Corporals. The jeep would proceed to Point 'A', drop off two NCOs on foot patrol to a predetermined point when they were met by the jeep. Then one NCO would change over with the L/Cpl ex-jeep to proceed of foot patrol to the next change over point. This system enabled the patrol to work a long shift and cover a very large area as they could arrange their own breaks to fit in with what was requiring their attention.



Hamburg. Blumen Strass. Two patrols ready to leave – the Jeep drivers wear chin straps in place

The main patrol area was from the docks north to Little Alster in the town centre, which included the notorious Reeperbahn but from a police angle it did not live up to its reputation as the proprietors of the clubs kept the area well under control. The Royal Marines Provost became very well known and respected as we retained a presence there all the time the Section was alive in Hamburg.

During the early days, when the 'Non Fraternize' ban was in force we had power of arrest over all Alied Armed Forces and any attached civilians and all German nationals. When the ban was lifted the power of arrest for German nationals was reduced to cover certain offences, but the power to detain was kept. We welcomed this change as right from the start we had concentrated on building up co-operation with the German civil police, this change enabling us to pass a large number of incidents over to them. We were getting concerned, for instance, with our involvement in dealing with petty black market infringements by the German population as it was a waste of time and created the wrong image. With this change of emphasis, the civil police were obviously more helpful and facilities became more available to us, namely use of their stations and their police telephone network on a more friendly basis. In hindsight, this move did more than anything else to create a stable outlook in an unsettled community. It was the start of better communications. The other bonus was the the contacts we made at KRIPO Headquarters at Deutscher Ring where help was given at locating nationals wanted for questioning in connection with war crimes; other facilities, finger printing, etc, were also available to us. On a number of occasions when visiting KRIPO Headquarters we met up with NCOs from 88 SIB (Special Investigation Branch) which led to increased co-operation with them; they passed Naval matters over to us and we reciprocated by passing back Army investigations. This liaison we retained the whole time we were operating in Hamburg and it resulted in a successful outcome in may cases.

(To Be Continued)

United States Society for Military History

Report from the Chairman - Dr Donald Bittner *(RMHS)*

Between 10-12th April 1992, the 59th annual meeting of the Society for Military History was held at the Sheraton Inn, Fredericksburg Conference Centre, Virginia. Hosted by the Command and Staff College of the Marine Corps University, Royal Marines Historical Society member Lieutenant Colonel Donald F Bittner PhD, USMRC(Retd) was conference and programme chairman. This academic conference is the premier annual meeting of academic military historians in the United States. The theme of the 1992 conference was 'Joint, Combined, Amphibious and Expeditionary Operations', irrespective of time, era or nationality.

Over 400 historians attended the conference and five scholars from the United Kingdom presented papers. Five panels were devoted exclusively to British military history entitled:

Joint Operations in the Napoleonic Era: The Iberian Peninsular

British Expeditionary Operations in the pre-Dreadnought Era

Amphibious Warfare in World War II: The British Perspective

Gallipoli Revisited

Dieppe Reconsidered

Other papers related to these subjects or on other topics of British military history were part of other panels with related themes but multi-national in scope. Examples of these individual papers were **'English Amphibious Operations against Cadiz 1587-1702'** and **'Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay, Master of Amphibious Operations'**. Another session considered the Falklands War of 1982, but from a different viewpoint implied in its title **'The South Atlantic (Malvinas/Falkland Islands) War of 1982; The Argentine Perspective'**.

The Royal Marines were not neglected at this conference. One Canadian historian, Lawrence E A Lee of the Metropolitan Toronto Archives and Record Centre, presented a paper titled **'Per Mare, Per Terram? The Role of the British Corps of Marines in Amphibious Warfare 1745-1766'**. Another historian, Terry Poulous, a graduate student at the University of Chicago, devoted attention to both the Royal Navy and the Corps in a paper titled **'The Baltic Gamble: The Royal Navy, Seapower and Amphibious Operations during the Crimean War 1854-55'**. And US Army Captain Richard Herzoz of the US Military Academy, West Point, spoke on **'Royal Marines and Insurgent Operations in the Salamanca Campaign'**.

Session 28, **'Amphibious Warfare in World War II: The British Perspective'** was one which would be of most interest to RMHS members. Chaired by Dr Anne Cipriano Venzon of the Woodrow Wilson Papers Project, the commentator was J Kenneth MacDonald formerly of the George Washington University. Some members may remember him as a US Marine Corps officer who served with the Royal Marines in the 1950s. Canadian historian Donald Graves of the Directorate of History, National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, presented a paper titled **'Fourth Service or Perennial Problem: The British Combined Operations Organisation 1941-43'**. While addressing the diverse issues and personalities associated with that organisation, Graves dwelt on the manpower shortage and the limited allocations to the maritime services, and how this affected both the Combined Operations organisation, the Royal Navy, the Royal Marines and Merchant Navy. Dr Raymond Callaghan of the University of Delaware spoke on **'Are There Lessons Learned? Churchill, Gallipoli, Anzio.'** Professor Callaghan

addressed each campaign and stressed the differences as opposed to the superficial similarities in each. He thus refuted the oft quoted comment by Major General John P Lucas, US Army, V Corps Commander, linking both operations, Churchill, and, even before the landing, an anticipated presumed failure at Anzio equal to that of the World War I operation.

Dr Bittner, an RMHS member, also on Panel 28, had planned to present a paper on the raising and dissolution of the Royal Marines Division during World War II. In concept this would have been a follow-on to his paper given at the 1990 meeting titled **'Britannia's Sheathed Sword: The Royal Marines and Amphibious Warfare in the Inter-War Years, A Passive Response'**. However while researching this topic in War Cabinet records on microfilm at the Winston Churchill Memorial and Library, Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri, it became apparent that this topic could not be approached without a lengthy research trip to the UK. Because of the issues involved and the many governmental agencies associated with the Royal Marines Division (Royal Marines, Admiralty, War Office, Directorate of Combined Operations, Chiefs of Staff Committee, War Cabinet, etc) the complete account of its raising and dissolution is a subject which will have to await a PhD dissertation or scholarly book by someone who can spend a lengthy period in Britain locating and working through voluminous records. This gap in Corps history thus will remain into the indefinite future.

Hence, in the middle of research on the Royal Marines Division, Dr Bittner shifted to another topic, but one indirectly involving the Royal Marines and rooted in how Marines would be employed after the summer of 1940. He presented a paper titled **'Britannia's Drawn Sword: Joint Planning for Atlantic Islands Expeditions 1940-41'**. Royal Marine forces played a key role in the planning for and preparation associated with them: the nucleus landing force for potential operations in the Azores, Cape Verdes, Madeira and, finally, the Canaries were 101 and 102 RM Brigades.

Depending on the operations and plans, ground force commanders were Brigadier Albert C St Clair Morford, Brigadier Robin H Campbell and finally Major General Robert G Sturges. At times, each of them, especially St Clair Morford and Sturges, as well as Adjutant General Sir Alan G Bourne and other staff officers, were present at Chiefs of Staff Committee Meetings as specific aspects of these operations were discussed and decisions made. Associated with such deliberations were discussions on the role of the Corps in the war, assigned priorities to either landing forces or Mobile Naval Base Defence Organisations, locations of units, formation training, and equipment. With respect to the Atlantic Islands, general and detailed plans for these operations (under a variety of code names) were discussed. In those tense and uncertain days of early World War II, the roles of the Brigades of what would become the RM Division shifted from a reaction force ready to sail to Ireland in case of a German landing there (Summer 1940), to landings against no, or light opposition in the Portuguese Atlantic Islands (Autumn 1940 to Summer 1941), to finally a planned major operation against Spain's Canary Islands (Summer and Autumn 1941). By 1941 Operation *Pilgrim/Puma* had grown so large and complex, coupled with concern about an opposed landing, that the Chiefs of Staff concurred with a War Office proposal that while General Sturges would command a large landing force they agreed to the creation of the XIX Corps commanded by an Army general in charge of all landing operations. Thus, though not directly noted in the title of Dr Bittner's paper, the role of the Royal Marines in World War II was addressed by him at the conference, but in a way not originally envisioned!

Egyptian Campaign of 1882 – Part 2

The Journal of Lieutenant W H Palmer RMLI

We suffered greatly from thirst this day as we remained in the burning sand from 10am to 4pm - when we again marched on. The men now began to fall out in great numbers and three officers, Major Norton, Colonel Graham and Captain McCleave were left behind.

Since our departure from Ismailia we had had nothing to eat save the biscuits we brought with us, so we pressed on as quickly as possible to Mahsaunch only to find our hopes of food rudely dashed to the ground. For about two miles the ground was simply littered with pots and pans, arms and clothing; but no food except a little very salt rice and some onions. I was so hungry, that when a sergeant offered me a piece of water melon which a horse had partially eaten, I eagerly devoured it. All of us were fearfully knocked up that night and some of the men could scarcely drag themselves into Mahsaunch, so we lay down where we halted and were all soon in the arms of Morpheus.

At 4am the next morning (26 August) we were all again under arms, and as we were told that we were likely to remain at Mahsaunch some time, we endeavoured to make ourselves as comfortable as possible - accordingly after breakfast of onions and rice boiled together, we foraged about and managed to rig up a shelter with some pieces of tent, which protected us somewhat from the sun. All that day we were employed in burying the dead Egyptian horses and camels, a most revolting duty, whilst other parties were destroying some excess ammunition, etc.

Meanwhile the Artillery and Cavalry had followed up the enemy and after a sharp but decisive fight had captured a large camp of theirs at Mahsaunch; so hasty was the flight of the Eqyptians that they left behind them several tents, many hundred stands of arms, a vast quantity of ammunition and clothing and forage - the artillery made excellent practise and succeeded in smashing up a large train of 100 carriages, which together with several prisoners, afterwards fell into our hands - unfortunately the train contained only arms and clothing.

Most of the dead had been thrown into the fresh water canal, which was thick with mud and filth of every description - and this was all we had to drink. Certainly we were all provided with pocket filters, but our thirst was so insatiable that we could not wait long enough to use them. Whilst bathing in the canal that day I came into contact with a dead Egyptian and it was by no means an embrace I enjoyed.

The Life Guards, some batteries of Artillery and ourselves and the 84th Regiment and 46th and RHG marched on to Kassassin Lock, our most advanced station. The enemy after being defeated at Mahsaunch retreated to Tel-el-Kebir, removing their camp at Kassassin as they retreated; so that our troops encamped at the Lock within seven miles of the lines of Tel-el-Kebir without resistance.

After working hard all day with but little food, I hoped to get a good night's rest, but it was willed otherwise for at 6pm my company and another one were ordered on outpost duty. Outpost duty in the enemy's country is at all times nasty work and here it was more than usually so, as with only 200 men we had to protect the whole camp from surprise and keep a look out for nearly two miles around. We remained out until 6am the next morning, the officers not having a wink of sleep. The men, however, were better off as each man got four hours sleep. We returned into the camp dead beat and very hungry to partake of a breakfast of biscuit and a little weak tea.

This (27th) being a Sunday we had a tolerably quiet time although fatigue parties were at work all day. Some Dragoons and RHG arrived from Ismailia and from them we begged some salt meat which we thoroughly enjoyed. What with the stink from the dead bodies, bad food and water and the heat, a great number of men went down; the poor horses suffered greatly from sunstroke.

At a distance of about two miles from Mahsaunch there ran almost round in a circle a high ridge - which by day was used by our vedettes as a look out, and by night was the advance line of our outpost. As far as you could see, therefore, from our camp there was nothing but desert, except on the opposite side of the Fresh Water Canal where there was a

patch of maize. Upon the ridge at certain intervals you saw solitary vedettes - perfectly motionless in the hot sun save when one of them had to communicate to his next number. Whilst at Mahsaunch I managed to secure a few lentils whch I converted into soup, to my taste it was not very palatable but the Egyptians think it rather a delicacy I believe.

Early on Monday the 28th, another Dragoon Regiment and a Regiment of Sikhs arrived and almost immediately afterwards heavy firing was heard in our front in the direction of Kassassin. The whole camp was at once fallen in under arms, but as the firing soon ceased the disperse was sounded. We fell in no less than six times during the day only to be dismissed again after standing in the burning sun for about half an hour each time.

About 5 o'clock in the evening, firing was again heard and once more we fell in and this time it was no scare as the enemy to the number of about 12,000 were attacking our small camp of 2,000 at Kassassin. (The number of enemy afterwards proved to be 17,000). At 5.30 we marched from Mahsaunch, the Life Guards and other Cavalry being the first to leave, and remarkably well they looked as they passed us at a smart trot. Next came a battery of artillery, which was protected by two of our companies H and K, and behind came the remainder of our Battalion. We in the companies attached to the Battery were one on each flank, and very hard work it was to keep up; but at last at about 7.50pm we came up with some of our engaged troops (the 46th, I think).

When we arrived there was still very heavy firing going on accompanied by a tremendous musketry fire. We found ourselves in the middle of the firing without knowing friend from foe, as no-one came to inform us and the night was very dark. Luckily the Major of the Battery was a cool hand, so he halted us and we waited for orders, and there we were with shot and bullet flying round us, totally useless. At last the firing ceased and then a Staff Officer galloped up and ordered us to advance; he also informed us that the enemy had been charged by the Life Guards and Cavalry in pursuit. We followed them up for about two miles, then tired and footsore marched back to Kassassin Camp where we lay down and were soon fast asleep.

We learnt afterwards that the enemy had been threatening the camp all the day and at about 5pm they attacked in great numbers with 12 field guns. Our little camp of men had defended themselves bravely though they had but two guns, but so well were these two worked by Captain Tucker and Lieutenant Marshall RMA (since deceased) that the enemy's guns were kept in check. These officers were, I'm glad to say, afterwards mentioned in



The Royal Marine Artillery working a captured Krupp gun at Kassassin on 28th August 1882.

despatches though poor Marshall, whom I knew well, afterwards succumbed to the effects of the hardships of the campaign.

Several times the enemy pressed the camp very hard and the little garrison was very glad when the reinforcement arrived from Mahsaunch. Seven guns were captured during the fight, but stupidly they were left out all night and of course, before the morning, the enemy had carried them off. The losses on the enemy's side were rather severe, though ours were very trifling. I sincerely hope that it never falls to my lot again to be attached to a Battery of Artillery for their flank protection.

We arrived back in camp about 10pm, and having placed our outposts, slept soundly on the bare sand until 4am the next morning when reveille sounded and again we were under arms. We could secure no breakfast as no provisons had come up; as our tents however arrived about 9am we employed our time in pitching them and at 12 noon we were thankful for their shelter. The men were sixteen in a tent and the officers seven.

A large number of troops arrived during the day and towards evening we had some rations served out which were soon devoured. Our tents were pitched about half a mile from the Fresh Water Canal, where our drinking water was provided and filthy stuff it was, just as bad as that at Mahsaunch. About 8 in the evening we all rejoiced at the arrival of the first train from Ismailia with stores, etc.

The next, the 30th, we again shifted camp and were employed unloading trains, etc, the heat being something awful, so much so that every train returning to Ismailia was filled with the sick.

Our regimental transport throughout the campaign consisted of about 70 mules - the officer in charge was Captain Eden and most ably he performed his troublesome work for a mule is at no time an excellently tempered beast and in the hot sun they were simply unmanageable. For carrying water we had twelve camels all of whom we looted - they also are troublesome and viscious brutes to deal with.

While at Kassassin we used to wash in a rather original way - after 4am parade we armed ourselves with spades and waterproof shutes and proceeded to the canal. There having dug a hole in the bank, we placed a waterproof shute in the hole, filled it with water and then dabbled in the filthy liquid.

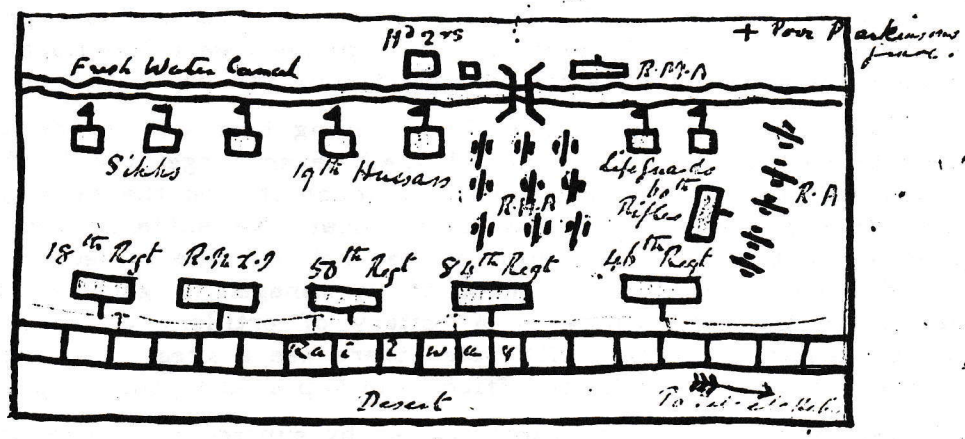
Thursday and Friday, the 31st August and 1st September, were spent in unloading trains, etc., nothing much going on excepting the arrival of more troops, stores, etc. The Thursday I had another night on outpost duty from 6pm to 6am. It was rather ticklish work as vedettes from the Indian Cavalry had to pass in and out of our lines all night and at night they bore a strong resemblance to the Egyptian Cavalry and as no countersign was allowed, a mistake might easily have been made. Besides this the enemy had plenty of cover for advancing close to our outpost without being seen. To show how confusing it was, I was several times asked by officers where their men were, although distant perhaps only 100 yards from them. It was very difficult to find the sentries and I found the best way was to lie down and look along the ground. I was always glad when outpost duty was over and I could drag my weary body back to camp and snatch a few hours sleep.

On 1st September, for the first time since landing at Ismailia, we had fresh bread issued and greatly we enjoyed it, although next day many men were ill from it as it was only half baked and very hard.

We all received a shock on the 2nd, I remember it well. I with several other officers was in the middle of the washing process when one of the fellows came down and told us of the death of poor Parkinson. At first we could hardly believe it, for though we knew he was knocked up, we had no idea he was really ill. Poor fellow, had he only given in at first, he might now be still alive but he struggled on, at last succumbing to the combined effects of bad food, heat, etc. He was a great favourite both with officers and men and we all felt his death keenly; he was the first of my tent mates who went down. We buried him in the evening close to the Lock at Kassassin where a few other victims were also interred.

His body was borne to its last resting lace on a stretcher carried by four of his company, whilst myself and three other officers were pallbearers. A great many officers

x The Marine Artillery were also on our left - though on the other side of the Fresh water canal.



Camp at Kassassin Sept 1st 1882.

and men joined in the procession and there far away from all who were dearest to him he was buried as the sun went down, buried like a soldier in his uniform with his greatcoat wrapped round him.

From this day until 5th September things went on in their ordinary course. Daily troops arrived in large numbers as well as trains full of provisions, ammunition, the whole camp being simply littered with cases, etc. Our time was fully occupied in unloading the many trains.

On 6 September General G Graham VC, CB, RE reviewed the whole of the troops at Kassassin at 5am and there we were in the enemy's country holding a review as quietly as if it were on Southsea Common. The enemy, however, could not make out what we were doing and sent their cavalry to reconnoitre, whereupon there was a sharp cavalry skirmish resulting in the withdrawal of the enemy.

Lieutenant Raitt arrived this day from Ismailia where he had been in hospital for some time. On the night of the 7th I was again outpost duty and on the 8th a strong reconnoitring force went out to have a look at Tel-el-Kebir; but we cme back hastily as the enemy appeared in force. We were now taken out of the 1st Brigade with the Guards and brigaded with the 18th, 87th and 84th Regiments of the 2nd Brigade, 1st Division under General Graham. This brigade was called by Sir Garnet Wolseley "The Fighting Brigade" throughout the campaign.

Of General Graham it is impossible to speak too highly - a brave soldier and a good General he was and it was our luck to be under him the whole time.* He always had a cheering word for everyone and was seen in the thickest of fighting, hurrying hither and thither. By the men he was greatly liked and respected, they recognised him as a thorough soldier. He was a splendid specimen of a Briton, standing over six feet tall and proportionately broad.

On 9th September we rose as usual at five and having paraded we all went down to the canal, distant about half a mile, to have a wash before breakfast. I, with several others, had just reached there when we heard the 'General Assembly' sound followed by the 'Double'. Everyone hurried back and fell in and at 6.30 we marched off to meet the enemy who had skillfully approached the camp and attacked it, some of them being as close as 900 yards.

Author's Note: This was questionable as he made several gross errors in the Sudan.

As soon as the ground permitted Colonel Jones formed us for attack H & K Companies in the fighting line, F & G and the remaining companies in reserve. On our left were the 60th Rifles and on our right the 18th Regiment, the remainder of the Infantry and some of the Artillery and Cavalry. We came under fire at 7am and remained under fire until twelve. We drove he enemy back a distance of five miles and then held the position we had gained until 1.50 when we slowly returned as there was no object in retaining this position.

The amount of ammunition expended by the enemy was somewhat enormous, but luckily their firing wavery indifferent. Their artillery, however, made excellent practise sending three or four shells right into our camp, but our gunners were too much for them. The Krupp guns mounted in railway trucks also did good work for us.

We arrived back at camp dead beat at four, having been out in the blazing sun all day with nothing to eat, not even breakfast. I shall never forget the frightful heat that day, my sword was so hot I could scarcely bear to touch it, and the sand and the pebbles were so burning it was almost impossible to sit down. We suffered tremendously from thirst, as most of us in the hurry of falling in had not had time to secure water, and our water carriers did not arrive until 1pm. Most of us managed to get some water at about noon which was given us very kindly by a battery of artillery to whom we were most thankful. When our camels did arrive with water there was a great rush for it, a picture of this was very well drawn by a brother officer and appeared in the Graphic.

We had 25 men wounded and four knocked over by sunstroke; my company and another company succeeded in capturing two guns, whilst the 60th Rifles captured one. The real credit was due to poor Wardell, who was afterwards shot at Tel-el-Kebir, but most undoubtedly his company it was that silenced the two guns though another company claimed them.

Whilst advancing with my company, suddenly about 300 yards in front, a single Egyptian rose up and fired a shot at us and then ran after his companions who were about 900 yards from us. I ordered one of my men to fire at him which he did and the Egyptian at once dropped as if he had been shot. I had my suspicions however, and sent two men over to see if he was dead; on arriving near him they both thought he was dead as he lay so motionless, but one of them out of kindness and to test whether he was quite dead, dropped a little later on his mouth and the sudden shock made the Egyptian wince. Eventually they discovered he was shamming and quite uninjured, so they made a prisoner of him and brought him in. This shows how extremely cunning these Egyptians are.

During our advance we also came across a wounded Egyptian who had been lying in the burning desert for two days with nothing to eat or drink. He was altogether past recovery, but pointed to the hot sun and to our water bottles meaning he was thirsty. We gave the poor beggar a good drink and then he signed for a smoke, so some-one gave him some cigarettes which he seemed to enjoy greatly. He died soon after quite calmly smoking to the last. Several times I noticed dying Egyptians smoking and they invariably seemed peaceful. Whether they have a superstition I know not, but certainly they seem to die much better when they are smoking.

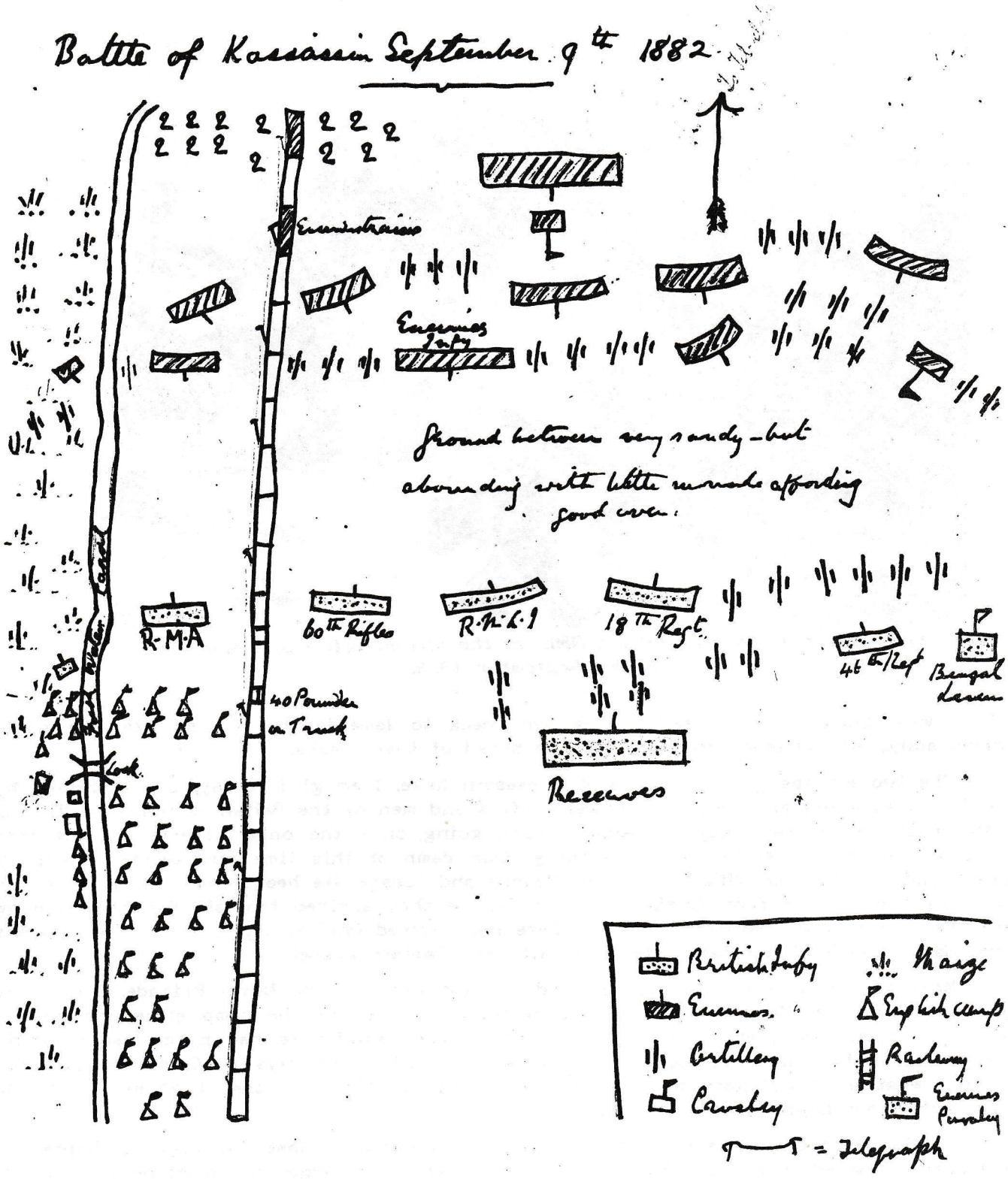
The enemy when they retired got into several trains which had brought them up, so they made good their escape. The white uniform of the Egyptian Infantry showed up very plainly against the sand and gave us an excellent mark to aim at, but as a rule they kept out of range, and one thing I will say for them is that they can run like horses.

The number of enemy was estimated at 12,000, many of them being a picked troop, whilst we had no more than 6,000, I suppose of whom not more than 2,000 came into action. The total number of wounded was 61 of whom 25 were ours, a goodly proportion.

I was never so tired in my life as I was when we arrived back in camp. I could hardly drag one leg before the other and in a weak moment I had offered to carry one of the men's rifles which I did all the way back and uncommonly sick I was of it. The cold tea, biscuits and 'Fanny Adams'* on our return was simply delicious.

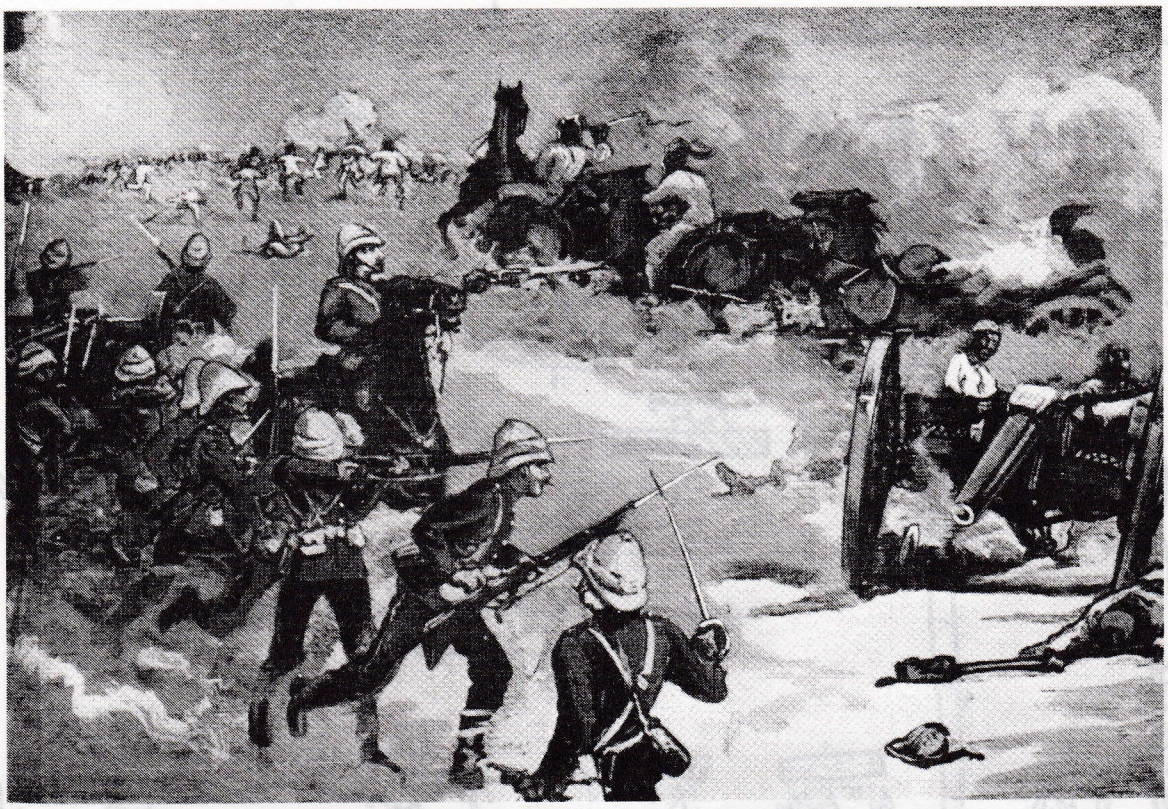
We found on our return that the Guards had arrived from El Mahuta; and that Sir Garnet and his staff had arrived from Ismailia. A great deal has been written about this

* *Fanny Adams - Tinned meat, (19th Cent) from the name of someone who was murdered and the body chopped up.*



attack on the camp at Kassassin and many have blamed General Graham, but in reality, although the camp was threatened considerably at one time, the danger was of short duration. No doubt there was a fault somewhere, as in broad daylight the enemy should never have approached the camp as they did without something being done to check them. I believe that early in the morning the cavalry had a skirmish and then word was sent to say the enemy were advancing, but seemingly no notice was taken of the warning. The 13th Bengal Lancers were in this action and they certainly are as wiry and tough a lot of men as one would wish to see. Their dress and lances as they went by made them look uncommonly striking and picturesque. Give them fighting in any form and they are quite happy, whatever maybe the cause for which they are fighting, for they fear not death.

Most of the fellows were very knocked up the next day - but I was thankful to feel



Two guns are captured by the RMLI at the second Battle of Kassassin on 9th September 1882.

pretty well. Cotterill, poor fellow, was sent back to Ismailia; he was so weak he could hardly stand. All my tent mates were on the broad of their backs.

The two Krupps guns captured at Kassassin have, I am glad to say, been accepted by the Queen as a present from the officers, NCOs and men of the Battalion. Sunday 10th was spent much in the same way as usual - work going on - the only difference being that there was a service early in the morning. Our camp at this time was about 2 miles in length and was covered with tons of provisions and forage. We heard that 300 more of our men had just started from England - poor fellows they arrived too late for the fighting and are still at Port Said doing duty. These men retired (sic) in April 1883. The officers were Major Colwell, Lieutenant Peters-Skipwith and Captain Cosbet.

More troops arrived on this day and a great many of the Naval Brigade. Six trains arrived daily now. Men of every nation were to be seen in the camp either as special correspondents, interpreters, etc. Since starting from Ismailia we had never had a single change of clothes (nor did we get a change until after two days in Cairo) so you can imagine what a filthy state we were in. I believed at the time that I should never be clean again, but happily that was an error.

On Sunday night I was again on outpost duty. I remember that this night a chapter of accidents happened to me for, first of all, I sat down in a large ants nest, next I trod on snake and then I nearly sat on a scorpion; and then after arriving in camp at 6.30am on Monday very tired, I was on fatigue duty unloading trains all day.

The Highland Brigade arrived on Monday 11th so there were now about 20,000 in camp; therefore you can imagine the difficuty in provisioning them, etc. Heathcote's Company came up from Ismailia by train together with all Sir Garnet's personal staff. Heathcote's Company was throughout the campaign attached to Sir Garnet Wolsey as his permanent bodyguard and I believe they gave the General every satisfaction. At all events Heathcote received a Brevet and a Mejidie for his services although he was very jolly compared with some of us.

Early Use of Word "AMPHIBIOUS"

Two interesting replies were received to Colonel Tony Crockett's query on the early use of the word Amphibious when he referred to discovering mention of a Freemason's Lodge of September 1799 entitled 'AMPHIBIOUS LODGE' (see page 54 of *The Sheet Anchor* - Winter 1991)

Cliff Marshall writes:

Formation of Freemasons Lodge "Amphibious Lodge No 258"

Prior to June 1786 a group of officers of the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines raised a petition to the United Grand Lodge of England to form a Masonic Lodge at Stonehouse. This petition was granted by the then Grand Master, the Duke of Cumberland, who authorised Sir Charles Warwick Bamphfylde, Past Grand Master for the County of Devon and the City of Exeter to issue the Warrant No 407.

The Lodge was instituted on 22 August 1786 and the first Lodge Meeting was held on Monday 12 September 1786. At this meeting it was decided that the Lodge should meet on the third Monday of each month. At the third meeting on Monday 3rd October 1786 a Code of Bye Laws was approved, one of which stated:

> "Arrangements are made for the admission of any applicant who is a transient man, by which is to be understood a gentleman of the Navy or Army."

New members joining were:	1786	13
	1787	12
	1788	3
	1789	2
	1790	6
	1791	5
	1792	1

In 1787 an Officer of the Dutch Navy was admitted. The main event of 1787, however, was the laying of the foundation stone of the new Chapel at Stonehouse which was carried out by the Rt Hon Viscount Mount Edgecombe. At the ceremony the Lodge was favoured with the Band of the Royal Marines conducted by Mr James Parsons, by kind permission of Major General Arthur Tooker Collins who was also present. This was followed by a dinner which 48 members and guests attended.

As the number of members increased it became necessary to find a larger Lodge room within Stonehouse. On 2 February 1790 it was noted that an agreement had been reached with a Mr Leaper, the Sutler of the Mess, to provide a new Lodge room in his house. It is interesting to note that apart from the provision of hot food, the provision of the 'best spirits at three shillings per bottle, sugar included. If made into punch five shillings per bottle. A bottle of wine made into Negus at two shillings and sixpence'. *(A Negus was a hot drink of wine in water and flavoured as invented by a Col Negus in 1732.)*

In the early 1790s the Lodge appeared to go through difficult times with a fall off in the number of members attending. After the meeting on 14 August 1792 at Stonehouse, there is nothing known of what happened to the original members of the Amphibious Lodge. There is also a mystery as to where the Warrant No 407 and the Minute Book were kept.

There has been some speculation that these were found amongst the belongings of a wayfarer who died at the Shears Inn, Hightown, Liversedge, near Bradford, Yorkshire. What is

fact is that the Lodge was reconstituted at the Shears Inn at Liversedge as Amphibious Lodge No 407 on 2 May 1803. During the next forty years the Lodge moved its meeting place to:

Gomershal 1813
Hightown 1816
Millbridge 1824
Heckmondwike 1850

The meeting place at Heckmondwike was a purpose built Freemasons Hall and was the first building in West Yorkshire to be used solely for Masonic purposes. The first meeting there was on 27 March 1850 and the building is still in use to this day.

The Lodge Number within the Grand Lodge of England has changed through the years:

15 June 1786	Amphibious Lodge No 407 - Stonehouse
2 May 1803	Amphibious Lodge No 407 - Hightown
December 1813	Amphibious Lodge No 407 became No 489 in consequence of the union between two Lodges.
1832	Alterations in the numbers of Lodges, it changed from No 489 to No 322
1863	Again as a result of changes in the numbering of Lodges Amphibious became No 258

Today there are Royal Marine Lodges located in the areas of Chatham and Portsmouth but none of them are using the name of Amphibious. There is one exception, however, located in Wimborne, Dorset, where we have Amphibious Lodge No 9050. In the late 1970s a few former Marines, Navy and the odd Army man met and decided to try to form a new Lodge. Eventually the second Amphibious Lodge was consecrated on 13 November 1982. This has attracted other former Royal Marines in the Poole area and once a year it hosts the Officers and members of Amphibious No 258 from Heckmondwike. This dining in is reciprocated by No 258.

***Frank Agass** writes in a similar vein and adds the following:*

The first meeting on 22 August 1786 was held in the Suttling House in Stonehouse Barracks when the Rev W Wood officiated. It is not known whether he was a service padre. At the foundation stone laying ceremony in 1787 the Lodge turned out in full regalia and asked Major General Collins 'to favour the Lodge with an Officers Guard and a Band of Music, thus enabling us to form a colourful formation.' I wonder whether the foundation stone still exists in the fabric of the barracks as I have never been able to find it.

At one of the meetings a Commander Nelson was shown as attending. Was it the future Admiral? It also shows that the Lodge dined with Prince George on 19 December at Plymouth, but does not appear to have taken place within the barracks. The final entry in old documents concerning the Lodge show that the last meeting was held in 1792. The original Minute Book and the Stonehouse Lodge banner were found in the effects of an un-named person who died at at Spen Valley, Yorkshire in 1803.

Footnote: Cliff Palmer and Frank Agass, both members of the RMHS, have respectively held the offices of Secretary and Treasurer and are founder members of Amphibious Lodge No 9050.

Royal Marines Lodges

The following Royal Marines lodges are known to have been in existence:

Lodge No 122 of the Antients Grand Lodge of the 2nd Division of Marines. Warranted 14 October 1763 to meet at the Vine Tavern, Lombard street, Portsmouth. No records after 1764

Lodge No 256 of the Antients Grand Lodge. Warranted 18 December 1789 to meet at the Marine Barracks, Dock Road, Chatham. Lapsed c 1792

Lodge No 237 of the premier Grand Lodge in the 2nd Division of Marines. Warranted 2 January 1759 to meet at the Red Lion, South Street, Plymouth. Removed to Plymouth Dock in 1769 and took the name Marine Lodge in 1770. Does not appear to have drawn its membership exclusively from Marines after 1770

Royal Marine Lodge No 260 of the Antients Grand Lodge. Warranted 15 December 1812 to meet at the Royal Marine Barracks, Chatham. Met at Lodge Rooms, Queen Street, Chatham from 1814-1823 and the Chest Arms, High Street, Chatham, 1823/24, In 1824 united with another Chatham Lodge and lost its exclusive Royal Marine membership.

Royal Marine Lodge No 328 of the Antients Grand Lodge. Warranted 18 November 1810 to meet at the Lodge Rooms, Royal Marines Barracks, Woolwich. Met at various Wooolwich Taverns from 1813-1826, in the latter year uniting with the Royal Horse Artillery Woolwich Lodge No 86 and subsequently the Royal Artillery (1st Battalion Gibraltar) Lodge No 230 to form the present Union Waterloo Lodge No 13.

Royal Marine Lodge No 336 of the Antients Grand Lodge. Warranted April 1808 to meet at the Golden Marine Inn, Chapel street, East Stonehouse, Devon. Met in the Marine Barracks, Barrack Street, East Stonehouse 1808/09. From 1809-1830 met at various taverns in East Stonehouse. Erased by Grand Lodge 1 December 1830.

Lord Charles Beresford Lodge No 2404 of the United Grand Lodge of England. Warranted 6 May 1891 in the Chatham Division of the Royal Marines to meet at the Prince of Wales Hotel, Raiway Street, Chatham. Believed to meet still.

It is also known that Globe and Laurel Lodge No 4657 meets in Deal.

The Brunswick Star - Or Is It?

by Major Alastair Donald *(Vice President RMHS)*

Probably the best known headdress of the Corps in the eighteenth century was the 'Round Hat', worn at the time of Trafalgar. This was replaced in about 1821 by the Regency Shako and amongst the minor changes made to the officers' pattern a year later was to replace the circular plate on the front with an 8 pointed star. This star was long and narrow, similar in shape to the star worn by officers of the Coldstream Guards in their caps today. The shako star was surmounted with a crown and heavily ornamented with cuts and facets of silver.

In 1829, in both the Army and the Royal Marines, the Regency Shako was replaced by the bell-topped Shako and with it came a large 8 pointed star plate with a crown above for both officers and men. In the Royal Marines an anchor was placed in the centre; over the anchor was a scroll bearing the Honour 'GIBRALTAR' and below the anchor, two scrolls 'PER MARE' and 'PER TERRAM' *(Fig 1)*. By 1842 the Artillery Companies had added a silver grenade also at the bottom of the star.

When Albert Shako replaced the Bell-topped Shako in 1844, the other ranks' plate on the front reverted to a circular design with a crown above but officers continued to wear a star, and for the first time the Globe was included in the badge of both RM Officers and RM other ranks. These changes were similar to those made in Army headdress at that time and subsequently with each change in shako pattern in the Army, the Royal Marines followed suit. All these shakos, in both the Army and the Corps, had 8 pointed stars with a crown above as the basis for the front plate, albeit that the sizes changed, dependant on the size of the headdress. By the time that the last shako had disappeared in 1878 the RM plate was almost identical to that worn on the white helmet today; even the same size.

By 1863 the Royal Marine Artillery had replaced the shako with a black busby, which had a large grenade on the front, bearing the various devices of the Corps, ie, the Globe, motto, anchor, laurels, etc. When therefore the blue cloth helmet was introduced in 1879, a



Fig 1. Bell topped Shako plate - 1829



Fig 2. RMLI Officers' Helmet plate - 1878

large grenade continued to be worn by the RMA. The RMLI, on the other hand, who had adopted the same helmet a year earlier, reverted to a large 8 pointed star *(Fig 2)*, as did all the line infantry regiments *(Fig 3)* and most of the departmental corps of the Army.



Fig 3. Officers' Helmet plate, 24th Foot - 1878



Fig 4. 7th Dragoon Guards Officers Helmet plate - c 1914

In 1905 the blue cloth helmet was replaced in the Corps by a white helmet of similar shape. At this time a universal helmet plate was introduced for wear by both the RMA and the RMLI. This was the same design as that worn by the RMLI on the blue cloth helmet, but without the bugle horn at the bottom and very much smaller: in fact the same size as on the last pattern shako and is the same plate as that worn today. The Imperial Crown was of course replaced by the St Edward's Crown when HM the Queen ascended the throne in 1952. This then is the helmet plate which is erroneously called 'The Brunswick Star'. It can be seen that it is by no means unique to the Royal Marines. In fact it was not only worn by infantry in full dress until 1914, but also by Dragoon Guards *(Fig 4)* and Dragoons on their brass helmets as a plate on which to mount their distinctive regimental badges, or numerals in the case of other ranks. Many Army bands, who have returned to the pre-1914 pattern full dress of their regiments, still wear this 'helmet star' today.

Although generally spoken of as the Brunswick Star, the helmet plate is only referred to as such in writing by Colonel C F Field in 'Britain's Sea Soldiers', Vol 2, page 305, when describing Drummer's Lace and in an appendix to Colonel G W M Grover's 'Short History of the Royal Marines'. In the latter the author states "Brunswick Star - First worn 1739". By using this date Colonel Grover can only have been referring to one of the badges on the headdress, a type of grenadier cap, worn by all 6 regiments of Marines formed in 1739. However all the illustrations of their uniform show this to be a 'Garter Star' and it is so described by both Colonel Field on page 88 of Volume I of 'Britain's Sea Soldiers' and by that eminent historian of military dress, C C P Lawson, on page 22 of Volume II of his 'History of the Uniforms of the British Army'.

In 1739 the nearest connection with Brunswick was the mother of George II. She was the daughter of the Duke of Brunswick and Celle, but had been divorced by her husband, King George I in 1692; 22 years before he came to the English throne and started the House of Hanover.

Why therefore do we call it a Brunswick Star and consider it a device peculiar to us?

This is the first in a periodic series of literary connections with Royal Marines.

The Marine Who Nearly Was

by Captain John Coleby (RMHS)

William Cobbett, the journalist, farmer, Radical reformer and MP, author of *Rural Rides* and many other books, founder and editor of the *Political Register and Parliamentary Debates* (now *Hansard)* was born in humble circumstances, and buried in some state, in Farnham. His own account of his life reveals an interesting beginning.

He was nineteen years old when, in the autumn of 1782, he went on a visit to a relation who lived near Portsmouth.

> "From the top of Portsdown, I, for the first time, beheld the sea, and no sooner did I behold it, than I wished to be a sailor. I could never account for this sudden impulse, nor can I now. Almost all English boys feel the same inclination: it would seem that, like young ducks, instinct leads them to rush on the bosom of the water. But it was not the sea alone that I saw: the Grand Fleet was riding at anchor at Spithead. I had heard of the wooden walls of old England: I had formed my ideas of a ship, and of a fleet; but what I now beheld so far surpassed what I had ever been able to form conception of, that I stood lost between astonishment and admiration. I had heard talk of glorious deeds of our admirals and sailors, of the defeat of the Spanish Armada, and of all those memorable combats, that good and true Englishmen never fail to relate to their children about a hundred times a year . . . . . The sight of the fleet brought all these into my mind, in confused order, it is true, but with irrestistible force. My heart was inflated with national pride. The sailors were my countrymen, the fleet belonged to my country, and surely I had a part in it, and in all its honours: yet these honours I had not earned; I took to myself a sort of reproach, for possessing what I had no right to, and resolved to have a just claim by sharing in the hardships and dangers."

He had walked thirty miles but could not sleep, and at dawn the next day -

> "I went to Portsmouth, got into a boat, and was in a few moments on board the *Pegasus* man of war"

The captain of the *Pegasus* appears to have misunderstood the motives of the intending recruit.

> "He represented to me the toils I must undergo, and the punishment that the least disobedience or neglect would subject me to. He persudaded me to return home, and I remember he concluded his advice with telling me that it was better to be led to church in a halter than to be tied to the gangway, or, as the sailors called it, married to Miss Roper. From the conclusion of this wholesome counsel, I perceived that the captain thought I had eloped on account of a bastard. I blushed, and that confirmed his opinion."

Cobbett could not even get his name down on the roll of volunteers kept by the Port Admiral (had the word been passed along?) and he "escaped, sorely against my will, from the most toilsome and perilous profession in the world. I returned to the plough but I was spoiled for a farmer."

On 6 May 1783, Cobbett left Farnham for London, where he found work as a lawyer's clerk in Gray's Inn, which did not suit him, nor did he enjoy the city life. Out for a walk in St James' Park some months later

> ". . . . . I happened to cast my eye on an advertisement inviting all loyal young men, who had a mind to gain riches and glory, to repair to a certain rendezvous, where they might enter into His Majesty's Marine Service, and have the peculiar happiness and honour of being enrolled in the Chatham Division. I was not ignorant enough to be the dupe of this morsel of military bombast: but a change was what I wanted; besides, I knew that marines went to sea, and my desire to be on that element had rather increased than diminished by my being penned up in London. In short I resolved to join this glorious Corps, and, to avoid being discovered by my friends, I went down to Chatham and enlisted, into the marines as I thought, but the next morning I found myself before a captain of a marching regiment (the 54th Foot). There was no retreating: I had taken a shilling to drink His Majesty's health, and his further bounty was ready for my reception.
>
> "When I told the captain (who was an Irishman, and who has since been an excellent friend to me), that I thought myself engaged in the marines: 'By Jasus, my lad,' said he, 'and you have had a narrow escape.' He told me that the regiment into which I had been so happy as to enlist was one of the oldest and boldest in the whole army, and that it was at that moment serving in that fine, flourishing and plentiful country, Nova Scotia. He dwelt long on the beauties and riches of this terrestrial paradise, and dismissed me, perfectly enchanted with the prospect of a voyage thither."

Cobbett was twenty one when he joined the army. He spent a year at the Chatham depot where he taught himself the basics of English grammar and composition in his spare time: he had had but rudimentary schooling at home. He was promoted corporal and sent out to join the regiment. Within a year he was promoted Regimenal Sergeant Major 'over the heads of fifty sergeants' and served five years in that appointment in New Brunswick, returning to England with the regiment in 1791.

He was twenty eight years old, six foot two, intelligent, active, hugely industrious and 'of unbending rectitude' yet popular with officers and men: he was offered a commission but declined it, taking honourable discharge at the end of his engagement, so that among other things he would be free to institute legal proceedings to court-martial the officers and quartermasters whom he had evidence of corruption and peculation. He was a formidable man even then but the military establishment closed ranks and ex-RSM Cobbett found it politic to leave the country, without undue delay.

What would the Marines have made of him? And he of them?

They would not have cared for *The Soldier's Friend*, published in 1792, a pamphlet attacking the harshness and injustices visited on other ranks and the widespread administrative malpractices of the commissariat. Cobbett originally denied that he had had a hand in it, but later admitted authorship of this, the first work he wrote 'for the press'.

But the Marines might have found a better use for his outstanding abilitities than the army did, for as long as he survived. That might have been the country's loss, in the end.

REMINISCENCES OF A WARTIME OFFICER — Part IX

by Major Patrick D A Ennor *(RMHS)*

All through the summer of 1942 tremendous strides were made in bringing forward the Royal Marines Division. New battalions were produced from the Training Brigade. The Divisional Artillery of three Regiments commanded by Lt Cols 'Crash' Fuller, Reggie Hill and 'Busty' Fellowes was developed, and John Dickson, a Territorial Gunner came as Brigade Major to the CRA. The Provost Company was brought up to establishment, and the remaining vacancies on the staff were filled, a number of them by officers from the Army. Colonel J Kinnear, an Edinburgh doctor with long Territorial service came as ADMS and joined our mess so we became quite a large party. Next door to us were the Divisional Signals and this unit, commanded by Lt Col E C L Bearcroft with Tony Pigot as Adjutant established a very high reputation for a consistently high standard of efficiency.

While I was AdC to Major General Robin Campbell he paid quite a lot of visits to units which were not in our Divisional Area, but with which we were to a greater or lesser extent connected. Amongst these were Peter Picton Phillipps' Beach group near Emsworth in Hampshire, which positively bristled with loaded weapons, and where Peter itched to take possession of a French liner, which he had discovered nearby, in order to replace the small ship which he had reluctantly been compelled to leave behind at Arran. My master also visited the Royal Marines Training Brigade in Devonshire where I met for the first time Brigadier George Newman on whose staff I was later to have the pleasure of serving, and he also went to the OCTU to pass out a course of the cadets. I have always disliked the atmosphere of Cadet Training Establishments and this for serious as well as frivolous reasons. Unless the Commandant and his officers are able to keep an exceptionally close hold on everything I think there is a grave danger of far too much power and influence falling into the hands of the NCO instructors. I think the intensely competitive spirit amongst themselves which is inculcated into the cadets is the very antithesis of the team spirit which is regarded as of such importance. Certainly it is very different from the atmosphere which prevailed amongst us as Second Lieutenants under instruction at Deal, and, as I understand it, before the war at the Royal Naval College and the Royal Military Academy. The object was to help one another along, and cover up if necessary and not to score off another for one's own aggrandisement. I think it wrong that an NCO should be allowed to blackguard a cadet one day and be expected to salute him and regard him as an officer the next. I think that the end product is not a young officer but merely a super sort of private soldier. I know that all these objections are airily disposed of by saying "Oh, you don't have those difficulties if the cadets approach the business in the right spirit, and you get the right type of instructors who are not plaster saints; I think these dangers do exist and that the system creates them. I know for a fact that the OCTU system during the war cost the services some very good officer material.

In slightly less serious vein I feel that there should not be so big a gulf between those who are already officers and the potential officers. The cadets are all the time far closer to, and more under the influence of, the NCOs whom they are not required to resemble than the officers they are supposed to emulate. At the Royal Marines OCTU at Thurlestone owing to the geographical layout of the premises, the Officers' Mess, the bedrooms, and various offices and strategic points all seemed to be jumbled together. Immediately outside my bedroom door there was a sentry post, on which a cadet with rifle and fixed bayonet was mounted. Every time I passed him on the way to the bathroom or lavatory he religiously came to attention, sloped arms and gave me a salute. In a few

weeks time this young man was likely to be sitting at the same table with me and calling me by my christian name. I thought it all rather ridiculous. I quite realise that proper respect for rank is essential, that the right types of men should be able to take it, and that efficiency and toughness are necessary. But I fancy that the Probationary Second Lieutenant and the Gentlemen Cadets of pre-war Sandhurst and Woolwich was no whit inferior in these qualities to the OCTU cadet. Off parade there should be more emphasis on the 'officer' and less on the cadet, if what is ultimately required is an officer and not an NCO.

After one of our expeditions to South Devon it had been arranged that we should motor to South Wales and the General arranged to pick up the Commanding Officer of one of the units, who was an old friend, in Somerset where he was on leave and take him on in the car. This meeting was successfully effected and we went on through Bristol, and Clifton - where I relived for my master's benefit scenes from my childhood - over the ferry at Aust and so into South Wales. Most Marine officers are pretty handy with the gin bottle - this no doubt being due to two-penny tots in warships all over the world; but this particular officer was perhaps an outstanding player in the strongest company. He was once asked "Have you ever refused a drink?" He pondered for a few moments and then replied "No, I don't think I ever have!"

In the early autumn of 1942 we were driving back to Tenby one evening. My master, who had been silent for some while puffing at his pipe, said to me "Pat, I think you'll have to get me another AdC." I was horrified. I was devoted to my master. I was very happy serving him and the thought of leaving him, particularly on the eve (as we hoped) of great events, was quite overwhelming. However he soon went on to say that he wanted me to become his DAAG. This put a very different complexion on the matter. At that stage comparatively few Grade 2 appointments were held by non-regular officers and an 'A' appointment was specially to my taste. I tried to tell the General how pleased and honoured I felt and he replied in his dry way "Well you always seem to know everybody which is useful over making appointments, and you seem surprisingly well informed about the regulations (so I was, but frequently for the purpose of evading them). George Jarvis is there as Staff Captain 'A' to keep you on the straight and I daresay you'll make out well enough." Later I discovered that Nicol Gray and C F Philips, whom I had never thought cared much for me, had had a part in suggesting to the General that I should be given this appointment.

I now had to set about finding someone to take over as AdC and despite the General's strictures on the point I felt that it might be better for him to have someone more juvenile. But it was no good. Although I did produce some capable and personable young men he would have none of them, and I had the unenviable task of explaining to my protegees tht they had been rejected, not because they were unacceptable or used the wrong fork or had failed to measure up to the required standard, but merely because they were too young. All this was not, perhaps, a very auspicious start for a DAAG who had been selected for his capacity for fitting peopleinto appointments. But it was not easy. Most of the older men were commanding or second in command of companies and even to serve the GOC whom they liked and admired, were reluctant to leave their unit and their men.

In the end I told David Miller, of whom the General very much approved, that I felt he ought to take the job. David was par excellence a regimental officer. He had a deep and sincere affection for the men, indeed I fear that sometimes his kindness and good natured generosity made him a prey to too many hard luck stories. He was most capable and he was reluctant to leave 2 RM which, now commanded by Colonel 'Bonzo' Simmonds, was once again in the ascendant. But I knew that he could do the job well. I knew that he was not one of

those foolish people who regards an AdC post as rather that of a tame cat, and I knew that his affection and regard for our General were only little less than my own. So David assumed my mantle as AdC and I moved into the vacant DAAG chair.

I had heard that George Jarvis, the Staff Captain 'A' who was of the same seniority as I and who had done the Staff Course, had quite understandably, rather hoped for the appointment of DAAG himself. If George was at all sore he showed no sign of it. He gave me the most loyal and efficient help and support and when I found him again in Freetown many years later, his presence and friendship were of much comfort to me at a time of considerable loneliness and distress. I am sure that George Jarvis realised that I had been put in as I was quite a bit older than he was, and perhaps more experienced in dealing with Generals and other Grandees.

In November 1942 the Royal Marines Division moved to South Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, our Divisional HQ was at the Balmer Lawn Hotel in Brockenhurst. HQ 101 Brigade was at Bassett, a residential area on the outskirts of Southampton, and HQ 102 Brigade was on the Island. One of the cynics observed that it was obvious that there had been a great exodus of troops from UK for the War Office to send all the RM Division into a first class command like Southern Command. Our B Mess, of which I became PMC, was in the hotel building and our bedrooms were on the attic floor, the first and second floor bedrooms being used as offices. The bedrooms, though in the attics, were comfortable. They had fitted basins and there were plenty of bathrooms; but although convenient the arrangement of sleeping, eating and working under one roof was a bad one. We were extremely busy and there was a strong temptation never to go out or get any fresh air at all.

At that time there were three different authorities giving us orders. HQ Southern Command, the Chief of Combined Operations, and the Royal Marines Office, Admiralty. We maintained a running and usually acrimonious correspondence with the latter, and this was conducted by the archaic method of sending every paper in duplicate and replying on one of the copies. There was also a rule that a correspondence once begun could not be concluded until the Superior Authority, that is the RMO, signified its termination by the words 'To Be Retained' at the bottom of the minute sheet. Conversely once these words had appeared a further letter on the matter was prohibited - even though much more remained to be submitted or discussed, and many were the shifts and subterfuges resorted to in order to re-open a vexed question by starting it again under a different heading or as an incidental to some quite separate issue. Much more difficult however was the task of keeping alive a correspondence on which the magic formula had not appeared, so I merely initialled it as having seen it, and put the file in the 'out' basket whence it was duly collected by the orderly and taken to the Registry. The file again appeared that afternoon and I followed the same procedure, but when it arrived a third time I sent for the Colour Sergeant, and told him roundly that I wanted to see it no more and that there was nothing to add to the correspondence. With this he agreed, but he told me most plaintively that as the words 'To Be Retained' did not appear we must make some reply. He went on to say that it had been impressed upon him by the Superintending Clerk at RMO that an important aspect of his job was to keep the officers straight on procedure and added "If you don't worry about yourself Sir, at least please think of my reputation and future." This impassioned appeal of course melted me and I duly had the word 'Oh!' typed on the minute sheets, signed them and sent them off. In due course back came the papers annotated 'To Be Retained', so that was the end of that and I suppose everyone was happy and honour satisfied.

Soon after we had arrived at Brockenhurst a message came through one lunch-time that representatives of Hants and Dorset would wait upon the GOC that afternoon at 1430. There was much speculation as to what this might portend. Some thought Hants and Dorset was an Omnibus Company, others a defunct railway. I myself favoured the theory of a Country Gentlemen's cricket side. Accordingly David as AdC and I, as visits and so presumably visitors are supposed to be in the 'A' portfolio, repaired to the front door. Sure enough a large car, not khaki like ours, but gleaming in peacetime black, with I think a green pennant flying, appeared. From it 'they', beautifully booted and spurred, emerged. 'They' it transpired were a Military District, and even those of us who had heard of such things thought they had disappeared when war broke out. However the deputation was ushered upstairs and I speculated as to what such military dandies would make of our old gentleman in his stockings and short puttees. We never saw them again and to this day I have never discovered what they were supposed to do. One incident occurred at this time which appealed to me but less to some of the others, was when a large dog-hound took up residence with us. He must presumably have been left out by some pack hunting in the Forest and, quite unawed, he came into the HQ and stretched himself down near a radiator on one of the upper landings where he dozed peacefully. A big dog-hound takes up a lot of room indoors, even in a large passage and I was very much afraid that someone would tread on his nose or his stern as he slept with disastrous results. We could not see any mark in his visible ear, and had no intentions of trying to take hold of a strange dog-hound in order to look at his other ear. He seemed very done up so we decided to leave him to sleep while we telephoned the various kennels. Fortunately we fairly quickly got the right one and in due course our unusual visitor was collected and taken away.

Military commanders display a considerable amount of fortitude in undertaking perpetual visits and tours of inspection, and much determination in maintaining at least a show of interest and enthusiasm. As one set of latrines and one cookhouse is uncommonly like another, their power to attract soon fades and I must confess that I should have found our round of visits very boring had we not belonged mostly to one Corps. As it was I generally found some of my cronies at each unit which we visited and was able to indulge in some frivolous gossip with them while my master and our seniors discussed more serious things.

At this stage of the war the custom developed for General Officers to say that they did not want a formal parade or inspection, but they would come and look at a unit carrying out its normal routine. This procedure was instituted with the laudable intention of saving time, and avoiding interruption of training and organisation. I have seen it in operation from both inside and out, both as a regimental and as a staff officer, and I am quite sure that it produced the very opposite results to those which it was designed to achieve. As no time programme was laid down no Company or Department knew when to expect the distinguished visitor. No-one wished his arrival at his area to coincide with a ten minutes stand easy, when the men would be either be sitting smoking or in the canteen, nor with a change over from one evolution to another. No-one wished the visit to coincide with those inevitable moments of apparent utter chaos and confusion when the final stages of tidying up are taking place. No-one wished to be found in his Company office or store doing really quite necessary work when it might appear that he ought to be out in the open with his men. The result was that, for the whole morning, no-one could settle profitably to anything. The Commanding Officer could not get away from his office, the adjutant could not settle to his paper work. The same man remained on sentry so that reliefs should not be being posted when the Great Man arrived. The men in the guard could not relax as the guard had to be ready to turn out promptly and smartly. The same man, who could be relied on to do it right, throughout the morning performed the same TOET

(Test of Elementary Training). The same platoon did PT until they nearly dropped from exhaustion. The same party peeled the same potatoes for hours in the galley. The RSM and Provost Staff hung about unable to carry out their duties, in order to watch for the visitor's arrival. The Mess Staff hung about to produce coffee or sherry according to whether the refreshment stage was reached late or early in the proceedings. A set parade of four companies at a pre-arranged time followed perhaps by a quick tour of inspection consumes far less time, and is far less disruptive of training and routine that these admirably intentioned 'informal' visits.

Once upon a time a formation commander notified one of his units that he would be 'dropping in' one morning. He did not want anything to be laid on. In his progress round the camp he took a turning to the right no doubt out of perversity when the Commanding Officer was clearly anxious that he should turn to the left. He quickly found himself in a sort of gravel pit in which stood a 15cwt truck. One man was continually throwing mud and grit over the truck while another with bucket, sponge and brushes was perpetually washing it clean. Having arrived from the direction from which he was not expected, the General addressed the posterior of the cleaner who was bending over his bucket with the enquiry "What are you doing there?" Without looking up this man replied "There's some old geyser of a General coming round to look at us this morning and me and this other Marine have had to spend all morning making this truck dirty and washing it clean again so that I can be washing it clean when the General arrives." I am told that the look of horror on the face of the mud-throwing man, who was supposed to disappear behind some convenient bushes, but who stood transfixed when the party appeared from the wrong direction, was not rivalled - even by the General's.

General Sturges had by now returned from his successful expedition to Madagascar and had resumed command of the RM Division. My master was appointed Commandant of the Depot. Although General Sturgess had been my first Commandant, and I had, and have, the greatest possible affection and regard for him. I think many of us felt that General Campbell was very unhandsomely treated. He had made it clear that he did not wish to become an Acting Major General to command the RM Division if there was any chance that he would have to relinquish the rank. He had pressed to be allowed to command the Division as a Brigadier, with a Colonel Commandant in temporary command of his Brigade. This the authorities would not allow. General Campbell was better fitted for any appointment involving co-operation with the Army than most senior RM officers of the period. He was a graduate of Camberley; he had been DAA and QMG of an Army Brigade; and he had fought in France in the 1914-18 war in which he was decorated and wounded. It seemed unthinkable that some worthwhile appointment would not soon be found for him either at the Admiralty or War Office. I made up my mind to try to be available to serve him again if possible.

Shortly before leaving the Division General Campbell had arranged for our AQ, Colonel C K Hamilton, to attend the Senior Officers' School and Ian Riches took his place. We did not know Ian Riches very well; he had been Staff Captain of the original RM Brigade and as he was a former peacetime adjutant we anticipated something of a fire-eater. In fact he proved to be the most sympathetic and helpful person and was rather more ready to allow and encourage participation in such pleasure and social amenities as were available, than his predecessor had been. The Christmas season brought a number of these and a party of us went over to a very good function at Eastney.

Early in the New Year 101 Brigade gave a dance at their HQ Mess at Bassett near Southanpton. Before the dance the officers of the 3rd Battalion gave a dinner party at one of the Southampton hotels to which they asked a large gathering. They kindly included Jean Moir - whom I had hardly seen since Surrey days - and now a WRNS Officer, along with

another Wren Officer named Rokeby, 'Grumpy' Scarth, one of the G3s and me. After dinner we drove in service MT to the dance. Although the girls were fully within the regulations in travelling in Service Transport they were in plain clothes and I was anxious to avoid any possible contretemps with military police and such like meddlesome fellows. So I insisted on the girls wearing their uniform hats and greatcoats over their long evening frocks which must have looked a little peculiar.

The Brigade HQ Mess was in a large house which was admirably suited for entertaining and this was a most excellent party in every way. Much trouble and organisation must have been put into the arrangements in which I feel I detected the hand of Eric Palmer - now the Brigade Major. Pervading all this was the personality of the Brigadier himself who by his cordial welcome and old world courtesy and style set the tone of the whole function. The dance orchestra fom Eastney played. Log fires blazed in the hearths, evening dresses, rare in wartime, made their welcome appearance, and we were nearly all close friends and associates and members in some way of one great regimental family. Somehow, despite rationing, there was a plentiful supply of drink, and I think the Messes of 101 Brigade must have denied themselves stringently for several weeks. Whisky was already very scarce but there was plenty at this party and the girls kept asking in wide-eyed astonishment ". . . but where can they have got all this wonderful whisky?"

The day after the dance I went up to London by train from Southampton on leave. We were supposed to have 10 days leave every four months, but I don't think that during the whole war I ever succeeded in taking my full annual entitlement. However I managed to go on this occasion. While I was at home George Jarvis rang me up one evening to ask if I would like to go to HQ Combined Operations as a Temporary G2. Before I had left Brockenhurst we had had a letter about this post and discussed in a rather half-hearted and non-commital way the possiblility of my applying for it. It was not easy for me to make a decision. I was reluctant to leave the RM Division in which I had served for a long time, but this appointment at Combined Ops HQ was only a temporary one so I should be fairly easily available to rejoin Robin Campbell should the opportunity arise. I felt that if, as now seemed likely, my future career was to be a Staff Officer it would be a good thing to learn the workings of a staff at higher level. After much separation, a period with my wife and son would be welcome, and I knew General Sturges would like to bring Douglas Drysdale onto his staff. Under all these circumstances I agreed with George Jarvis that my name should be submitted and I fancy that I did not even go back to Brockenhurst and immediately after my leave reported to HQ Combined Operations.

(To Be Continued)

The Recruit and his Sentry Box

Some many years ago there was stationed at a barracks not many miles from Gosport an old sergeant who was notorious for his love of practical joking, and this propensity of his was very near to getting him into serious trouble. It happened thus:- Whilst drilling a squad of raw recruits one morning, one of the recruits, a native of Somersetshire - or, as he would say 'Zummerzett' - caught sight of a sentry box, and being desirous to know its uses, the following conversation took place when the drill for the day was over.

"I zay, zargunt, what's that 'ere little 'ooden 'ouze vur?"

"Well, my sonny," replied the sergeant, "that will form part of your kit. All the men of this corps must have one of those. You will want one as soon as you have learnt your drill properly."

"'Ow much be 'um, zargunt?" asked the recruit.

"Oh, about a couple of pounds or so" replied the artful old sergeant.

"Lor' a' mussy! Wheer be I to get vorty shilluns from?"

"Well never mind," replied he, 'I'll manage it for you. I can see there is the makings of a smart Marine about you," (with a quiet wink to a few old hands that were listening to the conversation), "and as it is well known in the corps that Sergeant W Y Bilkinson is always willing to to assist all young recruits, I tell you what I will do. As that sentry box is nearly as good as new, I'll sell you that one for five shillings and a quart of porter." Of course, the offer was gladly accepted and the porter drunk.

The whole affair might have remained a secret but for what followed. The next morning, as the Adjutant was walking round the barrack square he noticed a private busy cutting away at a sentry box with a large clasp knife. The Adjutant in a thundering voice shouted out "Hi there, you infernal scoundrel. what do you mean by spoiling Her Majesty's property in that manner?" To which the recruit replied, 'No I baint, zur. This 'ere 'ouze is my own. I bought un and paid vur un."

"What the deuce do you mean, sir?" shouted the Adjutant, purple with rage.

"Well, you see zur, Zargunt Bilkinson told us as how I should 'ave to buy one of 'em, and zo I gi'e 'im vive shilluns and a pot o' porter ver un, and zo that I should know 'un from t'others, I jest cut my name on un." And sure enough, staring the officer hard in the face, in letters varying from two to six inches in length, on the front of the sentry box were the words: 'Roger Whacksraw, Krooksham, Zummerzett.'

The end of this little game was not so laughable, for the poor recruit was punished for damaging Government property, whilst old Sergeant Bilkinson had to refund the five shillings, be severely reprimanded, and have a new front put on the sentry box at his own expense. It was rare fun for his messmates, which the old man bore in good part. The recruit eventually became a Colour Sergeant with three medals, and was never ashamed to own that he was the raw recruit that bought the zentry (I beg his pardon, he now says 'sentry') box.

An extract from the Globe and Laurel - 1894

Interesting Recruiting Poster

Sergeant P A McBride of Clearbrook, British Columbia, sends a copy of the following Royal Marines Recruiting Poster and asks if anyone can place a date or reason for it. He writes "I checked pages 58 and 59 of your 'Pictorial History of the Royal Marines' which mentioned British Columbia, but there was nothing which threw any light on why they wanted these pensioners. I can only guess that the period is before the turn of the century and the threat the Americans. I'm just guessing, based on the pay scale."

WANTED

Pensioners, Royal Marine Artillery

FOR SERVICE IN

BRITISH COLUMBIA

UNDER THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT.

Pensioners volunteering for service as above must have been discharged with character not inferior to good, must be unmarried, not above 45 years of age, in good health, not less than 5ft. 6 ins. in height, and 34 ins. round the chest.

They will be required to pass a medical examination in England; those selected will be conveyed to Canada free of expense and on arrival there, enlisted for a period of 3 years.

The Canadian Government do not undertake to provide men with free passages back to England at the termination of their engagement as it is expected they will become permanent settlers in the Dominion.

The pensions of men who are accepted for this service will be paid in Canada.

Pay, etc., will be as follows:—

PAY.

Staff Sergeants	Dol. 1.00 per day.
Sergeants	0.80 ,,
Corporals	0.70 ,,
Bombardiers	0.60 ,,
Buglers [under 18 years of age, 30c]	0.40 ,,
Gunners	0.40 ,,

IN ADDITION

FREE RATIONS.

1 lb. bread, 1 lb. meat, 1 lb. potatoes, 2 ozs. cheese, 1 oz. pot barley, oz. coffee, ½ oz. tea, 2 ozs. sugar, ½ oz. salt, ½ oz. pepper; also fuel, light, barrack accommodation, and medical attendance.

Good Conduct pay for Bombardiers and Gunners at rate of 2 cents per day for first year's service, 3 cents per day for second, and 4 cents per day for third, to be paid at termination of engagement; and on re-engagement for three years, 5, 6, and 7 cents per day for each successive year.

FREE KIT ON JOINING.

1 Cloth Tunic.	1 Pair Cloth Trousers.
1 Serge ,,	1 ,, Serge ,,
1 Forage Cap.	1 ,, Boots.
1 Winter ,,	1 ,, Mitts.
1 Muffler.	

And thereafter a similar issue annually, winter cap, mitts, and muffler complete, with badges, &c., according to rank.

An annual allowance, after first year's service, of three dollars will be granted to each soldier to enable him to keep up his winter kit, including boots.

ALSO ISSUE OF

REGIMENTAL NECESSARIES.

FREE ON JOINING.

To be kept in serviceable order at the soldier's expense during his whole period of service, viz.:—

2 Grey Shirts.	1 Hold-all.	1 Button Stick.
1 Cotton Shirt	1 Fork and Knife.	1 Sponge.
2 Knitted Shirts.	1 Spoon.	2 Pairs Socks.
1 Cloth Brush.	1 Razor and Case.	2 Pairs Drawers.
1 Button Brush.	1 Comb.	1 Pair Braces.
1 Pair Shoe Brushes.	2 Towels.	1 Box Blacking.
1 Shaving Brush.		

Apply, with Certificates of service, to
Colonel Commandant,
Eastney Barracks,
PORTSMOUTH.

Looking in From The Outside

by Michael Powell *(RMHS)*

Some Random Thoughts on the Royal Marines Leaving Eastney

I was never a Royal Marine. Why then am I sad about the Marines going from Eastney? I think the truth and importance lies in the fact that I was never a Royal Marine, I had no father or uncle who could sponsor me to join the cadets, the opportunity never came during National Service as indeed National Service did not come to me, but somewhere there has to be a reason. I think the reason is that I was not a Marine.

If you have joined an organisation and agreed to abide by the rules, then if you have been happy in that organisation and it collapses or closes there is a sadness which comes from memories of past activities with which you have been involved.

I believe, when the barracks was built, it was one hour's march from the barracks to Portsmouth Town station, presumably with full kit. If I did some research I would know when Kassassin and Tokar Streets were built, but one can guess reasonably well from the battles they commemorate. When did the first shops appear in Highland Road, or when was the 'Barracks Cellars' built? Developers do not expect to put up houses at a loss, so there must have been profit in building Adair Road, Eastney Street and Worsley Street. Did the authorities object when Henderson Road was built so close to the barracks wall? I do not know the answers.

In 1914 I do not know if the day my mother recalls, when the buglers ran down the Eastney Road sounding the, as my father described it, 'fall in A, fall in B, fall in every company', actually happened. If it did, it was presumably for the despatch of Marines to Ostend. Even if it did not happen those buglers' activities have been passed down. I do not even know if they are true or not, but I know various people who believe in them. I do not remember her name, by that I mean her married name, I only remember the pride with which she recalled how the Corps chaplain had taken over the arrangements for her daughter's wedding so shortly after her son had been killed.

I do not know the name of the first sentry or the subsequent ones who put up with me and other urchins eyeing them up and down when they were on duty. They were probably the same blokes who smuggled lumps of ship's chocolate out on which we could test our teeth.

I wonder how many of us went to Milton School and were the sons or the grandsons or the friends of Marines. The men actually did not talk of being Marines, but whether they were light infantry or artillery, the men on the 15" howitzers in France, the man from Cosham who I believe ended up with a flotilla on the Caspian Sea. How did this community grow and function? Eastney, at one time, must have been a village in which the barracks was the centre. The source of income, discipline and probably fear within the area was the barracks. Who was the joker who made money in the 20s with his tableau of the watch over the Rhine? Probably a relative of the person who supplied the piece of bacon rind and the old watch that sat on top of it for those who parted with their coppers to see. Who was the horrible little sod who stood in the middle of Henderson Road with a box camera as the band bore down on him? At least I have the answer to that one - I still have the photograph. As well as snaps of the despatch riders riders roaring up and down and, I think, the 3.7" ack acks redeploying each evening and coming back each morning. I remember

how the drill shed used to echo to drill or with the sounds of the band, and how the streets were dominated by the regular bugle calls. I had difficulty with the Marines bugle calls and those of the Hampshires which I was taught; and I never could understand why the garden wall had broken glass on the top when apparently the lads needed to get over it late at night.

There cannot be much sense in remembering disjointed things like this; this is what I have told myself, yet somewhere, for some reason, the brain decides that something of importance should be stowed away. Perhaps this is why I am sad at the Marines going from Eastney. I have no recollection of it being unsafe to walk the streets late at night for a child, nor to creep through the fence and play close to what was to become the officers' piggery. We climbed over the beached LCI in Langstone not far from what is now Lumsden Road and we collected spent cartridges from the range. We also, in fact, collected live rounds from the range and these we usually handed in, and we did not get abused or thrown out for our trouble. This is probably as well because it kept the cases of people who battered .303 rounds with the centre bit and a hammer and caused ricochets off the barrack wall to a mimimum. I can claim no credit for the hammering but I do recall seeing the round go off.

I wonder where the zone of financial influence of the barracks ended; did it go as far as Milton Market? Did it help finance Ringwood, Fordingbridge and Cadnam Roads? Who owned the houses? Did officers buy their own houses and were there Marines and retired Marines who bought there?

When, as kids, we followed behind the band or stood at the roadside in anticipation when we heard it coming down the road, did the Bandmaster and band think we were a bloody nuisance - indeed did they give us a thought at all? I do not know the answer to that either, but I suspect that somewhere along the line, somebody forged a bond with somebody else. I hope that what is left of the barracks survives and takes on a new lease of life. I hope Fort Cumberland has the benefit of the right ideas to ensure its future, and I hope that another generation grows up who will turn out for the band and for the Corps, and will speak up in its defence. They will not have the benefit of seeing the Vampires screaming over Eastney on Exercise 'Runaground', or of pressing their faces to the wire by the ranges whilst trying to recognise the vehicles, but perhaps somewhere they will find encouragement and perhaps the place is the Museum. They will look and they will learn and they will be told things which makes them think there is a thread of continuity which should not be broken.

Regrettably I feel that in our society there is too little ability to create without excessive destruction - but then I think again. In a world where Philistines destroyed the canoe shed in the compound by Lumsden Road and the piggery, and where the combined public convenience and police station have bitten the dust, in such an area people of true grit and fortitude must have left their marks on their offspring. Perhaps no sadness is called for as the ghost of the Marines will one day bring the Corps back, if only to a bigger and better museum, which has a record of what the Corps did to create a village where a village had never been before.

Someone once said that, in his life, he had known many terrible things and most of them had never happened. Probably that is true of many memories. The Marines had to have something to make them the yardstick against which so many measured themselves, or perhaps we only remember the bits we want to. I cannot be the only non Marine to remember, can I ?

Book Review

Colonel Bogey to the Fore - A Biography of Kenneth J Alford

by John Trendell (RMHS)

Kenneth Alford only wrote 17 quick marches (amongst many other compositions) and yet every one of them is a classic, with a sound familiar to all Royal Marines and military music buffs. Unlike his American counterpart Philip Sousa, who wrote several hundred marches, Alford had a 'hit' every time. But that is only the bare outline of the tale of a man who gave his all to military music and will be remembered as long as it is played.

The story of Major F J Ricketts RM, Director of Music of the Plymouth Divisional Band from 1930-1944, and formerly, for nearly 20 years, Bandmaster of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, is one to savour and be thankful for as he has brightened so many of our lives. John Trendell, who wrote the history of the Royal Marines Band Service, has produced a splendid biography of the great march composer. Young Joe Ricketts was brought up in the tough East End, but his parents had the foresight to recognise his musical talents, which led to him joining the army, falsely declaring his age as 15 at the recruiting office though he was only just 14.

John Trendell traces Ricketts quick rise to musical fame; how he was selected for the Kneller Hall Bandmasters' Course at the early age of 23 and became Bandmaster of the 93rd Highlanders in 1908 where he remained until being commissoned into the Royal Marines in 1927. His marches follow his career, from his first 'The Thin Red Line' (1908) commemorating the Highlanders at Balaclava to his last two 'Army of the Nile' (1941) and 'Eagle Squadron' (1942) remembering the Second World War. In between came such classic marches 'The Great Little Army', 'On The Quarterdeck' and the memorable 'Colonel Bogey'. The author has produced some very intriguing facts about this latter march, the battle over copyright when the film 'Bridge on the River Kwai' used it as its theme tune and an article in The Times jumping to the defence of the march.

Apart from the author's own writing, including appendices listing all Alford's compositions, both military and classical, and a selected discography, Sir Vivian Dunn has written a tribute and a profound analysis of all the marches for the musically minded.

The book is well blessed with photographs and anecdotes, has an easy style and a wealth of fascinating detail about a distinguished musician who, somehow, was never blessed with a tangible award in his life time, though the naming of Ricketts Hall at Lympstone in 1968 and a Mountbatten Concert in 1981 which was a Centenary Salute to Alford is some lasting compensation.

D.A.O.

The Book is available, price £9.95, from either the Royal Marines Museum or direct from The Blue Band Office (the publishers) at the Royal Marines School of Music, Deal, to which John Trendell has donated all profits.