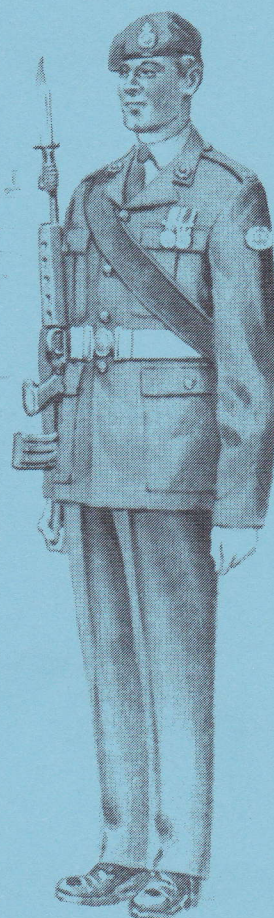
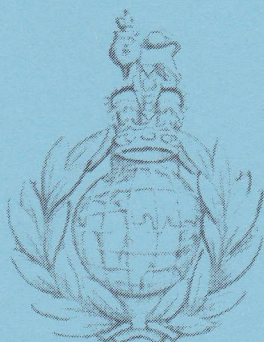
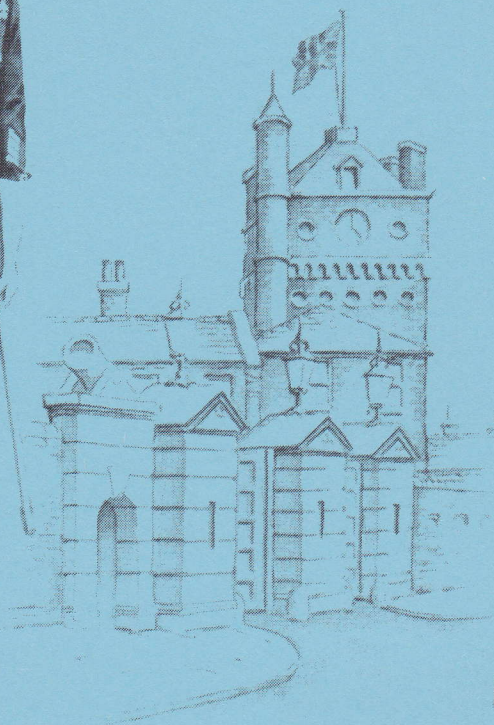




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WINTER 1993

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Whilst every effort is made to ensure accuracy, the responsibility lies solely with the author concerned. Illustrations are by kind permission of the Corps Photographic Library, or supplied by the contributor.

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The cover illustration of this and last year's *Sheet Anchors* is by Charles Stadden (RMHS). It depicts a Drum Major, Royal Marine Artillery (1976) and a Sergeant Royal Marines (1986) and was presented to the Sergeants Mess, Royal Marines Eastney by Captain Derek Oakley MBE on his retirement as Supervisor.

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The Cape York Marines

1864 - 1867

First to Land and Last to Leave

by A N Cude JP

When Sir George Bowen arrived at the Moreton Bay settlement aboard HMS *Cordelia* in 1859, settlers had been pressing north for some 20 years, with the first sale in the Gladstone area taking place in 1854. The flow of shipping through the Torres Straits, especially after the French had established a colony and a naval station at New Caledonia had increased, which together with the number of Royal Navy ships now being driven by steam power caused the Governor to stress for the need for a settlement in the extreme north of the state of Queensland.

In a dispatch to the Colonial Secretary in London dated 9th December 1861, he commented that part of such a settlement could be set aside as a refuge for shipwrecked mariners and a coaling station for the Royal Navy.

In response to an Admiralty instruction of the 21st March 1862, Commodore Burnett, the officer commanding the Australian Station embarked with Sir George Bowen in HMS *Pioneer* and on 27th August proceeded to Cape York for the purpose of selecting a suitable site. Thirteen days later they arrived at Booby Island (so named by Cook), his last landing on the Australian coast) where they deposited an iron chest for letters to be left by passing ships.

The site finally chosen for the settlement was in the Albany Passage, between the north-east tip of Cape York and Albany Island (*What a coincidence - York & Albany - recalling the first Corps Commander*) The name given to this settlement was Somerset after the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Duke of Somerset.

In his report of the voyage to the Colonial Secretary, Sir George wrote:

'I had provided myself with a number of hatchets. knives, fishhooks and other useful presents for them the aboriginals of the area) . They daily came off to the ship in their own canoes, bartering fish, turtles and tortoise shell viz for biscuits and tobacco, and were visited by us in their camps on shore. We were able to communicate with them by the help of the excellent vocabulary of their dialect printed in the appendix to 'The Voyage of HM Survey Ship Rattlesnake.

Commodore Burnett agrees with the opinion that a party of 20 marines, a subaltern officer and an assistant naval surgeon (the whole to be borne on the books of an HM Ship on the station) will be amply sufficient for the protection of the new settlement.'

[illegible]

An extract from Commodore Burnett's report to the Admiralty dated 22nd September, gives greater thought to detail:

'With reference to the concluding paragraph of their Lordship's letter 'M' of the 21st March 1862, as to such measures as the further reports may point out, I have the honour to submit the following suggestions connected with the health and efficiency of the detachment of Royal Marine Light Infantry proposed to be sent to Cape York, viz

The detachment to be allowed for the first two years, a whale boat 30ft long, of the lightest draft and otherwise complete.

A Seine net and fishing tackle.

Alternate daily rations of compressed vegetables and lime juice.

A seaman's library for a First Rate.

Filters sufficient for the number of men during the rainy season.

Annual supplies of useful vegetables and seeds.

One circular tent complete, of the ordinary size issued by the War Department.

The settlement was established on the 21st August 1864 when HMS *Salamander* arrived at Somerset with the detachment. The surviving correspondence between the Queensland Government, the Colonial Office and the Admiralty, concerning the relief or the replacement of the detachment shows that bureaucratic procrastination is no new phenomena but was at much the norm then as it is today, and commences with a letter from the Admiralty to the Colonial Under-Secretary dated 17th December 1866:

Sir,

I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit a communication dated the 24th September last, No 144, from Commodore Sir William Wiseman, with a letter from Commander Nares of the *Salamander*, suggesting that the detachment of Royal Marines at Somerset, Queensland, should be replaced by Black Troops, and with reference to previous correspondence My Lords would be glad to receive the views of the Earl of Carnarvon on the subject.

The detachment of Royal Marines having been nearly three years in the Colony will be required to be relieved or entirely withdrawn in July next, and as the Governor of Queensland in his letter of September last has stated that the continuance of Royal Marines in the settlement is more an Imperial than a Colonial question, some definite and early arrangement appears to be necessary on the part of this department with reference to the Marines, and they would suggest Black Troops should take their place.

I am etc etc
W G Romaine

The following reply was received:

Downing Street,
9th Janry, 1867.

Sir,

I am directed by the Earl of Carnarvon to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 17th ultimo, stating that the detachment of Royal Marines stationed at Somerset, Queensland will have to be relieved or withdrawn in July next, and requesting to be informed whether in His Lordships opinion a force of this nature should be employed there, or whether they be replaced by Black Troops, as suggested by Commander Nares, in his letter you enclose.

Lord Carnarvon desired me to state that he has no wish to press on their Lordships the retention at Somerset of the Marines now stationed there, and leaves it entirely for their Lordships to decide whether the advantage derived from that settlement in affording succour to shipwrecked sailors, justifies the maintenance of the present force there for any longer period, or any contribution from the Admiralty funds to the cost of its defence.

If that force is withdrawn it will rest with the local government to determine whether the settlement shall be maintained, and if so what force shall be employed for the protection of the settlers. If the local government should decide this question in the affirmative, it is very likely that they may be determined on employing a Native Police. That appears to Lord Carnarvon to be a matter for them to determine.

If however the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty should consider the post to be important in an Imperial point of view and yet desire to withdraw the Marines, Lord Carnarvon is of the opinion that a considerable proportion at all events of the cost attending the maintenance of a Police or other Force will be chargeable upon funds at the disposal of their Lordships, in which case their Lordships would have a claim to be consulted by the local authorities as to the nature and extent of the force to be maintained there.

It is only further necessary to observe that the settlement is not without its value to the crews of wrecked vessels, as shown by Sir George Bowen's dispatch No 54 of the 12th September, enclosed in my letter of the 3rd December.

His Lordship requests to be informed of their Lordships decision in time to

enable him to communicate the result to the Governor by the mail of the 19th inst.

I am etc etc

Fredk Rodgers

The reply from the Admiralty to this letter clearly shows that the question was not, who was to provide what, but who has to pay for it.

Admiralty
17th Janv 1867

Sir

I have received and laid before my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your letter of the 9th inst respecting the protection to be afforded to the settlement at Cape York, and I am to request you will state to the Earl of Carnarvon that my Lords have taken the same into their consideration.

From Commander Nares letter of 15th August last it appears that the Royal Marines are entirely unfit as a guard against the attacks of hostile natives. (Note - This refers to their serious decline in health)

My Lords will therefore carry out their previous arrangements for the removal of the detachment now stationed there. This will probably take place about the month of July next. As there may be some difficulty in replacing the Marines with a Native Force, my Lords will direct Commodore Maguire to consult as far as possible the convenience of His Excellency the Governor of Queensland as to the precise date of their removal. It appears clear to my Lords, from the information they have received, that the place is of great and increasing value as a place of refuge for the shipwrecked crews of vessels navigating the Torres Straits, and that its maintenance is of importance to the Mercantile Marine, both of Great Britain and the Australian Colonies.

My Lords regret that it is out of their power to provide any funds out of the Naval Vote for the support of this settlement. They will however, if it be desired by Lord Carnarvon, give directions that it shall be visited as before, twice in each year by one of HM Ships, and their Commanding officers shall be instructed on these occasions to carry out such supplies for the settlement as they may be requested to do by His Excellency the Governor.'

W G Romaine

This was followed by another letter to Sir Frederick Rodgers, the Under-Secretary to the Colonial Office.

Admiralty
22nd Febrv, 1867

Sir,

With reference to my letter of the 17th Janrv, I am commanded by my Lords of the Admiralty to send you herewith for the information of the Earl of Carnarvon a copy of a letter from Captⁿ Sir William Wiseman dated the 18th inst, reporting on the settlement of Somerset at Cape York and recommending that the Royal Marines should be withdrawn therefrom and be replaced with Native Police.

It appears to their Lordships to be essential that the Marines should be withdrawn as soon as the necessary arrangements can be made, as the men remaining at Somerset are suffering from the climate.

I am etc etc

W G Romaine

The following week saw this reply received at the Admiralty.

Downing Street
28th Feb, 1897

Sir,

I am directed by the Earl of Carnarvon to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 22nd inst, having reference to the withdrawal of the detachment of Royal Marines from the settlement of Somerset at Cape York.

Lord Carnarvon desires me to state in reply for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that it will rest with their Lordships to determine when the Marines should be withdrawn, and with the local Government of Queensland to make such provision as it may be necessary to keep up the settlement after their withdrawal.

Copies of the previous correspondence have already been sent to the Governor for his information and copies of your letter now acknowledged and of this answer will likewise be sent to him by the mail of the 1st March.

I am etc etc
FredK Rodgers Bt

Orders for the withdrawal of the Marines were sent to the Officer Commanding the Australian Station.

Admiralty
7th March 1867

Sir,

With reference to my letter of the 1st inst, No 37, forwarding a correspondence between this department and the Colonial Office relative to the removal of the Royal Marines from Somerset, Queensland, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you that, as soon as you have arranged with the Governor of Queensland in regard to the Police to be sent to that Settlement, you are to order the detachment of Marines to be embarked from Cape York and to be conveyed to Spithead in HMS Salamander.

The Salamander is to proceed without awaiting the arrival of the Virago (which ship had been ordered to Australia to relieve the Salamander) through the Torres Straits to Simon's Bay, calling at Batavia for coal. Should any of the Marines wish to purchase their discharge, their Lordships authorise you to grant this request, and herewith you will receive, to enable you to take the necessary steps, a nominal list of the NC Officers and men serving at Somerset, Queensland, with a statement of their length of service, and the amounts to be paid for their Discharge by Purchase.

I remain, Sir,
Your obedient servant
W G Romaine

Commodore Maguire
Australia

Nominal list of RMLI at Somerset, Queensland

Name	Rank	Service		Price
David DENT	Sergeant	11 years	343 days	£ 8-0-0
Thomas RICE	Private	4 years	251 days	£ 20-0-0
James BOSWORTH	Private	4 years	109 days	£ 20-0-0
John SMITH	Private	4 years	96 days	£ 20-0-0
Richard WHELE	Private	4 years	76 days	£ 20-0-0
Johnathon LAWSON	Private	4 years	210 days	£ 20-0-0
Charles JARVIS	Private	9 years	134 days	£ 15-0-0
Edgar BAXTER	Private	12 years	63 days	Time Expired

Samuel WILKINSIN	Private	9 years	226 days	£ 15-0-0
(alias Sam Frank				
WILKINSON, alias				
Sam SMITH)				
William O'REAGAN	Private	13 years	191 days	Time Expired
Joseph BLAKE	Private	12 years	156 days	Time Expired
George TUCKER	Private	19 years	212 days	Free
Edward WALLACE	Private	6 years	179 days	£ 18-0-0
William YOUNG	Private	2 years	362 days	£20-0-0

The withdrawal of the detachment should have been the end of the story, however as late as 1871, a letter in the Queensland archives show that the problems of the Settlement at Somerset concerning the Admiralty, the Colonial Office and the Queensland Government was still keeping beaurocrats busy.

Colonial Secretary's Office
Brisbane
9th March 1871

Sir,

I have the honour to bring under the notice of Your Excellency the present inadequate arrangements made by the Admiralty for the conveyance of supplies and police required for the maintenance of the Settlement at Somerset.

It will be hardly necessary to recall to your Excellency's recollections, the reasons that led to the formation of this settlement by the joint actions of the Imperial and Queensland Governments, and the subsequent removal of the detachment of Royal Marines stationed there by the Admiralty.

A complete history of the establishment at Cape York, from its foundation in 1864 to July 1869, will be found in a communication of the 9th July of that year addressed to the late Governor Blackall by Modgson, at that time Colonial Secretary.

The operations of the Settlement during the above period are given in detail, and the importance of its maintenance to the Mercantile Marine, both of Great Britain and the neighbouring Australian Colonies, is clearly shown in the letter referred to, as well as the strong claims of the Settlement upon the Imperial Government for assistance.

It will be remembered that the Secretary of State for the Colonies in communicating to the Governor of Queensland in his dispatch dated 25th June 1867, the decision arrived at by the Lords Commissioner of the Admiralty to remove the detachment of Royal Marines then stationed at Somerset, added that the Lords of the Admiralty were willing to consult the convenience of the Queensland Government and that it was desired their Lordships would give the directions that the Settlement should be visited twice in each year by one of HM Ships, carrying such supplies as the Government might consider necessary.

And in an Executive Minute of the 5th June, 1867, on the subject of this decision of the Admiralty transmitted by Governor Sir George Bowen with his dispatch of 7th June of the same year to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, one of the conditions on which this Colony expressed its willingness to continue to co-operate with the Imperial Government in the maintenance of the Settlement was that the necessary relief of men, stores and supplies etc which might be conveyed by one of the HM Ships visiting the station at least twice a year free of expense to the Colonial Government.

But although the stipulation on the part of the Queensland Government was agreed to, practically the periodical visits of HM Ships to Somerset have been attended with very little advantage to this Government who have been compelled at a considerable cost, to send by ordinary sailing vessels the supplies and police necessary for keeping up the establishment.

The amount paid for freight and passage from 31st August 1869 to the 1st February 1971 is £452-2s-6d, as it so happened that the supplies and reliefs of men were urgently required at a time when one of HM Ships was not available.

Twelve months has elapsed since HMS Blanche left Brisbane with stores for Somerset and on that occasion she was unable or unwilling to provide the accommodation for the wives and families of the Water Police sent to the settlement.

At the present time horses are urgently required for the purpose of looking after the herd of cattle on which the establishment has chiefly to rely for the supply of fresh meat, but these cannot be conveyed to Somerset without a vessel being chartered expressly for the purpose as I am assured by Captain Challis that HMS Rosario, now about to proceed there has no accommodation on board for horses, and no room to stow them on deck.

I trust therefore that under these circumstances Your Excellency will see the necessity that exists for better arrangements being made for keeping up the communication between Brisbane and Somerset, and the conveyance of supplies for the maintenance of a station, which however valuable it may be as a place of refuge for the crews of vessels wrecked in the navigation of Torres Straits and the neighbouring seas, is of little practical importance to Queensland itself.

In reply to Your Excellency's enquiries as to the stores which this Government will now require to forward to Somerset by HMS Rosario, I beg to state that in consequence of the irregularity which has hitherto characterised the visit of HM Ships, this Government was compelled to forward nearly all the supplies wanted by the schooner 'Early Dawn' in January last and there is little more than a medicine chest and few sundries to be forwarded.

I have etc etc

A H Palmer

Colonial Secretary

His Excellency

The Administrator of the Government

Brisbane.

The removal of the Royal Marines from the Somerset Settlement at Cape York was in itself not a very notable occurrence except that they were the last garrison of Imperial troops to serve on the Australian continent so that again the Corps was 'The First To Land and the Last To Leave'.

Maritime Memories and Mementoes

David Saunders has been commissioned to write a book on the 'Maritime Memories and Mementoes of Great Britain'. This will be published by Patrick Stephens Ltd about the end of 1994. To supplement the information he has collected over the past fifteen years he is asking whether members of the RMHS can add to his list by sending details of maritime memorials for inclusion in the book. Information please to David Saunders, Woosung, Pointfields, Hakin, Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire, SA73 3EB (0646 692316)

If you have ever been to Portsmouth, and particularly if you have ever had anything to do with the Navy, you may have heard of the ghostly Drummer Boy of the Royal Marines. Reputed to appear in mid Nineteenth Century uniform on the ramparts of the old Forton Barracks at Gosport, his arrival is always, according to legend, the prelude to a violent death in the locality

A Drummer Boy for Christmas

by Lieutenant Commander Peter Shapter (RMHS)

(This short story was written in 1950 when he was a young Marine)

As we all know there were two branches of the Royal Marines until 1923, the Red and the Blue. The Blue Marines wore a blue uniform and lived at Eastney under the title of the Royal Marine Artillery. Across the water at Forton Barracks were the Royal Marines Light Infantry, known as Red Marines from their scarlet tunics.

Economies after the first World War resulted in the two branches being amalgamated into the present Corps of Royal Marines with Portsmouth Divisional Headquarters at Eastney. Forton Barracks was turned over to the Navy and is now HMS *St Vincent*¹, a training school for boy seamen.

About this time the Drummer Boy's ghost apparently noticed that the familiar Marine uniforms had disappeared. For some 70 years his body had lain peacefully in the barrack cemetery after dying of fever, and his ghost had been content with the constant sight and sound of old comrades and their successors.

But now his beloved regiment was gone and the restless ghost set out to search for them. His appearances at Forton were infrequent, but adequate enough to start the legend. I fear a number of Boy Seamen must have been jeered at, and even adult sentries punished for reporting a ghost, but several subsequent and mysterious deaths served to strengthen the legend.

In September 1947 at the tender age of 18 point nothing I was conscripted in the Royal Marines, and after the usual lengthy recruit training I found myself in the duty squad at Eastney over Christmas 1948. Apart from the forty odd 19 year olds in the duty squad and a handful of permanent staff, this huge barracks was empty over the leave period.

My own job was to be the sentry at a point known as the West Gate, where I did three four-hour spells in 24 hours in accordance with normal naval watchkeeping routine. The West Gate was at the end of a narrow roadway leading past Group Headquarters, the parade ground, officers mess, infirmary and playing fields to the East Gate about a mile away. On one side of the road at my end were officers' vegetable gardens on one side and the West Fort² on the other. I should say the remains of the West Fort because it consisted of the ruins of a grass-grown Napoleonic Fort, now used as a home for the officers' poultry.

1. In the 1960s HMS St Vincent became St Vincent School, now a Sixth Form College and Leisure Centre

2. This is Eastney Fort East, which later became the Group Commander's garden

For company I had a wooden sentry-box, a telephone line to my 'oppo' at the East Gate and another to the guardroom. I was supposed to be armed with an entrenching tool helve and issued with a powerful torch. In customary service fashion neither was available.

This was 1948 when food was still rationed and poultry was short. As Christmas was approaching I was expected to wander into the West Fort now and again and see that no black market raiders were whipping away with the officers' Christmas dinner.

On Christmas Eve I was down for the middle watch, that is to say the poultry and I were scheduled to see Christmas in together from midnight to four in the morning. It was a cold, clear night with little moon and I soon found an excuse to ring up Bill Harrison, who was my 'oppo' on the East Gate.

"How's your luck, Bill?"

"B..... cold! Roll on death, I've had enough of this caper! Hope that flaming Drummer Boy doesn't decide to walk tonight."

"Well that should warm you up if you see him. Sleep well sweetheart, see you at breakfast."

I resumed my solitary watch, cherishing no ambitions to walk through the West Fort's vast creaking gates to see if the poultry were enjoying the sleep of the just. The atmosphere of the place and the fact that it was now Christmas morning were amply conducive to brooding about ghosts. There was no sound but for the gentle waves rolling up on the nearby shingle beach. An occasional patrol would cycle from the guardroom along the coast road inspecting the stationary cars. They were looking for black market raiders, but this explanation did not cut much ice with the courting couples so vulgarly disturbed.

It was about 2,30 am when a voice murmured "Where are they?"

I whipped round with a gasp of alarm, thinking the expected raiders had come. There was nobody there.

It was some minutes before my shaken nerves calmed down again. Then I laughed at myself for imagining things and I blamed my shock on the solitude. Some ten minutes later, to my intense horror I heard a sound which I recognised immediately, and knew it could only be one thing. It was the muffled beating of a drum.

I traced it to the Fort, and then raising my eyes to the mound of earth, grass and rubbish which rose from its interior, collapsed on the roadway in a dead faint. There on the mound stood the Drummer Boy, outlined from the top of his tall hat to the

boots beneath his long thigh-length leggings in a pale luminance. As I passed out, my last conscious sight was of the drum-sticks rising and falling as he moved in a slow march towards the East Gate.

I recovered consciousness to find myself still on the roadway, soaked in a cold sweat, and semi-paralysed with fear. It took the rest of my watch to regain anything like a level headed state of mind, and when my relief turned up at 4am I returned to the guardroom in haste and silence.

There I received a cup of 'kye', the marvellous Navy cocoa, which will turn your stomach at the sight of it by day, but is a life-saver in the still watches of the night. While drinking it I decided to say nothing to the others about the drummer. In the more normal surroundings I concluded I must have dozed off in my sentry box and had a momentary nightmare.

Finishing the 'kye', I was about to lie down on one of the guardroom beds, when in walked Anderson, the East Gate relief.

"What the Hell are you doing here?" exploded Hardy, the Corporal of the Guard.

"Why haven't you relieved Harrison?"

"Can't find him Corporal," replied Anderson, visibly shaken, "not anywhere. He's not at the Gate and I've looked all along the road."

"My God, the Drummer," I whispered.

"What did you say?" shouted the Corporal, twisting towards me.

"I . . . I thought I saw the dead drummer tonight, Corporal," I faltered, "at the West Gate."

To my surprise Corporal Hardy, a man with 18 years service, went white.

"Then he has crossed the river at last," he muttered. Then recovering himself, "Turn out the guard. Light these storm lanterns and come with me."

Under the Corporal's orders we all poured out to the East Gate, and, by the aid of the lanterns, searched the roadway and playing fields for Harrison. Even so, it was gone 5am before we found him. He was lying in a field on his back, his eyes wide and staring and a look of awesome terror on his rigid features. He was quite dead.

There was an enquiry of course, on Christmas Day. Corporal Hardy remembered to ask Anderson why he had not phoned the guardroom instead of coming back when he could not find Harrison. His reply that he had tried but could not get through was confirmed when it was found that the line from the East Gate had unaccountably come adrift from one of its supporting poles.

The Naval Surgeon and Police Doctor, who examined Harrison, agreed he had died of heart failure following severe shock due to unknown causes. And there it was left, I suppose for, as far as I know, the Portsmouth Police never did solve the mystery of his death.

In January 1949, sixteen of my squad, including myself, were drafted to the cruiser HMS *Sirius* and left for Gibraltar shortly after. We never returned to Eastney and heard no more about the case.

But sometimes I shall wonder: Did the Drummer Boy in fact cross the harbour to Eastney that Christmas Eve? And was it his ghostly materialisation from the dark that frightened poor Harrison to death?

Maybe he realised at last that the Marines had gone from Forton for ever, and so sought his comrades of the Sea Regiment at that other great barracks where the beat of drums and the sweet notes on the bugles could still be heard.

I do not know the answer. What do you think?

It is interesting to note that the two articles following appeared in The Globe & Laurel the first in the March 1948 issue and the second two months later.

March 1948

A Legend of Forton Barracks

While removing an old picture from its frame, a relative of Mr L. A. Graffham, of Mudford, Yeovil, discovered a copy of "Pullman's Weekly News" dated 1st February 1898. It contained this story, Mr Graffham, an ex-Royal, has sent it to us and he would like to hear if any other facts are known about the haunting of Forton Barracks.

A mysterious story of a sentry and a supposed ghost has just come to light at the Royal Marines Light Infantry Barracks, Forton.

On Friday night, Private Herbert Harris, a young Marine, was on sentry at the battery, which occupies a lonely situation behind the barracks, close to a burying ground in which French prisoners of war were once interred. The burying ground is now disused, but it has a great reputation as the haunt of disembodied spirits.

Many stories of ghostly visitations around the spot are told, and some of them are vouched for on high authority. One spirit is said to appear in the form of a French officer, a prisoner of war, who when he died left a letter to the effect that his betrothed and he had pledged themselves to meet at his graveside.

Harris's story, however, is a little more circumstantial than any of these. Early on Saturday morning, it seems, he several times challenged a mysterious personage and, receiving no reply, he finally closed with him.

A severe struggle ensued which ended in the sentry being left insensible with the loss of a portion of the forefinger of his right hand, the finger apparently being cut off with a knife.

Since the occurrence Harris has been confined to the infirmary and has made rambling statements as to his assailant having been a black man, with heavy whiskers and a long black coat - a masquerade to which ghostly visitants at Forton seems to be rather partial.

Harris however, has not yet sufficiently recovered to give any rational account of the occurrence.

A peculiar feature of the case is that, although the report of a shot was heard, none of the ten rounds of ammunition with which Harris was served out before going on sentry had been expended. No traces of the assailant can be discovered, and it is therefore generally supposed that he can be none other than one of the Forton ghosts.

May 1948

More Facts on an Old Yarn

By Chandos E Hill

With reference to the yarn in *The Globe & Laurel* of March, about the ghost that haunted the vicinity of the gun battery at Forton, its reputation was very much alive when I joined the Portsmouth Division in 1903.

The post was most unpopular with young soldiers, as the episode of the attack on the sentry was comparatively recent and the locality was lonely and depressing.

The beat extended round the old gun battery, which was a reproduction of a line of battleship minus its masts; round the swimming pool, which was surrounded by a high wooden paling; and last, but not least, two derelict graveyards, in one of which lived the Commandant's donkey, which is suspected on one occasion of impersonating the deceased French officer.

On two sides the post was bounded by malodorous creeks along whose banks giant rats scampered.

The sentry was visited punctually at 10.55 pm by the Subaltern of the Day. Indeed, it would have been a serious breach of military etiquette to have gone the rounds any earlier or later. True, a few 'Field Officers of the Week' tried to break this iron custom, but within a few days the old routine was re-established.

Ceremonial Visit

The procedure in visiting the sentry on the Gun Battery was a ceremonial occasion. The Subaltern of the Day having turned out the Guard, inspected the drunks in the Guard Detention Room and asked them if they had any complaints. They always protested that they were perfectly sober and demanded to be released. They knew they could not be, but the formula had to be observed.

The officer, accompanied by the Corporal of the Guard, then visited the sentry on the Pay Office. There was a ghost here, too, but the subalterns' quarters were above the Pay Office and the occupants usually made such a noise that the poor ghost had few opportunities of manifesting itself.

The little party of two then proceeded to the Gun Battery. Here it resolved itself into 'Visiting Rounds'.

Before leaving the Guard Room the Corporal had provided himself with a piece of paper on which was written the 'Password for the Night'. This important piece of information had also been imparted verbally to the sentry on the Gun Battery.

Ghost Watch Routine

The sentry could always be found on the extreme boundary of his post, as far as possible from the graveyards, and 'Visiting Rounds' knew exactly where to find him. Out of the darkness would loom a dark figure, and a nervous voice would hail "Halt! Who goes there?"

'Visiting Rounds' promptly halted, as it was quite possible the sentry had loaded his rifle to defend himself against the Frenchman. The Corporal then replied "Visiting Rounds".

Back from the sentry came, "Stand, Visiting Rounds. Advance one to give the countersign." The Corporal then unfolded his scrap of paper and by the light of the lantern discovered the magic word, approached the sentry, who pointed his bayonet at the pit of the Corporal's stomach.

The Corporal then whispered the magic countersign and the sentry shouted "Advance, Visiting Rounds. All's well." The subaltern then joined the Corporal and the sentry, heard the latter gabble through his orders, and left him to the ghost and rats.

I wonder if the Navy managed to lay the ghost, and, if ever the Royals take over Forton once more, whether their own special ghost will re-appear to lighten the monotony of the 'Sentry on the Gun Battery'.

The Origin of the Green Beret

by Captain Derek Oakley MBE (RMHS)

In the summer of 1942, No 1 Commando, first formed in the summer of 1940, were stationed in Ayrshire, Scotland. They had recently taken part in a raid in the Le Touquet area of France, near Boulogne. There were six Troops in all, billeted in private houses between Irvine and Kilwinning. One day the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Will Glendinning of the Welch Regiment, as was his wont, was conducting a 'tour d'horizon' of the Commandos future employment with his Second-in-Command, Major Tom Trevor, also from the Welch Regiment, and his Adjutant, Captain B G B 'Puggie' Pugh of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. The question of a common head-dress was raised.

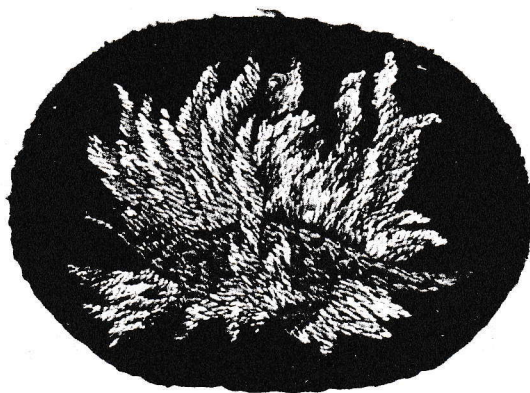
The problem arose from the fact that no less than 79 different regiments and corps of the British Army were represented in the Commando and that each was wearing the head-dress peculiar to his parent unit. Thus a motley collection of caps, tam-o-shanters, bonnets, forage caps, caps 'fore and aft', berets, peaked KD caps, etc, appeared on the Commando parades, the forest being a veritable RSM's nightmare!

This problem, of course, ran through all other Commando units at the time, but some, Nos 2 and 9 Commandos in particular, had resolved it by adopting as a common head-dress the cap TOS (tam-o-shanter). For a variety of reasons, one being that No 1 Commando was predominantly Welsh in character, a head-dress with a Scottish flavour was not considered appropriate or desirable! It was therefore decided that a beret was a better answer as it was difficult to wear improperly, was light and easily disposed of in a pocket if necessary.

As to colour, the two already in service, Black was worn by the Royal Tank Regiment and Red (maroon) by the Parachute Regiment and so had to be avoided. Luckily a range of ideal colours was to hand in the shoulder insignia of No 1 Commando, a salamander going through fire - the salamander being green and the flames yellow (gold) and red (crimson). This insignia was originally designed by the Richmond Herald at the College of Arms.

It did not take a genius to decide that, of the three colour choice, green was far and away the first and obvious choice. And so it was to be.

The type, style and colour having been settled, 'Puggie' Pugh was detailed to investigate how and where it could be produced. Luckily there was a factory close by at Ardrossan specialising in the manufacture of Scottish bonnets, etc. A visit there solicited the information that they also had a WD (War Department) contract to make black berets for the RTR. Samples of these were produced; an Officers' pattern and an Other Ranks' pattern, the only difference being that the headband of the



The shoulder flash of No 1 Commando depicting the green salamander going through fire. These illustrations are taken from 'Commandos & Rangers of World War 2' by James Ladd, and 'World Army Badges & Insignia since 1939' by Guido Rosignoli.

former was of silk and the latter of leather! Colour samples were matched up to the green of the salamander. Pugh recalls that the original sample was of a 'particularly nauseating design, the crown being the ideal green but it was surmounted by a red bobble with red and white dicing round the band". As a result of negotiations two sample designs were produced for the CO's inspection and were approved with instructions to get some actual green berets made. Within a fortnight the firm had completed the order to every one's satisfaction.

The next phase of the 'operation' was the CO's decision to seek the approval of the Commander of the Special Service Brigade, Brigadier Bob Laycock, for No 1 Commando to take into use the green beret. By return of post, preceded by a phone call presumably, Bob Laycock said that for some time he had been considering a common head-dress for the whole brigade and he felt, subject to No 1 Commando's agreement, that the green beret would be ideal. Naturally agreement was forthcoming. As a gesture, the Brigadier decreed that as stocks became available, No 1 Commando would be issued with them first. And so it was that the green beret was taken into use by No 1 Commando prior to them embarking for Operation *Torch*, the landings in North Africa in November 1942.

As far as the Royal Marines were concerned it is claimed that 41(RM) Commando was the first to wear the beret. Lieutenant Colonel B J D 'Bertie' Lumsden was visiting SS Brigade's HQ and saw one of the first green berets; and taking an immediate liking to it, he was allowed to take one away with him. He decided to put his full dress collar badge into it in place of a normal cap badge, a custom adopted only by the officers of 41(RM) Commando. This beret is on display in the Royal Marines Museum, along with the Commando fighting knife.

This article is based on a short memorandum by Captain (later Colonel) B G B Pugh dated 23 January 1976. He says that he had corroborated the story with Colonel Glendinning, Colonel Trevor, Major Griff-Hunt, the Administrative Officer of No 1 Commando and Orderly Room QMS Henry Brown, who ran No 1 Commando's Orderly Room throughout the war.

The Diary of

Captain David James Ballingall RM

by Alexander Craig

A letter of instruction dated 27th January 1841

*From J Wilson, Acting Adjutant General.
To Col Jones Royal Marines Portsmouth*

Send a Captain and a Second Lieutenant to proceed to the Lakes of Canada, via Packet to sail from Liverpool to Boston on fourth of February 1841. The Officers to proceed to Kingston and report to the Senior Naval Officer. P.S. Advised the regulated Government contract price for passage to Boston is Thirty Five Pound.

*Signed Thos C. Dwyer
Lieut & Adj*

This order set in motion the hasty departure from Portsmouth of Captain D J Ballingall RM and Second Lieutenant J C Symonds RM. The Captain's diary recorded the coach trip to London of his wife Dorcas and himself. His meeting via a letter of introduction with the Mr Cunard of the Cunard Steamship Line (see Note 1). Captain Ballingall's early call found the gentleman still "Abed", however Mr Cunard invited the Captain to breakfast with him. The invitation was accepted and the journal records the conversation pertaining to Cunard's "Recent award of the mail contract by HM Government, to deliver the mail to North America by Steamship and his payment of Sixty thousand pounds per annum for completion of same."

It was about this time that Dorcas Balligall requested that her husband keep a journal of all the interesting happenings during his posting to upper Canada. The Captain agreed and his journal was begun. The book itself is a leather bound volume entitled "Fifteen Months on Lake Ontario, Upper Canada in the Years 1841 to 1842." The Captain's attention to detail and extensive use of language show him to be an articulate, well educated, intelligent individual with a very keen perception and understanding of a variety of subjects, not the least of which were his observations of life, people and events. Captain Ballingall has given Canadians a unique insight into the life and times of Kingston when it was capital of the Canadas. This is a period of history on which there is only very scant material existing. The journal begins with a letter written to his wife upon its completion:

My Dear Mrs Ballingall,

Agreeably to your request on my leaving England that I should keep a record of any interesting subjects that might fall beneath my notice during the period of my being stationed on the Lakes of Canada, That such recreation would open the mind to reflection, add to my cheerfulness and tend to calm and elevate the soul.

In the compilation of the following papers I have used my best endeavours to acquiesce in your wishes, in touching on the lakes and cataracts of the great river

St. Lawrence, the manners and customs of the various tribes of Indians who have come under my observation.

A limited notice of a portion of the ornithology and emigration of the country with an interspersed of a few anecdotes as incident to the subject.

Should their perusal in the least contribute to your amusement and information then has my object been fully accomplished and will afford me a very heart felt pleasure.

Your very faithful and affectionate
Husband

D G Ballingall

After this letter, is an index of the 365 pages, showing such diverse subjects as the climate of Canada, the lakes of the thousand islands, falls of Niagara, the Indian widow, maple sugar, the great northern diver or loon, delirium tremens and HMS *Niagara*. In all there are forty nine different headings with the relevant page numbers.

Since the diary was written for his wife Dorcas, it describes daily life in general, there is however some limited military information, mainly pertaining to the life and conditions in HMS *Niagara* and the threat of the ever expanding nation to the South.

The two officers Ballingall and Symonds were transported from Liverpool to Boston on board the *Britannia* "A steamship of 1,400 tons." (see Note 2) Owing to the late booking of his passage his first night was spent in an "After Cabin" rather than the "State Room". he occupied for the remainder of the stormy voyage. He describes his state room "Being ankle deep in water at times." He also refers to the "84 packages and six thousand letters being sent in the mail." and the ships coal capacity of "6 hundred tons."

On arrival in the USA, Captain Ballingall gives a description of each town he passed through, beginning with Boston to Montreal and then to Prescott and Kingston. The mode of transport was a horse drawn sleigh, a beautiful sketch of the sleigh with four horses and driver is shown in the book, with the following description:

"It contained two fixed seats at either end each capable of containing three persons who with the Buffalo robes and blanket coats find themselves pretty well squeezed, with only six persons one finds themselves pretty comfortable but should the Coachman pick up a passenger on the road those unlucky persons already in possession are unfortunate enough to have a shifting bench put somewhat askew for these additional passengers who rest their backs against the broad band which hooks across All this one may bear until another Weary Weight is found on the road who wants to ride when a second shifting seat and strap is fitted across. Then you have the pleasure of being squeezed with twelve persons inside a carriage said only to contain half that number

The coachman's seat is on a small bench considerably lower than the horses, and there being no patinets the reins dangle loose and afford no command of them, but they are so admirably broken that altho fine high spirited animals they regulate their pace instantly at his call."

Each man drives ten or fifteen mile stages and what must surprise every Englishman pulls up every four or five miles and gives his horses an adlibitum dose of water The coachmen are paid by the proprietors at the rate of twelve dollars per month, and receive no fee from passengers and this is the rule also with all public servants in America, as in Hotels, Steamboats and Railways."

On arrival at the small town of Prescott both officers inspected the Battlefield site of 1838.

"On the morning of Sunday we passed through Prescott where we had an opportunity to view the position occupied by the Rebels in November 1838, which consists of a Windmill and some adjacent houses built of stone from whence they could not be dislodged. (See Note 3)

This body of rebels consisted of 400 men who came down in a steamer from Sackets Harbour, with the intention to destroy the town of Kingston. It appears that they altered their plan afterwards, and made for the town of Prescott, but here they missed the wharf and drifted down into the Windmill, which they occupied with two pieces of cannon and also some adjacent houses. Here they made a stand against the attack of Captain Sandom with an armed steamer. Lieut Parker of the Royal Marines with 13 of his men and some seamen were wounded, one Marine killed

In the course of the day Colonel Dundas arrived with 4 Companies of his Regiment from Kingston. Considering the buildings too strong to be reduced without Cannon they drove the Rebels from the houses within the Windmill from whence they attempted to escape by concealing themselves among the brushwood, but all were captured. The remainder in the Windmill displayed a white flag and surrendered at discretion. The whole number of prisoners was 390.

The Canadian Militia among whom some luke warmness had been suspected showed the utmost zeal, and mustered to the extent of 5000.

In Kingston every person talked of the gallant and dashing conduct of Captain Parker and his handful of Marines in this little affair where I am proud to say, as usual the Corps displayed all that gallantry for which they are at all times Conspicuous."

The next day being the 24th day from England and the 28th day of February the officers arrived in Kingston. On 1st March 1841 Captain Ballingall reported for duty. What follows are his impressions of HMS Niagara, the numbers and disposition of seamen and marines Lake Pay and Naval Estimates.

"The 1st of March reported myself to Captain Sandom Royal Navy, commanding the Naval Establishment on the Canadian Lakes, whose pendant flies on board Her Majesty's Ship Niagara, altogether an imaginary ship, certainly a non-such. (See note 4)

By the Treaty of 1814 with the United States, Great Britain is prevented from having any armed vessels on the lakes, which caused the induction of one Dockyard Establishment at this place, and not until the breaking out of the late Rebellion in 1837 did we consider a Naval Establishment again necessary. Captain Sandom was sent out in 1838 to form a Naval Force on Lake Ontario. This force at present consists of 300 Seamen and 90 Marines having two small vessels on this lake and two on Lake Erie. By the treaty with the States these steamers are not allowed to carry guns or to be armed as vessels of war. To be in some state of preparation however their guns are dismantled and kept in the hold.

During the winter season while these steamers are frozen in alongside of the wharfs of the dockyard the crews occupy a handsome stone building one of the store houses of the dockyard, which is divided from the rest of the establishment by a high wooden picketing, all within this space is called Her Majesty's Ship Niagara.

The building itself consists of a basement and three stories. The Basement contains cooking places for the Officers and men, with kitchens, Strong Room, Prison and cells, behind is a good yard, where the men amuse themselves at skittles, quoits and other games. In the rear of this yard are the wharfs and slips for the Boats, where the men can wash their clothes in the waters of the lake.

The First floor is entered from the yard in front of the principal doorway from whence a circular staircase divides the building from top to bottom. The Apartment on the right as you enter is 85 feet long and having a width of 30 feet, and spacious height which is fitted up as the Lower Deck of a Line of Battle Ship, with mens Tables, Kios and Tubs, this is called the Dining Room, or Lower Deck.

The Apartment on the left of the stairs is fitted as a bedroom having four rows of wooden bed places, One over the other, like those in a cabin of a Passage Vessel. Over the mens dining room is the Messroom and Cabins for the Officers, the Apartment over the bedroom is termed the Quarter Deck, one side of which is also fitted up with Cabins for the Mates. There all complaints are made and all punishment directed.

The Two Apartments over this are fitted as a Sick Bay, Armoury, Tailors and Shoemakers Shop and cabins for the Warrant Officers.

The Establishment at Present Consists Of;

1	Post Captain	Sandom	Lake Pay	7/6	Per Diem
1	Commander	Duffil	" "	5/-	" "
	Lieut	Harper	3/6	Mates	/10½
	Lieut	C C Powell	3/6	Mr Moyle	/10½
	"	C Beer	3/6	" Dyett	/10½
	"	D Elliot	3/6	" Reeve	/10½
	"	G Western	3/6	" Duncan	/10½
	"	M Rowlatt	3/6	" Willoughby	/10½
	Captain	Marines D Ballingall	3/6	" Hubert	/10½
	1 Lieut	Lowder	/10½	" Sandom	/10½
	2nd Lieut	Symonds	/10½	" Lapethitier	/10½
	Surgeon	Alex MacLeroy	3/6	<u>2nd Master</u>	
	"	Ed Newman	3/6	Mr Emery	/10½
	Purser	Jos Marsh	3/6		
	2nd Purser	Chas Asmer	3/6		
	Assist Surgeon	John Forbes	1/0		
	"	" Thos Stratton	1/0		
	"	" Lawren Martin	1/0		
	First and 2nd Class Petty Officers		16/10	Per Month	
	Able Seamen and Private Marines		12/10	" "	

The Civil Officers Naval Yard Canada Kingston.

Mr Marks	Clerk in Charge	£350"0"0
" Haywood	Acting in Charge Lake Erie	200"0"0
" Taylor	Master of Niagara in Addition	100"0"0
Allowance to Clerk in Charge for House		50"0"0
-Do- For Actg Clerk in Charge Lake Erie		36"0"0
Allowance to Clerk in Charge for Stationary		22"0"0
Traveling Charges, Postages, Advertisements and other small charges		300"0"0

From the Naval Estimates of 1841

£1059"0"0

Government have granted this allowance to the men employed on Lake Service to render their pay and situation in every respect equivalent to that of the American Seamen . . . Yet notwithstanding this liberality evinced by the British Government Desertion goes on to an alarming extent."

As Officer Commanding Royal Marines on the Great Lakes, Captain Ballingall had to have a firm grasp of the events of the previous war with the United States. He devotes three pages of his journal stating the ships, numbers of guns and information regarding British losses in action during the war of 1812

THE FOLLOWING IS A STATEMENT OF THE ENGLISH
AND AMERICAN NAVAL FORCES ON THE LAKES IN 1814.

Statement of English
Naval Forces on Lake
Ontario 1814

Statement of the
American Force on Lake
Ontario 1814

Names of Ships	No of Guns	Names of Ships	No of Guns
St Lawrence	102	Superior	60
Prince Regent	58	Mohawk	44
Princess Charlotte	44	Pike	26
Montreal	24	Maddison	33
Niagara	21	Jefferson	28
Star(brig)	16	Independence	28
Charwell	15	Slyph	24
Magnet (schooner)	12	Oneida	18
Netley	10	Lady of the Lake	2
		Four small craft	8
		Ten Gun Boats	10
<u>Gun Boats</u>			
Cleopatra	1		
Lais	1		
Minow	1		
Nelly	1		
Regent	1		
Thunderer	1		
Wellington	1		
Retaliation	1		
Black Snake	1		
Prescott	1		
Dreadnaught	1		
Total	311	Total	291

Statement of the English
Naval Force on Lake
Eirie 1813

Statement of the American
Naval Force on Lake Erie
1813

Name of Ships	No of Guns	Name of Ships	No of Guns
Detroit	20	Lawrence	20
Queen Charlotte	18	Niagara	20
Lady Provost	12	Caledonia	3
General Hunter	6	Ariel	4
Eire	2	Summers	2
Little Belt	2	Porcupine	4
Chippawa 8 Inch Howitzer	2	Tigress	1
		Scorpion	2
		Teippe	1
Total	62	Total	57

NB. This Squadron was captured and destroyed the same year by a superior American force, although the English ships exceeded the Americans in the No of Guns yet the Calibre on the side of the latter was so much larger that on estimating the weight of metal thrown by one broadside from each Squadron, the American was to the English as 3 is to 2. The number of men on board the American was nearly in a similar proportion.

Statement of the English
Naval Forces on Lake
Champlain Aug^t 1814

Names of Ships	No of Guns
Confidance	28
Linnet (Brig)	16
Chub (Sloop)	13
Finch (Sloop)	11
Iceicle (Sloop)	4

Gun Boats

Sir James Yeo	2
Sir George Prevost	2
Lord Wellington	2
General Simcoe	2
Marshall Beresford	1
Sir Home Popham	1
General Brock	1
Tecumseth	1
Lord Cochrane	1
Canada	3
Blucher	2
Sir Sydney Beckworth	1

Total 91

Statement of the American
Forces (Naval) on Lake
Champlain Aug^t 1814

Names of Ships	No of Guns
Saragota	28
A Brig	26
Ticonderoga	22
Commodore Prebble	11
Montgomery	9
Ten Gun Boats	20

Total 116

This Floatilla sic) was captured and destroyed by the American Floatilla before
Platsburg.

Captain Ballingall further deliberates on the state of preparedness of both the
American and British Fleets on the Lakes with the following observations:

"As a vital station to the American port of Sackets Harbour on this Lake, Navy Bay is entitled to every consideration as long as it becomes an object to maintain a Naval superiority on the Lake. The greatest attention must be paid to this establishment, particularly when it was observed with what care our rivals completed their ships began during the war of 1814, and also the measures they are generally adopting to be able to contend against us should such a calamity arise in any outbreak hereafter, with numerical strength in their favour, and in fact the methods they persue are well calculated to obtain the object they steadily keep in view.

The conduct of an enterprising enemy should always be narrowly observed and a countervailing power be prepared commensurate to the means of aggression. The Americans build their ships faster than we did on this side of the lake, and for this reason, strength is the chief object with them, and if that be obtained they care but little about beauty of model or elegance of finishing, in fact they received no other polish than what was given by the Axe and Adze, which on the other hand we employed as much time upon our ships as we should in the Dockyard at home.

They were as strong as the Americans, Handsomer and much better finished, but they were far more Expensive, and did not endure so long a period. Ours as I have already stated after crumbling to pieces, have been broken up, some sold as old timbers, and others sunk while those of the Americans are still to the fore, and with (Better) little Expense be made available for service."

As the Journal progresses, Captain Ballingall comments on the domestic scene within HMS Niagara, with the following observations of his fellow officers in preparations for the winter thaw.

"26th March I have found the Officers all busy these two or three mornings past in preparing a composition of India Rubber and Melted Tallow for the purpose of greasing Boots and Shoes. Preparatory to the thaw and melting of the snow, a very necessary precaution against wet feet during the sloppy weather which takes place at this season in this climate, the Receipt is as follows. vis

Melt one pound of Tallow in an Iron Kettle add from four to six ounces of India Rubber which set fire to by the light of a candle, then hold the Burning Rubber, so that it may drop into the Kettle containing the boiling Tallow until it is perfectly mixed, it will then be fit for Greasing Boots and Shoes, and will render them Perfectly Impervious to Water, though in it all day. During the preparation of the mixture, it will boil up in Foam, and send off Copious Pungent fumes but this does not injure it - One Twentieth part of Bees Wax improves it - Old worn out India Rubber Shoes may be used in the manufacture.

Much more has been said at the house about preparing the Shooting Shoes as the 1st September approaches when a great fuss takes place amongst our English Sportsmen in which they are pleased to call Greasing and Rendering the Shoes limp - But I have seen nothing at all to compare to this American Receipt, for at the same time that it renders this, it Destroys that unpleasant hardness which the Shoes acquire during the Summer Season the Leather immediately becomes soft and limp, which renders the wear Inexpressibly Agreeable.

How often do we see young Gentlemen tramping about in the mud and marsh with little tight half Boots, just above the ankle, Soaked through and through, and when they return home, sit down by the fire and permit their feet to dry without changing Stocking and Shoes. Can we wonder then at the coughing and harking and Rheumatism and Inflammation which enables the Doctors as the Yankees have it "To Ride in their Carridges". I have always found wet feet to produce affliction of the Throat and Lungs and when such disease have once taken place, "The House is on Fire", Danger is not far off, therefore let me entreat you to guard against wet feet, by using this India Rubber preparation."

As the Captain's journal progresses he tends to leave the Military aspects behind and now provides a more general view of life in and around Kingston. He describes the town of 7000 persons as containing houses "well built of Limestone, or brick painted red generally, one or two stories high." Point Frederic, on which the Dockyard stood, was joined by "A long, Heavy - Built, ugly, decaying footbridge." Ballingall describes the "Country Women" returning from market with unsold produce. Hapless male and female rebels of 1837 - 38 housed in Kingston penitentiary, indians camped on the banks of the Cataraqui River and other fascinating scenes.

Several chapters are devoted to a description of his trip to the Niagara Falls area thus giving a comprehensive view of social life of a Royal Marines Officer serving on the Great Lakes. Fetes, picnics, sleigh rides, 'sugaring - off' parties and moonlight cruises on "The Lake of a Thousand Islands" all of which were popular entertainments available to Military and Naval Officers in the 19th Century Canada West.

On Canadian settlers he writes "The Class of person who best succeed as Farmers amongst the colonists are those who have been brought up to rural employments from their childhood and who become occupiers of a location between their Twentieth and Thirtieth Year, Professing a good show of health and strength, a Stout Young Woman for a wife, accustomed to Country life, conversant with the Dairy and Pasturage, a few Children so that the Boys may begin to handle the Axe at 10 and which will make them able to follow their Father into the Forest by the time they are 14 Years of age."

The Diary notes the following anecdote on dress among Indians:

"Dress amongst certain Indians scarcely differs between the sexes. The Ursuline Nuns, having Educated a Huron Girl, presented her, on her Marraige to one of her countrymen, with a complete handsome suit of clothes in the Parisian style. They were much surprised some days after to see the husband, who had ungenerously seized the whole of his brides attire and arranged himself in it, parading back and forward in front of the Convent and betraying every symptom of the most extravagant exhaltation. This was further heightened when he observed the ladies crowding to the window to see him and a Universal Smile spread over his countenance."

These extracts give us some idea of the humour, scope and versatility of Captain Ballingall's writing. It is also of interest to note on the last page of the journal the following statement is written in handwriting other than the Captain's (I suspect it is a relative writing at a much more advanced age.)

"This is the Journal of her most Beloved Husband David James Ballingall who died at his house No 10 Hampshire Terrace Southsea on the 31st March 1864. David James Ballingall was the elder son of David Ballingall who Retired a General upwards of 21 years. David James Ballingall R.M. Died a retired Commandant of the Woolwich Division Of Royal Marines at 66 years of age."

After reading the journal I checked the records of the local Kingston Newspaper of the day 'The Kingston Chronicle and Gazette, and I found the name Ballingall in the Society columns no less than five times. To my surprise the 15th January 1842 paper describes "Major Ballingall of the R.M. attending Sir Charles Bagot's levee." On 19th March in a long column on the St Patricks Society celebration "Col Ballingall R.M. returned thanks to several toasts and solo singers, who incidently included Captain Sandom RN who sang 'Hearts of Oak'." In the same paper on the same day was this announcement "Admiralty Office, February 12, 1842 Corps of Royal Marines Bvt. Major J J Ballingall to be Lieut. Colonel, vice McCallum, Promoted. The promotion of this Meritorious and Distinguished Officer has given great satisfaction to this community generally."

His promotion explains Ballingall's rather short stay in Kingston. His replacement was Captain Collis R.M. who with Lt Symonds and Lt S N Lowder R.M. attended a "Drawing Room" held by Lady Mary Bagot at Government house as reported in the Kingston Chronicle and Gazette of 24th August 1842.

When reading Captain Ballingall's diary I was amazed to think of the great number of pages diligently written out, probably by the light of a candle or lamp, with not a single blot in the entire book. A great number of sketches by artists C D Shanly and Lady Alexander also lend a great deal to this volume. It is quite literally a time capsule from 1841 - 42.

I owe a great deal to Queen's University archives where the Ballingall Diary is located, and to the Staff and in particular Dr Shirley C Spragge, Queen's University Archivist for her kind permission to quote from the Ballingall Diary. Last but not least, many thanks to Mr Dennis Carter-Edwards, Research historian for Canada Parks, for first informing me of the existance of Captain Ballingall's journal. Alexander Craig.

Note 1. The "Mr Cunard" was Sir Samuel Cunard (1787 - 1865), he was born in Nova Scotia of a Welsh family and he became a merchant and a shipowner. He arrived in England in 1838 to start The North American Packet Service and became the chief partner in the British and North American Royal Mail Steam Packet Co. which began regular service in 1840. He was made a Baronet in 1859.

Note 2. The "Britannia" was the first liner of Cunard's new company, it accommodated 115 passengers and 200 tons of cargo. Its maiden voyage accross the Atlantic took 14 days 8 hours from Liverpool to Boston. She was a paddle steamer 207 feet long with engines developing 740 hp.

Note 3. A very full account of this battle is to be found in Sheet Anchor Vol XII Number 1. it is by the same author Alexander Craig.

Note 4. HMS Niagara was built as a Naval Store in 1820, converted to a Service Establishment in 1837 and used as such through the 'Trent Affair', 'U S Civil War' and 'Fenian Raids'. In 1876 the First

Aqaba Interlude

by Captain John Good (RMHS)

John Good served in 42 Commando from 1947 to 1950. In December 1948 the unit was stationed in Shandur Camp, near the Bitter Lakes on the Suez Canal in the British militarised zone of Egypt. Here he recalls an unusual and hitherto unrecorded episode.

Shortly after Christmas 1948 a party was formed to undertake a special mission. I knew nothing about our task until the detachment, one captain (R J McGarel-Groves), one lieutenant (me) and about twenty other ranks embarked in two LCTs, manned by the Royal Army Service Corps from the Army port south of Suez. The LCTs were loaded with ammunition consigned to the Arab Legion, the King of Jordan's British trained and led army, and we were to escort it to Amman in Jordan by way of Aqaba.

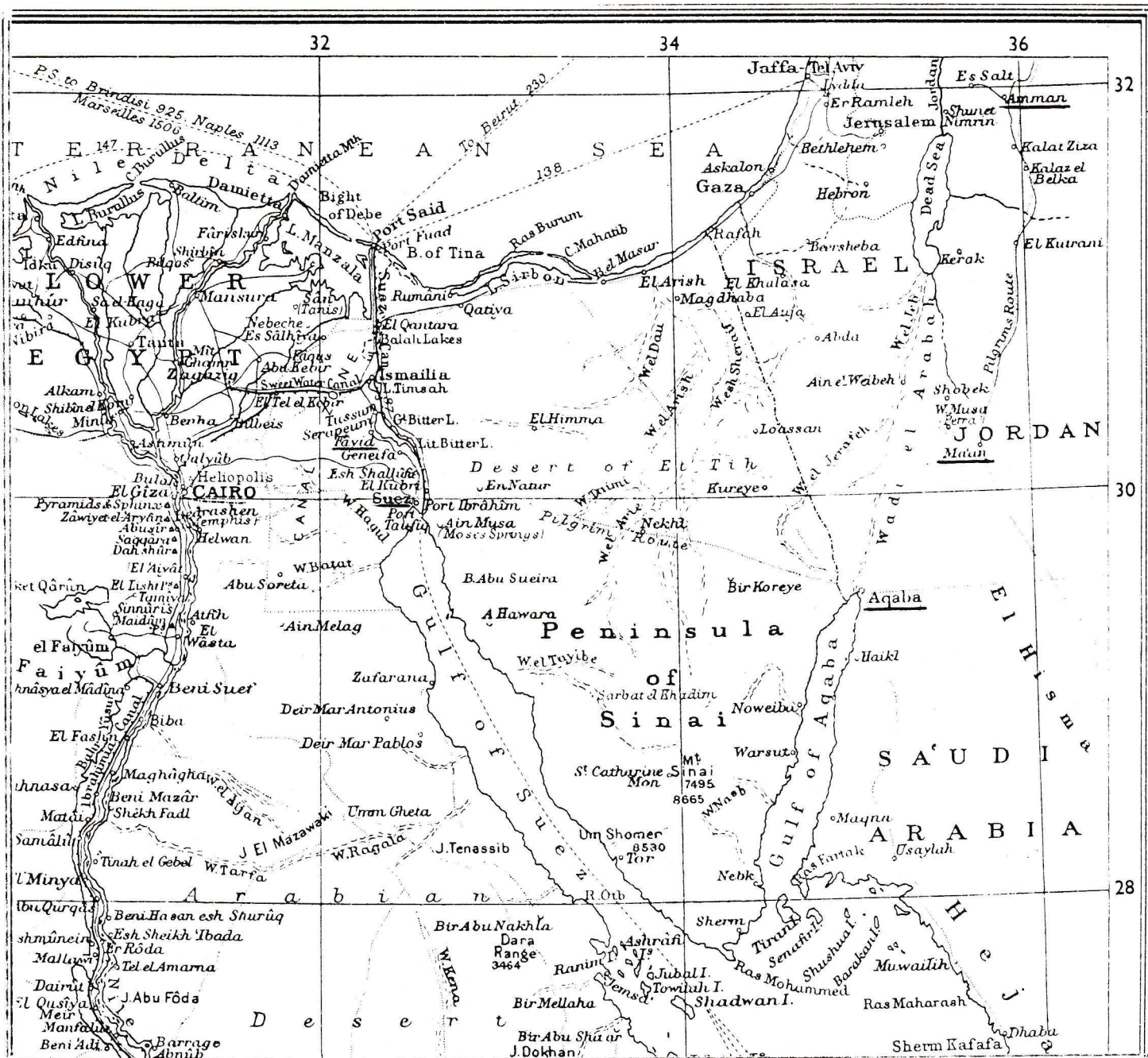
I was glad that I knew something about LCTs in which we travelled. My Combined Operations experience was useful. Conditions were extremely cramped, about ten marines plus the ship's crew, and a full cargo of ammunition in the tank deck did not provide the best of comfort. The services were definitely overworked, but as usual on these occasions, we soon found a hole to bunk down in. The other LCT left a few hours before us. The RASC Captain was surprised to find he had a watchkeeper amongst his passengers; I could never keep a full watch because I was not a member of the crew, but I did spend the odd hour on the bridge when the sea was so clear that the watchkeepers could attend to other duties. Standing on the bridge alone with two Paxman diesels throbbing under my feet brought back happy memories. I really enjoyed the two day voyage to Aqaba where we left the LCT, unloaded the ammunition and set up camp ashore.

Aqaba was then deserted. It had been a British camp during the war and it was resuscitated a few months later when 45 Commando were sent there. There was nothing on the other side of the Gulf, a mile distant, which belonged to Israel and where the resort of Elat now stands. Our stores were to be transported to Amman in two overland convoys. The first half departed at once leaving me and about ten marines on our bare patch of sand with a large pile of ammunition. The convoy of about twenty or thirty vehicles was organised and run by the RAF who had been in operational control of the region for the past twenty five years and knew the desert well. We were in good hands.

I felt isolated when the convoy left; there was no one I could turn to for immediate help if anything happened, my nearest friends were several hundreds of miles away in Egypt and we were completely alone. However in a day or so help was at hand and I felt less naked when a destroyer, HMS *Verulam* (Commander Viscount Roden RN), arrived and anchored a couple of hundred yards off shore. I believe the powers in the Canal

Canadian Military College was started under Major (later Lt Col) Edward Osborne Hewett RE who was the son of Colonel John Hewett RM who as a Lieutenant fought in the War of 1812 and had been stationed in Kingston. He was mentioned in despatches for gallantry at the attack on Oswego in 1814, he was the officer who took down the US Flag whilst under fire. The building is now referred to as "The Stone Frigate" and in 1876 it became the Cadets dormitory and is still used as such today. In 1965 the original limestone face was replaced owing to corrosion (acid rain etc.)

The Royal Military College has produced officers for the Canadian Army (and British Army) since 1879 and it now produces officers for all branches of the Canadian Forces



Zone realised that our small detachment was rather exposed and defenceless, so sent the destroyer. We were invited aboard for showers and food and for the next four days everyone had hot showers and hot meals. The Captain brushed aside my apologies for having nothing smarter to wear to dinner than battledress, they were 'at readiness' too.

I know we were in Aqaba on Sunday 6th January 1949, the day we heard the news from London that Tommy Handley of ITMA fame had died. Tommy Handley had been the leader of THE radio show during the war which everyone listened to. His death caused quite a stir as he had kept us laughing even when the news was very bad.

As the first convoy of empty RAF vehicles returned to Aqaba four days later our friend Verulam left on cue. I was glad to shed the responsibility for so much ammunition, it was explosive both politically and literally. We loaded the vehicles in

the evening and left for Amman at daybreak. The journey to Amman normally took two days. On the first day our destination was only sixty miles away at Ma'an on the top of a 4,000 foot jebel. The track from Aqaba to the bottom of the pass was hard sand and presented no problems, then a metalled road wound tortuously up the jebel, a long climb in heavily laden vehicles, in bottom gear nearly all the way. At the top there was time for a maintenance break and for us to have a hot meal before we camped for the night. All vehicle radiators were drained because the temperature dropped dramatically to well below freezing. I remember that night well, four officers and the driver sleeping in the ambulance; we all slept in everything we had, greatcoats, blankets, the lot, and we were still frozen. I was bitterly cold - indeed one of the coldest nights I ever remember in all my life. We were glad to see the sun rise and with it the temperature rose rapidly so that we were soon able to dispense with coats and sweaters - the change was dramatic.

From there onwards the road ceased to exist and we followed a line of tors, piles of stones. At the start we made good progress and were almost in sight of Amman when it started to rain. In no time the sand changed to mud, really slippery mud that completely bogged down the vehicles. With much physical effort we managed to get the convoy together and prepared for a second night in the ambulance, thoughts of a hot bath having to wait another day. The rain let up a little in the morning, nevertheless it seemed that we pushed most of the vehicles on to the tarmac road at the outskirts of Amman. We were glad to hand over our cargo and to get the mud off our boots and clothes. It was a delight to be housed in the comfort of the RAF camp with all its facilities. The RAF still had the old airfield, now too small for modern aircraft, which had been designed for the stringbags that flew in the 1920s and only needed a short take off. The buildings and facilities were excellent.

The rain now poured down putting paid to our plans to return overland to Aqaba. We were stuck here until the weather improved. We said farewell to our RAF escort and they returned to their base at Habbanniah in Iraq, several hundreds of miles across the desert.

I suppose we were stranded in Amman for at least a week until relief came, during which time we took a jeep and visited the old city of Jerash near the Jordan, a wonderful memory. A team was busy excavating parts and we talked to the man in charge who told us a lot about the place and what they intended to do. I suppose Jerash today is overrun with tourists. I have been so lucky to see these places before the general public began to use aeroplanes for their holidays.

One evening we were invited to dinner by a director of the Iraq Petroleum Company, whose name I have forgotten. I do not know how he found out we were stranded, but we were collected in a chauffeur driven Rolls Royce with a neat *IPC* logo on the door to be taken to his house. It was a most pleasant evening.

Then one day we were told to pack our bags and get into the truck outside which would take us to Mafrak where a plane would take us back to Egypt. We drove miles out to Mafrak over flat hard desert and stopped miles from anywhere with nothing in sight. Soon a Dakota appeared, landed on the hard surface and engines still running we slung our kit into the plane where it was crudely secured to stop it careering around in flight. We quickly embarked, sat on the floor, secured our seat belts and were off - and I had never flown before! I had no time to feel apprehensive but was a little scared by the way the wings flapped. In a couple of hours we landed at Fayid and were soon back with 42 Commando. It had been an exciting interlude.

The Drums and Fifes

John Ambler (*RMHS*), who was involved in the making of 'Sound The Alert' is trying to trace the whereabouts of the documents Colonel C Field RMLI used when writing his Note VIII on p8 of 'Britain's Sea Soldiers'. The Note is entitled "Drums and Fifes" and quotes from a Warrant from the Drum Major general written 22 March 1693-94 and a manuscript by Ralph Smith written in 1664 "or a few years later". Field's source reference appears to be incorrect. Has anyone been along this road before and found the location of these documents, please? If anyone can help would they please contact John Ambler, 1 Westgrove Gardens, Bridge Road, Emsworth, Hants, PO10 7DR (0243 376170)

Reminiscences of a Wartime Officer

Part XII

by Major Patrick G A Ennor (RMHS)

My instructions ordered me to sail early in January 1945 from Liverpool in the P & O ship *Maloja*. Phyllis nobly came up with me to Liverpool and we stayed one night in the Adelphi, and in due course I reported to the ship and found there was also a small draft of about 20 Marines and three other officers. In the draft I was pleased to find L/Cpl Mathews who had been the Commanding Officer's driver in 2 RM and the other officers were Geoffrey Sharman, Ian Major and David Savory.

The *Majola* had been an armed merchant cruiser and she still carried full armament and an RNVR Gunnery Officer. Geoffrey Sharman was our senior officer and on the day of embarkation very shrewdly went off to the OC Troops and the Captain of the ship and arranged with them that the Marines should take over the ship's armament, and in return be excused all other ship's duties. Watch keeping was no hardship and indeed in such places as the Red Sea it was far pleasanter to keep the middle watch on the bridge than in the small single, not blacked out cabin in which the four of us were accommodated. This was very different from the comfortable cabin which I had had to myself in the *Kenya* five years before! Another difference was the *Majola*, like all troopships and transports, and thanks to American Allies was 'dry'. The ship's officers were, however, entitled to their liquor, and as soon as we made good friends with them we used, from time to time, to be invited to have a drink with them in their cabins.

Save for my first experience of radar as a navigational aid and a rather ineffective attempt to learn Urdu, the voyage was uneventful and after six weeks and early one morning we anchored off Bombay, and the old hands pointed out to us the historic landmarks such as the Gateway to India. Soon afterwards the ship went alongside and we went ashore, and for the first time I set foot in a land in which my ancestors had first served nearly 200 years before.

We reported at the Headquarters of Admiral Beirt, the Senior Officer, Royal Navy establishments, India, where we found Colonel Kenneth Hunt, who welcomed us, and Colonel Cawley-Way. General Newman with other members of the staff was expected by air in a few days, and in the meanwhile we went out to the large Royal Marines camp at Chembur - about 18 miles from Bombay. This was an excellent and well run camp, and for the first time I encountered service life as conducted on the oriental pattern with its myriads of camp followers, contractor, tailor, canteen manager, bootmaker and civilian cooks and mess staff instead of soldiers.

I was astonished to find how many officers there were in the camp whom I did not know; amongst them was a number seconded from the South African Forces, an arrangement for which I believe General Newman was largely responsible. Almost without exception these officers were smart and efficient, of fine physique and generally a great acquisition, and we were much impressed by their gabardine uniforms which were greatly superior to our khaki drill, besides keeping clean a good deal longer.

The day after our arrival was a Saturday and David Savory and I took the opportunity of having an afternoon's racing. This was very good fun, and I have never known racing conducted on such a luxurious scale. There was even a covered stand from which to watch the horses in the paddock. The whole spectacle was colourful and enthralling. Princes and Maharajahs, Indian ladies in beautiful sarees and glittering jewels, wealthy Parsees and business men, Government Officials and officers of the services with their womenfolk dressed in their best, all appeared against a background of tremendous luxury.

While we were sitting in the stand we got into conversation with one of the High Court Judges and I asked him if he happened to know the Allens, whose daughter had been my wife's child bridesmaid. "Yes" he said, "They are sitting just behind us". After this remarkable coincidence the Allens very kindly asked us to dine with them that night at the Bycullah Club. We had a splendid dinner after which an enormous kitmagher went round the table holding in a pair of tongs, a smouldering charcoal from which we lighted our cigars and cigarettes. I was glad to have this opportunity of experiencing something of the mode of life under the British Raj before it had disappeared for ever.

Rather unexpectedly General Newman appeared at the races accompanied by David Miller and two WRNS Officers, Dilys Richards and Nicola Dreyer who had flown out with him. I was surprised to see David and wondered how he had been dragged away from his beloved flotilla to become a Staff Officer again, but I was, of course, delighted and took the opportunity of having an interesting talk with him about our future plans and movements.

After discussion with Admiral Bevir it became clear that the proper place for General Newman's HQ to be was in Ceylon where the Commander-in-Chief East Indies flew his flag, and not in India; and that on the analogy of the Royal Marine Office being a Department of the Admiralty, the HQ RM East Indies should be a branch of the Commander-in-Chief.

We did not therefore stay long in Bombay but we were there long enough to sample some of its delights and made pleasant visits to the Yacht Club and the Gymkhana Club, to which we were introduced by Shillcock and where I had a brief meeting with Geoffrey Longhurst who was there playing cricket. We were also in Bombay long enough for the General to come out to inspect the camp at Chembur. For this inspection a very fine guard of honour had been mounted, which would have been creditable even in peacetime. Not a man appeared to under 5'10" and the drill and turnout were excellent. Later on the General told me that as a result of inspecting this guard he had vowed never again to ask a man a question on parade. He went on to explain that he had been asking the usual questions of various men at random, when he came in

front of a very smart, well set-up young man and asked him "Where have you come from?" Like a flash and without a flicker or movement this marine banged out the answer "From detention, sir". General Newman, who was not easily non-plussed said that this fairly shook him, and that the urge to come back with some banal small talk remark such as "Oh really, did you have good weather there?" was almost irresistible.

It was fairly soon settled that some of us should set off at once to Ceylon by air, and that the General and the WRNS Officers should follow. Accordingly, early one morning in the dark we boarded a Dakota at Juhtu Airport; this was my first flight and I must admit to having been considerably alarmed. I was just beginning to feel a little better when the Captain of the aircraft elected to issue the first of those infuriating little bulletins to which airmen are so attached. The only piece of information in this bulletin which was even comprehensible to me was "we are now passing over the Western Ghats". Politeness, and an attempt at interested enthusiasm, compelled me to look out, and down. A great mass of serrated and uncompromising peaks met my horrified gaze, and I felt the Captain of the aircraft might have deferred his geography lesson until we were flying over some more welcoming and hospitable terrain.

On our journey we stopped for a short spell and refuelling at Bangalore where my cousin Edward Bowra was then serving as CRE (Commander Royal Engineers), but we went on without a further stop to Colombo Airport. Here we were met by Peter Picton Phillips, who, most curiously, had become Fleet Royal Marines Officer, East Indies, and the modest structure of his staff was to provide the foundation for our more pretentious edifice. At once I noticed a change in Peter and he was quite clearly not in his element. I knew of his contempt for staffs and all to do with staff duties but as Fleet Royal Marines Officer he held also, at least, theoretically an operational appointment.

Accommodation had been arranged for us in the Lake View Mess, and we were well fed and reasonably well accommodated, but perpetual annoyance was caused by a species of lizard whose favourite items of diet were shaving soap and buttons. It was quite usual to discover on rising in the morning that one's shaving soap and several essential trouser buttons had been removed during the night.

Within a few moments of arriving at Lake Road Mess I encountered John Oldrey - serving in the RNVR; he exclaimed with horror on seeing me walking barefoot from my cabin to the bathrooms and emphasised the existence of a particularly virulent form of foot fungus, chronic to many of the inhabitants of Colombo, and highly contagious. I thanked John sincerely for his opportune warning and took good care never again to go without slippers.

On his arrival General Newman took up residence at the Galle Face Hotel, but he was very keen to make this a temporary measure only, and to set up a Mess. At first I was entirely in agreement with him and we inspected a series of houses. Nothing that could possibly be regarded as suitable was available. In fact each house we examined seemed to be worse than the last, and although the General approached each one with determined enthusiasm and optimism it was soon clear that the scheme would not work. The houses offered to us were far too small, plumbing and cooking arrangements were primitive or non-existent, and the houses were frequently located in obscure outposts

in Colombo, generally in a small glade of palm trees approachable only by a track. Administrative problems too were considerable, there being no garages, no rooms for orderlies, drivers and mess staff whom we would need. Clearly too the dictates both of propriety and the Superintendent WRNS would prevent Nicola Dreyer from living in the Mess and running it. This duty would therefore devolve on one of us, probably it seemed on me; my experience in England with all the facilities and advantages which were there available made it clear that to run a Mess in Colombo - of the standard which General Newman would very properly demand - would be a gargantuan task and one which I was not anxious to undertake in addition to my normal duties. In the end the General remained in the Galle Face Hotel, and we all, by degrees obtained accommodation in the Grand Oriental Hotel. Later, after the end of the war and when the staff had been very much depleted, a small Mess was established.

There being no Mess our social life depended on private parties and entertaining of which there was a good deal. At one of the first parties to which we went we were introduced by Joan Baker - who had come out in the *Maloja* with us - to Daphne Spiller, one of the WRNS Officers on the C-in-C's staff. The WRNS were, of course, greatly in demand for all the many social activities of Colombo. At one particular party when Daphne and I were dancing I looked across the room and in one corner I saw, to my consternation, a leopard. This, I thought, was terrible. I had heard horrific tales of unfortunates who saw snakes or rats on the bed posts and pink elephants, but what was this alarming manifestation? Fortunately my fears of Nemesis were groundless: it was a real, half grown leopard, and also fortunately it was on a chain held by a girl who had owned it since it had been a cub and who treated it as a pet, taking it everywhere as though it were a dog.

Life in Colombo was very formal. The Navy has always, and rightly, insisted on the maintenance of as high a standard of dress and ceremonial as is practicable. Many of the naval officers wore white mess undress every night, and we did so fairly regularly. The European residents in Ceylon were also very insistent that correct dress should be worn and in this connection there is an amusing tale told of the Colombo Club during the one and only air-raid on the capital. Apparently one of the few British aircraft available on this occasion was shot down (by our own anti-aircraft fire it is said) and the pilot parachuted safely onto the Galle Face Green. Having picked himself up and disentangled himself from his harness, the pilot saw a welcoming light not far away to which, feeling badly in need of a brandy and soda, he made his way. At the door he was met by an enormous Tamil servant who refused his admittance, and who, when asked for his reason said: "Because firstly he is not a member and secondly Master is not in evening clothes". In fact, in Colombo, as in other places, the Clubs were eventually very generous and hospitable to service people in the matter of honorary memberships, but this may not have been so in the earlier stages of the war to which this story refers.

One of our chief difficulties in Colombo was transport. Although the sailors seemed to use their official transport for unofficial purposes with gay insouciance, ours was rigidly controlled by David Miller who did not fully share my enthusiasm for social activity. It was therefore necessary to use hire cars. These were usually elderly and dilapidated large American cars. No doubt their petrol consumption was extremely heavy and as a result they were extremely expensive. Very often the driver had an

accomplice with him on the box; this it was alleged, was to ensure a majority of two to one in case the passenger tried to bilk, or to extort more than the agreed fare. I never had any trouble with these characters from which I suppose I must deduce that I was consistently overcharged. The covers and the shoe seats of these vehicles were usually very grubby and the squabs very much raked and very soft. In order to maintain the necessary immaculate appearance and protect one's jacket against creasing and soiling it was necessary to sit upright on the edge of the seat with one's back well away from the seat - at any rate on the outward journey. Coming back we were not so particular as a jacket had to go to the dhobi after every outing. In fact my white jackets and waistcoats were always washed and starched by the indefatigable Marine Sign himself, as he did not consider the dhobi did them well enough, although he did permit the locals to do the rest of my laundry.

The other form of public transport available to us was the rickshaw. This provided quite an agreeable form of travel - especially at night, when it was cool, and in the slight breeze, with the oil lamps casting their flickering light and the pad-pad of the coolies feet a sensation almost reminiscent of a carriage was produced. Although nothing of an egalitarian I could never altogether reconcile myself to being dragged about in a cart by another human being. From time to time my friends would try to suppress my doubts as to the ethics of this proceeding by saying: "Well you can console yourself with the reflection that if you and other people didn't employ these chaps as rickshaw coolies, they would very soon be dead of starvation". Many years later, in Malaya, where a small number of the old rickshaws remained I was discussing the same subject with an acquaintance who said to me: "I would never travel in a rickshaw". "Here" I thought "is someone who feels strongly about human dignity in a way that should put me to shame"; but he went on "No, it's far too dangerous, all these rickshaw pullers suffer from strained hearts and are liable to collapse and die at any moment. I saw this happen the other day and up went the shafts and the passenger was tipped out backwards and nearly broke his skull. No thank you - no rickshaws for me - far too dangerous".

After the end of the war in both Europe and the Far East transport regulations were relaxed and we were allowed to use service-hired civilian transport for periodic outings on Sundays. The end of hostilities also brought some relaxation in the regulations which required the wearing of uniform at all times. Hitherto plain clothes were allowed for recreational purposes only and this was pretty strictly interpreted to mean the actual playing of games, and so forth. However with greater latitude we now had to find suitable clothes and the relevant order made it clear that no clothing coupons would be issued for the purpose. All that was required were some shirts to wear with my uniform khaki shorts, but clothing coupons were required in Colombo so Sign decided that he must go into the Pettah (the bazaar) to see what he could find. Accordingly at lunch time one day soon after when I went up to my room to change into a fresh set of uniform I found quite a nice white cellular shirt laid out on my bed. This I duly tried on for size, and Sign then said the price was 'three rupees as we have no coupons. I got two. There is another in the cupboard - a nice blue one to match the colour of your eyes, but I'm sorry I couldn't find one with red stripes too!"

My first duty in Ceylon was to preside over a committee whose terms of reference were to produce the draft of the Major General's report to the Admiralty and of the directive to be issued to him by the Commander-in-Chief. The other members of this committee were Cyril Goulding, John Acton, one of the G3s, and Dilys Richards as Secretary. Despite my fairly extensive experience of the work of staffs and ministries, I had never before been required to do anything of this sort, and the members of my committee had no more ideas than I. After we had met on two successive afternoons and gazed helplessly at each other I suggested that I had better produce a draft report by myself and get them to concur with it. This proposal was hailed with grateful acclamation and I was left in sole possession of the field. To make a start was a difficulty but I hit on the idea of framing the draft as an annexure to a formal letter from the Commander-in-Chief to the Admiralty. This disposed of the opening paragraph, after which it was fairly plain sailing. We included a list of all the authorities, ships and establishments which the Major General had visited since his arrival on the station and I adopted the staff officer's traditional manoeuvre of writing a War Establishment as an additional appendix.

Our report was well received and it was presumably forwarded to the Admiralty - but whether or not it was ever read there I have no idea. Certainly the War Establishment was never approved as very soon hostilities ceased and all Establishments were frozen and retraction, not expansion, became the order of the day.

The final part will be included in the next Sheet Anchor

Extract from The Globe & Laurel

Video - Royal Marine Commandos - The Official Story narrated by Geoffrey Palmer (*Castle Vision* £12.99 - available from W H Smith or mail order from the Royal Marines Museum (+ £1.95 p&p))

The title perhaps is a little misleading; it is more a 'potted' history of our Corps with the exploits of 329 years compressed into 74 minutes, profusely illustrated with film clips, many of which are new to me. After an introduction by our Captain General the narrator, himself a former Marine, sets off at a good speed-march pace, which does not falter or slacken for the whole, length of the video.

Its one fault is that too much is crammed into it - it might have been better to lengthen it by some five or ten minutes, but had that been done I fear the price might have proved a deterrent. However the author of the script (Derek Oakley, a former editor of *The Globe & Laurel*) and the producer are to be congratulated on this comprehensive and detailed history. Individual viewers are bound to comment on the content: *'Why was there so little about this, while so much was said about that . . . ?* - for example there is a short clip of the Tercentenary Parade at Buckingham Palace, but no mention is made of it. However my sympathy is with the producer, who must have had a thankless task to cut it down to its final length (comments about not pleasing all the people all the time are more than appropriate!). Notwithstanding such shortcomings I found it most enjoyable, as did a number of other viewers, both Royal Marines and civilians, who have seen pre-release copies. I can thoroughly recommend it - it will appeal to all serving, former or future Royal Marines and anyone interested in our history.

AGN

