

History of the Royal Marines

1837-1914

HE Blumberg
(Minor editing by Alastair Donald)

In preparing this Record I have consulted, wherever possible, the original reports, Battalion War and other Diaries, accounts in Globe and Laurel, etc. The War Office Official Accounts, where extant, the London Gazettes, and Orders in Council have been taken as the basis of events recounted, and I have made free use of the standard histories, eg History of the British Army (Fortescue), History of the Navy (Laird Clowes), Britain's Sea Soldiers (Field), etc. Also the Lives of Admirals and Generals bearing on the campaigns. The authorities consulted have been quoted for each campaign, in order that those desirous of making a fuller study can do so.

I have made no pretence of writing a history or making comments, but I have tried to place on record all facts which can show the development of the Corps through the Nineteenth and early part of the Twentieth Centuries.

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Devonport
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PART I

1837 – 1839

The Long Peace

On 20 June, 1837, Her Majesty Queen Victoria ascended the Throne and commenced the long reign which was to bring such glory and honour to England, but the year found the fortunes of the Corps at a very low ebb.

The numbers voted were 9007, but the RM Artillery had officially ceased to exist - a School of Laboratory and nominally two companies quartered at Fort Cumberland as part of the Portsmouth Division only being maintained. The Portsmouth Division were still in the old inadequate Clarence Barracks in the High Street; Plymouth and Chatham were in their present barracks, which had not then been enlarged to their present size, and Woolwich were in the western part of the Royal Artillery Barracks.

Owing to the long peace and the neglect of the Services, promotion was stagnant and a Commission was held this year which makes very sad reading: as a result an Order in Council was published on 21st June 1837 increasing the Establishment of Retired Officers, which afforded some relief, but gives a sorry picture of the position of affairs: "The Inefficiency of the Officers holding the rank of Colonel Commandant in the Royal Marines who, from slowness of promotion in the Corps, must almost necessarily have reached an age incapacitating them from active exertion before they attain command of a Division, has occupied the serious attention of successive Boards of Admiralty. Further steps are necessary. At a survey held by our orders by a member of the Board, the Physician General of the Navy, and the DAG Royal Marines, three out of the four Commandants were found unfit to discharge their duties. The Board therefore propose to create six additional retirements on Full Pay for Colonels Commandant, the full and retired pay to be £1.18.6 per diem. Also three retirements on full pay for Colonels 2nd Commandant, one additional full pay retirement for Lieutenant Colonels and five for Captains

This made the full pay retired establishment up to 8 Colonels Commandant, 3 for Colonels 2nd Commandant, 4 for Lieutenant Colonels (there was an increase to 6 on 10 August 1840), 25 for Captains and 10 for First Lieutenants

The Order went on to say that experience of late years had shown that owing to the number of men embarked in small ships without officers etc, the number of officers on shore, in proportion to men, was larger than required; the number of companies was therefore reduced to 90 with 2 Artillery Companies, allowing one Captain and two Subalterns to each, thereby reducing 12 Captains and 4 Subalterns, also abolishing the supernumerary Artillery Captain, though he was restored on 15 May, 1838.

Further, to place the Marine Corps on the same footing as the Artillery and Engineers, and to accelerate promotion the 2nd Commandants were granted the rank of Colonel, and the rank of Major was abolished. Of the Subalterns, two-thirds were to be First-Lieutenants and the remainder Second-Lieutenants

On 1st January 1838, Lieutenant Colonel Sir John Owen (afterwards KCB KH) became DAG, an appointment that he held until 12 December 1854; under his fostering care conditions in the Corps much improved.

Sidearms - On 5 November 1837 an order was issued that Army and Marines were to discontinue wearing of sidearms except on duty. This of course did not affect the Sergeants' swords and at the same time the exception must have been made which allowed Corporals of the Portsmouth Division to wear them when walking out. Prior to this they must have been generally worn, because an order of 30 January 1830 (Plymouth) shows that a punishment for misconduct was deprivation of wearing sidearms in streets or at Church Parade except on duty.

In 1838 the numbers voted were 9,000. In 1839 the numbers voted were 9000.

Officers - On 19th December it was laid down that in future all candidates for Commissions would be required to possess competent knowledge of arithmetic, algebra, euclid and trigonometry, and be able to write English from dictation: the examinations were held at the RN College, Greenwich.

War in Spain. 1856-1859 - We must now turn to the operations that occurred during this period, in which portions of the Corps were gaining further laurels. First, there were the operations in Spain in support of the Christinos against the Carlists, who were trying to usurp the throne and oust the line that later was represented by King Alfonso, well known to the Corps of the present generation.

When King Ferdinand died in 1833 there were two claimants to the throne: his daughter Isabella, with the Queen Mother, whose supporters were known as Christinos; and his brother Don Carlos, who according to the old Salto

Law was the male heir. For some reason France and England supported the Christinos, and Great Britain allowed a British Legion to be raised consisting of 2 Cavalry Regiments and 10 Infantry Battalions under Lieutenant General Sir de Lacy Evans. They also lent the assistance of the British Squadron under Lord John Hay, and sent a Battalion of Marines under Major John Owen, and a Field Battery of RMA under Captain R Steele, RMA with some RA and RE detachments to assist them. The Squadron secured the possession of the north Coast of Spain, so that they could land where they pleased, but they could not go inland beyond the guns of the Fleet. The Battalion (the Detachment from Plymouth under Major Owen, KH, embarked on 27 April) was formed at Santander in May 1836, and on the 15th of that month 100 men from the Battalion and a part of the detachment of HMS Castor under 2nd Lieutenant Halliday were sent to garrison Portugalette at the mouth of the Bilbao river. They were here joined by another detachment under Lieutenant G C Langley. They fortified - and incidentally 'cleaned' - an old Spanish monastery and made a battery armed with two long 32 prs and two 9 pdrs

On 5th May at San Sebastian the Legion, aided by the fire of HMS Phoenix and other ships, drove off the Carlists and captured some guns, but had later to fall back to San Sebastian. The RM Battalion was brought round to Portugalette and proceeded to Bilbao, but after a week was withdrawn and returned to San Sebastian.

On 27th May 1838, the Third Brigade of the Legion, supported by the Royal Marines, advanced across the river Urumea to the east of San Sebastian, covered by the fire of the steamers and gunboats, and the guns on the Fortifications together with the RMA Field Battery. They forded the river in three places and bivouacked on a hill near Ametza, whilst a feint was made to the westward by a detachment of Royal Marines in the Salamander and Reyna to draw off the Carlists.

At 3 am on 6th June the Carlists drove in the pickets of the Legion and attacked in force at 8 am. The Royal Marines were called up to support the Spanish, and the three leading companies deployed and opened fire. The Carlists fell back and the Marines returned to their bivouac, Captain Garmston and two Privates being wounded.

On 28th May, 70 men of the Castor under Lieutenants Halliday and Langley were taken to the eastward and landed at Passages, where they marched to the top of the hill, which commanded the harbour and the hills round. On the next day they were reinforced by Lieutenant Clapperton and 12 RMA; here they built a redoubt, under the direction of Lord John Hay, which was shaped like a ship and was given the name of the 'Ship'. It was armed with two 6 prs and two 3prs, also a 4 pr and 20 pr Rocket Tube. Seamen from the Fleet came up to help make and man the redoubt; also a company under a Captain from the Battalion. It was only about six miles across country to San Sebastian, so they could watch the fighting going on there.

About 2 am on the 9th June the little garrison of 300 was attacked by 400 Carlists. At daylight, when visibility was better, the Carlists were driven off: Lieutenant Langley was wounded in the leg and gained the Order of San Fernando.

The garrison of the 'Ship' was then augmented by two companies from the Marine Battalion, also the Marines of the *Pearl*, *Tweed*, and *Royalist*, besides 300 Spaniards and 4 Companies from the Legion.

On 10th July, 1836, the Battalion was concentrated at Passages, and on 11th July, General Evans with about 5000 men moved towards Fuentarabia; Lieutenants Halliday and Clapperton with 52 men being left to hold the 'Ship' redoubt. General Evans apparently wished to prevent reinforcements being thrown into Irun and Fuentarabia, so he seized the bridge near the Monastery of Guadaloupe. The bridge was secured, but the Carlists counter-attacked and two companies of Royal Marines were brought up to an embankment close by, and later two more were thrown into a convent near the bridge and held the Carlists in check till late in the afternoon: the Christinos then retired to the Isquibel hills and two other companies of Royal Marines checked an attempted sortie from Fuentarabia.

On the 12th the force fell back to Passages, the Royal Marines having lost two killed and 10 wounded. With the exception of a small Carlist attack on the outposts at Passages on 1st October, which was quickly driven off, the Royal Marines were undisturbed during the remainder of the year.

On 10th March 1837 the Legion and a body of Spanish troops, supported by the Royal Marines, made an attack on the Ametzegana position (a redoubt constructed by the Royal Marines at Passages). The Christinos, covered by the guns of San Antonio, made a feint on the villages of Lezo and Rentirea; part of the Legion stormed the Ametzegana position, and a Spanish regiment supported by the Marines captured Gabara. So the whole position fell into the hands of the Christinos. The guns of the RMA drove out the enemy at San Marco, who put up an obstinate defence.

It was then decided to attack the Carlists who were in position near the village of Hernani, 7 or 8 miles from San

Sebastian. On 15th March 1837, the RM Battalion advanced on the Hernani Road as far as the Windmill Battery in the Ayette Lines. The Carlists were strongly posted at the Vents of Oriamendi, and when at 2 pm the Marines advanced they came under artillery fire at about 800 yards, to which the guns of the RMA replied with considerable effect. The Christinos were making a flank attack round the Carlist right, and at 5 pm the Legion drove the Carlists from a line of heights which enabled the guns to be brought to close range of the Venta. At 7 pm the Venta was stormed and its defenders took refuge in the town of Hernani. By 8 am on 16th March the RM Battalion

was in position on the Oriamendi plateau, about 1.5 miles from Hernani, covering the movement of the heavy artillery on the right of the Venta Hill; close here the RMA 24 pr howitzers were posted under Lieutenant Savage RMA.

The RM Battalion was with the 5th Division of the Legion; in their front were the 2nd Spanish LI and the 6th Regiment of the Legion in extended order. When the advance began fire was opened by three Carlist guns on the left of the town, to which the Heavy Artillery Battery replied. At 11 am the Carlist Lancers made a charge which was met by the Lancers of the Legion and over-thrown. Four Carlist Battalions then suddenly appeared on the left from a gorge and drove back the skirmishers. Lieutenant Colonel Owen at once deployed 5 Companies of the Royal Marines under cover of a natural breastwork, and opened a heavy independent fire which checked and drove off the Carlists, whilst a flank attack on the right was defeated by the RM as also an attempt to get on to the San Sebastian road in their rear which was met by a company placed en echelon by Colonel Owen. The Carlists in front of the Marines fell back towards Hernani, but on the British left they continued to gain ground, so that the RM Battalion was ordered back to cover the San Sebastian road and eventually halted in column, where they had first come under fire on the day before - ie about 800 yards in rear of the Oriamendi Plateau. By 3.20 pm the Christinos and the Legion were falling back in such disorder that the Carlists were only checked by the Royal Marines deploying into line and showing such a threatening front that the Carlists ceased their pursuit, and the Christinos were able to gain the shelter of the fortifications at San Sebastian: the Battalion marched in that night and was quartered in the Church of St. Francis. The Spaniards and Legionaries had behaved so badly that it was only the steadiness of the Royal Marines that saved the day from disaster.

On 21st March, General Evans published the following order:

"The unshaken firmness of the British Royal Marines under Lieutenant Colonel Owen, in repulsing, as they did, four times their number, afforded you a noble example of the irresistible force of military organisation and discipline, which the Lieutenant General feels confident on future occasions you will be proud to emulate."

For the remainder of the year (1837) they were constantly moving about over the ground between Passages, Hernani, and San Sebastian. On 18th May, Irun was captured by assault and Fuentarabia surrendered the same day. The Battalion then proceeded to Passages.

On 8th July the Battalion paraded in honour of the funeral of King William IV, who had been a General of Marines and a good friend of the Corps. On the 9th they fired a *feu-de-joie* to celebrate the accession of Her Majesty Queen Victoria.

On 1st August Lieutenant White was captured by the Carlists by whom he was well treated, and shortly after exchanged.

In September, 1837, the Battalion joined the Spanish Army and was present when Hernani was surrendered on 9th September.

On 24th November 1837, Lieutenant Colonel Parke took over command from Lieutenant Colonel Owen, who had been appointed DAG Royal Marines, and it remained in quarters at Passages, assisting the Christino troops when possible till the close of the war in 1840. Lieutenant Colonel Thompson Aslett relieved Colonel Parke in command on 5th February 1840, and brought the Battalion home on 2nd September 1840. Several Officers received Spanish decorations for their services in this campaign.

Lord John Hay, the Admiral, sent the following letter to the Commanding Officer:

" The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty . . . have directed me to convey to yourself, the Officers, NCOs, and Privates of the Royal Marine Battalion under your command, Their Lordships' marked approbation of the zeal, gallantry, and good conduct which has been displayed by the Battalion on all occasions during the long course of service in which it has been employed on this coast. . ". He also conveyed his own thanks for their steadiness, zeal, ability, etc. HMS *North Star*. 16 August 1840

Karachi - On 17th January 1839, HMS *Wellesley*, flagship of the East Indian Squadron, embarked the 40th Regiment and sailed for Karachi. On 2nd February under cover of the guns of *Algerine* and *Constance* the boats landed the regiment on the beach to west-ward of the batteries, which however only fired one shot. As so many seamen were away in the boats, the Marines under Captain E B Ellis, were manning the ships' guns and opened fire until the fort was occupied. On the 4th the boats crews went to the encampment of the regiment on Marharo Hill and the regiment occupied the town. So fell into British hands one of the most important harbours in India.

Persian Gulf and Aden - The *Wellesley* then went up the Persian Gulf to Bushire, where the Persians were holding up the Residency. Captain Ellis and 50 Marines were sent in the boats on 25th March to a landing place 8 miles from the *Wellesley*, where the boats opened fire which was not returned, and the detachment landing quickly the Persians fled; 1 Sergeant and 2 Privates were wounded.

They then occupied the Residency and brought off the Admiral and Residency staff. Captain Ellis and 30 Royal Marines were left there until 30th March, when they brought off the Resident. Another small party of the Corps from HMS *Volage* and *Cruiser* were present with the force that captured Aden on 19th January, 1839.

P A R T I I

1840 – 1843

These years are notable for two campaigns in which the Royal Marines took a prominent part.

In 1840 the numbers were 9000.

On 12th January the franking of letters was abolished, and in future all letters were to be prepaid, and accounts to be kept by the Office Adjutant: this coincided with the introduction of the Penny Post.

Libraries - We see also the advance in the amenities of the barracks, as on 2nd June the Barrackmasters were called on to furnish estimates for fitting up Libraries for NCOs and Men of the Divisions.

By Order in Council 10 August 1840, Marine Cadets were admitted to the Royal Naval College at Portsmouth to train for Commissions. It was laid down that after a short course on board one of HM ships and at the RN College they were to receive Commissions as 2nd Lieutenants. It was estimated that 12 cadets would be sufficient to fill vacancies. Their pay was to be the same as Mates RN, viz £65 per annum, and they messed with the Mates and Midshipmen.

The Royal Naval College had been established on 30 January 1816 and the staff allowed is interesting as showing subjects taught: Governor, 1st Lord of Admiralty; a Post-Captain and 2 Lieutenants; a Professor - Master of Classical History and Geography, with 3 Assistant Masters; a French master, a Fencing and Dancing master (abolished in 1827), Drawing master; 2 Sergeants Marine Artillery (with £30 extra pay); Matron and Housekeeper.

In 1841 the numbers voted were 10,500.

Arms - On 8th February the Corps was rearmed with the new Percussion Muskets, an advance that was to prove its worth in China the following year.

On 8th May presumably in consequence of the War in China, one Lieutenant Colonel RM and a Lieutenant Colonel for the Artillery Companies were added to the Establishment; also one Company to each Division besides an additional Company to the Artillery of the Marines. The number of Privates in each Company was raised to 107 from 97, and the three Artillery Companies had an addition of 1 Sergeant, 1 Corporal and 15 Gunners each, making the total Staff 41, Royal Marines 10,058, Artillery 405.

Syria, 1840¹ - Another portion of the Corps were occupied in operations at the Eastern end of the Mediterranean.

Mehemet Ali, the Pasha - or as we should say the Khedive of Egypt - had so improved the efficiency of his army and navy that in 1839 he thought himself strong enough to rebel against the Sultan of Turkey. Having invaded Syria he defeated the Turkish Army at Nizib on the Euphrates. England, Austria and Prussia however took the part of the Sultan; France stood aloof. The bulk of the work fell on the British Mediterranean Squadron, commanded by Admiral Sir R Stopford, assisted by a small Austrian Squadron and a few Turkish ships. Russia and Prussia took no part. The British Squadron consisted of the *Princess Charlotte* (104), *Rodney* (92), three 84-gun ships, eight 74- and 80-gun ships, eight frigates and corvettes, three brigs and six steamers.

An ultimatum was sent to Mehemet Ali to withdraw his troops from Syria, to which he returned a defiant answer.

Colonel Sir C Smith RE was in command of the Allied troops, but owing to ill-health the shore operations were taken charge of by the Commodore, Sir C Napier, RN.

At nightfall on 8th September 1840 the Royal Marines of the Fleet, under Lieutenant Colonel Walker, were embarked in the *Gorgon* (steamer), and 5000 Turkish troops in other steamers. At dawn on the 9th September the Fleet weighed and stood towards Beyrout Point, towards which the Egyptian troops concentrated and came under the fire of the Fleet. At noon the steamers with the troops were dispatched to D'Jouni Bay, at the other extremity of the Bay, followed as the wind changed by the *Castor*, *Pique*, *Dido*, *Wasp*, and *Powerful*. The steamers landed

¹ Authorities: "Life of Sir C. Napier"; "Britain's Sea Soldiers" (Field); "History of RM Forces" (Nicolas); MSS Letters, etc. (RMO)

their troops, who were safely ashore unopposed by 4 pm

The heights covering the landing place were occupied by the Turks; one Company of Royal Marines was sent along the beach to the Southward and crossed the Dog River (only passable at its mouth) and reinforced a Turkish company that had landed there: a second Company RM with 300 Turks occupied a convent three or four miles from the main position on a hill covering the road to Baalbec via Antura. These formed the outposts behind which the Allies established an entrenched camp with 9 British field pieces, three 5.5 inch howitzers and 8 small Turkish guns. The force consisted of about 1500 Royal Marines, 200 Austrians, 5000 Turks, with a Company of Royal Artillery and some Royal Engineers. The Royal Marines on landing were formed into two Battalions of 8 Companies each, commanded respectively by Lieutenant Colonel Walker and Captain C Fegan. Reinforcements arrived from England shortly afterwards with orders that Lieutenant Colonel Walker was to command the Brigade, and Captains Whylock and Leonard the Battalions. The troops were occupied for some days in strengthening the position at D'Jounie, which was in communication with the Mountaineers of the Lebanon; there were also two roads from Baalbec to Antura which were held by two Turkish Battalions and 5 Companies of Royal Marines.

HMS *Dido* and *Carysfort* were sent to Gebail to open communication with the Mountaineers of Mount Lebanon, but as the Albanian garrison was still holding the old Castle they did not meet with a very friendly reception.

The Commodore therefore reinforced them with HMS *Cyclops* on the 12th September, which brought four Companies of Marines (220) under Captain Robinson and 150 Mountaineers. Captain Robinson selected a beach to the South of the Castle as a landing place; under cover of the fire of the ships on the Castle and town, the troops were landed, but the fortifications could have defied the whole of the Mediterranean Fleet. They however advanced up the slope, which was intersected by stone walls and dotted with trees, covered by the fire of the boats carronades. The Royal Marines in extended order took every advantage of cover and there was no serious opposition until they arrived within 30 yards of the Castle. On crossing the last wall a fierce musketry fire broke out, particularly from some loopholes. On the ground level; the Marines returned the fire, though Captain Robinson saw there was nothing to be done, but to retire to the cover of the walls, as there were no openings, gates or embrasures by which they could get in. He therefore retired to the beach and by sunset they were on board their ships. The RM lost 5 men killed, Lieutenant C W Adair and 16 men wounded. Lieutenant Gifford RN, who had accompanied them, was also wounded. The Admiral approved of Captain Robinson's action, especially as during the night the Egyptian troops evacuated the Castle, which was occupied and became a very important post as it commanded the main road by which the enemy might advance from the north and was a convenient depot to convey arms to the Mountaineers.

On 22nd September, Commodore Sir C Napier with one Battalion RM and 2 Battalions of Turks reconnoitred the Egyptian camp near Marouba. They advanced by the road of Antura and Argentoum through very difficult country under a blazing sun. The RM Battalion was much knocked up and reached Argentoum with difficulty.

Sir C Napier with two Companies of Turks pressed on; about two hours before sunset they arrived in sight of the enemy entrenched camp, which occupied a very strong position. The Royal Marines were now ordered to move on and show themselves. That evening they returned to Argentoum and the next day returned to D'Jounie.

In order to attack the left of the Egyptian Army near the heights of Ormacaguan, on the evening of 25rd Sir C Napier sent General J Jockmus and three Battalions of Turks into the ravine of the Dog River, between the camp and Beyrout; another Turkish Battalion supported by the 2nd RM under Captain Fegan and the Austrian Rocket Battery were sent across the bridge at the river's mouth to occupy the heights on the Beyrout side and watch the road leading to Beyrout. The Turkish Battalion reached its position unobserved and debouched on the left of the Albanians who were afraid of being out off from the road leading to Beharsof; they abandoned their entrenchments and gained the heights of Ormacaguan, occupying a strong position on the road on which General Jockmus was approaching. The latter attacked at once and drove the Albanians out with considerable loss so that the Royal Marines were not engaged.

Meanwhile the Fleet had not been idle. On 14th September it bombarded the town of Beyrout and on 20th made an attack on the town of Tortosa where large quantities of stores had been reported.

The Royal Marines of the *Benbow*, *Carysfort*, and *Zebra* were re-embarked for the operation. The *Carysfort* and *Zebra* anchored within 500 yards of the shore, opened fire and 50 RM under Lieutenant R Harrison embarked in the boats and a pioneer party of seamen in the cutter who made for the beach.

A wall ran the whole length of the beach in which only a bricked up archway had been breached. The cutter's party landed though fire was opened all along the wall when she grounded; the boats with the RM however

grounded about 30 yards out on the rocks and came under a heavy fire, which they returned though most of their ammunition was ruined by the water. Fourteen men were transferred to the cutter and got ashore to help the seamen who, after breaking open some stores, were compelled to retreat to the cutter. The boats were then recalled with a loss of 1 seaman and 3 Marines killed, 11 seamen and 8 Marines wounded. The losses would have been heavier but for the covering fire of the *Carysfort* and *Zebra*.

Caiffa - HMS *Castor*, *Pique*, and a Turkish frigate bombarded Caiffa, and a landing party destroyed the guns and ramparts; a castle with 5 guns commanding the rear of the town, was also destroyed by the fire of the ships, and a landing party of Royal Marines and seamen soon dismantled it, although a large Egyptian force was close by.

Tyre - Tyre, occupied by 5000 Egyptian troops, was next attacked by HMS *Castor* and *Pique*, on 24th September. Fire was opened by the ships and at daylight seamen and Marines were landed and took possession of the town; here they levelled large sandbanks which had been thrown up by the Egyptians to cover the town; they also carried off the stores of grain. The guard boats were kept manned, because they were in full sight of 15,000 Egyptian troops only two miles away.

Sidon - Sidon was the next place to be attacked. It stands on an eminence rising somewhat abruptly from the sea; high walls enclosed the three landward sides; the houses and barracks along the beach formed practically a line of fortifications toward the sea; from the Barrack a bridge ran out to a castle standing in the sea. Another large castle stood in the centre of the town, and there was another small fort on the south side, crowning a small but steep ascent from the level ground outside. The principal gate, which was well defended, was on the north side near the beach.

The ships told off were the *Thunderer* (84), *Guerriera* (Austrian), *Wasp* (18), and *Gulsefulde* (Turkish); also the *Gorgon* and *Cyclops* steamers. The *Cyclops* carried a Battalion of Turks 500 strong, the *Gorgon* six Companies of the 1st RM and six Companies of Turks under Captain Morrison RM. The *Hydra* arrived with Walker Bey, the Turkish Admiral, and the *Stomboli* with 284 Royal Marines under Captain Whylock, RM. A summons to surrender was peremptorily refused; the plan was for Captain Morrison's Battalion to land on the beach to the north of the town; Captain Whylock's detachment, with 100 Austrian Marines under Prince Frederick, to land to the South-East, whilst the Turks were to capture the outlying castle and bridge. The heavy guns of the *Gorgon* opened on the barracks and shore end of the bridge, whilst the guns of the larger ships were directed at the houses and walls of the town. After half an hour's bombardment, the sea castle was breached, and the Turks effected a lodgment, but the enemy still held the barracks though the walls had been swept away. Captain Whylock's detachment and the Austrians on landing advanced on the small fort on the South side, and with great skill and gallantry forced their way into the fort and houses round with the loss of Lieutenant C F Hoskin RM killed and several men wounded. (Hoskin held the Order of San Fernando for operations in Spain.) Having secured the fort they were ordered to fight their way to the main citadel in the centre of the town. The Turks, headed by Walker Bey and two British Naval Officers, forced their way over the bridge into the Barracks, whilst the RM Battalion under Captain Morrison which had landed on the north side broke into the North Gate. The Allies, advancing into the centre of the town from all directions, encountered a large house near the Barracks, which made a strong resistance; at last headed by Hassan Bey, the Egyptian Commander, the garrison made a sortie, which was met by the Royal Marines, and Hassan Bey refusing to surrender, was killed. The whole garrison of 3000 men were killed, wounded or captured, although the landing force was only half their numbers. The Governor, Suleiman Pasha, resisted to the last; he was killed and his house destroyed by the Royal Marines.

Lieutenant A Anderson (afterwards Commandant at Plymouth) planted the British flag on the walls of Sidon and one of the enemy standards was captured by Corporal John Symons RM. The Royal Marines remained here until 8th October, when they returned to their ships.

Acre - The whole coast except Acre had now fallen. The Allied Commanders were doubtful of attacking Acre, as the season was so far advanced, but the British Government decided that the attack should be made. On receipt of the instructions, Admiral Sir R Stopford decided to take the risk. On 31st October, 13 British, 2 Austrian, 1 Turkish, and 1 Arabian men-of-war left Beyrout for Acre, anchoring about two miles from the town on 2nd November. Surveys were made to enable the ships to take up their bombarding positions, and in spite of some misunderstandings the bombardment commenced at 2 pm the following day (3 November) and continued till past 4 pm, when the principal magazine was blown up with disastrous results for the enemy, as two regiments were annihilated. After a pause the bombardment was resumed and continued until sunset, by which time only about 20 of the enemy guns were still in action, when the Admiral made the signal to cease fire. During the night the Egyptian troops evacuated the place, after plundering the inhabitants.

On the 4th November, all the troops and Marines under Colonel Sir C Smith, who had now resumed command,

were landed and occupied the place; 2000 of the enemy were made prisoners. Two days later there was a second explosion, which caused some casualties to the Royal Marines.

This terminated the operations of the Allies: 250 RM under Lieutenant Colonel Walker were left in garrison and suffered severely from fever. Colonel Walker died on 8th December, and was succeeded by Lieutenant Colonel John McCallum, who had been with the operations since 10th October and remained in command until the garrison was withdrawn on 10th June, 1841.

A return in the Records, dated 'Marmarice Bay, March 1841', shows the effectives of the Royal Marines who were lately on the Coast of Syria, but were now supernumeraries in the Fleet (ie in garrison at Acre) as 1 Lieutenant Colonel, 6 Captains, 3 Subalterns, 1 Acting-Adjutant, 2 Staff Sergeants, 14 Sergeants, 11 Corporals, 4 Drummers, 160 Privates, Royal Marines. 1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 3 Sergeants, 3 Corporals, 2 Drummers and 47 Gunners, RMA.

The officers were: RMA. - Captain Shute, Lieutenant Parke. Royal Marines – Lieutenant Colonel McCallum, Captains Baker, Brown, Edwards, Brevet Major Whylock, Leonard, Childs. Lieutenants Travers, Suther, Rich, Anderson, and the following were in hospital - Captains Cater and Downman, Lieutenants Land, Miller and Aslett.

China War. 1840-43² This war is of peculiar interest to the Royal Marines, as they appear to have filled most of the roles for which the Corps exists: sometimes landing to secure and hold forts etc., battered down by the Fleet; sometimes to storm places under cover of the ships' fire; at others to assist and reinforce the Army in its operations. The harmonious working of the Corps and its officers throughout these varied operations is very noticeable.

War with China had been pending since 1839. Continued commercial disputes, the question of the opium traffic, the Chinese custom of insisting on all foreigners kow-towing to their officials - an indignity that could not be borne; these were all causes of friction, but the first overt act of war was the attack on 3rd November, 1839, by a fleet of junks on British merchant shipping in Macao Roads; HMS *Volage* (26) and *Hyacinth* (sloop) sank three of the junks and drove the remainder ashore. No serious action was taken until the summer of 1840, when an expedition under Commodore J G Bremer with 15 men-of-war (*Wellesley* (74), the frigates *Amoy* and *Alligator*, with small craft and 4 steamers) went to Chusan, leaving some ships at the mouth of the Canton River to protect the British at Canton.

Chusan - The Commodore summoned the Chinese to surrender the town of Tinghae, where the Chinese had mounted every gun possible on the Temple Hill. At 2 pm on 4th July, 1840, as no reply had been received to their overtures, HMS *Wellesley* opened fire which was returned by the Chinese, but they very soon bolted. The right wing of the 18th Royal Irish, reinforced by 121 Royal Marines (2 Captains, 5 Lieutenants, 114 NCOs and Men) under Captain Ellis (with Captain McArthur, Lieutenants E Usher, F J White, J Urquhart, Priest, and Hayes Marriott) followed by detachments of the 26th and 49th Regiments with Madras Artillery and Sappers landed, and by 3 pm the British ensign was hoisted on the Temple Hill. By daylight of the 6th, eight 9 pdrs, two mortars and two howitzers were in position against the city. However, the Chinese had evacuated it during the night. Chusan Island was occupied, but unfortunately very little impression was made on the Chinese, particularly on the Imperial Government at Peking. The British Superintendent of Trade, or as we should say the Political Officer, seems to have been a pretty hopeless sort of person and hampered the operations very much. Admiral Elliot went up to the Pei-Ho and the remainder of the Fleet blockaded Canton, Amoy, and Ningpo.

Macao - The British residents at Macao, near Canton, having appealed to the British Admiral for assistance, the Royal Marines of HMS *Druid*, *Larne*, and *Hyacinth* (about 100, under Lieutenants Maxwell and Pickard) landed on 19th August, 1840, with some seamen manning a field piece, covered by the *Larne* and *Hyacinth*. The ships opened fire on one of the principal batteries and Chinese encampment with 10 guns, and silenced them in twenty minutes; the Royal Marines advanced to the top of the hill where they came under heavy fire and were counterattacked by a strong body of infantry, who were checked by a volley and retreated leaving a number of killed and wounded; Lieutenant Maxwell then ordered the RM to return to the beach to await the arrival of Captain Mee and the Bengal Native Volunteers, who landed about an hour later. This officer, with the Royal Marines in the centre, the Bengalis on the right, and seamen on either flank, advanced on the fort which was entered without opposition, the Chinese retiring to the war junks and to the old Portuguese battery. After a short

² Authorities: Log of HMS *Nemesis*; Life of Sir Hugh Gough; Life of Sir S. B. Ellis, RM; original letters, Reports, etc.

bombardment the Chinese abandoned their guns and fled; the guns were spiked and the magazines destroyed.

The Chinese now took refuge in negotiations. The sickness was very great in Chusan in October 1840, so that no troops were available for any serious attempt to be made on the Canton Forts. An old Return of the number of sick at Chusan has a note against the regiment with the largest number of sick, "a temperance regiment".

On 30th November the Government, realising that they were committed to a serious campaign, offered the command of the troops to General Sir Hugh Gough in India, but he did not arrive on the scene until 2nd March, 1841.

Bogue Forts - At the beginning of the year (1841) the Naval C-in-C determined to attack the Forts on the islands defending the Bocca Tigris, ie the Channel connecting the outer and main defences of the Canton River, now known as the Bogue Forts.

On the 7th January, 1841, the outer forts were captured. For this purpose a force consisting of a detachment of Royal Artillery, with one 24-pdr Howitzer and two 6-pdr field guns with seamen crews; detachments of the 28th and 49th Regiments, 37th Madras Native Infantry (NI), detachment of Bengal Volunteers, and a Royal Marine Battalion from the Fleet under Captain Ellis RM (3 Captains, 9 Subalterns, 17 Sergeants., 11 Corporals, 458 Privates and 8 Privates of the 18th Royal Irish) in all about 1400 men under Major Pratt, 26th Regiment, landed at 8 am, 7th January, in a small sandy bay, two miles below Chuenpee Point.

Chuenpee Point is a projecting headland on the left bank of the river (on north side of the Bocca Tigris). It is a high peak about one and a quarter miles wide; on either side is a sandy beach off which there are good anchorages. On top of the hill was a Watch Tower and the Upper Fort; at the bottom a strong battery and other works recently strengthened; round the rear was a line of entrenchments with mud batteries. Behind the hill was an opening northwards to Ansons Bay, with another small battery and a square barrack. The river at this point is three miles wide.

Captain Ellis led the advanced guard with two companies Royal Marines, supported by the 26th and 49th, and followed by a column composed of the RM Battalion, 37th Madras NI, and the Bengalis. After marching about one and a half miles they came to the edge of a hill crowned with an upper fort and a strong entrenchment with a deep ditch and breastwork connecting with the Upper Fort. The position was flanked by field batteries and deep trenches garrisoned by a strong force of Chinese.

The British guns came into action, as did HMS *Queen* and *Nemesis*, who opened fire on the Upper Fort at 10 am and soon silenced it. The Advanced Guard crossed the shoulder of the hill on the right, driving the Chinese before them, and descended into the valley, where the guns of the *Queen* and *Nemesis* again assisted them: they then captured a field battery and moved against a large force occupying the crest of a wooded hill in front. Two companies of the 37th Madras NI had gone round on their right and drove off the Chinese with much loss. The Advanced Guard, having cleared the wooded hill, Nos 3 and 4 Companies under Captain J Whitcomb passed the valley by the left, and forced an entry into the breastwork and up to the Upper Fort. The British ensign was hoisted by Private Knight. No. 8 Company, Captain Gillespie, crossing on the left, caught the garrison retreating from the Upper Fort. Lieutenant F S White, 2 Sergeants and 7 Marines were wounded out of a total loss of 30.

This success led to a truce, and negotiations took place between the Imperial Commissioner Keshen and the British Envoy, Captain Elliot. The British demands were (i) the cession of Hong-Kong; (ii) Indemnity of 6,000,000 dollars; (iii) Direct official intercourse; and (iv) Re-opening of Trade at Canton.

On 21st January the Forts were handed back to the Chinese and on 28th HMS *Nemesis* and *Madagascar* went up to the Pagoda at the Second Bar where the conference was held. A Guard of Honour under Captain Ellis (*Wellesley*), Lieutenants Maxwell (*Druid*) and Stransham (*Calliope*) with 100 picked Royal Marines from *Wellesley*, *Druid*, and *Calliope* was provided and excited great admiration and wonder among the Chinese.

The British demands were presented on 27th, and on the 28th the Chinese envoy came to pay his respects and the *Nemesis* and *Madagascar* returned down the river.

By 2nd February no ratification of the agreement had been received, and on 11th February HMS *Nemesis* went up the river again to see about the compliance with the terms, on which day the Chinese envoys received an order from Peking to resist the demands. Hong-Kong was however taken possession of on 26th February 1841, and the British had decided to renew hostilities and attack the Bogue Forts on 25th February.

Anunghoy - These forts were still very powerful. On the East side of the river about 45 miles from Chuenpee is Anunghoy; it is a high hill on an island, the fortifications are the most important at the Bogue; between Chuenpee

and Anunghoy is Anson's Bay. The works on Anunghoy were two very strong heavy batteries built of granite connected by a temporary work with a semi-circular wall round each fort. There were several strong entrenchments to the South of this, and the ridges of the hills which were armed with guns - led up to a camp calculated to hold 1200 men. On the north side there was a modern work mounting 60 heavy guns, and there were 150 yards of rocky beach between the end of this battery and the Northern circular battery which was armed with 40 guns. These works were protected by a high wall with steps for musketry and in the entrenchments were barracks and magazines.

The breadth of the river at Anunghoy is two miles; in the middle of the river are two rocky islands known as North and South Wang-Tong and a smaller rock; the Channel towards Anunghoy is generally known as the Bocca Tigris or Hogue; the passage to the Westward was barely known, but was used by some ships in the attack on North Wang-Tong. The true Bogue is only $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile wide and ships have to hug the Anunghoy shore. On the East side of the North Wang-Tong Island was a battery with a double tier of guns to defend the passage of the river on that side, and to cover the rafts of floating timber moored across the river supporting a chain to form an obstruction - one end on South Wang-Tong, the other on Anunghoy. On the West side of the island was a battery of 40 guns, flanked by another with 17. On the western side of the Channel on Ty-Cock-Tow Island was a battery of 22 guns and another field work with 17 guns protecting another encampment for 15,000 to 20,000 men. South Wang-Tong was not occupied; on the night of 24/25th February the British seized it and threw up a work for two 8" iron and one 24 pdr Broass Howitzers, and by daylight on 26th Captain Knowles RA, opened fire on North Wang-Tong.

The *Wellesley* (74) and *Druid* (42) attacked the South-West batteries of Wang-Tong; Admiral Sir F Sonhouse, with *Blenheim* (74), *Melville* (74), *Queen* and a Rocket Boat, attacked the Batteries on Anunghoy; the frigates *Calliope*, *Semarang*, *Herald*, *Alligator*, *Sulphur* and *Modeste* fired on the Batteries on the North and North-West of Wang-Tong and those facing Anunghoy. The *Nemesis* and *Madagascar* were told off to land the troops.

The troops under Major Fratt, 26th Regiment, were landed and gained North Wang-Tong without loss, 1300 Chinese being captured.

As soon as the batteries on Anunghoy were silenced by the *Blenheim* and *Melville*, their Marines under Captains Whitcomb and Gillespie with a party of seamen all under the Naval C-in-C landed at the Southern battery, and by 1 pm the Chinese were driven off and the British flag was flying along the whole chain of works. The battery commanding the passage on the Western side of the Wang-Tong Islands was occupied by a party of Royal Marines from HMS *Wellesley*. Admiral Kwan, the Chinese commander, was killed by the Royal Marines at the gate of Anunghoy.

The next day it was found that the Wampoa reach was blocked by forts, camps, and an old British ship called the *Cambridge* mounting 34 guns. The light ships having been sent up to clear the way (*Sulphur*, *Calliope*, *Modesto*, *Hound*, *Madagascar* and *Nemesis* the *Madagascar* and *Nemesis* came into action first and at 3 pm the remainder of the squadron arrived. At 3 pm Lieutenant Stransham³ (*Calliope*) and the Royal Marines landed to storm the works with the seamen under Captain Herbert RN. The Royal Marines carried the gate nearest the landing place and by 4 pm the fort was in their possession. A small party of seamen got off in a boat and captured the *Cambridge*, which was set on fire and blown up. The ships pushed on to reconnoitre, and on 28th all the Royal Marines, to the number of 593, were embarked in the steamers to go up to the attack of the last of the nine Hogue Forts - Howqua'a Fort, which was a square battery mounting 30 guns, on the right bank of the river and was at the mouth of a creek running into the main river. In front of it was a long low island dividing the river into two branches and on the Eastern point of the island was a fort with 35 guns; there were well secured rafts forming a bridge extending to both sides of the river, and junks filled with stones had been sunk in the channels.

Little or no attempt was made to hold Howqua's Fort. On 5th March the Royal Marines of *Wellesley*, *Druid*, *Blenheim* and *Melville* landed at the Joss House opposite it on the other side of Junk River, and strengthened the latter against attack; as the ships stood in to cover them, the Chinese, having fired all their guns, fled.

Macao - The Chinese reopened negotiations and the troops having re-embarked, the ships dropped down to Wang-Tong. On 13th March the Macao Passage Fort mounting 22 guns, on an islet in the river, having refused to surrender, was bombarded by the *Modeste* and *Madagascar*, and then stormed by the Royal Marines under Lieutenant Stransham. Captain Herbert RN, being in charge of the operations Lieutenant Stransham was left in

³ Inspector General of the Corps from 1862 to 1867, and created GCB in 1887.

charge of the Fort which was a valuable *point d'appui* for further operations.

Above it is the Bird's Nest Fort on Honan Island, where the river was obstructed by rafts well moored; there were also a number of war junks at point of junction with the Canton River opposite Shameen. On 17th March a flag of truce having been fired on by the Chinese, the ships opened fire and a rocket from the *Nemesis* set Bird's Nest Fort on fire. Captain Herbert brought up a flotilla of 4 Divisions of boats, embarked 6 Officers and 227 Men from the garrison of Macao Fort and on 18th March attacked the whole of the works which defended the river front of Canton. Some hours' operations ashore and afloat resulted in great destruction of Chinese junks and shipping. At 11.30 am the *Nemesis* attacked the end forts, the Chinese returned the fire; the *Modeste* and *Madagascar* joined in and soon silenced the Chinese guns. The boats crews mastered the forts and another field work mounting 20 guns. The *Stanley* and *Algerine* got through the rafts and carried another battery and also every junk as the boats arrived. The captures were 113 guns, 6 gunboats and 6 mandarin boats. The *Nemesis* bombarded and the boats captured Shameen Fort with 10 guns. The *Madagascar* captured Dutch Folly, a circular fort in centre of the river, opposite the city mounting 25 guns; whilst the boats captured another battery close to the Naval Arsenal and recaptured the English Factory.

On 9th April, Captain Ellis and 80 Royal Marines landed to garrison Tay-Wong-Koo (? Dutch Folly Fort) a circular fort with 20 embrasures on a small island in centre of river commanding the branch of the river leading to Macao Fort and within three miles of Canton. Nothing material occurred, but the Chinese were restless and batteries were erected on the opposite bank of the river and their forces increased from day to day to about 50,000⁴.

Canton - The capture of the Bogue Forts was now complete, and the way was open to Canton. The Political Officer was however very vacillating and difficult to deal with; by this time General Sir Hugh Gough had taken over the command of the troops and Admiral Sir F Senhouse had replaced Commodore Brener in command of the Fleet. Operations were therefore suspended until May.

A plot was then discovered to murder the British merchants in Canton, and a proclamation was issued on 20th May. On 21st May the foreigners were warned to leave Canton by the British Envoy and left for Macao; the factories were deserted, and the Marines withdrawn, and that night by means of fire junks the Chinese attempted to burn the *Modeste*, *Pyladee*, *Algerine*, *Nemesis*, etc. "Fortunately that day I had been directed by Captain Herbert of HMS Calliope commanding the Advanced Squadron, to detach from the garrison 1 NCO and 12 men to the latter for her protection and accordingly sent them with a large supply of ammunition and they arrived in time to be of the utmost use."⁵ No attempt was made on the Fort.

Sir H Gough and the available troops were now making their way up the river. On 21st the Royal Marines evacuated the Fort and proceeded up the river where they were formed into a battalion and joined Sir H Gough's forces.⁶

A second attempt by fire ships was defeated on 23rd and a battery above the town opened on the ships, but was silenced by the the Calliope, and a party landed and destroyed the fortifications. HMS *Nemesis* also discovered 43 war junks and 32 fire rafts and destroyed them; whilst the mob pillaged the factories. A reconnaissance was made by the Naval and Military C-in-C's on 23rd, and Tsing-poo - 4 miles to West of Canton - was selected as the place for landing; here a creek runs up to the base of the hills commanding Canton on the North-West. The foreign factories were in the Western suburbs and there were also suburbs on the East and South sides of the town.

A wall running from East to West divides the old Northern part from the new Southern part of the city. Outside at the South-East corner was a fort called French Folly, Westward almost in centre was the Dutch Folly; both forts commanded the Arsenal. On Northern hills on the high ground were 4 strong forts with 42 guns which were directly above the city, from which they were separated by a ravine.

The Naval Forces consisted of *Blenheim*, *Wellesley* (Flag), *Blonde*, *Calliope*, *Sulphur*, *Hyacinth*, *Nimrod*, *Modeste*, *Pylades*, *Cruiser*, *Algerine*, *Conwag*, *Herald*, *Alligator* and the steamers *Nemesis* and *Atalanta*. The Naval personnel amounted to about 3200, of which about 1000 were available for landing.

At 2 pm On 24th May, 1841, the troops began to land, with two days cooked provisions. Troops were in light marching order, men's canteens were filled with water and they carried a spare pair of shoes and socks per man.

⁴ Captain Ellis' Report

⁵ Captain Ellis' Report

⁶ See Captain Ellis' Report later.

The sappers carried scaling ladders. They were formed as follows:

Right Column - Major Pratt
26th Regiment - 317.
Madras Artillery - 21 with one 6-pdr. and one 5.5" Howitzer
R E

Their duty was to attack and hold the Foreign Factories.

Left Column - Under Sir Hugh Gough.
1st Brigade - Major General Burrell.
18th R. Irish - 535 - Colonel Adams.
Royal Marines⁷ - 377 - Captain Ellis 2nd Brigade - Captain Bouchier RN
1st RN Battalion - Captain Maitland (*Wellesley*)
2nd RN Battalion - Commander Barlow (*Nimrod*)
about 471
3rd Brigade
Royal Artillery - 38
Madras Artillery - 241
Madras Sappers - 150
4th Brigade - Lieutenant Colonel Morris
49th Regiment - 321
37th Madras NI - 240
Bengal Native Volunteers - 80.

Guns: 4x12-pdrs; 4x9-pdrs; 4x6-pdrs; 3x5.5" mortars; 152x32-pdr rockets.

The duty of the left column was to assault the heights above the city.

The Right Column landed about 5 pm on 24th, and easily occupied the factories.

The Left Column, embarked in 80 boats, was towed by the *Nemesis* for about 5 miles; HMS *Sulphur* was covering the landing place, but it was dark on their arrival and no opposition was offered.

General Gough landed first with the 49th. Picquets were posted and during the night the disembarkation continued and by early morning of 25th all was ready for the attack.⁸

The heights were about 3.5 miles off; the ground was undulating and covered with rice fields. The advance was unopposed till near the forts; four forts were near the North-West corner of the City Wall; others were on higher ground and near the centre of the North Wall. The progress of the Artillery was slow, but by 8 o'clock two heavy guns and the rockets had arrived and bombarded the forts for an hour. The troops were in echelon of columns; the 4th Brigade were to carry a hill on left of the nearest of the two most Eastern Forts; the 1st Brigade co-operating by attacking a hill, which flanked the approach to the fort on which the 49th were moving to cut off communication between the two forts. The Naval Brigade advanced on the two Western forts. As the attack was commencing, and the RM Battalion and the Royal Irish were ascending the heights in Reserve, the C-in-C was informed that the enemy were in his rear and had already attacked the shipping and boats. The RM Battalion was

⁷ The Field State of the Royal Marines was:

<i>Wellesley</i>	Capt Ellis
	Lts. White and Usher. 127 NCOs and Men.
<i>Blenheim</i>	Capt Whitcomb
	Lts Whiting and Farmar 116 NCOs and Men
<i>Blonde</i>	2Lt Polkinghorne 33 NCOs and Men
<i>Druid</i>	Lt Maxwell 3 NCOs and Men
<i>Calliope</i>	Lt Stransham (Adj) 3 NCOs and Men
<i>Modeste</i>	12 NCOs and Men
<i>Columbine</i>	15 NCOs and Men
<i>Pyles</i>	28 NCOs and Men
<i>Hyacinth</i>	18 NCOs and Men
<i>Cruiser</i>	16 NCOs and Men
<i>Nimrod</i>	17 NCOs and Men
Sergeant-Major- Sgt. Mackay.	QMS - Sgt. Chance.

⁸ For the conditions of the Marines' landing see Captain Ellis' Report later.

ordered to halt and to send a strong picquet to protect the rear and disperse the enemy. Captain Whitcomb with Nos 7 and 8 Companies was sent with No 6 in support, and he fell in with and dispersed several large bodies of the enemy, but "to pursue was useless".

At 9.30 am the general advance began under cover of the artillery fire, but under heavy fire from the forts and City Wall and by a very difficult road. The 49th captured the two Eastern Forts, and the Naval Brigade under heavy Fire, the two Western. Within half an hour all the forts were in British hands.

Heavy fire from the City Wall and 400 men entrenched on rising ground North-East of the Wall harassed the British left. In the afternoon the 49th were sent to dislodge them, and cleared them off, but later the Chinese came on again. The only approach to their cantonment was along a narrow causeway exposed to fire in rear from the walls of the city; the 49th and 18th and one Company of Royal Marines under General Burrell were detailed to clear it. The severest loss of the day occurred in crossing the causeway, but the enemy were driven out, their camps and magazines being destroyed. The rest of the day was spent in reconnaissance because the Artillery had to be brought up before assaulting the city. Meanwhile the Dutch Folly Fort was occupied and the French Folly carried and occupied on the morning of 26th.

That night the RM Battalion bivouacked in and around a large building at the foot of the heights with strong picquets out, and next day preparations were made to assault the walls. An attack on the landing place was driven off by the baggage guards on 26th. On the morning of the 26th the Chinese hoisted the white flag, but nothing came of it. Ammunition was got up, and on 27th the Royal Marines marched at daylight to form a junction with the Seaman Brigade to co-operate with them in storming the walls near the large Pagoda, but the Political Envoy had agreed to a suspension of hostilities on payment of the 6,000,000 dollars; but as usual the Politicals had made a mess of it and given away all the advantages gained. On May 29th only 2,000,000 dollars were paid.

The Battalion of Marines returned to their former position with four companies on picquet duty; but 150 of the 26th Regiment having arrived, the GOC ordered the Marines to occupy a large Joss House near the North Gate, which with two large houses formed very comfortable quarters.

By the terms the Tartar troops were to evacuate the City, but on 30th a large body of Chinese irregulars were gathering four miles in rear of the British and with increasing numbers threatening to attack the camp. The British were divided into two forces - one to hold the Camp under General Burnell, one to attack under General Gough consisting of a wing of 26th, five Companies of 49th and 37th Madras NI. A Reserve, ready to return and meet any advance from the town, consisted of the Royal Marines and the Bengal Native Volunteers.

There were about 4000 Chinese behind an embankment which was carried by 26th and the Madras NI, who destroyed the post and magazines. They advanced about 5 miles, when the GOC considering that the force was too large for the purpose, sent back the 49th and Royal Marines to camp. General Gough watched the enemy for two hours and as their numbers increased to 6000 or 7000 he opened fire with rockets and two charges were made by the 26th and the Native Infantry, which drove them back.

The heat was very great and the British suffered heavily from it, the RM had 8 men down with sunstroke, and then a rainstorm came on, which made the firelocks useless; the enemy retreated and Sir Hugh's force returned to camp. Captain Duff, commanding the 37th Madras NI had detached a Company under Lieutenant Hadfield to open communication with the 26th on his left, when the retirement took place. This Company was accidentally left behind and their absence was not discovered till after the return to camp. Captain Duff was sent with two Companies of the 49th and one of the Royal Marines, mostly from the *Blenheim* and the *Blonde*, under Lieutenant Whiting, who had been re-armed with percussion muskets which were unaffected by the wet. They found the native Company, which had formed square and was defending itself as well as it could because its firelocks were useless; two or three volleys from the Royal Marines dispersed the enemy and the Company was brought safely to camp.

Captain Ellis' report to the Admiral is appended, and gives a graphic description of the formation of the Battalion - not an example to be followed - and a description of the above incident.

Sir,

I have the honour to report to you that the Battalion of Royal Marines under my command amounting to 370 men, and formed from part of the Squadron under your Command employed in China, viz; *Wellesley's* detaohment, *Blenheim's*, part of *Blonde's*, *Modeste's*, *Pylades'*, *Hyacinth's*, *Nimrod's*, *Cruiser's* and *Columbine's* landed in cooperation with other Forces of Her Majesty and HEICs Service in the successful and gallant advance, and the capture of the Heights and Forts in front of Canton on the 25th ultimo, and that altho' under the very great disadvantage of having to be formed as they landed into eight companies of 22 files each, and to be proved and officered, many of the men meeting for the first time, unaccustomed to act together, the zeal of all got everything into fair order, and they advanced with steadiness and regularity to the attack. First-Lieutenant Maxwell of the *Druid* commanded the first company, and cooperated with HM 18th Regiment Royal Irish, in storming the enemy's entrenched camp the evening after the attack: Lieutenant White the 2nd, Lieutenant Polkinghorne the 3rd, Lieutenant Ussher the 4th (for one day only, as he fell sick and returned the next), Colour Sergeant Nicholls commanded the 5th, Colour Sergeant F Fairweather the 6th, Lieutenant Farmer the 7th, Lieutenant Whiting the 8th. Captain Whitcomb assisted as Field Officer and from whom, throughout the whole of the arduous duties the Battalion had to perform, I received at all times and occasions the most cheerful, able, and ready aid; Lieutenant Stransham of the *Calliope* executed the laborious duties of Adjutant with alacrity, zeal, and ability, and to the officers in command of companies generally I was much indebted for the prompt execution of, and attention to, the orders they from time to time received; to Lieutenant Whiting of the *Blenheim*, an active and vigilant young officer, my thanks are especially due, in an affair of the 30th ultimo between a large body of armed peasantry, and HM 26th Regiment and the 37th NI, a company of the latter, on the return to quarters was missing, and in consequence, at about sunset, I was directed by the Major General to detach a Company in search of it - the 49th had two out for the same object. I selected the 8th (*Blenheim's*) - being armed with percussion muskets - for this important duty, and Lieutenant Whiting to command them. He was accompanied by Captain Duff of the 37th NI. After a long and tedious march of 8 miles through paddy fields filled with water, they succeeded in reaching this company drawn up in square on a rising ground, surrounded by the enemy, then actively engaged in getting up a field gun for their destruction. Lieutenant Whiting announced his proximity to the 37th NI by firing a musket and directing his company to cheer loudly; the effect was instantaneous and beneficial; the Chinese, from the darkness, not knowing the amount of force, so unexpectedly near, separated a little and the 37th retreated; and Lieutenant Whitting, watching his opportunity, judiciously fired a volley amongst them, whereby the two companies were enabled to return to their respective Corps unmolested: the previous very heavy rain to which the 37th Company was exposed had wetted their firelocks and rendered them useless for the time.

The following morning in a letter I had the honour to receive from Sir Hugh Gough on the subject he thus expressed himself: "Many thanks to the officer and party who were out last night.

I shall give out an order on the subject." I am most happy to add that every praise is due to the Non-Commissioned Officers, Drummers, Rank and File of the Royal Marine Battalion engaged in this short and brilliant campaign for the steadiness, zeal, order, and sobriety invariably displayed by them through all the operations, which it is most gratifying to me, their Commanding Officer, to have the honour to make known to you. The casualties are happily but few: one corporal and one private dangerously wounded, four privates slightly. The 1st and 2nd Instant all the men composing the Battalion had returned to their respective ships.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) S. B. Ellis

Captain, Royal Marines. Commanding Officer

On 27th May, 1841, the GOC published the following General Order.

Fort Yang-gang-Tai.

Major General Sir H. Gough, from his heart, congratulates the troops of every arm upon their steadiness under fire and their brilliant conduct in the attack of the heights and the capture of the several forts above Canton and of the entrenched camp under cover of the City Wall on 25th instant. The expression of the General's best thanks were as fully merited and as sincerely accorded to the Naval Battalions and the Royal Marines who have nobly upheld the high character of their profession."

On the 1st June the heights above Canton were evacuated and the troops re-embarked. The following extract from Orders refers to the Royal Marines.

"No. 2. The Royal Marines and. Brigade of Seamen will not move until a preconcerted signal be given, when the whole of the remaining force will evacuate the forts at the same moment and move down into the plain and form in rear of the Artillery in the following order:

Royal Marines Brigade of Seamen, 49th Regiment 18th Royal Irish."

The detachments returned to their shapos. The RM casualties had been two severely wounded and four slightly wounded.

On 6th June the General expressed his thanks again to the 18th Royal Irish and to Captain Ellis RM.

On 1st June whilst the force was withdrawing the detachments of the *Calliope*, *Conway*, *Alligator*, *Herald*, and *Algerine*, about 45 men under Lieutenants Urquhart, Hewett and Hayes Marriott were employed in the boats of the Advanced Squadron in the destruction of the enemy works including French Folly Fort and along the banks of the river.

Captains Ellis⁹ and Whitcomb were given Brevet Majorities. For the next months there was inaction, whilst the politioals tried to negotiate with very little result. There was a great deal of sickness, ague and dysentery, from which the Navy suffered more than the Army, and the C-in-C, Sir H. Senhouse, died.

In spite of the Treaty, the Chinese authorities failed to carry out the provisions, and obstacles to trade were thrown in the way; so that at last, in August, orders were issued for a renewal of hostilities. There was a new Naval C-in-C - Sir William Parker - and of almost equal importance, a new and strongsr Political Officer - Sir H Pottinger.

Amoy - It was decided to attack Amoy, and on 25th August the squadron anchored off the Port. The Island of Ku-Lang-Su in the middle of the harbour commands the town; it is separated from Amoy by a passage which practically forms another harbour; every island and headland was fortified. In front of the outer town were a line of batteries with a solid rampart facing the sea about a mile in length, on which 96 guns were mounted in tiers. A castellated wall led to a range of rocky heights

running parallel to the beach and rampart. It was therefore protected from flanking attack: the entrance between Ku-Lang-Su and Amoy, thus protected, was only 600 yards wide. On Ku-Lang-Su were several strong batteries mounting 76 guns, some facing the above rampart. There were to be two attacks, one on Ku-Lang-Su, the other on Amoy.

Taking first that on Ku-yang-Su, there was a frontal attack by the ships, whilst the landing party took the batteries in reverse. Captain Ellis with 40 men from the *Wellesley* transferred to the *Blonde*, Captain Whitcomb with 40 from the *Blenheim* to the *Druid*, and with *Blonde's* and *Modeste's* detachments making altogether 8 Officers, 7 Sergeants and 172 Rank and File. At 1.30 pm on August 26th, the *Blonde* (44), *Druid* (44) and *Modeste* (18) under Captain Bouchier, RN ; bombarded the Easternmost battery. The troops - 3 Companies of the 26th - were landed in a small bay to left of Easternmost battery. A Company of Artillery was embarked in the *Blonde* to assist in the bombardment.

Captain Ellis in his Report says: "*I landed without accident to the right of fort on a low sandy beach, climbing the rocks with some difficulty, we gained the cliffs; the enemy courageously resisting us. We drove them before us and cleared the fort, Lieutenant Polkingorne hoisting the boat's Union (flag). Part of the 26th arriving, I sent them to Southht and right flank to dislodge the enemy from an 8-gun battery in that direction, which they gallantly accomplished. Leaving a guard in the fort under Lieutenant Polkinghorne, I pursued the fugitives. By 3.30 pm Ku-Lang-Su was captured.*"

The Royal Marines remained in bivouac on the island till 1st September; the officers were Captain Ellis, Lieutenants Hewett, Pickard, Whiting, Ussher, Farmar, Polkinghorne, Maxwell (Adjutant).

In the attack on Amoy the *Wellesley* and *Blenheim* bombarded the extreme end of the rampart nearest the town; the *Pyladeo* (18), *Cruiser* (16), *Columbine* (16) and *Algerine* (10) continued the attack up to the entrance of the harbour. The selected landing place was at the extreme end of the castellated wall described above; two ships were stationed at this point to guard against flanking fire from the batteries.

The Naval bombardment was not so successful as usual; separate batteries were silenced, but little impression was made on the great rampart, and up to 2 pm very little damage at all was done. At 3 pm the 18th and 49th Regiments were disembarked at the foot of the castellated wall (the 55th Regiment not until the next morning). The 18th were to escalate the wall, the 49th to make along the beach and then mount the rampart. Captain Hall of the *Nemesis* with a few seamen rushed the wall and were followed by two Companies of the 18th, who ran down and opened the gate; the 49th got over the rampart and cleared out the Chinese near the outskirts of the city, being joined by some Royal Marines; ie the remainder of the Royal Marines who had not landed at Ku-Lang-Su and who had been required on board to work the ships' guns and were landed under Captain Whitcomb, aided by a few seamen by order of Admiral Sir William Parker.¹⁰

⁹ Captain Ellis was afterwards Commandant at Woolwich and the Honorary. Colonel of the Portsmouth Division from 28th March 1863 till his death in 1865.

¹⁰ Captain Ellis' Report.

The outworks at both ends of the rampart were taken by the Naval forces. The 18th, 49th, and Royal Marines formed up on the heights above the rampart, which commanded the outer town of Amoy, but a chain of rocky heights occupied by the enemy guarded the inner city. Guns were brought up and an attack was made in two columns; there was only slight opposition and by evening the British had gained possession of the hills and next morning secured the town. The Royal Marines returned to their ships in the evening.

It was then decided to hold only Ku-Lang-Su; accordingly the defences of the town were destroyed and 500 guns taken possession of; there was a certain amount of plundering by Chinese bandits. On 5th September the troops having re-embarked, sailed north for Chusan.

Chusan - Storms delayed their arrival until 25th September. The Chinese were busy strengthening the defences of Ting-Hai on the South-West side of the island. This was a walled town two miles in circumference and one mile from the shore. There was a raised bank to guard against inundations, on which was a battery with 80 guns, but very badly constructed.

The Pagoda Hill batteries were close to the landing place; opposite to it were two small islands, one called Trumbull, which proved very useful on which to mount guns for the attack on Pagoda hill. On the Western side were steep hills called the Forty-Nine Hills, commanding the flank of the battery wall; here were fortified camps and two strong forts not yet manned. This point was selected for the landing place.

On 29th fire was opened on the camp and destroyed the temporary buildings; on 30th a small battery was completed by the RA on Trumbull or Melville Island.

The General Orders issued on 29th September, 1841, said:

“It may be necessary to recapture Chusan. Be prepared to land in light Marching Order.

Left Column - Lieutenant Colonel Craigie.

Madras Artillery. 4 Howitzers, 2 Mortars.

Madras Sappers and Miners.

55th Regiment

18th Royal Irish.

With two days' cooked provisions.

Right Column - Lieutenant Colonel Morris.

Madras Artillery. 2 guns.

Madras Sappers

49th Regiment

Royal Marines ¹¹

R. Seaman Battalion.

With one day's cooked provisions.

On Trumbull Island.

Royal Artillery

Madras Sappers

Scaling Ladders, Powder Bags, and Planks for crossing canale to be provided”.

On 1st October, *Wellesley*, *Cruiser*, and *Columbine* covered the landing; the Madras Artillery with 8 guns, the Sappers, 18th, 55th, and Madras Volunteers landed at the West end of the wall; the 55th advanced up the heights which were steep and rugged. The Chinese made a stronger defence, but the heights, encampment and a stand of Colours were captured. The troops also dealt with a long line of batteries along the coast. The 18th, the Marines, and the Artillery were resisted with courage. The Royal Marines had landed and formed up at noon and moved off in support of the Royal Irish advancing to attack the strong position of the Joss House in the suburbs of the city; they joined the Royal Irish at the Joss House Fort, the enemy retreating from it. At sunset by orders of Admiral Sir William Parker the battalion re-embarked in the *Sesostris*, lying off the hills to await further orders,

¹¹ Field State of Royal Marines landing at Chusan, 1 October 1841.

Wellesley - Captain Ellis, 2 Subalterns, 4 Sergeants, 2 Fifers, 89 Rank and File.

Blenheim - Captain Whitcomb, 2 Subalterns., 3 Sergeants., 2 Fifers, 78 Rank and File.

Columbine - 1 Sergeant, 1 Fifer, 12 Rank and File.

Cruiser - 1 Sergeant, 1 Fifer, 13 Rank and File

Lieutenant Farmar, Adjutant. Sergeant Fairwsather - Sergeant-Major. The Subalterns were White and Farmar (*Wellesley*), Whiting and Ussher (*Blenheim*).

but as none arrived the men were conveyed to their own ships.¹²

Two Companies of the 55th were placed to prevent the Chinese gaining the South gate of the town; they were joined by the 49th and the outer defences were abandoned by the Chinese. The guns and rocket battery were brought up to the hills on the North-West which commanded the town. The Chinese escaped by the North' and East gates, the 55th having gained the walls of Ting-Hai and the 18th being on Pagoda Hill.

The importance of the island was due to its situation at the mouth of the Yang-Tse-Kiang.

Ningpo and Chinghai - The next place for attack was Chinghai, the sea port at the mouth of the Ningpo River, and 12 miles from the city of Ningpo which stood on the left bank of the river. On this side at the Sout-West corner, separated by a rocky gorge, a precipitous rock known as the Joss House Hill stood out, with a fort on its top. The river was blocked from this point by piles and sunken junks; the rock and the City Wall were strongly garrisoned. The main body of the enemy troops were on the right bank on a range of hills commanding the town, which were fortified; it was a position of great strength, with an entrenched camp, field redoubts, etc.

The Army under Sir Hugh Gough were to attack the right bank, covered by the *Cruiser, Nemesis, Queen, Phlegethen, and Columbine*. On 10th October the Army were quite successful and the enemy fled, but they could only help the force on the left bank by bringing the captured guns to bear on the City and by the fire of the Rocket Battery.

At 11 am on 10th October the *Blenheim, Wellesley, Blonde, and Modeste* bombarded Chinghai. Captain Herbert (*Blenheim*) with 400 Seamen and 276 Marines under Captain Ellis, a detachment RA, and 50 Sappers landed with Sir William Parker, and made their way up the Joss House Hill. The magazine exploded as they approached and the Chinese in their panic did not close the gate; there was a second explosion and the British immediately escaled at the Sout-East angle of the City Wall, and the Chinese escaped by the West Gate. A great arsenal and cannon factory with quantities of warlike stores were captured with practically no loss, owing to the skilful use of the British Artillery.

On 12th October, Ningpo surrendered. The force however was not strong enough to make an attack on Hang-Choy, or proceed to the Yang-Tse.

Captain Ellis' Report of this action is as follows:

Marine Quarters,
Gate of Confucius, Ningpo
21st October, 1841

.....The Royal Marines had to climb a range of precipitous heights (which was quite unexpected by the enemy) The walls of the city of Chinhae were 25 feet high, and at part of these which were flanked by some rocks, some Marines of HMS *Wellesley* by extraordinary perseverance and courage succeeded in ascending and lowering a rope; others soon followed from below, when fire was opened on the oncnly who soon fled, having a few killed. Scaling ladders coming up, the remainder of the Marines and armed seamen under Captain Herbert RN, were quickly on the rampart and in possession of Chinhae. Marine sentinels were posted on the gates and on the walls, and the seamen returned to their s_oipc. The troops under General Gough operated on the opposite side of the river, carrying by assault a strongly fortified entrenchment, which the Chinese defended with great obstinacy, and numbers were killed. In the evening the General crossed over to Chinhae and took up his quarters in the Joss House.

Having decided on a forward movement by water, the 55th Regiment and half the Royal Marine Battalion under Captain Whitcomb were left at Chinhae. The remainder under Captain Ellis accompanied the C-in-C in the *Modeste* to Ningpo. The RM were ordered to attack the gate I am now holding. Other troops proceeded to other points; the GOC remarked 'His orders were executed without any resistances.' The Chinese Governor and his troops had fled."

The garrison at Ningpo consisted of Captains Ellis, Lieutenants Hewett, Usher, Farmar (Adjutant), Sergeant Fairbank (Sergeant Major), Sergeant Waldron (QMS), 6 Sergeants, 12 Corporals, 3 Drummers and 84 Privates, belonging to *Wellesley, Blonde, Columbine, and Blenheim*.

A small expedition was undertaken in December 1841 to Yu-You and Tsekee, to cow the province of Fu-Kien, after which operations were suspended for the winter.

On 11th November the Marines under Major Ellis quitted Ningpo, and calling at Chinghae embarked the 113 Royal Marines under Captain Whitcomb who were in garrison there.

¹² Captain Ellis' Report.

In February 1842 Major Ellis and a portion of the *Wellesley's* detachment left for England. The *Blenheim's* detachment under Captain Whitcomb returned to their ship and went to Macao, and they were replaced by the detachment of HMS *Cornwallis* under Brevet Major Uniacke. Major Ellis was promoted to Brevet Lieutenant Colonel on 26th May 1841, and at the close of the war was given a CB in 1842.

Sir Hugh Gough wrote; *"I cannot allow you to leave the expedition without some assurances on my part of my regret at losing you, and of my best wishes for your future welfare. As you have been repeatedly placed, by the Naval C-in-C, at my disposal for active operations in the field, I have had occasion to notice the gallantry and steadiness of your little Battalion, as well as the zeal, spirit, and judgment with which you exercised the command. The subsequent period of your service in the garrisons of Ningpo and Tinghae, has only tended to increase the satisfaction which I shall always feel at having had you and a portion of the Royal Marines under my orders, and I will beg you to convey the expression of my sentiments to the Officers, Non-commissioned officers and men under your command."*

Tsckee - In March 1842 the Chinese made surprise attacks on Ningpo and Chinghai, which were repulsed after some severe fighting, and the Chinese fell back to Isekee, North-west of Ningpo, where they were reinforced from the North. On 15th March it was decided to attack Tsekee, for which 850 troops of 49th and 18th Regiments with 410 Seamen and Marines were detailed. They were taken up the river and landed as near Teekee as possible, where they were joined by the guns of the Madras Artillery. After a cannonade by the field guns, the Seamen and Marines escalated the walls at 4 pm and the force concentrated at the North Gate; the 18th Regiment moved up a steep ravine on the right which commanded the Chinese left. The Naval Brigade were then to attack the Chinese right and the 49th the centre. The 18th were slow in getting into position, so at 8 pm the General sounded the 'Advance'; the Royal Marines covered by the Seamen poured in a heavy fire, when the 49th and two Companies Royal Marines under Lieutenants G Elliot and A J Hambly dashed forward and charged up the steep and rugged hill in front of them; the Chinese put up a strong resistance but were routed and 1000 killed, the troops turning their flanks. The RN Brigade lost 3 killed and 15 wounded, of which the Marines had 1 Private killed, Lieutenants Elliot and Hambly and 10 Privates wounded.

Yang-tse-Kiang - It was then decided to transfer operations to the Yang-tse-Kiang and to commence by attacking Chapoo, which was the centre of trade with Japan. Ningpo was therefore evacuated on 7th May and the garrisons of Chinghai, Chusan, and Amoy reduced to the smallest dimensions.

Chapoo - Chapoo was the port of Hang-Chow on the Huan Estuary, and on 17th May the Fleet anchored near Chapoo, which was a walled city with hills extending Eastward for 3 miles. It was defended by batteries near the shore. The plan was to land on 18th at the Eastern end of the promontory and storm the heights. The troops were in three columns:

Right:	18th, 49th, and RE	970.
Centre:	RA, RE, and Company Madras NI	388.
Left:	28th, 55th, RE	883.

The Right Column landed first and covered the disembarkation, the Left Column was sent round the base of the heights to get in rear of the enemy and cut the communications with Chapoo, which they successfully accomplished. The Right Column advanced on the defences, covered by the fire of the ships, *Cornwallis*, *Modeste*, *Blonde*, *Sesotris*, *Algerine*, *Columbine*, *Starling*; and *Bentick*. The Tartars in a Joss House put up a stiff resistance and caused casualties. By noon General Gough was on the walls, where he was joined by the Seamen and Marines who had been landed near the suburbs not far from the Joss House, and the gates were scoured. The place was held only for a few days, whilst the arsenals and ordnance were destroyed, and on 27th May it was evacuated and the squadron proceeded round the headland into the mouth of the great river.

The first operation that had to be undertaken before they could advance up the Yang-tse-Kiang, was the capture of the Woosung Forts, which was carried out by the Navy. On 12th June, 1842, the Fleet reached the anchorage off Woosung; the Admiral and General made a reconnaissance and found that there was no landing place practicable except for a frontal attack.

Woosung - The Woosung River empties itself into the right bank of the Yang-tse-Kiang, and the town of Woosung - about 500 houses - stood at its mouth. At its entrance the breadth of the river is about one mile, but the channel for vessels is only about 300 yards wide. Its course is North and South, and the banks widen as it joins the Yangtse. The principal line of defence was along the Western bank; from the approaches of the village of Woosung for 3 miles along the river mouth, and then curving gradually round the bank of the Yangtse River.

The town of Paoushan was nearly two miles in rear of the batteries at that end; there were 134 guns, but the embrasures were too wide and the batteries were made of earth; there were also stakes along the front. Just above the village of Woosung, skirting it on the Southern side, was a large creek, or canal, communicating with the river, protected by strong semi-circular stone batteries armed with ten brass guns (24 pdrs). They defended the river itself and commanded the whole reach as well as the mouth of the creek.

On the East side of the river - opposite Woosung - was a strong fort, built of brick, circular in shape and flanked by a line of embankments armed with 21 guns. There were 175 guns available for defence at Woosung with the pick of the Tartar troops, who worked their guns with great spirit and kept up a good fire and who, when the principal line of defence was out-flanked by the Seamen and Marines, defended themselves with great courage.

The water shoaled to under three feet within 200 yards of the banks and it was very difficult to find a landing place.

On the 16th June the tide and the state of the weather was favourable: the bombarding ships were towed in by the steamers, which were lashed alongside; only five steamers however were available. The *Cornwallis* and *Blonde*, the heaviest ships, were placed in front of the batteries just below the village of Woosung.

The light squadron - *Modeste*, *Columbine*, *Clio*, towed by *Nemesis*, and *Phlegethon*, and *Pluto* - passed above the village, and engaged the battery at the mouth of the creek and the circular battery on the East Bank; fire was not returned by the ships until they had anchored in position, so that they suffered some-what.

The *North Star* arriving, the *Tennasserim*, after placing the *Blonde* in position, went off and placed her ahead of the *Blonde*. The *Nemesis* engaged the war junks, but they bolted; however, the *Nemesis* went ashore, so sending away her boats with all those of the *Phlegethon*, together they destroyed all the junks.

The Chinese fire having been reduced, Captain Watson RN, with the Seamen and Marines of *Modeste*, *Columbine*, and *Clio*, landed in the creeks to cut off the enemy retreat and to turn their flank near the village. He was received with heavy fire, but the Chinese soon retreated. As the Chinese soon came on again, Watson withdrew to the embankment. Captain Bouchier landed some men from the *Blonde* to assist Watson's men, who renewed the attack, the Chinese putting up a good fight. The Seamen and Marines of the *Blonde* and *Cornwallis* (Captain Uniacke RM) then landed nearly opposite their vessels, and as soon as they were formed up they drove the enemy out of the line of batteries. The *Sesostris* engaged the fort on the East side of the entrance, but went ashore; she however brought her guns to bear, and a party landing from her and the *Tennasserim* took possession of the fort. The troops were not landed till the afternoon, as most of the transports had gone ashore. General Schoedder was sent to get in rear of Paousgan. Sir Hugh Gough with the Naval parties moved along the line of batteries, and the Chinese fled to Soo-Chow-Foo.

Lieutenant C C Hewett RM (*Blonde*) and 1 seaman were killed; 3 officers, 15 seamen, 1 corporal and 5 RE were wounded; 250 guns were captured, of which 42 were brass.

The way to Shanghai was now open, and the attack was arranged for the 19th June. One Column of 1000 men under Lieutenant Colonel Montgomerie of the Madras Artillery was to march by land; the Royal Marines of the squadron went up in HMS *Medusa*. One long battery of 49 guns below the town opened fire, but was quickly silenced by broadsides from the *North Star* and *Modeste*. Captain Bouchier with the Seamen and Marines landed and took possession of it. The land column reached the city first and the town was captured unopposed. All military stores were destroyed and a large number of guns captured, but the city was almost immediately evacuated owing to the lateness of the season. The expedition returned to Woosung, and having received reinforcements it was decided to attack Nanking, 170 miles up the river at the junction of the Imperial Canal with the Yang-tse-Kiang. It was fortified and Chin-Kiang-Foo commanded the Northern entrance to the Canal. The expedition started on 6th July, 1842. They had to go 200 miles up an unknown river, but only 10 days were taken in the passage and there was practically no opposition. On 19th July, HMS *Cornwallis* anchored off Kinshan, about 1000 yards from the entrance of the Imperial Canal, which was occupied by a small party of Marines, and on the 20th the Fleet was concentrated.

The Canal formed the moat for Ching-Kiang-Poo, joining the main river near the Western angle; on the North and East sides was a range of heights. Both heights commanded the North angle of the city and on each was a Joss House.

On 21st July the assault was delivered by the Army, which carried the hills and the encampments on them. Whilst the guns were being landed by the *Blonde* near the West Gate, the Chinese attacked the Seamen and Artillery; the *Cornwallis* at once landed 200 Royal Marines at the entrance to the Canal, and being joined by 300

Madras NI, they pushed through the suburbs, supported by the boats which advanced into the Canal. Near the West Gate the Marines and Native Infantry, with the Naval Officers, escalated the Wall and advanced against the Chinese, who put up the strongest resistance, but were at last driven back by rockets; the outer Gate was blown in by the 3rd Army Brigade, who rushed into the city. The Seamen and Marines then advanced along the Western Wall. The heat was intense, and many men died from sunstroke: among them Captain and Brevet Major J Uniacke RM, of the *Cornwallis*. He had joined the Corps on 28th August 1804, and had 38 years' service.

In addition to Major Uniacke, Lieutenants L Atcherly of the *Cornwallis* and W Herald had died. About 780 Royal Marines had been engaged in this War. This proved to be the last engagement of the War. By August 9th the whole Fleet had arrived, and on 17th the Chinese proposed preliminaries of peace and a preliminary treaty was signed on 29th, by which the island of Hong Kong was ceded to the British, the Chinese paid an indemnity of 21,000,000 Dollars, and the following ports were opened to foreign trade: Canton, Amoy, Foo-Chow, Ningpo, Shanghai; and the British envoys, etc were to be treated on a perfect equality with the Chinese.

The regiments that were engaged in this war were granted the badge of the "Dragon superscribed China", so that this is yet another of the badges to which the Corps is entitled, but which is merged in the 'Great Globe Itself'.

P A R T I I I

1844 - 1852

The numbers seem to have remained unaltered until 1845, when there is a very interesting Order-in-Council dated 13th January 1845, which, whilst giving the numbers for that year, affords information as to the employment of the RM Artillery:

"Consideration of the steam vessels and weight of armaments and consequent insufficiency of present numbers of the Companies of Marine Artillery, a portion of whom are embarked in each vessel. Previous to 1831 the Marine Artillery consisted of eight companies; in that year four companies were reduced and in 1832 two more; at which period the horse-power of the Navy amounted to 2660 horses; in 1841 one company was added, making the strength 405. The Steam Navy now amounts to upwards of 26,000 H.P., and this amount will be doubled in a few years; the Board therefore propose to establish two companies of RMA without adding to the total force of RM, viz 10,500"....."The total strength was divided into Staff 62, RM 9,682, Artillery Companies 725. The cost of the change was estimated to be £2741."

On 18th March 1846, two more Artillery Companies were added, making 7 all told; the numbers were taken from the Divisional Companies without altering the total. The RMA Headquarters about this time were moved back to the Gunwharf Barracks, still forming part of the Portsmouth Division; and when there were too many men for these and Fort Cumberland, men were sent to the other Divisions.

Bands - A subscription of one day's pay from all officers was ordered for the support of the bands from 19th March 1842, and has continued ever since.

Quartermasters - On 19th May 1846 a big departure was made. For the first time a second Quartermaster was added to each Division and instead of a combatant officer being appointed for a term of years, they were selected from the Staff Sergeants of the Corps; but it was not until Order-in-Council 18th January 1850 that any scales of pay were laid down for them and not until Order-in-Council 26th June 1857 that there was any scheme of Retired or Half Pay.

It would seem that this addition must have been due to the increased duties in connection with rations and quartering, for we learn¹³ that it was not till then that the GOC Western District ordered that an evening meal of tea or coffee and a proportion of bread should be provided in addition to breakfast and dinner; and the hour of pm after evening roll-call is suggested.

Duelling - A very important change in the social customs was made by the Army Order forbidding Duelling, on 15 March 1844; as we have seen it was more or less officially recognised, though when the Commandant at Portsmouth reported in 1812 that an officer had died of his wounds, the other officers concerned absconded and the Commandant was ordered to 'respite' their pay.

The year 1847 was noteworthy for legislation affecting service which still governs the Corps.

On 24th April 1847 the strength was raised from 10,500 to 12,000, which included three more companies at a strength of 145 each added to the RMA¹⁴ making 10. The Acting Adjutant RMA was put on the same footing as the other Adjutants of the Corps. The Divisional Companies were 100 with a strength of 104 each, and on 22nd July another Lieutenant Colonel was added.

Medals - On 1st June 1847 the issue of the Naval War Service Medal for the Great War 1793-1815 was authorised with clasps for the numerous and various actions. The same medal was also issued for the Syrian Campaign of 1840 and for Navarino, 1827. There were 230 different bars issued. The distribution took place on 1st January 1849, when naturally there was not a very large number of recipients surviving. An Army Medal was also issued with clasp for their battles, and a certain number of these were issued to the Royal Marines.

Marine Mutiny Act - Since the Great War the problem of the age of officers had been very pressing, but it would now seem as if some difficulty was arising as regards the men. As we have seen, except for certain exceptions during the war periods when men were enlisted for 3 years or the duration of the war, or from the militia for 'Limited Service', enlistment had always been for life, and no doubt the peace period was producing men too old for the duties required.

Doubtless also the influence of the Army Service Act 1847 was felt and at all events the Mutiny Act of this year

¹³ Plymouth Orders, 8th August 1845.

passed on 1st August 1847 contained the first provision for limiting service in the Marines, and was known as the Marine Mutiny Act 1847 (d 12 Victoria c 53), the provisions of which are still in force, by which it was ordered that men were to be discharged after 12 years' service, and allowed to re-engage for another 12 years (afterwards modified to 9, in 1853). This was a revolutionary step and had a great effect on the Corps. The Pension Regulations were altered at the same time. Apparently, on 26 June 1837, pensions had been granted after 21 years at sea or on foreign service, two years on shore in England to count as one year afloat and no Marine was entitled unless he had 10 years afloat or on foreign service. Further, since 1st January 1832 service had only counted from the age of twenty; now by an Order-in-Council 17th June 1847 this rule was declared to be unfair, and a reversion to the old Marine system was ordered, by which Marines were entitled to benefit from the whole of their service ashore and afloat and were allowed to reckon service from the age of 15. On 1st August a new scale of pensions was fixed, which remained in force up to 1919, viz 8d a day, with additions of 21 pence for Sergeant-Majors, 2 pence for QMS, 1 penny for Sergeants, a ha'penny for Corporals, with limits of 2/6, 2/3, 2/-, and 1/6 for respective classes. Acting time did not count.

1848 - The strength was 12,000 but a fresh distribution was ordered, by which 12 new companies were created, but with reduced strength; which allowed 700 men to be transferred to the Artillery companies and the creation of 3 additional Artillery companies. An additional Lieutenant Colonel was, allowed for the Artillery Companies, and one for the Corpe generally.

Portsmouth Barracks - In this year came also the move from the old Clarence Barracks at Portsmouth to the new Barracks, which had been erected on the land where the old hospital for prisoners of war used to stand at Forton. These were exchanged with the War Office for the Clarence Barracks, and at first consisted only of the four large blocks. The transfer took place on 29th March 1848.

At the same time the Barracks for the Woolwich Division on Woolwich Common were completed. These were the latest things of their day and appear to have been a very fine set of buildings. They were called the Cambridge Barracks: since 1846 the Division had been quartered in the old 74-gun hulk *Benbow* alongside the quay in the Dockyard. The Infirmary was established in what is now known as the Red Barracks.

In 1849 the strength voted was :

Staff	-	70
112 Divisional Companies	-	10416
10 Artillery Companies	-	1500
		11986

An Order-in-Council of 16th January 1849 contains many valued concessions to the Marines which exist to the present day. It is laid down that a Marine's service commenced from date of attestation as service towards pension, reckoned from the age of 18 only.

Meritorious Service Medal - It instituted the Meritorious Service Medal, granting annuities for distinguished service to Sergeants - for which a sum of £250 was allowed, to be divided in sums not exceeding £20 per annum, to be enjoyed whilst serving or after discharge. The medal to be of silver "For Meritorious Service" and not to be liable to forfeiture except by sentence of Court Martial or on conviction of felony. Order-in-Council 11th January 1853 modified the annuities.

Long Service and Good Conduct Medal - It also institutsd gratuities for the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal - Sergeants £15, Corporals £10, Privates £5 - provided they had served 21 years with irreproachable character and never been convicted by court martial. It also laid down the conditions for the grant of Good Conduct Badges, and introduced the proviso of the grant of the 4th Good Conduct Badge at 16 years (now obsolete). It also brought in the regulation that deprivation of Good Conduct Badges could only be by Warrant, as for corporal punishment, and that no man wearing a GCB was liable to corporal punishment except for mutinous conduct.

Gunnery - An Order-in-Council of 1st July 1849 directed that Marines generally should be trained in Naval Gunnery, also in knotting and splicing, hammock-slinging, boat pulling, etc. Hitherto such instruction on shore had been confined to the Artillery training of the RMA., but it was not till the year 1877 that a definite standard of Trained Man as for seamen was laid down for the Infantry of the Corps.

A curious old custom was abolished on 6th October 1849. Apparently Captains of Marines afloat were liable to a deduction of 1/1 a day to meet cost of provisions. No naval or military officers were so liable, and it was

abolished on 1st July. In 1851 another old privilege of RMA Captains went: they had apparently drawn £20 a year Non-Effective Allowance - it is not stated for what it was granted. It was abolished on 24th September 1851, and 1/1 added to their personal pay in lieu.

In 1850 the numbers were 12,000,

In 1851 the numbers were 10,500.

Lodging Money (In this year was held the Great Exhibition in London.) On 14th April a great boon was granted to married NCOs and men. They were put on the same footing as the Army for lodging money, viz 2 pence a day; the proportion allowed was 3 men for every 100. Later the allowance was increased to 6 pence a day.

The difficulties caused by stagnation of promotion, however, were still extant. In November 1852 it was reported that four Lieutenant Colonels and four Captains were unfit for further active service (Order-in-Council 10th November 1852) and again in August 1853, Inspection Reports say that four Lieutenant Colonels are unfit for active service owing to advanced age and ill health (Order-in-Council 8th August 1853); they were all specially retired on full pay.

In 1852 the numbers were 10,500.

South America - It is customary to speak of the period 1815 to the Crimean War (1854) as a period of 40 years' peace, but as we have already seen this did not apply to the Corps, and the accounts of the following operations will show that the Corps was never really free from active service. No sooner were affairs settled in China before attention was turned to another hemisphere and the Royal Marines were engaged in South America, where the Spanish Colonies were all in a state of revolt.

From 1835 there had been two factions in Uruguay, one under Rosas desiring incorporation with the Argentine Confederation, and the opposition led by a M. Rivera. The Acting President was a M. Suarez. Rosas, the dictator of Buenos Ayres, favoured the Argentine party and one of his lieutenants - Criebe - in 1843 began the nine years' siege of Monte Video.

But in 1845 the British and French Governments ordered their squadrons to interfere against Rosas at the moment when his victory seemed assured, and in consequence an attack was ordered.

Admiral Inglefield with 6 British and 3 French ships first proceeded to turn Rosas' men out of Colonia, a town on North bank of the River Plate: these retired after a few shots. The ships then ascended the River Parana to where powerful batteries had been erected at Puente Obligado, about 100 miles from the mouth.

On 18th November they anchored about three miles below Obligado. The batteries on the right bank were armed with 22 guns and a number of field guns. Twenty-four vessels had been secured with a chain as a boom across the river, protected by a schooner and two gunboats. On 20th the Allies attacked and the leading vessels suffered rather severely, but the chain was cut and the steamers passed through and enfiladed the forts. At 5 pm Captain T Hurdle with Lieutenant Morrison as Adjutant, landed with 145 Marines and 180 Seamen (who had been trained as Light Infantry by Lieutenant Lawrence RMA) and attacked the Uruguayans covering the batteries and drove them out with the bayonet. They destroyed the guns and re-embarked; next day the destruction was completed. The British loss was 30 killed and wounded. The squadron then went up the river to Corrientes, opening up the river to trade.

In the early part of 1846 when the Allied squadron was bringing down a convoy of vessels, Rosas had prepared a warm reception for them at San Lorenzo, where the high banks afforded a good site for his batteries. To facilitate the passage of the convoy, Lieutenant C L Barnard RMA and 12 gunners with Lieutenant Mackinnon and 11 seamen with 4 rocket tubes, were concealed on a small island close to the batteries for three days. As the convoy approached, the rocket tubes opened fire and, assisted by the fire of the ships, the convoy was successfully passed down. That evening Captain Hurdle with the Marines of the squadron landed, and with the seamen small arm men stormed the batteries where they spiked the guns.

The Royal Marines of the Fleet, under Brevet Major Leonard, were landed till 1847 to protect British interests.

Lisbon - In 1848 the Royal Marines were again in Lisbon. Admiral Sir William Parker, owing to the critical state of affairs in Portugal on 21st October 1846, offered an asylum to Queen Maria II. Some Marines, who had been sent out in the *Terrible*, were available and he was authorised to retain them on 1st November, and the Admiralty hoped that he would be able to occupy Belem Castle with them. They were retained until matters calmed down.

New Zealand - In quite another quarter of the Globe, in New Zealand, trouble arose over the occupation of tribal land between the settlers and the Maoris. In March 1845 at Kororareka, the Chief Heke so harried the settlement that it was abandoned and the inhabitants went to Auckland. Reinforcements were demanded from Australia and on their arrival the 58th and 96th Regiments with the Seamen and Marines of HMS *North Star* and hazard and a body of natives, proceeded against a stockade called Okaihau. As they had no artillery it was found to be impregnable, and they were forced to retire with a loss of 14 killed and 59 wounded. On 23rd June 1845 they attacked another stronghold - Oheawi; the guns were useless till a 32 pdr was brought up from HMS *Hazard*. On 1st July the assault was delivered and again repulsed with heavy loss; on 10th it was found that the Maoris had evacuated the Pah.

In November 1845 Sir G. Grey XI the governor sent a force of 1170 soldiers, volunteers, Seamen and Marines against the Chiefs Heke and Kawiti. Heke was at Ikoragi, but the force proceeded against Kawiti in the Pah at Ruapekapeka and. besieged it from 31st December to 10th January 1846, when the Maoris abandoned it. The British loss was 13 killed and 30 wounded.

The Chiefs surrendered and were pardoned, and the War in the North Island ended. A medal was granted for this campaign in 1869.

Ireland. 1848 - During the revolutionary troubles in Ireland a small Battalion of 300 men was sent to Dublin in July and proceeded to Waterford. It was present at the attack on Portland Barracks and the attempted destruction of the Granagh Bridge over the River Suir on 12th September 1848. On the 1st March the complements of ships on the Irish station had been increased by 300 men. The Battalion was withdrawn in February 1840.

West Coast of Africa.1851 On 26th and 27th December1851, HMS *Bloodhound* and *Tartar* took Lagos on the West Coast of Africa. Lieutenants J C W Williams¹⁵ and E McArthur RMA with 27 RMA. and 47 RM taking part. Lieutenant Williams was wounded.

1852 - On 26th February the *Birkenhead*, conveying troops to South Africa, was lost, 9 officers and 349 men being drowned, the troops remaining fallen in and keeping their ranks as the ship went down, after the women and children had been saved, providing yet another deathless story for the Annals of the Services.

The (Second) Burmese War, 1852, in which a small portion of the Corps was engaged, commenced this year.¹⁶

Rear-Admiral Austen was in command of the Naval Forces and Major General H Godwin of the troops who came from India.

On 5th April 1852, after a brief bombardment, the town of Martaban was captured. On 8th April the squadron was joined by the Royal Indian Marine squadron of six ships, bringing 4 transports with troops from Bombay and Madras, and 7 transports from Bengal.

Rangoon - The Burmese had persisted in their insults to British officers and refused to pay the indemnity of 10 lakhs of rupees, so an expedition was ordered to attack Rangoon. The following forces were available:

HMS *Rattler*, *Fox*, *Hermes*, *Salamander*, *Serpent* 818 men, 80 guns.

Indian Navy - 8 ships. 952 men, 31 guns (mostly Bengal Marine 7 ships.500 men, 33 guns 8")

The troops were the 18th Royal Irish (650), 51st (900), 80th (460), Artillery (517), 3 Regiments Native Infantry (2800), Sappers and Miners (170) with two 8" howitzers, six 24 pdrs, eight 9 pdrs field guns.

On 10th April the Fleet anchored below Hastings Sand. On 11th each ship having two transports in tow crossed the Sand and anchored below the stockades protecting Rangoon: as soon as clear of the Sand the transports were cast off. At 9.30 am the Burmese opened fire, which was returned by the Indian ships *Ferooz*, *Sesostrie*, and *Mozaffur* as soon as they were anchored. A stockade mounting nine 18 pdr guns was blown up early in the proceedings. Fire was kept up on Dallah on the left of the British as well as on the Rangoon defences on the right. At first the Burmese replied with accuracy, but soon after the *Fox* and *Serpent* came up at 11 am and the firing on the British right nearly ceased. The ships kept up their fire on both sides till the large stockade of Shoe Dagon blew up. The fire cleared the coast for nearly a mile and made a clear landing place for the troops, who were to land the following morning.

At 4 am on the 12th the 51st with the 9th and 35th NI were landed.

¹⁵ Afterwards

¹⁶ Authorities: History of Indian Navy; Fortescue's British Br'my; Officers' Services.

The *Sesostris*, *Zenobia*, and *Mozaffur* went up the river and anchored abreast of the Upper Stockades and burnt them without opposition. Proceeding on till abreast of the Great Pagoda the ships continued fire until ordered to cease by the Admiral. HMS *Serpent* and *Phlegethon* went on to Kemmerdine, where they found the stockade too strong for them, and were reinforced by the *Fero*. On 13th April Kemmerdine was found to be evacuated and was burnt.

The squadron anchored abreast of the Great Pagoda and shelled it during the night of 12/13th. At 2 am they ceased firing to allow the troops to advance, and Rangoon was captured during the afternoon, together with 98 guns and 70 gingalls. The troops also captured the White House Stockade and the Great Dagon Pagoda with a loss of 17 killed and 132 wounded. The troops had three days' hard fighting, the walls being 20 feet high, with spikes.

On 7th May, 450 troops under Colonel Apthorp including the RM of the squadron under Lieutenants J Elliot and Nightingale RM, in the *Medusa*, *Tennasserim*, and *Pluto*, under Commander Tarleton RN left in pursuit of the Governor of Rangoon. After going about 45 miles up the river the force landed and marched to Mawbee; the Governor had fled, so after burning the village they returned, having suffered a great deal of sickness.

Bassein - On 17th May, General Godwin and Commodore Lambert proceeded with 800 men in the *Mozaffur*, *Sesostris*, *Pluto*, and *Tennasserim* to capture Bassein, which was strongly held. The force comprised 400 of the 51st, 300 Madras NI, 67 Madras RA under Major Errington of the 51st, and included 44 RM under Lieutenants Elliot and Nightingale, and 16 Seamen with a field piece under Lieutenant Rice RN.

Bassein was 60 miles above the Island of Negrais at the entrance to the Bassein River, which they reached on the afternoon of the 19th; on the 20th they sighted the fortifications of Bassein on the left bank; there was an extensive fort and stockade with a strong work round the Pagoda, having a brick parapet facing the river. The ships anchored unmolested and the troops were easily and quickly landed, when fire was immediately opened on them from the stockades. One party under General Godwin stormed and carried the Pagoda, and the ships fired whilst the boats' crews of the *Sesostris* and *Mozaffur* stormed the stockades opposite the town; 54 guns and 32 gingalle were captured. Two days were allowed for the occupation of Bassein, the *Sesostris* was then left in charge and the remainder of the squadron returned to Rangoon on the 23rd May.

Pegu - On 3rd June an expedition started for Pagu, 75 miles from Rangoon, Major Cotton of the 63rd Regiment in command. With them went HMS *Phlegethon* with 5 boats from the *Fox* in which were the Royal Marines under Lieutenant Elliot, and the boats from the *Mozaffur* all under Commander Tarleton RN, of the Irrawaddy Flotilla. On the 4th Pegu was captured with small loss, the fortifications were destroyed and they returned to Rangoon.

Proes - In July an expedition was sent against Prome. Officers and men of the *Medusa* were sent to Yeanjue on the 7th July, followed by the *Prosperine*, *Mahannuddy*, *Phlegethon*, and three boats from the *Fox*. The enemy were encountered on the bank opposite Komroughie and a sharp action took place, lasting about an hour. Lieutenant Elliot RM and three other officers were severely wounded. As it was inadvisable to land, they anchored at sunset off Meaony. On the 8th the flotilla weighed and proceeded up river till they sighted an extensive fortification on the end of a ridge of hills above the town of Akouktoung. The Chief Bundoola with 1000 men was reported to be here, so the flotilla proceeded on and the *Medusa* reached Prome on the 9th at daylight. She landed her troops, and being joined at 7 am by the *Prosperine* with the *Fox's* boats, 13 guns were captured and brought off. The ships then withdrew and later, large reinforcements of troops having been received, they occupied Prome in September and the war was concluded. The Province of Pegu was annexed on 20th December, 1852. The India Medal with clasp for Pegu was awarded for this-campaign. Lieutenants Elliot and Nightingale were mentioned in despatches (LG 10 August 1852).

PART IV

1853 - 1856

This period comprises some of the biggest campaigns of the Nineteenth Century and large numbers of the Corps were engaged both ashore and afloat.

In 1853 the numbers were 10,500.

Employment of Marines - On 1st April 1853, Continuous Service was introduced into the Navy for the first time, and in the following year it had its repercussions on the Royal Marines.

The first was the Order-in-Council 11 August 1854, when stoppages for rations afloat were abolished for NCOs and Men. The wording of the Order-in-Council is so frank and gives such a picture of the duties of the Royal Marines afloat; that it deserves to be quoted *in extenso*:

"NCOs and Men, Royal Marines, are still liable for deductions from pay originally intended to meet most of sea provisions when afloat; this position has become more anomalous, compared with soldiers of the line, and their own officers, and in consequence of the increased pay to continuous service seamen of the Navy, no corresponding advantage having been granted to the Royal Marines.

- "The grounds upon which additional pay to seamen entering for continuous service was granted, had reference to the value which unquestionably attaches to the services of skilful and trained seamen, and to the great demand for such men in the Mercantile Marine; but the bearing of this increase, as affecting the relative conditions of the Marines when embarked, was not taken into account, and it cannot be denied that the reasons which have led unavoidably to the increase of the wages of seamen in the Royal Navy, when entered for long periods, apply in many respects with equal force to the services of Royal Marines when afloat. Of late years and more especially since Order-in-Council 1 July 1849 great care and pains have been bestowed in training Royal Marines ashore, not only in the exercise of the ships' gun batteries, but also to some of the duties of seamen, and the proficiency, which these men have acquired before embarkation, renders them so fully equal to those duties that in the recent equipment of the Fleet¹⁷ they have been found capable of rendering very efficient and valuable services.

"Another consideration which should not be overlooked in weighing the claims of the Royal Marines, is the fact that at all times and under all circumstances, but more especially during the repair and equipment of ships in port, they are liable to the performance of many harassing and laborious duties, which have been known to deter seamen, when not entered for continuous service, from volunteering during the period of equipment. The Royal Marines are exposed to much wear and tear of clothing without any additional remuneration, and that as regard the general discipline of HM Fleet too much importance cannot be attached to the contentment and efficiency of the Marine Corps and therefore Their Lordships consider that the NCOs and Men should be placed on a more equitable footing as regards ration deductions."

Therefore all differences between pay of Royal Marines ashore and afloat, and deductions for rations afloat, ceased from 1st October 1854; but it was 50 years exactly before the deductions for rations on shore ceased.

1854 - The strength for 1854 was 15,500 (Order-in-Council 30 January 1854)

Staff	72
12 Artillery Companies	2112
110 Divisional Companies	13310

Two Orders-in-Council published 9th March and 13th September made another effort to deal with the stagnation of promotion.

(i) Lieutenant Colonels to be promoted to Colonels after 3 years.

(ii) An establishment of 10 General Officers was fixed.

(iii) Any Lieutenant, Captain, or Lieutenant Colonel may be rewarded for brilliant service in the Field or afloat; such promotion to be by brevet and to be converted into rank on the strength at the earliest period that consideration for the claims of other officers senior will admit of.

(iv) The retired full pay establishment fixed at £35,000 - ie an increase of £6,000.

¹⁷ ie for the Baltic and Crimean Wars.

(v) Two Officers were to hold the appointment of to the King and to be promoted to full Colonel.

(vi) Rates of pay for Captains and Subalterns were laid down that remained in force for 50 years.

The Staff consisted of 1 DAG, 1 AAG, 4 Colonels Commandant, 4 Colonels 2nd Commandant, 18 Lieutenant Colonels, 1 Instructor of Laboratory, 4 Paymasters, 4 Barrackmasters, 4 Quartermasters, 9 Sergeants-Major (1 for Artillery), 4 QMS, 6 Barrack-master's Sergeants (1 for Artillery), 4 Surgeons and 4 Assistant Surgeons.

Arms - The Corps was at this time¹⁸, armed with the Minie Rifle, which had replaced the percussion muskets; it was superseded in 1857 by the Enfield Rifle. This rifle remained in use for about 10 years, when the Corps was ordered to be armed with its first breechloading rifle - viz, the Enfield converted on the Snider principle. The date of the order was the 19th January 1867. The Snider rifle carried a very heavy bullet (.577) and was fairly simple in action. It was superseded in 1875 (22nd April) by the Martini-Henry (.45), the rifle with the falling block for insertion of the cartridge, and a needle acting on a detonating cap in the base of the cartridge. It retained the old long triangular bayonet with locking ring. The cartridges were very bad, as they were made of rolled strips of brass and there were constant jams till the solid drawn brass case was introduced.

In 1855 the numbers were 15,500.

Light Infantry - On the 30th January 1855 the title of the Corps was changed to Royal Marines, Light Infantry. An Admiralty letter of that date says: "That the Corps of Royal Marines may be designated a Light Corps and equipped and designated as such agreeably to Your Majesty's Regulation for Light Infantry Regiments of the Line; this training being considered best adapted to the nature of the service which the Corps is generally required to perform when employed ashore."

During the Crimean War was also instituted the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal¹⁹. This was meant as the Naval counterpart of the Army Distinguished Conduct Medal instituted by Royal Warrant of the 4th December 1854. The Admiralty were authorised to confer rewards of the medal with gratuity to any Petty Officer, Seaman, or Royal Marine who "shall, while serving in action, distinguish themselves in action with the enemy"; the same to be granted in the proportion of 8 Petty Officers or Sergeants and Corporals and 10 Seamen or Privates for every 1000 men, and the gratuities to be granted were also laid down.

By Order-in-Council 8th February 1855 NCOs, Royal Marines, serving on shore from the Fleet in the Crimea, were made eligible for the Army Distinguished Conduct Medal and corresponding annuity and pecuniary awards.

In 1856 numbers were 16,000 (Order-in-Council 28 February 1855) by the addition of 1 Artillery and 2 more Divisional Companies.

By 1st November as the operations in the Baltic had shown the need of more RMA for service in the bomb vessels, Infantry Companies were reduced and the Artillery Companies were raised to 14, whose strengths were also increased.

The Russian War, 1854-1856 - In 1855 differences between the Latin and Greek Churches concerning the Holy Places in Palestine had led Turkey to appoint a Commission of enquiry. Russia, always a champion of the Greek Church, thought this to be a favourable opportunity to interfere with a view to breaking up the Turkish Empire. She demanded guarantees for the Greek Church and also that the Greek Orthodox subjects of the Sultan should be placed under her protection. This would have affected the independence of Turkey, and could not be entertained by the Porte, in which attitude she had the support of England and France. On 18th May 1853, Diplomatic relations were broken off with Russia by Turkey, and Russia proposed to occupy the Danubian Principalities. The British Fleet of 7 battleships and 8 frigates was ordered to Besika Bay and arrived on 13th June, being joined later by 9 battleships and 4 frigates of the French Fleet. Here many weary months were spent. At the end of October the Allied Fleets moved up to Therapia in the Bosphorus.

Conferences took place without much result, and on 30th November the Russians attacked and destroyed a Turkish Squadron at Sinope, which was escorting troops to Asia Minor. The Allied Fleets entered the Black Sea on 3rd January 1854, and going to Sinope escorted the Turkish troops to the Eastern end of the Black Sea and then returned to Constantinople. As nothing came of the conferences, war was declared by the Allies on 27th March 1854. On 6th April 1854 the *Furious* was sent to Odessa to bring off the British Consul and subjects, and though carrying a flag of truce, was fired on. Meanwhile British and French troops were arriving and being

¹⁸ 1854

¹⁹ By Order-in-Council 13 August 1855.

landed at Gallipoli.

On 20th April HMS *Terrible*, *Tiger*, *Furious* and *Retribution* with three French Ships went to Odessa and on the 22nd commenced a bombardment. HMS *Arethusa* stood in to the Mole, the fort of which was blown up, and the batteries ceased firing. The British ships then stood in and set the enemy shipping on fire and destroyed the batteries, and brought off the people. On 29th they made a reconnaissance of Sevastopol, but did nothing.

An incursion to the East end of the Black Sea was then made and on 19th May, after a bombardment of Redout Kalch, Turkish troops were placed in occupation of it.

At the end of May it was decided to blockade the mouths of the Danube, and to transport the Armies to Varna, which was done, but no further action was taken till the autumn, when an invasion of the Crimea was determined on.

Meanwhile action was being taken in other quarters, first in the Baltic²⁰ and also in the Pacific, where an abortive but instructive attack was made on Petropaulovski on 30th August. This place was very strongly fortified, but the Allied Commanders with inadequate forces proceeded to attack it. The British ships *President* (50), *Forte* (40), *Pique* (40), *Virago* and *Amphitrite*, with three or four French ships, attacked on 30th August. (For some reason the British Admiral shot himself during the engagement.) It was renewed on the 31st against three batteries of 3, 5 and 11 guns. A party from *Virago* landed and spiked the guns of the three-gun battery, but the Russians also landed men from their ships and they had to retire. The other batteries were also silenced, but were repaired during the night.

Three American deserters came off, and acting on their information a Council of War decided to attempt to seize the town and take the batteries in reverse. On 4th September, 700 Seamen and Marines were landed under Captains Burrridge and La Grandiere, after two batteries of 5 and 7 guns had been silenced by *President*, *Forte*, and *Virago*. There was a wooded hill in rear of the landing place and the Russians were driven back to it and one battery was destroyed. The Hill was then carried with difficulty, the top being covered with brushwood and brambles whilst skirmishers opened fire on the attackers; in a bayonet charge Captain C A Parker RM was killed and the British had to retreat to the boats. This was effected, but not without loss and confusion, the British losing 107 killed and wounded, and the French 101. Besides Captain Parker, Lieutenants McCallum and A H Clements, RM were wounded and the attempt had to be abandoned. The landing place had been badly chosen, as the wooded hill commanded it and when they occupied the hill they could not be covered by the fire of the ships.

The Campaign in the Crimea.²¹

Eupatoria - When it was finally decided to invade the Crimea and attack the great fortress and arsenal of Sebastopol, the British, French, and Turkish Forces put to sea on 7th September 1854 and were disembarked at Old Fort, near Eupatoria, on the 14th. The disembarkation was completed on 18th, when the Army began its march to the Southward; on the 19th was fought the Battle of the Alma, resulting in a victory for the Allies. The Corps took no part in these operations, except landing parties to cover the seamen working parties employed in removing the wounded after the battle. But in order to protect the flank of the Allied Armies HMS *Vesuvius* and *Retribution* had been sent on 15th September with a detachment of 12 Officers and 418 Royal Marines from the larger ships, the whole under Captain Brock RN, to hold Eupatoria and to act in conjunction with the French afloat and ashore, to secure the town from enemy attacks, and to defend the Bay when transports were anchored there. They established a police, and fortified three strong points: (i) the Lazarette at the South-West extremity of the Bay; (ii) a large house in centre of the Bay; and (iii) a strong stone magazine at the Eastern extremity. These were loopholed and strengthened with sandbags and breastworks. On 19th September a strong body of Cossacks attempted an attack, but were repulsed without loss. On 23rd September, 300 French Marines reinforced the British, and later the Turks landed 200 Marines. On 26th September, HMS *Leander* landed 100 men. The place was now strong enough to resist attack, but it was never used as a Base owing to the change in the plans²². It was left in peace until 12th October. On that day a force of Cossacks, apparently about 800 strong, was observed advancing on the town. Captain Brook mounted 30 Royal Marines with a 12 pdr howitzer and some Tartar horsemen sallied out to meet the enemy. When about 600 yards distant the Cossacks opened out and disclosed four Horse Artillery guns which opened fire. Captain Brook retired and took up a defensive position; after a few shots the Cossacks retired.

²⁰ See pages 35 - 37

²¹ Authorities: History of the British Army (Fortescue); Crimean War (Kinglelake); Life of Admiral Sir E Lyons; Life of Admiral Sir W R Mends; Manuscript Records in RMO; Diary of Sir S Fraser; Globe and Laurel, 1904.

²² Life of Sir B. Lyons.

HMS *Firebrand* arrived the following day with a reinforcement of 400 men of the Egyptian Army, with 24 and 12 pdr guns from the Fleet. These added to the defensive power of the place, which was not attacked again until November.

Balaclava - After the Battle of the Alma, the Armies marched towards Sebastopol; moving round the East side, they invested the fortress on the South and East Sides, the British on the right and the French on the left. It was therefore necessary to move the main bases of both Armies; the French moved theirs to Kameisch Bay, which was very convenient for them; the British had to be content with the small harbour of Balaclava, which was to their left rear and not covered by their siege lines and was also open to attack from the North-East. The British position was on a plateau with heights looking to their rear over the plain of the River Tchernaya; these were known later as the Marine Heights. In order to protect his rear and flank Lord Raglan, the British Commander, requested Admiral Dundas to land his Royal Marines. On 28th September accordingly a Battalion of 25 Officers and 988 NCOs and Men were landed from the squadron under Lieutenant Colonel T Hurdle RM, and two days later a further draft of 10 Officers and 212 Men were landed, making a total of 35 Officers and 1200 Men. They were formed into two Battalions. The Brigade was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Hurdle with Captain Aslett as Brigade Major. The 1st Battalion was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel F A Campbell, Adjutant Lieutenant H G Elliot; and the 2nd Battalion at first by Major **McLeux*** and later by Lieutenant Colonel T Holloway. (* Check the name in the Navy List)

They were stationed on the heights 1200 feet above the sea and proceeded to construct a continuous entrenchment about two miles long, extending to Kadikoi - a small village where Colonel C Campbell, commanding at Balaclava, had his Headquarters. At intervals along these entrenchments Batteries were made, armed with an assortment of guns from 6 pdr field pieces to 32 pdr ships' guns. To work the guns a certain number of Marines were allotted from the two Battalions²³. General Fraser records that the tents were old and dilapidated and that they suffered great hardships from wet and cold and bad food.

The outer line of defence was a chain of smaller redoubts upon a low range of heights, which stretch across the plain at a distance about one and a half miles from the gorge leading into Balaclava; these were manned by the Turks. The 93rd Highlanders with a field battery were in Kadikoi.

The RM Batteries were manned, No 1 by Captain Alexander and 78 RM, No. 2 by Lieutenant Joliffe or Pym and 56 RMLI, No. 3 by Captain S Fraser and a company of Royal Marines from the 1st Battalion, No. 4 by Captain Blyth and a party of RMLI. Lieutenant Bradley Roberts RMA acted as Gunnery Officer to the Batteries helping them cut fuses, etc.

The landing of the RM allowed all available troops to be employed in the actual siege works. The Navy also landed a Brigade with 50 guns, which were employed in the trenches and siege batteries; to this Brigade were attached Lieutenants Douglas and Steele and a party of RMA. Both officers were wounded and specially mentioned in dispatches.

By 17th October the Fleet had landed 1786 Officers and Seamen and 1530 Royal Marines, besides 400 Marines at Eupatoria.²⁴

The Royal Marines had their first brush with the enemy on 6th October when the Russians drove in a Marine picket, but the 12 pdrs opened fire and the Russians retired.²⁵

On 17th October there was a heavy bombardment by the land batteries assisted by the squadron.

Owing to the position of the Allied investing lines, the isthmus of Perekop was open to the Russians, who were thus able to pour troops and supplies into the Crimea, and they had also a large field army operating outside the invested fortress.

On 18th October the Russians, about 10,000 strong, appeared in the plain below the Marine Heights and with them large bodies of cavalry. They were met by our cavalry, and retired across the river. The 2nd RM was moved to the lower part of the Heights to keep up communication with the Cavalry and Artillery; the 93rd Regiment were on the right, with one wing between the 1st and 2nd Battalions RM. It proved however only to be a reconnaissance in force.

On 20th October the Russians advanced again and the whole of the forces at Balaclava were under arms; two companies RM under Captain Timpson were sent to left of the RM lines, about the centre of the position, but it

²³ Life of Sir E. Lyons.

²⁴ Life of Sir E. Lyons.

²⁵ Life of Sir W. Mends.

proved to be a false alarm. On 25th October, however, the Russians really advanced in force on the redoubts held by the Turks before described. The Turks were driven out of them, but the guns of Nos 1 and 2 Batteries RM covered them, rendering useful service - "a fire was opened with good effect upon the Russians as they followed up the Turks who were running across the open after having been driven out of the advanced redoubts."

The Russians came on and then took place the magnificent charges of the Heavy and Light Cavalry which are of immortal memory. Before the charge of the Heavy Cavalry, the RM Batteries opened fire on the Cossacks at about 200 yards range, but had to cease fire after the first round as the Heavy Cavalry had closed with the enemy.²⁶ No. 2 Battery however opened on the Russian cavalry reserve and caused them to withdraw. No. 1 Battery fired into the Cossack right as they were reforming to charge again, and dispersed them and shelled them as they retired across the plain. No. 4 Battery was also heavily engaged²⁷. Colonel Campbell in his reports says, "During this period our batteries on the hills manned by the RMA and RM made most excellent practice on the enemy cavalry which came up the hilly ground in front." General Fraser gives a graphic account of the firing of No. 3 Battery on the Russian Cavalry after the charge of the Light Brigade^{28*} but it is probable that he refers to the Heavy Cavalry charge.

Lord Raglan became doubtful of holding the base at Balaclava, but Admiral Sir E. Lyons was against any change, and it continued to be used as the Main Base until the end.

Inkerman - On 2nd November two Companies under Captains Hopkins and March²⁹ were sent to join the Light Division before Sebastopol to replace a wing of the Rifle Brigade sent to Balaclava. These companies took part in the battle of Inkerman on 5th November, when the Russians combined a sortie by the garrison with an attack by the Army outside the fortress. Fought amidst fog and smoke, the British were more or less surprised, and this has become known as 'The Soldiers' Battle', in which the two companies of the Corps bore a distinguished part. The attack fell on the right of the British, the enemy coming up from the valley of the Tchernaya. The Companies were at first told to hold their ground and prevent a junction or communication between the troops and the town. The Inkerman Caves had however been occupied by the enemy's sharpshooters, who were picking off the officers and gunners. A Russian frigate was covering the open space in front of the caves. The RM were then ordered to clear the caves, but as soon as they appeared the frigate opened fire; Captain March was severely wounded in the jaw and several men were killed and wounded. Sergeant Richards and Corporal Prettyjohns then proceeded to clear and hold the caves, which they did quickly, but they were promptly counter-attacked; ammunition was nearly all expended and Prettyjohns led them in collecting stones which they threw down on the advancing enemy. Prettyjohns gripped the leader in a wrestling grip and threw him. Later in the day they were recalled and had to avoid the fire of the frigate³⁰. Corporal Prettyjohns was awarded the Victoria Cross and Colour Sergeant Jordan the Distinguished Conduct Medal and annuity. Captain Hopkins received the CB

These two Companies remained in the trenches for several months, after which they rejoined the Brigade at Balaclava.

The Brigade remained throughout the winter on the Heights and in the defences of Balaclava, suffering with the rest of the Army in the disastrous gale of November 14th, when the Fleet was much damaged, and several transports were wrecked. with the winter clothing for the troops and large quantities of ammunition. They shared with the Army the great hardships of that winter.

On 10th December the garrison at Eupatoria was withdrawn and replaced by a Division of the Turkish Army, which was attacked again on 17th February 1855, but acoieted by the ships drove off the Russians.

Light Infantry - In January 1855, as already stated, the Corps of Royal Marines was granted the title of Royal Marines, Light Infantry.

On 1st February, Sir H Keppel RN, records in his diary that making his way up to Army Headquarters in the snow, he passed the Royal Marines, who occupied the lower ground, and above them were the Guards, and on the higher ground the 93rd Highlanders.

In March the Russians made a sortie which was repulsed.

²⁶ Globe and Laurel.

²⁷ Ibid, 1904

²⁸ Globe and Laurel

²⁹ Life of Sir E. Lyons. Captain Portlock Dadson says four and Sergeant Turner 312 NCOs and Men.

³⁰ Globe and Laurel, 1904.

On 9th April there was an ineffective bombardment by the Fleet and land batteries.

Attack on Redan - In May 1856 a Division of the French Army, having taken up a position on the Tehernaya River, the Royal Marine Brigade was advanced in support of the French to cover their extreme right³¹. This enabled a detachment of the RMA from the Balaclava Lines to be transferred to the Siege Train, to reinforce the Royal Artillery. This detachment, under Brevet Major Alexander, joined the right attack on June 17th, in time to take part in the bombardment preceding the unsuccessful attack on the Redan on 18th June; they continued with this attack until 11th July when they were transferred to the left attack, rendering valuable aid in both positions.³²

But in the meantime the detachment with the Naval Brigade had added yet another leaf to the laurels of the Corps. For on 5th June, Bombardier Thomas Wilkinson of the RMA had gained the Victoria Cross; a terrific fire from the Russian guns had knocked to pieces the advanced works of the British. Wilkinson, jumping on to the parapet, replaced the sandbags as they were brought to him, rebuilding the parapet under intense fire and so saving many lives.

On 6th June the Mamelon was taken by the French.

Sea of Azoff - The Russians had their depots for supplies to the garrison from Middle and South Russia round the Sea of Azoff, to which the entrance was through the Straits of Kertch on the East of the Crimea. The Navy were anxious to destroy these if possible, but it was first necessary to gain possession of the forts defending the Straits. On 1st and 2nd May, an expedition of 8500 French troops with 2500 British and 4 Batteries of Artillery started with a large squadron of ships, but on 3rd May the French squadron was recalled by the French C-in-C and the enterprise had to be abandoned. On 20th May there was another Council of the Commanders, and it was decided to proceed, the French providing 7000 Infantry and 3 Batteries of Artillery; the British 3000 Infantry, which included one RM Battalion and one Battery, the whole under General George Brown.

Kertch - The troops embarked on 22nd May; there were six Battleships and a large number of small vessels and mortar boats. They steered for Kaffa Bay and the landing was effected at the Bay of Kanish Burnu, 5 miles from Kertch, covered by the steam frigates. There was no opposition on 24th May, the enemy retiring and blowing up their Batteries. The troops marched to Kertch and occupied it the same day, the Russians again exploding the magazines and retiring.

Yenikale - The light draught vessels under Captain Lyons then pushed on to Yenikale to engage the Forts at the entrance to the Sea of Azoff till the Army could come up. On 25th there was a loud explosion and the Russians evacuated Yenikale, where nearly 100 guns were captured, with large quantities of ammunition and grain, which were destroyed. Yenikale was put into a state of defence, with a Turkish garrison. In "*The Life of Admiral Mends*", who was Flag Captain, he notes that the French and Turkish troops were very lawless, plundering and massacring, and notes "to the honour of the Royal Marines and 93rd Regiment, the only British troops landed, they preserved perfect discipline and the 93rd extinguished a fire that had broken out."

With the flag of Sir E Lyons in the *Miranda*, the squadron of light vessels entered the Sea of Azoff; among them were several mortar boats with RMA crews, the senior RMA Officer being Captain McNamara.

The Admiral then made over the command to his son, Captain Lynne, and returned. The squadron went first to Berdiansk on 26th May, where they destroyed a number of Russian vessels with grain and stores. On 28th they bombarded Arabat Fort, which blew up, but the garrison was too strong for the small Naval force to land.

They then went on to Genitchi, which they fired and destroyed. Passing on then to Taganrog, the principal place at the head of the Sea, on 3rd June the small flotilla anchored 1400 yards from the Mole. As their terms were refused, fire was opened on the Government stores and buildings which were set alight. The garrison of 3000 men were kept in check by the boats' crews. By 3 pm large stores of grain, etc, with the vessels building on the stocks, were set on fire.

On 5th June at Marianpoul, a small force was landed from the squadron³³ and the stores were destroyed. On 6th June, the stores at Gheisk were burnt and thus having swept the Sea of Azoff, they returned to Balaclava. Another raid was made in July under Captain Sherard Osborne with successful results.

The siege continued; the Fleet and mortar boats participating in the bombardments. The RMA in the mortar Boats were under Captain Digby RMA, and the following officers were borne on the books of HMS *Royal Albert* for mortar boats; Lieutenants E H Starr, H Hewett, W Festing. When the weather was too rough for the boats

³¹ Life of Sir E Lyons

³² Life of Sir E Lyons

³³ There is a picture of this landing, which shows the Marines in the boats.

they had to lie in Streletska Bay. They had been fitted on a plan devised by Captain Julius Roberts, RMA, which answered admirably³⁴.

The RM Brigade still consisted of two Battalions, the 1st commanded by Lieutenant Colonel F A Campbell, and the 2nd by Lieutenant Colonel T Holloway.

On 28th June Lord Raglan, the C-in-C, died, much regretted. At the funeral the RMLI furnished a Guard of Honour at the pier in the Bay of Kazatch, and also lined the road from the pier inland.³⁵

Malakoff and Redan - In preparation for another attack on the Malakoff and Redan, a bombardment was opened on 5th September, and continued on 6th and 7th; the Russians were expecting an assault and had brought up large numbers of troops and so lost heavily. Bad weather prevented the Fleet taking part, but the mortar Boats lying in Streletska Bay were able to bombard the Quarantine Fort. On 8th the French carried the Malakoff, but the British failed against the Redan. With the loss of the Malakoff the fortifications on the South side became untenable, so the Russians blew them up and retired across the harbour to the North side; during the night there were many explosions and the fortifications on the South side were seen to be in flames. The six remaining Russian battleships were sunk at their moorings, and the Southern portion of the Bridge hauled over. The Russian Black Sea Fleet of 18 battleships and numerous frigates was no more.

As the siege operations were finished, the Naval Brigade was withdrawn and re-embarked on 16th September. Sir H Keppel of the *St. Jean d'Acre* records in his diary: "5th October. Busy re-embarking the Royal Marines, the finest body of men in the Crimea."

It is interesting to record that the Royal Marines were the first British troops to re-enter Sebastopol, when in December 1918 the 3rd Royal Marine Battalion after the Great War took over the town from the German occupying troops.

The Admiralty letter to Admiral Sir E Lyons contained the following remarks about the RM and Naval Brigade:

"They command me on the present occasion to desire you to convey their approval of the conduct of the Officers and Men of the Battalion of Royal Marines who have been serving on shore, and more especially the officers and men of the Naval Brigade. That Brigade has shown the most cheerful endurance of the fatigues and hardships of the trenches, as well as the greatest skill and gallantry in working the guns, and bearing their part in the danger of the advanced works in the assault on the enemy lines."

But the war was not over. Shots were still exchanged with the Russians on the North side of the harbour; the cloaks were being destroyed and plans were made for its further prosecution.

Kinburn - The British were anxious to attack Odessa, but the French would not agree; finally the Emperor Napoleon III by a telegram of 20th September 1855, ordered his generals to attack Kinburn.

Where the Rivers Bug and Dnieper flow into the Black Sea there is a wide estuary, and Nicolaieff, a large arsenal and Naval Station, is on the River Bug. There is a long spit of land on the South shore extending for some miles towards the opposite coast; the Dnieper flows into the eastern extremity of the Gulf. Not far inland from this point is the town of Kherson; through which troops passed to the Crimea via Perekop. Kinburn Spit was fortified; a large stone fort was situated some distance from its extremity. Two other earthwork batteries, offering a very small target, had recently been built with 10 guns each. Fort Kinburn was a solid structure, casemated and with earthworks above the masonry, mounting 55 guns, howitzers and mortars, mostly *en barbette*. There was a wet ditch on the North front and the garrison consisted of 1500 men. On the opposite side of the channel was Ochakoff Point, on which was Fort Nicolaieff, with 22 guns and also several earthworks.

The plan was to land on the Spit below Fort Kinburn to cut off the retreat of the garrison, and then to bombard the defences with floating batteries and mortars, as the battleships could not approach nearer than 1200 yards.

The occupation of Kinburn would stop communication by sea between Nicolaieff, Kherson and Odessa, and would threaten the rear of the Russian Army and perhaps cause it to evacuate the Crimea.

By 6th October all was ready: the battleships *Royal Albert*, *Hannibal*, *Algiers*, *Princess Royal*, *St. Jean d'Acre*, *Sidon*, and *Leopard*, with two transports carrying 4000 British Infantry, including Colonel Hurdle's Battalions of Royal Marines (950 strong) and a Battery of Artillery, the whole under Brigadier Hon H B Spencer, a similar

³⁴ Life of Sir E Lyon

³⁵ Life of Sir W R Mends.

force of French under General Bazaine³⁶, with a French squadron and a large number of steam frigates, sloops, and mortar vessels. The mortar vessels were under Captain Wilcox RN and Captain Digby, RMA; 1st RM under Colonel C Campbell was reinforced by detachments of *Agamemnon*, *Royal Albert*, *St. Jean d'Acre*, and *Hannibal* from 15th to 30th October, and carried a colour lent by Captain King RN³⁷. The 2nd RM (Lieutenant Colonel Holloway) was reinforced by detachments of *Algiers* and *Princess Royal* for some time. The RMA detachment was under Brevet Major Alexander and Lieutenant Joliffe.

They rendezvoused on 8th October and reached the anchorage on 14th. At night the *Fancy*, *Boxer*, *Cracker* and *Climber* (steam gun vessels) with 4 French gunboats forced the entrance into the estuary, under heavy fire. The following morning the British and French transports landed their troops about 3 miles to the southward of the principal Fort, thus cutting off the retreat of the defenders. In the evening the ships ranged on the forts. The swell prevented operations on 15th, but on 17th with a Northerly breeze the mortar and other vessels took up their position off Fort Kinburn. By noon the buildings of the Fort were in flames and the Eastern face had suffered considerably. At noon 4 British and 4 French battleships approached Fort Kinburn in line abreast. Admiral Houston-Stewart and a small squadron pushed through between the Points to fire from the inside and cover the troops; 4 ships took on the centre battery and 3 the fort at the point of the Spit. The enemy's fire was soon silenced, and a flag of truce was sent ashore with a summons to surrender, which was accepted; the garrison of 1400 marched out with the honours of war. The British loss was only 2 wounded, but the Russians suffered heavily and 81 guns were captured.

On the 16th the enemy blew up the Forts on Ochakoff Point and retired. Kinburn fort was put into a state of defence, which was finished by the end of October, and garrisoned with 1000 French troops and a small Allied Flotilla.

The expedition returned to Sebastopol on November 2nd.

The troops were kept on board till 11th with a view to an expedition against Kaffa and Arabat, but the idea was abandoned. Part of the Squadron was sent to Malta to refit, and Admiral Sir Houston-Stewart was sent with 4 battleships to cruise in the Mediterranean and round the Ionian Islands. Admiral Mende records that the Royal Marines were sent to England on 2nd November, but these must have been supernumeraries as the detachments probably rejoined their own ships on 30th October.

The war dragged on, but there were no great operations. Peace was proclaimed at beginning of May 1856, and in July the evacuation of the Crimea was completed, having begun on 3rd June with the embarkation of the Coldstream Guards. It was completed on 12th July.

Rewards - The following rewards were given for the Crimea:

Colonel T. Hurdle - Brevet Colonel - 29.6.55.	CB - 5.7.55.
Brevet - Lieutenant Colonels:	
Captain W F Hooking RMLI	13. 6. 55.
Captain G L Alexander RMA	2. 11. 55.
Brevet Majors:	
Captain W F Hopkins, RMLI	12.12. 54.
Captain S Fraser RMLI	12.12. 54.
Captain W E March RMLI	12.12. 54.
Captain G P Payner RMLI	12.12. 54.
Captain H Marriott RMLI	12.12. 54.
Captain W S Aslett RMLI	12.12. 54.
Captain G B Rodney RMLI	2.11.55.
Captain G S Rigby RMA	2.11.55

³⁶ Of Metz fame.

³⁷ See Appx. Divisional. Colours.

The following were awarded the Legion of Honour:

Col T Hurdle
Lt Col T Holloway

Capt G B Rodney	Sgt C. Horner RMA
Capt G L Alexander	Sgt G Yule RMA
Capt W F Hopkins	Sgt E Richards RMLI
Capt W H Harch	Sgt J Jordan RMLI.
Capt G S Digby	Bdr T Wilkinson RMA
Capt D Blyth	Cpl W Chappel RMLI

Lt A A Douglas	Gnr J Bull RMA
Lt H.J.Tull	Gnr F Kerr RMA
Lt F G Pym	Pte J Burton RMLI
Lt A C Steel	Pte J Coborn RMLI

This list is probably not quite complete.

On the 23rd April 1856, a Review of the Fleets that had been employed in the Black Sea and the Baltic was held at Spithead. 240 ships being reviewed by Her Majesty.

The Baltic Campaign 1854-1855³⁸ - Concurrently with the Crimea, operations were undertaken in the Baltic, with no very great results. It was almost entirely a Naval War on the British side; both the Admiralty and the C-in-C were so fully impressed with the folly of pitting ships against forts without an adequate landing force, lessons that have been so bitterly repeated, that they were almost unduly cautious.

A Fleet was assembled at Spithead under Admiral Sir Charles Napier consisting of 13 screw battleships, 8 screw frigates, 8 paddle frigates and sloops, 6 sailing battleships and a large number of mortar boats, etc. The Press Gang could not be used, so bounties were offered and all sorts of riff-raff, not seamen, were entered; in fact, if it had not been for the Royal Marines and the Coastguard, the Fleet could not have got to sea. Continuous service for seamen had only just been instituted, and the Admiralty acknowledged the value of the Corps in this emergency by the Order-in-Council 11th August 1854, when free rations afloat were granted.³⁹

After inspection by HM The Queen, the armament sailed for the Baltic in April 1854, and cruised off the coast of the Gulf of Finland doing nothing; the Admiral was too old and past his work and would take no risks, in which he was backed up by the Admiralty.

Lieutenant Colonel Forteseue Graham RM had been embarked in the Flagship to take command of any landing party.

Bomarsund - The Russians had occupied the Aland Islands as an advanced post against Sweden and had erected there a big fort at Bomarsund. It was armed with 92 guns in two tiers. Its rear was protected by two smaller forts on hills in rear, Nottich and Tzee, and by a fort at Presto on a separate island. These were of granite and each had 24 guns in two tiers.

Admiral Napier at last feeling that something must be done, reconnoitred the Channels on 30th June and the Channels were surveyed by HMS *Driver*. Captain Sullivan RN found navigable passages, though they were difficult.

On 2nd July the Fleet returned to Helsingfors. On 30th July the French troops arrived, but would do nothing till the arrival of their artillery. The British troops were represented by the Battalion of Royal Marines from the Fleet, and some Royal Engineers under Brigadier-General Jone RE, who was in command of the whole force. It was then decided to attack Bomarsund.

The Royal Marines were under Colonel Fortescue-Graham ADC, with Major Nolloth and Captain W M Heriot;

³⁸ Authorities: Life of Sir C Napier, Britain's Sea Soldiers, (Field) ; Diary of Lt Durnford-RMA.; Life of Admiral Moresby; MSS Records

³⁹ . See page 27

Brigade Major, Captain W Elliot; Adjutant, Lieutenant O F Fraser; Orderly Officer, Lieutenant J M Lennox. The officers of the RMA Company were Lieutenants Mawbey, Poore, Hewett, J R Brookes and E C L Durnford (Acting Engineer). There were 8 RM Infantry Companies (Captains Hamley, Olavell, Naylor, Sayer, H Delacombe, McKillop, Fosbrook, John Elliot), Lieutenants H Evans, Jeffreys, Portlock-Dadson, J Sanders, T Bent, A Tait, W Sanders, Bland Hunt, Murray, with 18 Sergeants, 20 Corporals, 1 Bombardier, 7 Drummers, 70 Gunners, 541 Privates.

On 5th August the bombardment began, assisted by three French steamers. On 7th August HMS *Driver* embarked 700 Marines and 120 RE under Brigadier General Jones, with some naval guns under Captain Sullivan RN, and went round to the Northern landing place near Hulta in rear of the Forts where, covered by the *Edinburgh* under Admiral Chads, they were landed on the 8th and were followed by 2000 French Marines. The Russians were summoned to surrender but refused. French troops in large numbers were also landed at Tranvick Bay, to the South of the Fortress.

The RM advanced guard pushed on to about 1000 yards to the North of Fort Tzee, where it was encamped, and batteries were opened. The French Battery of four 16 pdrs and four mortars was ready and opened fire on morning of 13th; the British battery of ship 32 pdrs took longer to build as the guns had to be dragged up by the Sailors and Marines. The Marines built themselves wigwams, but it took several days to build the battery of three guns; they were further delayed owing to the few real seamen available having to go on board again to help to get off the *Penelope*, which had gone ashore under the big Russian Battery. During the building of the batteries, the fire of the enemy was kept down by the rifle fire directed on the embrasures by the Royal Marines and French chasseurs. A line of skirmishers of Royal Marines connected with the French attack.

The French attack on Tzee on the 13th commenced at 4 am and at 5 pm the Russians hoisted a flag of truce, but nothing resulted from the negotiations and the firing was continued. At 10 pm the other Russian forts opened fire and the French, finding no reply from Fort Tzee, crept up, found it deserted and at once occupied it. The fort caught fire the next morning and about 11 am it blew up. The British were occupied on the 14th in reforming their battery so as to fire on Fort Nottich.

On the 15th the British ships commenced firing on the remaining forts and the British battery opened on Fort Nottich at 8.10. After a considerable time some impression was made by the 32 pdrs on the granite, but it was not until the seamen had been relieved by the RMA, who had up till then been acting as infantry, that Lieutenant Mawby directed all the guns to fire simultaneously at one spot, when the granite fell in masses and a breach was made, and the defenders hung out a white flag. A hundred RM under Major Ord RE, then took possession of the Fort. The Russians had suffered heavy losses.

Presto Island Fort was next attacked; 800 men and 4 guns were landed at the back of the island, and Captain Ramsay opened fire at 1500 yards. This fort had suffered from the fire of the ships directed at the main fort, and surrendered on 18th to Lieutenant Colonel de Vascoigne of the French Army and Captain S N Lowder, Royal Marines.

The Main Fort, having suffered badly from the fire of the Fleet and seeing the preparations for the renewal of the bombardment from the rear, surrendered unconditionally and the garrison marched out on the 17th; the Royal Marines and a French regiment of Marines forming a line to the quay, to which the prisoners were played by the Drums and Fifes of the Royal Marines.

As the French were in command they looted Presto Fort, which was blown up on the 30th, and Fort Nottich on the 31st. The Main Fort was blown up on 2nd September, and they were occupied till the 14th blowing up the works. The Russians had themselves burnt the villages on the 9th to prevent their offering cover to the besiegers.

Admiral Moresby records that "none of the shot and shell from the Fleet had penetrated either the sides or the roof of the Fort the guns on shore had done the job in two days."

The Allied casualties were very slight. The RMLI had one killed and one wounded, but owing to the lack of sanitary precautions the French suffered heavily from cholera; out of 600 landed at Presto, 100 died, and out of 10,000 troops 800 were lost in three weeks.

The British left for Revel on 22nd September and the French went home.

Helsingfors and Sveaborg were reconnoitred and a few small raids were made, but nothing was done and the 1854 campaign ended, the British ships having to withdraw on account of the ice.

For the 1855 campaign Admiral Napier was replaced by Admiral Dundas, but the cautious policy was still

continued.

Many of the battleships and Royal Marines who had served in the Baltic in 1854, had been sent to the Mediterranean, where they served on shore with the RM Battalions. A French Corps d'Armee and floating batteries were to have taken part in the Baltic campaign, but had also been diverted to the Black Sea. The Allied Fleet consisted of 21 battleships, 30 frigates and sloops, and 50 gunboats and mortar vessels, in which large numbers of the RMA were embarked. It also included some 'blockships' which were cut down old battleships armed with 60 guns.

The Russian coasts were harried and Cronstadt was reconnoitred; a sketch of the Cronstadt Forts was made by Captain R A K Clavell, RMLI, who afterwards painted it on the wall of the Commandant's Office in the old Forton Barracks.

Viborg - On 13th July Viborg was attacked by the *Ruby* and boats from other ships under command of Captain Yelverton RN of the *Arrogant*, and another leaf was added to the Corps Laurels by Captain George. Dare Dowell, RMA, who earned the V.C.

Anchoring close to the South of Stralsund, the boats of the *Ruby*, *Magicienne*, and *Arrogant* with a strong body of Marines under Captain Lowder, RMLI (*Arrogant*) was sent in; when Viborg was sighted the flotilla was stopped by a boom and other obstacles. A masked battery opened on them at 350 yards range with musketry and grape shot; they also came under the fire of the Russian gunboats and had to withdraw to Stralsund, covered by the *Ruby*, which had failed to break the boom. An explosion took place on board one of the *Arrogant's* cutters, which was swamped and drifted close to the Battery; Lieutenant Haggard RN of *Arrogant* with Lieutenant G D Dowell RMA of the *Magicienne* in the *Ruby's* gig with a volunteer crew, Lieutenant Dowell rowing stroke oar, succeeded in towing out the cutter under a heavy fire and saved the crew. For this Lieutenant Dowell was awarded the VC, as already stated.

On 21st July Captain Yelverton appeared before the batteries recently erected at Frederickshaun on the Finland coast between Viborg and Helsingfors, and opened fire; the enemy abandoned their batteries and the British withdrew without landing.

It was however considered necessary that the fortified island of Kotla should be examined. On 26th the *Arrogant*, with a small squadron including mortar boats and gunboats, anchored off Fort Rotchenholm; the *Magicienne* was detailed to destroy the bridge connecting with the mainland, and voceels were anchored to command the military road to Helsingfors and the channel. All the Royal Marines were landed under Captain Lowder RM, with Lieutenants Dowell, Mudge, and Holmes, who took possession of the forts without opposition as the garrison had evacuated them. The stores etc were burnt and on 27th the squadron sailed, the *Cossack* being left in charge of the island.

Sveaborg - But nothing serious was attempted, as Admiral Moresby says "As a last useless act Sveaborg was bombarded by the Fleet at 3500 yards range" on 9th August 1855. A certain amount of damage was done, but "it had no practical effect on the War". A considerable number of the mortar boats with the RMA were employed, and the mortars had fired so much that they became unserviceable and the boats were sent home. The Fleet returned in September.

The Mortar Boats had however earned the thanks of the Admiral, who said: "My especial thanks are due to the officers and men of the Royal Marine Artillery for the manner in which their important duties have been performed. The cool and steady courage with which they continued to conduct the duties of their station deserves the highest praise; and I have much pleasure in calling Their Lordships' attention to the services of Captain Wemyss as well as to those of Captains Lawrence and Schomberg of that distinguished Corps."

Lieutenant Colonel Fortescue-Graham received the CB in Gazette of 5th July, 1855.

Brevet majorities were awarded in Gazette of 2nd November 1855 to:

Captain S N Lowder RMLI
Captain J M Wemyss RMA
Captain J F Lawrence RMA
Captain G A Schomberg RMA

By the Treaty of Paris signed on 30th March 1856, the War was terminated.

P A R T V

1857 - 1860

This period, which saw large numbers of the Corps employed on active service ashore, was also one of reorganisation; one of the most important events being the formation of the separate Royal Marine Artillery Division in 1859. It is also notable for the presentation of new Colours in 1858, and a great enlargement of all the Barracks.

In **1857** the numbers were 15,500.

Good Conduct Badges - By Order-in-Council 6th May, the grant of Good Conduct Badges, which had been given to Seamen and Marines on 15 January 1849, was extended to Sergeants. The Army had granted them on 8th July 1848.

Promotion - Again the subject of retirement and promotion was dealt with by Order-in-Council 13 November 1858. This did not much alter the 1854 order, but laid down that General Officers; Commandants and Staff were not to hold their appointments for more than five years, and that Commandants were to be retired at 60 years of age.

The growth of the RM Artillery had led to the creation of an additional 2nd Commandant to superintend the Artillery duties (Order-in-Council 2nd February 1857) and also an additional QMS.

1858 - The numbers were reduced to 15,000 in 104 Divisional and 14 Artillery Companies; the officers of the reduced companies were however retained as supernumeraries.

Barracks - The RMA moved out of the Gunwharf Barracks into Fort Cumberland at Portsmouth.

In 1867 and 1858 very considerable additions were made to the Barracks at Stonehouse, three passages being added to the main block and a new infirmary. The North Wing was not finished till 1864 and the fine Western Front with vane and clock not till 1867 and the Married Quarters in 1869.

At Chatham the Barracks were enlarged to their present boundaries in 1862; the C, D, E and F Blocks were added in 1864. A and B Blocks and the Paymaster's Offices and Quartermasters' Stores were added in 1866, and in 1867 the single Officers' Quarters and the Field Officers' Houses.

Colours - In 1858 new Colours were presented to all Divisions⁴⁰. These departed from the 1827 design in many particulars, and were evolved by the Herald's College according to recent Army regulations. No ceremony was observed in their presentations, which were mostly made at the DAG's Inspections.

In **1859** the numbers were 16,995, in 112 Divisional and 16 Artillery Companies.- (Order-in-Council 30 April).

A considerable increase in officers was effected⁴¹ by placing all the Adjutants, Quartermasters, Gunnery and Musketry Instructors on the Staff, instead of being borne on the strength of the Companies as hitherto.

RMA Division - The great event of the year was the creation of the separate Artillery Division, but the formation of the RMA as a separate Corps did not take place for another three years.

By Order-in-Council 22 October 1859, a Commandant, Barrackmaster, Paymaster, Surgeon, Assistant Surgeon, and another Adjutant, Lieutenant and Quartermaster, and one Quartermaster were allowed; the strength of the Artillery Companies being 2,992 as against an Infantry Divisional strength of 3,472 each.

The wording of the Order-in-Council says:

"The Artillery companies have hitherto been attached to the Portsmouth Division; but the present establishment of Artillery Companies being nearly equal to the strength of a Divisional Headquarters, much inconvenience is felt at Portsmouth, in consequence of all arrangements for the accounts of the said Companies having to pass through the Commandant of that Division; and this inconvenience is now greatly increased, as the Artillery Companies are stationed at a considerable distance from the Headquarters of the Division, and on the opposite side of Portsmouth Harbour. It will therefore be desirable, for the benefit of the Corps generally, to place the Artillery Companies on a more efficient

⁴⁰ See Appendix.

⁴¹ Order-in-Council 12 April 1859

footing, by forming them into a separate Division to be called the Artillery Division of the Royal Marines with the same staff and advantages as the other Divisional Headquarters”.

The officers however still remained on the general list of the Corps, and the men were drawn from the general recruits and were called 'volunteers for the RMA'

The Indian Mutiny, 1857⁴² - Before dealing with the China War it is necessary to note the terrible doings in India. The Mutiny of the Sepoys broke out in May 1857, and though it was far removed from the usual duties of the Royal Marines, yet a small portion of the Corps was able to render some assistance in that terrible struggle.

Calcutta - The detachment under Colonel Lemon RMLI of two Captains (S Little and T V Cooke), six Subalterns (Cobb, Inglis, A D Smith, Sparshott and two others), 22 Sergeants, 5 Drummers, 273 Corporals and Privates, with Colour-Sergeant Prettyjohns, VC as Sergeant-Major, which left England on March 12th for special service in China, were diverted to Calcutta, where they landed on 1st September, but were retained as garrison at Calcutta in Fort William and did not proceed up country. On 16th October they were reinforced by Captain Foote and 66 Royal Marines from HMS *Sans Pareil*, who however re-embarked on 30th October and Colonel Lemon's detachment left Calcutta for China on 4th November in the troopship *Assistance*. Their presence had released troops urgently required for service up country.

HMS *Shannon* and *Pearl* had also been sent from England to reinforce the China Squadron, but on arrival at Hong Kong, after disembarking their supernumary RMA (1 officer and 25 other ranks) they were sent back to render assistance; they arrived in the Hooghly on 6th August and landed their Brigades, whose names have passed into history.

HMS *Shannon's* Brigade under Captain Sir William Peel included Captain T C Gray and Lieutenant William Stirling RMLI with 17 RMA and about 45 RMLI and was about 450 strong all told, with heavy guns and rocket tubes.

Fathpur - They left Calcutta for Allahabad in the river steamer *Chunar* on 18th August, with a flat in tow carrying six 88 pdrs, two 24 pdr howitzers and two field pieces. They arrived at Allahabad on 2nd September and were joined on the 20th by a second detachment from HMS *Shannon* under Lieutenant Vaughan, making them all told 570. The troops were concentrating at Cawnpore and were being pushed up in detachments. A detachment of the Naval Brigade, 104 Officers and Men, escorting the siege train, left Allahabad on 25th October, the second detachment under Captain Peel followed on the 28th with a wing of 53rd Regiment, a detachment of RE and various regiments under Colonel Powell CB.

This detachment reached Fathpur - about half way - at midnight on the 31st, where information was received that about 4000 mutineers were occupying a strong position at Kajwa, 24 miles North-West of Fathpur. Colonel Powell decided to attack, and at 5 am on 1st November set out with a detachment of about 530 men, including 103 Officers and Men of the Naval Brigade under Captain Peel, with two 9 pdr guns. At 3 pm on 2nd November the enemy were sighted in position. Colonel Powell attacked at once, the 53rd in front, the Naval Brigade forcing back the enemy's left so that he was forced to face to left. Powell was killed and the command devolved on Peel. Peel gave them no time to rally, and posting a strong force to secure his new position, he carried his troops round the upper end of the embankment and cut them in two, drove them from this position and captured their camp and two guns. Pursuit was impossible as there were no cavalry, and the infantry had marched 72 miles in three days. The British losses were 95 killed and wounded; among the latter was Lieutenant Stirling RM who was severely wounded.

Peel resumed his march to Cawnpore, where Sir Colin Campbell arrived on 3rd November.

Lucknow - His immediate object was the relief of the beleaguered garrison at Lucknow, where the Residency was being held by Generals Outram and Havelock; the 32nd DCLI (Bor's Marines) forming a principal part of the garrison under their gallant Colonel Inglis.

From 3rd to 9th November the C-in-C was organising his advance and arranging for the defence of his base at Cawnpore, where a garrison of about 500 Europeans were left, including 47 men and the 24 pdrs of the Naval Brigade (including presumably some Marines and wounded), under Brigadier C Windham CB

A force of 3,400 men, including the Naval Brigade with eight heavy guns drawn by bullocks, and two rocket tubes mounted in light carts, with 250 Seamen and Marines, having been concentrated, the C-in-C advanced - on

⁴² Authorities: With the Shannon's Brigade in India; History of the Indian Mutiny (Malleon); History of the British Army (Fortesoue); RMO. Records.

12th November - on the Alumbagh, which was held by a force of 950 men left by General Sir Henry Havelock in the first relief. After a short opposition it was relieved, and the force halted next day. On 14th they moved to Dilkusha Park and the enemy after some resistance was driven out over the crest to the Martiniere, and retired across the canal to the city.

The GOC was making arrangements to secure the ground won, when the enemy delivered a counterattack, which was soon defeated; but as the troops were settling down into bivouac, the mutineers at 5 pm made a fresh attack, which the British - who were now lining the Canal - repulsed. The Naval Brigade during the fight was posted on some high ground to the left of the bridge between the Martiniere plain and the Hazratgani main street, and brought a heavy fire to bear on the enemy who were massed in this angle of the Canal and crushed them out.

On the 15th arrangements were made for the main advance to the Residency. The baggage was stored in Dilkusha Palace under cover of a strong rearguard.

On 16th the advance was continued, the first point of attack being the Sikanderabagh. It is not possible here to describe all the operations, but only to indicate the part taken by the Naval Brigade and the Royal Marines. The Sikanderabagh and the Barracks were carried with great gallantry, but the troops now found themselves held up by the Shah Najif, which was a large mosque situated in a garden, enclosed by a high loopholed wall, nearly square and very strong; also between it and the plain was a fringe of jungle and enclosures.

The afternoon was going on, and the GOC considered it essential to secure this point. General Adrian Hope with his Brigade was at hand, "Captain Peel brought up his 24 pdrs, mortars and rocket frames and placed them in battery against the Shah Najif in an oblique line, with their left resting on the village. The musketry fire of the enemy was very severe, and interfered seriously with the fire of the guns; Major Barnston's Provisional Battalion tried to clear the fringe of jungle and enclosures but was unsuccessful, and after three hours' battering the Shah Najif was still unsubdued. The narrow lane leading up from the rear was crowded and confusion reigned; some of the houses were alight; reinforcements and ammunition had the greatest difficulty in getting forward. At 4 pm the enemy brought up a heavy gun to bear from the opposite bank of the river, and the first shot blew up one of the Naval ammunition waggons, and their musketry caused Captain Peel to withdraw his men from one gun. The position was critical, retreat was impossible, and it was necessary for the infantry to do with the bayonet what the artillery had failed to do." ⁴³

The GOC addressed the 93rd in this sense; Middleton's Battery RA passed Peel's guns on the right, got as close as possible, and opened with grape shot; Peel redoubled his fire⁴⁴; the 93rd formed in open column on the plain and rushed on, Sir Colin leading them himself; but there was no breach or scaling ladders, so they halted and commenced a musketry fire. Two of the Naval guns were brought up to within a few yards of the wall and shot as fast as they could, but could make no impression. The rocket frames were brought up and threw in a fire which, just skimming the top of the wall, plunged into the interior of the building and searched it out. Under cover of this the guns were drawn off. Meanwhile Sergeant Paton of the 93rd had discovered a hole in the wall and General Adrian Hope with some of the 93rd got through about 50 yards on the right and officers and men were pushed through; the sappers enlarged the hole and supports rushed in and, gaining the gate, threw it open. The enemy appear to have been panic-stricken by the rockets, as they gave up the struggle just as victory seemed certain for them. The troops bivouacked on the ground won. On the next day the attack was made on the Mess House, which was carried under cover of the fire of the Naval guns from early morning till 3 pm. The Mess House was actually carried by Captain Wolseley, who also continued his pursuit and carried the Moti Mahal as well.

Though the intervening space was exposed to fire from the Kaisar Bagh, Generals Sir Colin Campbell and Sir James Outram met, and the relief was effected.

The main point was how to withdraw the garrison with the women, children, sick and wounded, etc. It is impossible here to describe all the movements necessary, but on the 20th the Artillery and Naval guns commenced a heavy fire on the Kaisar Bagh, which they maintained all that day, also on the 21st and 22nd, and by evening of the latter day the breaches in the wall invited assault, but this was not intended, as the bombardment was to cover the withdrawal. The women and children safely reached the Dilkusha Park and during night of 22nd/23rd all the troops were withdrawn to the same place. On the evening of the 24th the convoy had reached the Alumbagh, and Outram - who had been forming the rearguard - rejoined on the 25th.

⁴³ ..Malleon

⁴⁴ From reminiscences of an old Marine in the Globe and Laurel, 1904. We know the RM were there.

Cawnpore - On the 27th a garrison having been left in the Alumbagh, Sir Colin arrived at the Banni Bridge to find that the garrison at Cawnpore were engaged in a desperate fight with the mutineers and the Gwalior Contingent. At Cawnpore there were 9 guns worked by a detachment of the Naval Brigade. On 26th November General Windham fought a very serious action, in which two 24 pdrs and two 24 pdr howitzers of the Naval Brigade were engaged; two of the pieces were for a time in the hands of the enemy, but were recovered by the 34th Madras Native Infantry. Windham was only saved from disaster by the arrival of Sir Colin on the evening of the 28th. During the night of the 27th/28th, the convoys and troops were arriving from Lucknow. The Naval Brigade with the heavy guns, after a 30 mile march, only reached the ground an hour before sunrise. The mutineers had brought down their heavy guns to try and break the bridge of boats. The Naval Brigade was only allowed one hour for rest and food, and were then sent to a point above the bridge where they could fire on the enemy's guns. The guns from Cawnpore entrenchment were also turned on the same point. For some time the artillery duel seemed equal, but gradually the British guns asserted their superiority and the Cavalry and Horse Artillery with Adrian Hope's Brigade were sent across, and by evening of the 30th the convoy was safely across on the Cawnpore side, though the rebels were still holding the town.

On 3rd December the convoy of women-and children with the wounded was dispatched to Allahabad. Allowing time for the convoy to get away, Sir Colin Campbell determined to fight on 0th December The Naval Brigade took part in this battle, which is outside the scope of this History. It resulted in a great victory and dispersed tow enemy's troops and the dangerous 3walior Contingent. Captain Gray, RM , appeore to have been wounded in this battle.

On 31st December the mutineers sent down a party to destroy the suspension bridge over the Kali Nuddi at Fathgarh (Futtegurh), but a party of Adrian Hope's Brigade with two 21 pdrs and one 8-inch howitzer of the Naval Brigade under Lieutenant Vaughan was sent on and saved the bridge and repaired it. They were soon after counterattacked by the rebels, but the main body was coming up, and a very severe defeat was inflicted on the rebels.

The next operation in which the *Shannon's* Brigade was engaged was the capture of Lucknow. The two 24 pdrs and two 6-inch howitzers of the Naval Brigade accompanied the force; the operations are outside the scope of this history, but it must be mentioned that in reconnoitring for a position for his guns in order to breach the Martiniere on 9th March 1858, Sir William Peel was severely wounded. Lucknow was in British hands by 19th March and on 1st April the Naval Brigade started for Cawnpore and Calcutta; on 2nd March Captain Peel had been created KCB and ADC to the Queen, but on 27th April at Cawnpore he succumbed to an attack of small-pox and died there.

In the London Gazette of 5th January 1853, Captain Gray and Lieut Stirling RM are mentioned in despatches, and Capt Gray is also mentioned in the London Gazette of 16th January 1858 as wounded and in the Gazette of 25 May 1858 he is mentioned as "deemed deserving of honourable mention" for service at Lucknow. A telegram from HMS *Pylades* dated Calcutta 7th September 1858 says; NCOs of *Shannon's* Brigade served during the whole of that Brigade's campaign in Provinces; Commander J W Vaughan RN and Lieutenant Stirling RM bear the highest testimony to their zeal and gallantry in the execution of their duties." ⁴⁵

Chatham Division Sergeant Leo Hinder and Artillery Company Sergeant George. Young of HMS *Shannon* were mentioned in dispatches.

Gorakhpur - We must now turn to the proceedings of the *Pearl's* Brigade. This Brigade of 125 men under Captain Sotheby, which included Lieutenant F G Pym RMLI with 5 RMA and about 25 RMLI, were attached to a column under Colonel Rowcroft, which had been organised to clear the rebels out of the districts of Benares and the East of Oudh.

The Column also consisted of 50 Bengal Police and 359 Nepalese troops with four 12 pdr howitzers. It was to move to Tirhut along the Gandah towards Gorakhpur. Leaving their camp at Mirwa, they attacked a force of 1,200 sepoys and 4,000 armed irregulars at Sohunpore on 26th December 1857. The enemy were occupying a strong position at a village, covered in front by a tank with high trees and on the right by a tope of trees. Colonel Rowcroft halted at a distance of half a mile and rode forward to reconnoitre; he decided to turn the enemy's left, which was done with great success. Captain Sotheby managed the Artillery. "The Minie Rifles of the Royal Marines directed by Lieutenant Pym produced a striking effect." ⁴⁶ The attack commenced at 11 am and by 1.30 pm the enemy was beaten back, pursued, and driven across the Gandah. "Rowcroft followed up his victory the

⁴⁵ RMO Papers.

⁴⁶ Malleeson.

next day by crossing the river and destroying the houses of the leading rebels." ⁴⁷

The Nepal Army in the meantime had turned the rebels out of Gorakhpur on 6th January 1858.

On 17th February, Captain Sotheby, with a force of 130 Seamen and Marines and with 50 Nepalese and 35 Sikhs, when escorting the boats up the River Gagra assisted by the river steamer *Jamna*, attacked and captured the Fort of Ghandepur.

Phoolpore - On 19th February the Nepal Army reached Barari and that evening Rowcroft's force arrived within four miles and landed on the right bank. On the morning of the 20th he was joined by a Nepal Brigade and six guns; the boats were brought up, so that the Nepalese could cross at Phoolpore, but as that place was in enemy hands, Rowcroft marched on, capturing it and dispersing the rebels; he also captured three guns. Lieutenant Pym and Sergeant F Butler were mentioned in dispatches for this action.

General Rowcroft with the *Pearl's* Brigade, Yeomanry, and two Nepalese regiments garrisoned Gorakhpur, whilst the Nepalese continued the operations.

Amorah - Soon after Colonel Rowcroft, with Captain Sotheby, advanced on Amorah, 68 miles to the West of Gorakhpur, and on 4th March took up a position close to the enemy's entrenched camp at Belwa, which was occupied by a large force of rebels. On 5th March the rebels to the number of 14,000 advanced to attack the British camp which was distant about 7 miles. They were resolutely met. The Naval Brigade distinguished itself, and the enemy were driven off, followed by Yeomanry, and retired to their entrenched camp at Belwa. This was known as the Battle of Amorah, and besides Lieutenant Pym, Sergeant Argent (Portsmouth), and Sergeant F. Butler (Woolwich) were mentioned in dispatches. (London Gazette, 2 May and 4 August 1858). Rowcroft was not strong enough to attack Belwa, but on 17th at the village of Thanrowlee, and on 25th at Puchewas, he again met and defeated them in the plain between the positions.

On 28th April Rowcroft captured the Fort at Nugger; Acting Bombardier W Bates (Portsmouth) was mentioned in dispatches. The Brigade remained in the neighbourhood of Amarat; there was an engagement at Ranee's Cote on 9th June and another at Hurreah on 18th June.

The Pearl's Brigade was engaged again in September 1858 in the relief of Bhansi⁴⁸; after which they were withdrawn.

* * * * *

But meanwhile large numbers of the Corps were being actively engaged in yet another theatre of war, namely China, where we meet again many of the places made familiar by the war of 1840-3.

China War, 1856-60⁴⁹

In 1858 there was a renewal of the trouble with China; non-observance of the treaty arrangements, interference with merchants, and general difficulties with the Chinese head officials culminated in the seizure of the crew of the British vessel *Arrow*, for which no redress could be obtained. The C-in-C on the China Station therefore determined to take action against Commissioner Yeh at Canton and the following details are taken from Sir M. Seymour's despatch of 14 November 1856.⁵⁰

The Admiral moved HMS *Calcutta* (80 guns), his Flagship, above the Bogue Forts.

Canton - On 23rd October 1856, the force employed consisted of HMS *Coromandel*, *Samneon*, *Barracouta*, small steamers and gunboats with the RM detachments and the boats' crews of the *Calcutta*., *Winchester*, and *Bittern*, and the boats' crews of the *Sybil* and *Encounter* (the RM detachments of these ships were protecting the English factory at Canton).

The *Sampson* and part of the force were sent up the Macao Passage to capture Blenheim Fort; the Admiral with the *Coromandel* and *Barracouta* went up to the Barrier Forts, below the City, where they anchored, and sent on the boats to capture the Forts; who, having effected their object and having destroyed the guns and ammunition and burnt the buildings, proceeded on to Canton at 2 pm. The *Barracouta* having joined the *Sampson*, they occupied Blenheim and Macao Forts armed with 86 guns; 250 Marines were placed in Macao Fort, which they

⁴⁷ Malleson

⁴⁸ A full account of the Relief of Bhansi is given by Sergeant Sutler in Britain's Sea Soldiers, Volume II.

⁴⁹ Authorities: Life of General Hope Grant; Per Mare Per Terram. (:Major Poyntz); Life of Sir H Keppel; War in China. (Times Correspondent); RMO Records.

⁵⁰ London Gazette, 8 January 1857.

held till the expedition of the following year.

The reply of the Chinese was unsatisfactory, so on the 24th the Admiral landed a portion of the Royal Marines to aid the *Sybille's* and *Encounter's* Marines in protecting the factory on the West side of the town.

Bird's Nest Fort on Honan Island and the Shameen Forts on the West of Canton were occupied without opposition and the guns destroyed. As still no satisfaction could be obtained from the Chinese the remainder of the Royal Marines and a body of Seamen with field guns were landed near the factory; posts and field guns were established at all available points, and boats kept watch against fire rafts.

The work was in charge of Captain W K Hall CB, the Flag Captain. The Royal Marines were under Captain P Penrose (*Winchester*) "who showed great ability and promptitude".

On 25th the Dutch Folly Fort in the river opposite the centre of the town was occupied by the seamen of the *Calcutta*. At 12.30 pm the Chinese made an attack on the factory; after being warned by the Consul, they were driven back by the Royal Marines under Captain Penrose.

On 27th October, demands for satisfaction were renewed; also for proper treatment of British officials and reception as at other Treaty Ports. As there was no reply, fire was opened by the *Encounter* with her 10-inch gun, which shelled the Yamun; Gough's Fort on the heights behind the town was shelled by the *Barracouta*. Eighteen Royal Artillerymen under Captain Rotton joined up and were sent to man the Dutch Folly Fort. On the 28th and 29th fire was kept up by the Dutch Folly Fort with some 32 pdrs from the ships and a breach was made in the City Wall.

The landing party landed at 2 pm, the Seamen under Captain Stewart, and the Royal Marines under Captains Penrose and Hoyle. They seized the parapet and diverging left and right, within ten minutes they were in possession of the defences between the two gates. "Captain Penrose on gaining the wall hastened to the gate on the right on which he planted a small flag to show the position to Captain Hall, who then landed the boats' crews of *Calcutta* and *Barracouta*, and having pushed his way through the streets to the City Gate effected an entrance; the gate was blown to pieces and part of the arch destroyed. There was only scattered desultory fire from the Chinese. Three Privates RM were killed, 11 Seamen and Marines were wounded.⁵¹

The Admiral landed and went over to the quarters of the Chinese Commissioner, and the troops were withdrawn, re-embarking quietly and in good order. At 5 pm a fire broke out in the suburb; the breach was filled up again by the Chinese during the night, but was blown down again on 30th and also on 1st November after further repairs.

The Chinese still continued refractory, sending inferior officers to treat and refusing to accede to the British demands. Therefore at 11 am on 3rd November slow fire was opened from the *Encounter*, *Sampson* and Dutch Folly Fort, which was continued on the 4th and 5th.

On the 5th, the Chinese projected an attack on the factory and ships: as there were 26 war junks anchored off French Folly Fort, Commodore Elliot in the *Barracouta*, with the *Coromandel* and a detachment of Royal Marines and ships' boats was sent to disperse them and capture the Fort. At daylight on 6th he proceeded, towing the boats, and engaged the junks, who replied fiercely with 150 guns. After 35 minutes the *Barracouta* and the boats drove the Chinese out of the junks, and turned on the Fort. The guns and ammunition were destroyed; only two junks escaped, one of which was the Admiral's ship. The others were burnt.

On 11th November the Bogue Forts were destroyed. The *Sampson* and *Niger* were sent to protect the factory; the remainder of the Squadron went down river and attacked the two forts on the Wangtong Islands, which were taken possession of by the boats and the Royal Marines after considerable resistance, 201 guns being captured. On 13th the Forts on Anunghoy, on the opposite side, were similarly taken without any casualties, and the command of the river was in British hands. In the London Gazette of 6th January 1857, Captains Penrose and Boyle, with Lieutenants R P Henry, H Smale (wounded), C F Burton, W W Allnutt and Private Lye were mentioned in dispatches. Captains Penrose and Boyle were again mentioned in the London Gazette of 30 January, 1857.

On 14th December 1856, the Chinese burnt the British factories at Canton, but the Admiral put the Church and Clubhouse in a state of defence with two Companies of the 59th Regiment, and the RM detachment of the *Calcutta* (Captain Boyle); the RM detachment of the *Sybille* garrisoned Dutch Folly Fort, and that of the *Nankin*

⁵¹ Times Correspondent: War in China.

Macao Fort. Reprisals continued, parts of the city being burnt, but hostilities ceased for a time.

Escape Creek - On 25th, 26th, and 27th of May 1857, an attack was made on 41 junks lying in Escape Creek, by Commodore Elliot with the *Hong Kong* and some gunboats; the junks were armed with 24 or 32 pounder guns in the bows and four to six 9 pdrs. There was a brisk action, after which the Chinese crews fled; five junks were brought off, the remainder being destroyed. The Royal Marines were landed to clear the village and had 9 men wounded.

Fatshan Creek - On 1st June a large expedition under the Admiral himself destroyed 75 war junks in Fatshan Creek. The *Coromandel*, flying the flag of Sir M Seymour, towed up the boats with 300 Marines and arrived at Macao Fort on 30th May. Here she joined the gunboats which had been on watch. In Fatshan Creek two miles from the entrance, is Hyacinth Island; there is a steep hill on the left bank opposite the island, crowned by a fort with 19 guns. Higher up two small creeks go off right and left. Along the creeks and across the Channel above the island were moored 72 junks, their bow guns commanding the two channels. There was also a six-gun battery on the shore opposite to the Fort.

The *Coromandel* went first, towing the Marines under Captain Boyle RM in boats; she was to cover their landing. The gun-boats and boats were to follow her, but to wait till she was well up. At 3 am 1st June they started; the Chinese opened fire at dawn from the junks and the Forts. Going up the left hand channel the *Coromandel* ran aground, on a line of sunken junks, under heavy fire. The boats were cast off and rowed under the land; Captain Keppel coming up in the *Hong Kong* stood-in between the *Coromandel* and the bank; the *Haughty*, towing the boats of the *Fury*, *Inflexible* and *Cruiser*, with other gunboats, came up. Sergeant Christian, RMA was killed here.

The *Opossum* went up the right hand channel. Several gun-boats went ashore, but the boat continued up the creek. As the tide was rising the *Coromandel* and gunboats floated off again and the scene was like a regatta⁵².

The Chinese fire now slackened. The Royal Marines and the boats' crews had by this time landed and advanced up the precipitous side of the hill on which the fort was situated, where the Chinese had not expected them; the latter threw down 32 pdr shot as they could not depress the guns sufficiently. Led by Commodore Elliot and Captain Boyle, who ran a race up to the embrasures, the fort was captured; Boyle missed a mandarin but Elliot shot him. The Admiral also climbed the hill. The Chinese resisted bravely and continued firing their guns until the attacking party were within 50 yards.

The British turned the forts' guns on the junks, who replied. The Seamen then returned to their boats, followed Captain Keppel in the *Haughty* and made their way above the island. The Royal Marines descended on the far side of the hill, and wading into the water up to their waists, joined in the attack on the junks. The gunboats and boats placed themselves alongside the junks, whose crews made off across the paddy fields; the junks were then blown up or set on fire. Commodore Keppel in his galley with some boats' crews, charged among the junks and forced his way about 6 miles up the creek, almost to the town of Fatshan, where the Chinese turned out and stopped him; he then returned with his captures. The British loss was 13 killed and 40 wounded, of which the RM had 3 killed and 6 wounded. In the London Gazette of 1st August 1857 the following were mentioned in despatches; Captains R Boyle and T Magin; Lieutenants G L Blake, R P Henry, C W Burton, E Swale, A I Ozzard, A H F Barnes and A H Pascoe; 2nd Lieutenants W Allnutt, E T Cooper and C L Owen.

In the meantime the Government had decided on making the Chinese observe the treaties; reinforcements were being sent from England; Lord Elgin was sent out as a Plenipotentiary to arrange matters. HMS *Shannon*, *Pearl* and *Sans Pareil* were sent from England.

Royal Marine Battalions - Lieutenant Colonel Lemon with Captains Little and Cooke, and Lieutenants Inglis, J Cobb, A L Smith and E A Sparshott and 300 NCOs and Men, were sent from Plymouth for special service on 12th March. But the Indian Mutiny had broken out and they were diverted to Calcutta (q.v.) as were the troops under orders for China, and did not reach the squadron off Honan Island till 10th December, where they formed the nucleus of the Provisional Battalion Royal Marines, which was completed by the detachments of the Fleet. It is interesting to note that Colour-Sergeant Prettyjohns VC was Sergeant-Major of the detachment. HMS *Shannon*, *Pearl* and *Sans Pareil* were also sent to India, where we have already seen their doings.

A Brigade of Marines was also ordered to be sent from England. The Admiralty Letter to the C-in-C in China, dated 8th August 1857, said: "In consequence of the troops originally destined for China having been unavoidably diverted for service in India, Their Lordships have determined to strengthen the forces employed

⁵² Cooke

under your orders by the addition of 1,400 RMLI and 100 RMA as stated in detail in margin. They will leave England in less than 10 days from this date.⁵³ They are to be borne on the books of the Flagship as Royal Marines serving in the Fleet, but as far as practicable the Battalions are to be kept distinct for special service.

"Captain J. C. Travers, now serving in China, shall act as Brigade Major, and is to be borne specially for that service."

Colonel Holloway was appointed to command and the detail was:

	Lt Col	Cpts	Subs	Sgts	Cpls.	Drs	Ptes & Gnrs
Artillery Coy	-	1	4	5	8	2	80
1st Bn Chatham & Woolwich	1	8	18	34	32	8	600
2nd Bn Portsmouth & Plymouth	1	8	18	34	32	8	600

The Officers were:

Lieutenant Colonel Holloway.

Brigade Major - Major J O Travers

ADC - Lieutenant C J Ellis

Artillery:

Brevet Major G A Schomberg.

Lieutenants C Williams, Footing, Crease, and Crawford.

1st Battalion:

Lieutenant Colonel A S S Walsh

Captains P M Croker, Gritten, Morrison, Masters, E L Pym, S J Tribe, E P Usher, R Parke.

Lieutenants H L Evans, J F Hawkey, C F Coppin, E Willis, R J H Douglas, W Portlock-Dadson, C F Short, G O Evans.

2nd Lieutenants H Wolrige, H J Barker, J S Straghan, L Rokeby, A Fonblanque, M Heriot, S T Collins, E P Thomson.

Adjutant - Lieutenant J C Travers.

Quartermaster - Lieutenant Carrington.

Sergeant-Major - J B Woon.

2nd Battalion:

Lieutenant Colonel E Hooker.

Captains Kinsman, Ward, Jackson, Driver, Fox, Budd, Spratt, J B Prynne.

Lieutenants J de C Meade, W Connor, W H Wroot, W G Hale, E Bazalgette, C J W Napier, J D Broughton, F Parry.

2nd Lieutenants W H Smith, J A Godfrey, W Armstrong, J W O'Grady, J W Scott, W H Poyntz, C E Servante, C E W Oliver.

Adjutant - Lieutenant J H Maskerry.

Quartermaster - Lieutenant Gill.

There were three medical officers with each Battalion, the senior being Dr Little.

The Artillery, Staff, and Woolwich Companies embarked in the transport *Adelaide* at Deptford on 15th August, 1857, and arrived at Hong Kong on 30th November 1857.

The Chatham and two Portsmouth Companies embarked in the P&O *Imperatrix* which sailed from Portsmouth on 12th August and arrived at Hong Kong on 5th November.

Two Portsmouth Companies and the Plymouth Companies left Plymouth in the P&O *Imperader* on 13th August, and after a record passage arrived in 80 days at Hong Kong on 28th October. They were at once sent on to Canton and landed their Marines at the Wang-tong Islands below the City.

The French contingent was also arriving, as well as the British gunboats.

On 18th November HMS *Calcutta* (flagship) left Hong Kong for Canton, and anchored off Tiger Island where the *Adelaide* arrived on 1st December. On 4th December the *Assistance* arrived with Colonel Lemon's Battalion from Calcutta.

⁵³ As a matter of fact they left within three days.

The Admiral, Sir M Seymour, issued an order against looting, and took the opportunity of thanking the officers and men of the Fleet for their services during the past year.

The force now available for the operations against Canton consisted of:

Army: RA and RE, 59th Regiment, Madras Native Infantry	800
Royal Marines	2200
Naval Brigade	1500
French Troops and Sailors	<u>900</u>
	5700

Major General Van Straubenzee was in command, with Majors Clifford and Crealock as his Staff Officers.

Honan Island - On 15th December 2nd RMLI and 150 French Sailors were landed on the back of Honan Island, an island facing Canton; it is about 11 miles wide and 4 to 5 miles long. They were followed by the 1st RMLI and occupied the big warehouses on the shore. Colonel Holloway was in command. In his Report Colonel Holloway mentions the excellent work of Lieutenant Crease RMA, who, with only the artificers of the Brigade, constructed a fine magazine for the safe storage of their large amount of ammunition.

Lord Elgin's demands were that Canton should be opened as the other Treaty Ports to commerce; compensation for the damage to British merchants to be paid (the factories had been burnt), and the occupation of Honan to be acquiesced in as a guarantee. The Chinese Commissioner Yeh treated all negotiations with contempt, so preparations for the attack went on.

Life on Hoon Island was not pleasant, the mosquitoes rejoicing in the men just out from England. The Times Correspondent wrote: "*How the Marines do swear*"

On 20th December, divine service was held in the Warehouse, 1,200 Marines attending. Colonel Hooker had formed a choir from his Battalion.

Canton, Capture of - On 23rd December the General and Admiral made a reconnaissance in force with 70 Marines, at Tsing-poo, where Gough had landed in 1841 on the West side of the City, but decided against it. On 24th a reconnaissance was made on the East side, and it was decided to attack the East and North-East Gates and the Lin - or Eastern - Fort.

Yeh was informed that if he did not yield in 48 hours, the City would be bombarded.

The force was very healthy; the 2nd RMLI had only 15 sick out of 700; the weather was cold, rations were good and plentiful, and they had an extra supply of quinine. On 28th December the 59th Regiment arrived.

GENERAL ORDER.

Headquarters, Hcman.
28th December.

Troops under command of General van Straubenzee, CB, will be formed in Brigades as follows:

1st or Colonel Holloway's Brigade

Colonel Holloway ADC
Brigade Major - Captain J O Travers RM
Orderly Officer - Captain Ellis.
1st Battalion RMLI
2nd Battalion RMLI

2nd or Colonel Graham's Brigade

Colonel Graham.
Brigade Major - Major Luard 77th Regiment
Orderly Officer - Captain Hacket 59th Regiment
RE and Volunteer Sappers
RA and RMA
Provisional Battalion RMLI (Colonel Lemon)
59th Regiment
38th Madras Native Infantry

Colonel Lemon's Battalion was completed on 19th December by the detachments from HMS *Calcutta*, *Nankin*,

Sybille, Sanspareil, Esk, Highflier, to a strength of about 800 Officers and Men. Lieutenant C W Burton (*Calcutta*) was appointed Adjutant.

The Artillery were under the orders of Colonel Dunlop RA

Captain Morrison, 1st RMLI, was appointed Provost Marshal.

GENERAL ORDER

Before Canton
26th December

The Naval and Military Commanders-in-Chief of the Allied Forces before Canton have agreed to the following operations against the City.

First bombardment to commence at daylight on Monday 23th December. The ships and vessels named in the note under Letter A (viz. *Actaeon, Phlegethon*, and Gunboats) on signal being given will open fire on South-West angle of the City walls, with a view to breach them and impede the communication of the Chinese troops along the parapets to the Eastward.

Ships and vessels in note under Letter B (viz. *Mitraille, Fusee, Cruiser, Hornet, Niger, Blanche*) and the Dutch Folly Fort with a similar object will breach the City walls opposite the Viceroy's residence; the mortar in Dutch Folly Fort shelling the City and Gough Heights.

Ships and vessels in note under Letter C (viz. *Nimrod, Surprise, Dragon, Marcia* and gunboats), between Dutch Folly Fort and French Folly will open fire on South-East angle of the New and Old City walls and walls forming East side of City.

To commence simultaneously when White Ensign is hoisted at fore of *Actaeon*, and yellow flag from *Phlegethon, Hornet* and *Avalanche* will repeat these signals.

Bombardment to be in very slow time and continued day and night, not to exceed per each gun 60 rounds during the first 24 hours; C ships to fire 100.

Immediately bombardment opens, landing of Allied Troops will take place at the creek in Kupur, where British and French flags will be planted, in following order, commencing at daylight:

1. Sappers and Miners, 59th Regiment, RA Stores and Ammunition, etc.
2. French Naval Brigade, Stores, etc.
3. Naval Brigade under orders of Hon. C. Elliot.
4. Naval Brigade from Canton.
5. Colonel Holloway's Brigade of Royal Marines.
etc., etc. .

Following will be dispositions after landing:

British Naval Brigade on left.

Centre Brigade:

Lieutenant Colonel Lemon's Provisional Bn RM.

59th Regiment.

RA

Sappers.

French Naval Brigade on left.

Colonel Holloway's Brigade with RMA in reserve.

After getting into position, Allied Force will remain in Line of Contiguous Columns of Brigade until further orders for advance, which will be made to a position for the night preparatory to active service in-the morning.

M Seymour, Rear-Admiral.

Regnault de Guouilly, Rear-Admiral.

C V Van Straubenzee, Major General.

In the Dutch. Folly Forts platforms had been built for two 13-inch mortars and two 10-inch SS mortars and two 24 pdr rocket tubes. These were under Major Schomberg RMA and played on Magazine Hill, the City Heights and Gough's Fort.

The slow bombardment began at daylight and continued all day; the gunboats embarked the troops and went down to Kupur, and the General made a close reconnaissance of Lin Fort whilst the troops were disembarking. The covering force of the 59th was posted to protect the RE and Volunteer Sappers and working parties, whilst constructing piers etc. to land the, guns, and making a road across the marshy paddy fields to the hard ground about 400 yards inland. The tide prevented the disembarkation till 9 am on 28th, but all were landed before nightfall. At 10 am the French force, having landed, moved forward to some rising ground where fire was opened on them, and part of the 59th advanced to the right of the French. The French drove the Chinese from the undulating ground, covered with Chinese graves in front, but it was difficult to cross the paddy fields in front. The French howitzers opened on Fort Lin, and the 59th moved to the Joss House within 300 yards, covered by the fire of the British howitzers. The troops pushed on and kept up a heavy fire on the embrasures until the 9 pdr field guns got into action. The Fort was partially surrounded, the storming parties carried the Fort and the Chinese fled up the hill to Gough's Fort, which our heavy guns could not reach. The British and French flags were hoisted on Fort Lin, where the troops bivouacked for the night. Fires broke out in various parts of the town during the night.

On the next morning troops were formed up for the assault, the French Naval Brigade commanding the direct road to the East Gate, the 59th in rear and under cover of Fort Lin; the Provisional Battalion RMLI to the right on a range of hills fronting NNW; and on its right the Naval Brigade as if to advance towards Fort Gough, North of the City on the heights and the feint succeeded. The 3rd Division of the Naval Brigade was placed in rear and to the right of the Joss House, occupied by the Allied Commanders during the night. One Battalion of Colonel Holloway's Brigade was on the left, the other at the landing place protecting stores and keeping open the communications. The Artillery were in position in front of Fort Lin.

The guns opened fire on the East Wall to clear off the Chinese; the assault had been timed for 9 am but the French started at 8.40, followed by the 59th, but fortunately Major Schomberg RMA, in the Dutch Folly Fort was able to stop the guns and the French, 59th Regiment, and the RE escalated the wall about a mile to the North of the East Gate, and turning northward started clearing the walls.

At daylight on the 29th the large Joss House had been occupied by parties of the Naval Brigade, supported by the RM Battalion under "*that deserving old Officer*" Lieutenant Colonel Lemon. The artillery bombardment was to continue till 9 am to give time to bring up the ladders, but this was effected with more despatch owing to the great exertions of all concerned, particularly of the "*RA and RMA, whose energy and zeal were worthy of high commendation*", by whom two guns were brought close up the ditch. Captain Bate RN was killed reconnoitring for a place to put the scaling ladders;

Captains Blake and Cooke, RMLI brought up their two Companies of Royal Marines with scaling ladders and kept up a heavy fire on the embrasures, Blake's company losing one man killed and six wounded. When they had quelled the fire, the scaling ladders were placed and the Naval Brigade and Lemon's Battalion escalated the walls at a broken embrasure, 200 yards South of the North-East Gate; turning North, they swept along the Wall to Magazine Hill on the North side of the town.

At this time a Chinese Army, now perceiving "*we did not intend to attack Fort Gough, descended the hill, and necessitated my sending some companies of Colonel Lemon's RMLI Battalion to protect our right, and afterward to direct Colonel Walsh's Battalion to extend to their right to prevent advance of the enemy which was judiciously executed by all officers concerned, though I regret to say Colonel Holloway and some men were wounded.*"⁵⁴ Colonel Holloway's Brigade had been posted to the North-West of Fort Lin to meet such an eventuality.

The Tartars came on in skirmishing order, but were driven off by the RN and it was difficult to prevent the Marines from charging the enemy; but they drove the Chinese out of a little village and a small wood, and were pressing forward to complete their defeat, when the General recalled the Brigade; there was much discontent among the RM at this order; the men had thrown off their knapsacks in the fight and when recalled Colonel Holloway and a few had to bring them in.

⁵⁴ GOC's Dispatch.

By 9 am the greater part of the force was on the Walls, the enemy making slight resistance except at the Gateways. The Naval Brigade and Royal Marines proceeding past the five-storied Pagoda and the Magazine, the enemy rallied at the North Gate; part of the Naval Brigade charged down the hill and the enemy were driven back. At this point he showed a bold front. Brigadier Graham with the 59th and the 38th NI took the East Gate, and proceeded round the walls nearly to the South Gate of the City.

About 2 pm Gough's Fort - above the town - was assaulted and taken. The British remained on the Walls for the next 3 or 4 days; no tents were available and there was heavy rain for 70 hours, during which Colonel Lemon's Battalion was in the open and consequently there was a good deal of sickness.

In the London Gazette of 5th March 1858, the following were mentioned: Colonel Holloway ADC, Lieutenant Colonels Walsh, Hocker, and Lemon, Captain and Brevet Major Boyle, J A Morrison, Parke, Jackson, and Foote, Major J O Travers, Brigade Major, "*whom from personal observation I recommend as a valued officer*", and Captain Ellis.

Brevet Major Schomberg, i/c Mortar Battery in Dutch Folly Fort, and that "*indefatigable young officer*" Lieutenant Festing, RMA were also mentioned.

Gough's and Bluejacket's Forts were blown up, but without effect on the Chinese. After a pause to see if the Chinese would surrender, and as no move was made, on 5th January 1858 operations, were resumed and advancing from Magazine Hill, 250 of the French Naval Brigade entered the Yamen and secured the Tartar General where they were joined by the 2nd RMLI and two howitzers; two Companies of the 1st RMLI with two howitzers, under Colonel Holloway, forced their way into the Yamen of the Governor of Kwang Tung and made Pek-wai prisoner. The Provisional Battalion with two guns first marched to the Temple, where the Imperial Commissioner Yeh was supposed to be hiding, but failed to find him, and later joined by 200 of 1st RMLI - the whole under Captain Parke - they secured the Treasury and a large quantity of silver.

Captain Cooper-Key and 100 of the Naval Brigade secured Yeh later in the day. Escorted by Colonel Hocker and two files of Marines, he was brought before the General and the Admiral; as he was still recalcitrant, he was eventually sent to India. In order to control the City, the Governor Pek-wai was reinstated with a council consisting of Colonel Holloway, Captain Martineau (French), and Mr. Parkes the Consul, who governed the City for the next year. Later a Constabulary was raised, to which the RM contributed 3 officers and about 30 men under Captain E L Pym, RM.

The casualties had been; RMA, Colonel Holloway, 1 Sergeant and 2 Gunners wounded; Colonel Lemon's Battalion, 10 wounded; 1st RMLI, Lieutenant Portlock-Dadson severely, and 1 Sergeant and 3 Privates wounded.

1858 - The Royal Marines remained in garrison with two Sepoy Regiments. The 2nd RMLI were quartered in the monastery of Celestial Bliss, and one day a priest, waiting till the senior officers were out on a reconnaissance, presented an order from the General to recover his property, and carried off vast quantities of treasure that had been hidden in the idols, the guards being unable to prevent him.

As fighting was still going on in India, the Army Staff Officers wished to rejoin their regiments, so Major J O Travers became AQMG of the force vice Colonel the Hon. A Clifford, Captain T V Cooke became DAQMG vice Major Crealock and Captain Carrington DAAG.

Captain Ellis became Brigade Major of the RM Brigade, Lieutenant J C Travers ADC to Colonel Holloway and Lieutenant J F Hawkey Adjutant of 1st RMLI.

White Cloud Mountain - The garrison duty at Canton was varied by one or two expeditions. On 2nd June 1858 General Van Straubenzee made a reconnaissance of the White Cloud Mountain, where Chinese Forces were reported. He discovered an encampment and sent back for reinforcements; by 7 pm 1,400 men had started. Colonel Holloway with about 600 Marines and 100 of the 59th with 4 guns joined the General; the remainder consisting of the Naval Brigade, RA and Sepoys, embarked in gunboats, and went down the river to land next morning. The advance began at daybreak and it was found that only the two RMA rocket tubes could accompany them. At 11 am the enemy camp was sighted and the Advanced Guard pushed on, 3 officers and 8 men being wounded. Owing to the great heat the troops had to halt until the evening, the Marines carrying a village in which they were able to shelter. At 5 pm the force again advanced and crossed the mountain, 1200 feet high, but found the enemy camp deserted.

They returned to Canton on 4th, having burnt three villages. Lieutenant Rokeby and 26 men were wounded, but

a lot of men were lost from sunstroke. In the London Gazette of 28th July 1858, the following were mentioned⁵⁵: Brevet Major R Boyle, Lieutenants G McCallum, W E Clements, E H Norton RMA, H B Savage RMA, 2nd Lieutenants W W Allnutt and H T Cooper.

Nantow - In August another expedition was sent to the walled town of Nantow. They proceeded by water in gunboats and landed at 11 am on the 10th, to the South-East of the City, the covering party being provided by the Naval Brigade. This entailed an advance through a populous suburb. The advance was made in two parallel columns; 40 officers and 489 Naval Brigade formed the outer column; 3 officers and 64 men RA, 3 officers and 22 men RE, 5 officers and 104 men the 104th Regiment, 2 officers and 100 men 12th Madras NI, 5 officers and 140 men RMLI forming the inner column. The RMLI under Captain Foote were in reserve. They moved along the canal in great heat under constant fire from the right flank.

After reconnaissance, at 1 pm the ladders were placed and the Naval Brigade stormed the walls, covered by the 59th and 12th NI, whilst the RM covered the right flank. During the escalade of the walls the force under Colonel Graham was attacked by several hundred Braves who were most gallantly repulsed by Brevet Major Foote and the Royal Marines⁵⁶ though not without loss. The wall was gained and the enemy fled; the gate was blown in and then after burning the city they returned to Canton the following morning. Unfortunately three officers were killed by the accidental discharge of the seamen's rifles.

The Royal Marine lost 8 wounded, one mortally. On 23rd August Lieutenant Colonel Walsh was invalided, and on 1st October Colonel Lemon assumed command of the 1st RMLI.

Provisional Battalion - On 22nd September 1858, a Brigade Order was issued that, as the Provisional Battalion had been so reduced by the re-embarkation of the detachments of which it was composed, the remainder were to be drafted into the 1st and 2nd Battalions, to take effect from 1st October. Its strength was then only about 350. The Companies of the 1st and 2nd Battalions were made up to 75 men each, all above this and the NCOs were borne supernumerary.

British Columbia - On 24th November 1856, Captains Bazalgette and Magin, 5 Subalterns (C L Owen, Henry, G L Blake, Sparshott, ???) with 80 men from each Battalion were sent to British Columbia, where they occupied the island of San Juan which was garrisoned by the British and American Marines until 1872, when the German Emperor gave the decision in favour of the United States.

Canton - On 4th January 1859 the Brigade was attacked, whilst on its weekly route march outside Canton. Just after having their dinners they saw a large body of Chinese advancing on them. Colonel Holloway decided that from the point of view of prestige they must return by the same route, so flankers and skirmishers were thrown out and the march began. The Chinese followed to within three miles of the walls, and they had to pass through some villages, but the enemy fire was kept down by the skirmishers; the only chance of the getting to close quarters occurred when Captain Usher, the Provost Marshal, who had gone out to draw in the skirmishers of the 2nd Battalion (who had become too much extended) charged at the head of a few men and cut down and dispersed a party of Chinese. As the day was closing in, and in view of the General's instructions that they were not to take the offensive, Colonel Holloway did not feel justified in taking any further steps. They arrived at the North Gate at 6 pm in good order. Colonel Lemon was in command of 1st RMLI, and Captain Little 2nd RMLI. Lieutenant O'Grady was slightly wounded. The Quantung Braves had been driven off with loss.

On 8th January a force of 1,700 men was sent to take the town of Shek-Tseng, about 9 miles off. This force marched to a village about 1000 yards from the walls, whilst 400 of the Naval Brigade went by water to the mouth of the river. The only means of approach was across a narrow wooden causeway and the bridge; in the middle of the river was a well armed island. Two hundred French, 150 from 1st Bn Royal Scots, 150 RE formed the fighting line, and 1st RMLI under Colonel Lemon in support, the remainder in reserve. The French charged forward, but were checked by a volley. General Straubenzie sent forward the 05th Bengal NI to support them, whilst rocket tubes and howitzers covered the Royal Scots and RE, who worked up the river. The Naval Brigade, who had landed on the Shek-Tseng side, came down on the Chinese flank; panic seized the Chinese, so the Royal Scots, followed by the RE and RM Battalion, crossed the bridge. Large quantities of ammunition and stores were captured and the destruction of the city created a great impression on the Chinese, who had considered the place to be impregnable.

⁵⁵ These were all officers serving afloat.

⁵⁶ London Gazette.

But failing to make any impression on the Chinese Imperial authorities from Canton, the Allies decided to make an attack in the North, nearer Peking, with a view to getting them to observe the Treaties. In May 1858 the Squadron had attacked and occupied the Taku Forts with a naval landing party, but they had only been held temporarily, and the Chinese were now on their guard.

Taku Forts.—In June 1859, Vice Admiral Sir James Hope (who had succeeded Sir K Seymour) determined to attack the forts with a view to forcing the Chinese to admit the two Residents in accordance with the Tientsin Treaties. Colonel Lemon, with 400 of 1st RMLI and a small party of RMA under Lieutenant Williams and Lieutenant Tuson were sent from Hong Kong; about 400 Royal Marines were provided by the Fleet and a half company of RE with 19 gunboats reinforced Sir James Hope, who with other vessels was lying off in the Gulf of Pechili. The Royal Marine were formed into a small Brigade under Colonel Lemon, with Captain Parke in command of 1st RMLI Captain Masters of a 2nd. Battalion formed from the ships' detachments; Captain Croker was Brigade Major, Lieutenant Rokeby ADC, and Lieutenant Evan Adjutant of the 2nd Battn. The small party of RMA. were under Lieutenant Williams.

These operations are worthy of careful study as an example of how not to do it: Colonel Lemon objected strongly to the plans.

On 17th June a single vessel with the Admiral on board went to the anchorage off Taku; the rabble prevented any landing, and it was found that the Pei-Ho River was obstructed. On 20th the Residents arrived and told the Admiral to make his own arrangements to open the river. Against the advice of his military advisers in charge of the troops, the Admiral insisted on making a frontal attack on the Forts; on 25th under cover of the gun-boats the Seamen and Marines were landed on the mud flats, through which they had to struggle to attack; 4 gunboats were sunk, including the Admiral's and he himself severely wounded - he was rescued by the US ship. Out of the landing party of 1,100, 434 were killed or wounded and the Royal Marines lost Lieutenants English and Wolrige, with 21 NCOs and Men killed or died of wounds, 15 officers and 142 NCOs and men wounded.

The Reports of Colonel Lemon and Captains Parke and Masters give an excellent picture of what occurred.

Colonel Lemon's report says that the boats with the Royal Marines assembled round the *Nimrod* on the evening of 25th June, and were joined by the RE and the Royal Naval Battalion under Captain Chadwell, RN. They attacked the fort on the right bank of the Pei-Ho River and landed on the mud in front; the 1st RMLI was the first to arrive and advanced in skirmishing order to cover the parties carrying the bridges and ladders; the RE acted as coverers on the left. The ground was tenacious and the men sank knee deep in the mud, and could only advance slowly. Colonel Lemon says it was impracticable and injudicious to adopt a regular formation as they were under heavy fire, and that he led the mainbody forward until cover could be obtained for forming; that on arriving at a wet ditch the covering party waited for the bridges, but as there were none available they crossed by wading; advancing until they arrived at another deeper and more difficult ditch which they also crossed, and advanced until they got cover from the advanced trench, where they waited for the ladders, and here Colonel Lemon was severely wounded in the head and handed over the command to Captain Parke.

Captain Parke's report says that the 1st RMLI embarked in the boats at 5.45 pm and were taken in tow by an American steamer, *Taiwan*; as there was great difficulty in towing, all the boats except one had to cast off and were taken in tow by the *Forrester*. On arriving at the Stakes, the boats went alongside the *Cormorant* (1 Lieutenant and 46 NCOs and Men had been left in the American ship). Here Captain Willis RM ordered them all to follow him and pull ashore. The boats shoved off, the men pulling with all their might to be the first on shore.

The Battalion landed without any order and there was great confusion. All efforts to advance in anything like military formation were futile; the men jumped out anyhow, some up to their waists in water. Parke says he tried to extend them, but they rushed on in masses, all arms intermingled, towards the fort under a tremendous fire of guns and gingalls, which told with great effect. The men and officers pushed on gallantly; the ground was tenacious, clayey mud, into which the men fell down and rendered their arms useless; they arrived at the first ditch; they had no ladders, or bridges, but the seamen brought up some ladders; only one was serviceable and they crossed by wading.

Those who managed to keep their ammunition dry, kept up a heavy fire to cover the crossing of the rest. After a rest they advanced again and encountered another large ditch; there were then only about 100 men but many officers of the 1st RMLI and they succeeded in crossing, but as the ammunition was quite wet their fire slackened. Colonel Lemon being wounded, Captain Parke took command of the Brigade. Night was falling and only one efficient ladder was up; as the British fire lessened the Chinese assembled in large numbers and kept up a heavy

enfilade fire. Under these conditions Parke - after consulting with Commanders Commerell and Heath RN, and Major Fisher RE - decided to withdraw; the men were ordered to move off noiselessly in parties of twos and threes; the retreat commenced at 2 am, the enemy firing light balls etc unceasingly. Most strenuous efforts were made to bring off the wounded; all behaved well and although invidious to mention any one, Captain Parke calls attention to acts of gallantry by Lieutenant Wolrige, who was shot dead whilst cheering on his men; by Lieutenant Rokeby who volunteered to advance with only one ladder; by Lieutenants Evans and Straghan in assisting to carry off the wounded under a very severe fire and by Sergeant Major Woon and QMS Halling, whose gallantry was most conspicuous.

From Captain Master's report of 2nd RM we learn that he himself and his party were transferred to the Forrester and proceeded inshore to well within range of the forts who were firing; Captain Willis ordered them to land and the Admiral ordered them to take the fort by assault and to lose no time, as the sun was setting. The first boat contained Lieutenant Williams and a party of RMA; Masters himself was in the next. The boats could not get near the land and they jumped into the water up to their middles under a galling fire of guns and musketry, and were ordered to make the best of their way and to form up when they reached firmer ground; on arriving at the Stakes they formed up, some of the 1st and some of the 2nd. They were kneeling in the mud, which was over their ankles. Masters tried to get them to advance, but they were exhausted and could not use their muskets, which were unfit from salt water. Here he himself was wounded and taken off, and the Battalion was brought off by other officers. The Chaplain, the Rev W Huleatt, was severely wounded with the 1st RM

After this reverse the 1st RM returned to Canton on 6th August in HMS *Magician* and the Northern operations were abandoned till the properly organised expedition of the next year.

At this date the 1st RMLI numbered 696 and the 2nd RMLI 625. Colonel Lemon was invalided to England on 26th July 1859 and in the London Gazette of 16th September 1859 the following were mentioned in dispatches; Colonel Lemon, Brevet Major Parke, Captains W G Masters, P K C Croker, Lieutenants Rokeby, J F Hawkey, H L Evans, J Straghan, Sergeant Major Woon, and QMS Halling. The following Brevets were given for the operations in 1857-59:

To be Colonel - Lieutenant Colonel T. Lemon.

To be Majors -	Captain J C Travers	Captain J C Morrison
	Captain W F Foote	Captain G E O Jackson
	Captain P C Penrose	Captain C J Ellis
	Captain R Boyle	Captain R Parke
	Captain T V Cooke	

On 26th December 1859, the following Brigade order was issued by Colonel Holloway ADC at Canton.

RM Brigade - broken up - "The Board has directed that the Brigade shall be broken up and formed into one Battalion of 8 Companies, each consisting of 1 Captain, 2 Subalterns, 5 Sergeants, 6 Corporals, 1 Drummer, 76 Privates, with the following staff, 2 Lieutenant Colonels, 1 Adjutant, 1 Acting QM, 1 Acting SM, and one Acting QMS."

Lieutenant Colonel Hocker CB was appointed to command, but he was invalided on 27th January 1869, and Lieutenant Colonel J O Travers vacated his appointment of AQMG and assumed command. Lieutenant Carrington was appointed Adjutant, Lieutenant Meade QM, Lieutenant Cobb Assistant Adjutant, Sergeant Denslow to be Sergeant Major (died at Tientsin), Sergeant Brown to be QMS. The Medical Officers were Drs Little, Shin and Cope. Mr. Spark, Paymaster.

The Company Officers were

1 and 2 Chatham:	Captains Evans and Gritton.
3 and 4 Woolwich:	Captains Prynne and Usher.
5 and 6 Portsmouth;	Captains Symonds and Jackson.
7 and 8 Plymouth;	Captains Budd and Spratt.

NCOs and Men employed in the Military Train and Constabulary were formed into a Supernumerary Company; the Battalions were at once formed into four companies each of medically fit men; the men of the Bengal Artillery were attached to the RMA Company and 34 Privates were selected to complete the RMA Company proceeding to Macao Fort, and 51 Privates were sent to complete the Fleet; remaining Officers and NCOs to be borne supernumerary as well as the volunteers from the Indian Army. Colonel Holloway and the surplus officers and men returned home on 11th January 1860. A draft from England under Captain Slaughter arrived.

General Van Straubenzee published the farewell order on 31st December 1850:

"My sense of the efficiency, good order and high state of discipline of the Brigade, which reflect also much credit upon the Officers of the Battalions; the forbearance of the NCOs and Men of the RM Brigade since the capture of this city and their general very good character during the two years they have been quartered in it are most creditable to them, as soldiers, and to the splendid Corps of which they form part, and merit my highest approbation."

As serious prosecution of the war was now inevitable and as the Indian Mutiny had been crushed, troops were now available and were sent from India and from England. Colonel Gaucogne and Brevet Lieutenant Colonel March with a draft were sent from England to replace Colonels Hocker and Lemon.

General Sir Hope Grant of Indian fame was sent to command. The French Commanding Officer was General de Montauban, afterwards known as Count de Palikao.

About 14,000 British and 7,000 French troops concentrated at Hong Kong, and proceeded North in March 1860.

Shanghai - The 87th Regiment relieved the Marines at Canton and the RM Battalion was the first to move North; the left wing arrived at Shanghai on 6th April under Lieutenant Colonel March, where the Taiping rebels were threatening trouble. Owing to want of accommodation they remained at first in the *Assistance*; they were accompanied by Lieutenant Williams' Company of RMA.

The right wing under Colonel Travers went to Chusan.

Lieutenant Colonel Gascoigne joined the left wing on 15th May and took up a defensive line from the Stone Bridge, by the grandstand of the racecourse, to Ning Po Joss House on the North-East extremity round the walls to the City gate. On 16th June General Sir Robert Napier approved of these arrangements. The French - about 200 strong - were on the South side. On 15th June there was considerable anxiety about an advance by the rebels, but it did not materialise then.

A state of the Battalion dated 13th June 1860 gives an interesting account of their distribution:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Officers</u>	<u>NCOs & Men</u>
On board Transport <i>Octavio</i> at Shanghai	11	214
In Barracks, Shanghai	6	110
Ning-po Joss House	3	79
Souchon Bridge	3	80
Hospital	-	6
At Chusan	12	228
On board HMS <i>Encounter</i>	2	58 (on passage)
Hong Kong on Staff	2	8
Chinese Coolie Corps	4	33
Hospital Ships	-	5
Canton Constabulary*	3	132
Supernumerary	14	218
*Captain E L P Pym		
<u>RMA</u>		
Shanghai	2	87
Macao Fort, Canton	1	9
Coolie Corps	-	2
Barrack Sergeant. at Canton	-	1

On 21st July, leaving Lieutenant Colonel March as senior officer at Shanghai, with 300 RMA and RMLI and about 600 French, Lieutenant Colonel Gascoigne embarked with Nos 5 and 6 Companies (207 all told) but they did not arrive at the rendezvous till the 29th, too late to be present at the taking of the Taku Forts. Colonel Travers with Nos 1 to 4 Companies were not long at Chusan; leaving there on 11th June they joined the force in the North, where the ultimatum to the Chinese had been sent on 8th March.

The British Force was organised into:

A Cavalry Brigade – King's Dragoon Guards, Fane's and Probyn's horse, and Stirling's Battery RHA.

1st Division - General Sir John Michel - Two Brigades.

2nd Division - Maj.General Sir Robert Napier - Two Brigades.

Taku Forts - The 1st Battalion RMLI was attached to the 4th Brigade, consisting of 67th, 99th and 19th Punjab Native Infantry.

About the middle of May the force embarked for the Gulf of Pe-Chi-Li and the British landed at Talienwan and the French at Chefoo, where they formed depots.

On 20th July the troops re-embarked, and on 26th anchored off Pei-Tang-Ho. On 30th Sutton's Brigade (2nd), the Rocket Battery, and a 9 pdr with a party of French were towed ashore, landing through the mud, and next day, found Pei-Tang evacuated.

On 31st a storm prevented disembarkation, but it was continued next day. That night was spent in repairing roads, which occupied the next ten days; the British were kept making roads and building wharfs and so kept out of mischief, but the French went plundering.

On 3rd August a reconnaissance was made of the causeway leading to the Taku Forts; and on 9th August it was discovered that the country was traversable by all arms. The RM Battalion under Travers, with Lieutenant G. Mairis as its Adjutant, had now joined the Army.

On 12th August the French and the First Division advanced frontally along the causeway, the 2nd Division and the Cavalry Brigade followed the reconnaissance of the 9th instant; with the British were two batteries of the new 12 pdr Armstrong guns.

The First Division pushed along the causeway and captured the village of Sinho. About two and a half miles South-East of Sinhoe the Chinese were holding an entrenched position about Tong-Ku to which the causeway led with a wet ditch on either side.

On 13th August, General Grant caused the canals to be bridged, refusing to be hurried by the French. He ascertained that the Chinese forces had retired to the South (right bank) of the Pei-Ho end that there were no troops on his side of the river except in Tong-Ku and the Taku Forts to the South-East of him.

The First Division advancing on the right and the French on the left, crossed the space between the causeway and the Pei-Ho. The 60th Rifles advanced under cover of the field guns, which silenced the Chinese artillery; the 60th entered the works at Tong-Ku and found the Chinese in full retreat; the French further to the left met with some resistance. The Allies then arrived without difficulty within two miles of the Taku Forts. There was a halt of six days whilst ten day's supplies were collected at Sinho, and the heavy guns and ammunition brought up; a bridge of boats was thrown over the Pei-Ho at Tong-Ku and a close reconnaissance made of the forts. On each bank there was a detached fort to westward of the larger and principal fort; on the North bank this detached fort was only two miles from Tong-Ku and could be approached by a detour clear of fire and without cross fire from the Southern bank. If taken it would be possible to enfilade the large fort to the South-Eastward and it also overlooked the detached fort on the Southern bank. General Grant decided to attack this point. General Montauban refused, but had to give way. By August 20th all was ready, the road built and the canals bridged. Batteries were established against the North face of the detached fort; the Admiral had not brought up his gunboats, so the Chinese turned the guns in the cavaliers of the river forts to bear on the attackers.

The obstacles to be surmounted were a deep dry ditch, then an open space with abatis, then a wet ditch and a strip of ground 20 feet wide with pointed bamboo stakes, and then another wet ditch and another staked strip; there was also a thick wall of unburnt brick with loopholes.

At daybreak on 21st August the batteries opened vigorously and the Chinese replied; at 6 am the magazine in the

fort blew up, and at 6.30 am a shell from a gunboat blew up another magazine. At 7 am every gun in the detached fort was disabled and two batteries of field guns and the storming parties of the 44th and 67th Regiments advanced to the gate; the French on the right approached the Western angle. The wing of the RM Battalion had been detailed to carry pontoons for crossing the ditches, but owing to casualties unfortunately blocked the causeway and the stormers had to swim; it was sometime before sufficient troops were assembled; Major Anson - of the Staff - got to the post and hacked down the ropes of the drawbridge and some men got across, whilst Captain Prynne RMLI was the second man over the wall and shot the Head Mandarin with his revolver; Lieutenant Pritchard RE was the first. The garrison resisted bravely, but after three and a half hours the fort was taken.

Captains Barker, Carrington, and Straghan RMLI were among the wounded, and were mentioned in dispatches.

The heavy guns were brought forward to the attack on the main fort, when the Chinese on the South bank hoisted the white flag. They were told that unless the main fort was surrendered within two hours the Allies would re-open fire, and towards the end of that time the troops advanced; the enemy offering no resistance, they walked in and took possession. The Political Officer forced the Chinese commander to sign a capitulation giving up all the country and strong places on the river as far as Tientsin, including that city.

After a day removing obstacles in the river, the Admiral and Mr. Parkes steamed up the river to Tientsin. On the 25th the troops followed, and by 5th September all had followed except the 44th Regiment, which had been sent to Shanghai on account of the Taeping Rebels. A party of Marines and a battery of artillery were left to garrison Tong-Ku.

On 7th September the Convention was to have been signed, when it was suddenly realised that the Chinese authorities had not, and could not produce, any authority to treat; on which negotiations were broken off.

Peking - Meanwhile Lieutenant Colonel Gascoigne and the two Companies from Shanghai had joined the other half battalion, and Colonel Gascoigne assumed command. On 8th September the First Division and the Cavalry Brigade, with the French, began their march on Tung-Chow, sixty miles up the river and twenty miles below Peking. The RM Battalion was now with the 2nd Brigade. The 2nd Division was left at Tientsin; they marched in small detachments, the siege train and part of the supplies going by water. Major Poyntz says that the regiments will remember how the Royal Marines managed to keep up a supply of bitter draught beer throughout the march, which was much appreciated.

Captain C L Barnard with his party of RMA were brought to notice for the manner in which the heavy guns were brought up from Tientsin to Tung-Chow; the labour of pulling the boats over the flats was very great and it was "due to their exertions that the guns were brought up so rapidly and safely."⁵⁷

On the 13th the troops reached Ho-Si-Wu, where the medical officers of the RM Battalion established a general hospital. On the 17th the Cavalry Brigade and 1st Division left Ho-Si-Wu. Mr. Parkes and other officers and officials had preceded on the 16th to Tung-Chow to make arrangements; but the force had hardly advanced two miles before hostile forces were observed, and whilst waiting for the return of the advance party, suddenly a commotion was observed and Colonel Walker, AQMG, and other officers were seen galloping towards the column, some of them wounded. As there were no signs of Mr. Parkes' party, General Hope Grant advanced in attack formation. Fire was opened by the Chinese, who were holding an entrenchment several miles in length with a battery of 16 guns. After a sharp engagement of two hours (the RM Battalion was in reserve), the enemy gave way and were severely cut up by the cavalry. Captain Usher RM, the Provost Marshal, was nearly cut down by a Tartar, having been unhorsed.

Following up the enemy, the 99th and 15th Punjabis entered Ching-Kia-Wang, which was given over to plunder as a reprisal for the capture of Mr. Parkes' party. On 20th September there was a reconnaissance and the enemy were found to be in front of the Yang-Liang Canal, the waterway between the Pei-Ho and Peking, over which were two bridges, one of marble, at Pa-Li-Chao. The other - of wood - was about a mile to the West. The French were directed on Pa-Li-Chao, and the British Infantry on to the wooden bridge, with the cavalry to the left: the cavalry charged and, followed by three batteries of Armstrong guns and two Battalions, inflicted great loss. The pursuit was stopped six miles from Peking. The 2nd Division was hurried forward and by 2nd October the full force had arrived. On 6th October the advance was resumed through a tangle of ruined fortifications, and Tung-Chow was occupied. The Royal Marines and a party of French taking possession of the City, Colonel

⁵⁷ Letter from General Hope Grant.

Travers disarmed and dispersed a lot of Chinese soldiers who were hovering about the suburbs.⁵⁸

The letters of application show that they served in these actions, by which the Tartar covering army was driven off, and the road to Peking opened, together with occupation of Tung-Chow protecting the convoys of stores and supplies upon which the army before Peking depended.

On 7th October the French reached the Summer Palace and started plundering. The prisoners from Mr. Parkes' party were restored on the 8th, but only 10 remained out of 39, the remainder having been tortured or murdered.

General Grant threw up breaching batteries to blow down the city, and at noon on the 13th they were ready to open fire, when the Chinese surrendered and agreed to terms. On the 18th and 19th as a punishment for the treatment of our prisoners, the 1st Division burnt the Summer Palace. On the 24th a Convention and ratification of the Treaty of 1858 were at last signed by the Chinese Imperial Authorities.

On 8th November the troops began the march back to the transports; on the 12th Desborough's Battery, Probyn's Horse, the RM Battalion and 99th Regiment, the whole under the command of Colonel Gascoigne, marched for Tientsin, where they arrived on the 14th and embarked in HM Troopship *Adventure*. As the transport was not big enough, 31 officers and 629 men went in *Adventure*, whilst 4 officers and 240 men went in HMS *Sampson*, *Fury*, *Inflexible*, and *Minerva*; the RMA went in the *Highflier*.

Memorial - The RMA Battery and the RMLI Brigade erected a memorial to their comrades at Hong Kong. This shows that from 1857-60 the loss in all ranks was: killed or died, 3 officers, 2 staff-sergeants, 13 corporals, 214 gunners and privates; wounded, 27 officers, 16 sergeants, 20 corporals, 4 buglers, 155 gunners and privates.

In a Board Letter it was said that, "*My Lords observe with pleasure that the Marines, as usual, had conducted themselves with the spirit and gallantry which have always been evinced by that Corps.*"⁵⁹

Colonel Holloway, Lieutenant Colonels Lemon, Travers, Hooker and Gascoigne were awarded the CB, and there were many mentions in dispatches and brevet promotions.

London Gazette - 6th November 1860. :Mentioned-in-Dispatches: Lieutenant Colonel J O Travers, Captains C W Carrington, G Mairis, W J Barker, J Straghan., J C Symonds, J C Morrison, J B Prynne; Lieutenant T H Brenan, Sergeants G Tearle, T Knapp, Privates F Kelly, Brady, R Bowerman, for the capture of the North-West fort at Taku, and Sergeant H Trent for 'deserving all praise for exertions to get the pontoons up although wounded.'

In the London Gazette of 15th February 1861, the following brevet promotions were awarded:

Brevet Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel J. H. Gascoigne.
Brevet Lieutenant Colonel	Captain & Brevet Major J C S Morrison.
To be Brevet Majors	Captains J C Symonds and J B Prynne.

Taiping Rebellion - The RM detachment left at Shanghai was engaged on operations against the Taiping Rebellion from 1860 to 1863. In 1860 a fierce attack on Shanghai was driven off, and in the London Gazette of 14 November 1860, Lieutenant Colonel March, Captain Budd, Lieutenants O'Grady and O L Williams (RMA) were brought to notice; also Lieutenant F R Phillips who volunteered to carry a flag of truce to the rebel camp, "a service of great danger".

In April 1862 troops were sent from Tientsin under General Staveley to keep a radius of 30 miles round the city clear of the rebels. The Shanghai merchants also raised a force under European officers under an American officer named Ward. He was succeeded by an RM officer, Captain Holland, who was however defeated at Taitsan, 22 February 1863. He was replaced by Colonel Charles Gordon RE (Chinese Gordon) who with this force - named the 'Ever-Victorious Army' - eventually stamped out the Rebellion after two years.

The RM detachments were engaged in the capture of the Walled Cities of Kah-Ding and Singpoo, and in numerous engagements in neighbourhood of Shanghai.

⁵⁸ The fact that they were present at these two actions of the 18th and 20th September was the grounds on which they were awarded the clasp for Peking. (W0 Letter, 20th February, 1863.)

⁵⁹ 10 November, 1860.

P A R T VI

1861 - 1869

During this period the Corps was subject to some drastic changes, which considerably altered its outlook. First was the final separation of the Officers into two Lists - RM Artillery and RM Light Infantry - and the dropping of the title 'Royal Marines Light Infantry'. Also it saw the formation of the Depot at Deal for training Recruits for all Divisions, and the abolition of the Woolwich Division.

In **1860** the numbers were 16,000, in 118 Divisional and 17 Artillery Companies.

In **1861** the numbers were 18,000.

Depot Royal Marines - About the 4th May 1861 there appears to have been a detachment of Royal Marines at Deal; but on 7th May of that year the CO, Lieutenant Colonel W R Maxwell is addressed as Commanding Depot RM Deal, so that it is evident that the decision to form a depot for training recruits had been made, and steps were promptly taken to carry it out. On 8th May detachments from Chatham and Woolwich Divisions were sent for duty, shortly after followed by 100 Recruits from each Division to commence training. They were accommodated in the East Barracks⁶⁰ and by August of that year the Depot was in full swing. All recruits for the Corps were sent there, those of the requisite standard being allowed to volunteer for the RMA, until the removal of the RMA Company in 1897 to Eastney. At first the Depot was commanded by a Lieutenant Colonel, but later by a Colonel Second Commandant. As it expanded they took over the South and Cavalry Barracks, and later the North Barracks was built, the smaller blocks being completed in 1900⁶¹

RM Artillery - In 1862 by Order-in-Council 21st March the Officers of the Corps were finally divided into two separate lists (the recruits were however still drawn as before up to 1897) The wording of the Order gives the reason for the change: "Attention has been called to the position of the Officers of the Artillery Division of the RM Forces, and the present system of promotion, by which the Officers of the Artillery and Officers of the Infantry Divisions are placed on one general list, the consequence of which is, that the proportion of subalterns in the Artillery is much greater than in the Infantry, and the opportunities of promotion less (Artillery, 4 Subalterns to 1 Captain; Infantry, 2 Subalterns to 1 Captain). Artillery Officers are generally promoted to the Infantry companies, and are afterwards brought back to their own Corps as vacancies occur, often while on foreign service; thus not only subjecting the officer to the expense of providing new uniform etc, but causing a great inconvenience to the Service; as the officer, on his return from the other branch of the Corps, necessarily requires a fresh course of instruction to fit him for his duties as a Captain of Artillery; it being impossible for him to keep pace with the various improvements which are constantly being made in rifle ordnance⁶² while not employed in the discharge of Artillery duties." The Order consequently reduced the Artillery subalterns to two per company, but increased the companies to 24. The General List was divided into two separate and distinct lists for promotion and seniority, one "to be composed of the Officers of the Royal Marine Artillery and the other of the Officers of the Royal Marine Light Infantry." (This was the Order by which the historic title Royal Marines was dropped, the title of the Corps since 1855 having been Royal Marines Light Infantry.) The order went on to say that the division was made on the understanding that "after the lists have been formed no more interchanges by promotion shall be allowed". But the General Officers List remained common till on 10 November 1868 three generals were added to the list and the Generals' List divided into Artillery and Infantry.

In 1862 the numbers were 18,000.

Barracks - The Barracks for the RMA at Eastney were commenced but were not occupied till 7th November 1864 when the depot from Fort Elson took over, but it was on 1st April 1865 that the Barrackmaster assumed charge, and they were not in complete occupation till 1867.

Inspector General - A reform was instituted by Order-in-Council 6 January 1862 that is often advocated in recent times, but which after an extended trial was abandoned owing to the friction with the DAG.

An Inspector General was appointed, with a Captain as his Assistant; the first holder was Major General A R

⁶⁰ Formerly the RN Hospital.

⁶¹ See 'History of Depot, RM' *Globe and Laurel*.

⁶² This was a period when great strides were being made in development of guns and ammunition.

Stransham, an officer with a very fine record, and his Assistant was Major J C Travers. The wording of the Order says; "The strength of the Corps is now 18,000 whereas in 1839-40 it was only 9000"..... the Board "feeling the necessity of maintaining the Corps in a high state of efficiency, we consider it essential that a General Officer RM should be appointed Inspector-General."

The holders of the appointment were:

Major General A B Stransham	9th January 1862 to 30th June 1867.
Major General J O Travers CB	9th June 1867 to 18th December 1868

In **1863** the numbers were 18,000.

Colonels - The Colonelcies of Divisions, which had been held by Naval Officers up to 1837 were revived by Order-in-Council of 20th March 1863, but were in future to be held by General Officers Royal Marines. The Order-in-Council sums up the situation: "Owing to the peculiar nature of the RM Service, General Officers are debarred from all further advantage, having no lucrative commands or appointments to look forward to like their brother officers in the Army; and although various measures have been submitted from time to time to improve the position of officers and men, by placing them as nearly as possible on a footing with the Army, nothing has been done for the General Officers." It was therefore proposed to appoint a General Officer as Colonel to each of the five Divisions (on the principle adopted in the Army of Colonelcies of Regiments.) and to raise the pay of those officers from £702.12.6 to £900 a year. "This measure will in our opinion give general satisfaction, as it will not only afford a means of conferring a reward upon a very meritorious class of old officers, but will be beneficial in giving the Corps a few honorary appointments."

These appointments were abolished on 31st March, 1870.

The holders were;

Chatham:

Lieutenant General H I Delaconbe	28th March 1863.
Major General H Anderson	23rd August 1866.

Portsmouth:

Major General Sir S B Ellis KCB	28th March 1863.
General J Tatton Brown	28th March 1868.

Plymouth:

Major General Fortescue Graham	1st June 1863.
Lieutenant General Thomas Lemon	14th February 1867.

Woolwich:

Lieutenant General J A Philips	28th March 1863.
General Sir A B Stransham	14th February 1867.

RMA:

General Sir C H Menzies KH	28th March 1863.
Lieutenant General Fortescue Graham	23rd August 1866.

The post of Honorary Colonel Commandant of the Divisions was revived again in 1923, one being allowed for each Division. These are purely honorary appointments; no pay or allowances are granted, but they are allowed to visit their Divisions once a year, and are a very pleasant method of allowing officers to keep in touch with their old comrades.

In **1865** the numbers were 17,000, in 24 Artillery and 116 Divisional Companies - a reduction of 1000.

Greenwich Hospital Pensions - four of £80 for Field Officers and four of £50 for Captains - were established by Order-in-Council 16th February 1866. Also a very welcome concession was made to Quartermasters promoted from the ranks by granting them an allowance to pay the mess and band contributions on promotions.⁶³

In **1866** the numbers were 16,400.

⁶³ Order in Council 3 February.

Naval Savings Banks for RN and RM were established on 10th November 1866, which after fulfilling a very useful purpose for many years were abolished in 1933.

In **1867** the numbers were 16,400, in 18 Artillery and 105 Infantry Companies. (Order-in-Council 3rd August 1867)

Quartermasters - This Order-in-Council also finally abolished the appointment of Lieutenant and Quartermaster, and all Quartermasters were in future promoted from the ranks.

Second Captains - It also instituted the rank of Second Captain, 46 being allowed with pay at 10/6 per day; it further laid down that Adjutants should hold their appointments for five years unless previously promoted to Captain.

In **1868** the numbers were 14,700 (Order-in-Council 28 March)

It was laid down that a Quartermaster and 4 Staff Clerks were allowed to the RMO and a Schoolmaster to Deal.

Pay - An increase of pay of 2d per day to NCOs and 1d a day to re-engaged men was made.

Examinations for Promotion - On 19th June 1869 it was laid down that it was compulsory for all Officers under the rank of Captain RM to pass an examination for promotion similar to that in the army, with such modifications as were considered necessary. This was extended to include Captains for Major on 18 March 1880, and in 1903 the examination of Majors in Tactical Fitness for Command prior to promotion to Lieutenant Colonel was instituted. After the War of 1914-18 this last examination was replaced by a course at the Senior Officers' School of the Army.

In **1869** the numbers were 14,000 in 16 Artillery and 84 Infantry Companies⁶⁴ The number of 2nd Captains was reduced to 21.

Woolwich Division - A heavy blow fell on the Light Infantry by the abolition of the Woolwich Division, which was ordered by Mr. Childers. The reduction was carried out with great hardship and callousness. A certain number of officers and men were sent to Deal, being dumped on the beach with their belongings from the coasting cruisers that brought them round; 200 men were summarily dismissed by being marched out of the barrack gates and turned adrift, similar scenes being enacted at the other Divisions. Several hundreds of men in uniform paraded in front of the Admiralty in London with sandwich-boards, stating they had been discharged from the Corps. The scandal resulted in some being reinstated. The Mess property was distributed to the other Divisions and Depot, and the Colours were sent to the Depot where they now hang in the Depot Church. The Order-in-Council dated 17 March 1869 placed surplus officers, except Lieutenants, on half pay; they were placed on a special list with a view to re-absorption in vacancies. The barracks were exchanged with the War Office for the barracks at Deal.

Mexico - Internal disturbances had prevented payment of the interest on the debts of the Mexican Government and increased taxes had been imposed on foreign goods. By the Convention of London of 1st October 1861, England, France and Spain decided to send armed forces to Mexico for the protection of their nationals. Accordingly three squadrons with troops were sent to demand satisfaction.

The British contingent included a Battalion of Royal Marines under Lieutenant Colonel S N Lowder RMLI, consisting of 4 Officers, 63 RMA, and 28 Officers and 669 RMLI. This Battalion carried the old pair of 1827 Colours now hanging in the Officers' Mess at Plymouth.

On 8th January 1862 the Allies occupied the city of Vera Cruz with the Fort of San Juan de Ulloa. The city was so unhealthy with yellow fever that the troops were moved out to camps inland. The Spaniards at first under General Prin to Orizaba, the French under de la Greviere to Tehuacan, and the British under Sir C Wyke to Cordova. There was no C-in-C and no method of routine. The RM Battalion extemporised a field battery of ships guns drawn by mules under Captain Power RMA. Negotiations were opened, and the President Juarez was very insulting; but eventually the treaty of Soledad, a sort of truce, recognised Juarez as Liberal President. The French, however, who had harboured the leaders of the Mexicans also showed a tendency to interfere in local politics, and in addition to their contingent of 2000 troops they sent a further reinforcement. The British and Spanish, on the Mexican Government's promising to satisfy their claims, withdrew their troops in March 1862 who returned home. The French occupied Mexico City on 17th January 1863, and offered to crown Maximilian of Austria as Emperor; he accepted it, only to be dethroned and executed a little later.

⁶⁴ 28 Chatham, 26 Portsmouth, 30 Plymouth

Japan - Eastern Waters were not long without a Battalion of Marines. Trouble had arisen with Japan. After several attacks on the Legation in 1861 and 1862, in September 1862 a Mr. Richardson encountered one of the daimios or feudal nobles named Satsuma, whose guards cut him down and killed him. As no redress could be obtained a small squadron under Admiral Keefe proceeded to his principal town, Kagosima, on 11th August 1863, bombarded it and burnt it after dismantling the batteries and burning three new steamers. A Legation Guard commanded by Captain Smith RMLI was sent to the Legation from England to relieve the men of the Military Train, but a stronger force was needed. A Battalion was put under orders, formed of two companies from each of the four Infantry Divisions. Colonel W G Suther was Commanding Officer, with Lieutenant Colonels Penrose and C W Adair, Lieutenants H S Poyntz, Adjutant; J A Stewart, Paymaster; Hill, Musketry Instructor; Barker, Quartermaster: one Captain, two Subalterns to each company. It consisted of 700 of all ranks with 1 Surgeon and 2 Assistants. They were inspected at Plymouth on 19th December 1863, by General Stransham, the Inspector General, and embarked from the Victualling Yard in HMS *Conqueror*, a fine line of battleship with her main deck guns taken out. This Battalion carried the same pair of 1827 Colours now hanging in the Officers' Mess at Plymouth.

After calling at Hong Kong they proceeded to Yokohama where they were encamped on the Bluff in charming surroundings. Here they were joined by the 2/20th Regiment (now Lancashire Fusiliers) a detachment of RE and RA. The Royal Marines were on one side of a ravine, the soldiers on the other, the ravine between making a fine ground for sports, drill, etc.

Simonoseki - At this time the daimios or nobles were at the very height of their power and very troublesome. One of the most powerful was Prince Chiesu, whose territory commanded the Eastern entrance to the Inland Sea. He had erected batteries on shore, and had fired on the vessels of different nations. An Allied force of English, French, Dutch and Americans was ordered to assemble in the Inland Sea to punish him. On 29th August 1864 the RM Battalion re-embarked in the *Conqueror*.

The squadron consisted of nine British ships, three French, four Dutch, and one American together with the Battalion.

On 5th September the bombardment of the batteries commenced, the Fleet being formed in two lines; the *Conqueror* was anchored beyond the squadron and well out of range of the batteries. The Japanese batteries returned the fire and several casualties were caused. The *Conqueror* would not be left out, so the Armstrong pivot gun, manned by Lieutenant Lye and some gunners of the RMA fired over the other ships and made excellent practice at long range. The batteries were much knocked about, and by 6 pm the Japanese fire ceased and parties from the *Perseus* and the Dutch *Medusa* landed and spiked the guns of No 5 Battery. Orders were issued for parties to be landed on the 6th.

The British force was under Colonel Suther with Major Wolrige as Brigade Major. The 1st Battalion commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Penrose, and the 2nd Battalion composed of the ships' detachments by Lieutenant Colonel C W Adair. There was also a Naval Brigade under, Captain Alexander and a Dutch battalion of Seamen and Marines.

The landing was covered by the ships and boats with howitzers in the bows, the latter under Captain Luard RN. They disembarked without opposition, and an advance was made along the line of deserted batteries to the town of Simonoseki, which was found to be evacuated, as Prince Chiesu had declared he would pay a large ransom for the sparing of the town.

Whilst the troops were at dinner some officers examined the town; in the evening on their way back to the beach fire was suddenly opened on the RM Brigade as it was crossing the foot of a ravine, densely wooded. on either side and with a marshy valley in the centre.

Skirmishers were thrown out and Colonel Suther ordered an advance towards what proved to be a large well-built stockade with two field pieces at the gate. The RM were on the right and the RN on the left; the Dutch had taken another route. Colonel Adair was wounded by a spent ball. They advanced through a dense undergrowth, the men falling down frequently. The stockade was built of strong wooden stakes with barrack buildings inside and a large entrance gate. The troops scrambled over the stockade, but the Japanese escaped through an opening in rear into the woods, leaving a good many dead. Many of the Japanese were clad in armour, samples of which can be seen in the Officers' Mess at Chatham.

The barracks and magazines were burnt or blown up, and the force re-embarked. Two Officers (Captain de Courcy and Lieutenant Inglis) were severely wounded and some NCOs and Men killed and wounded.

On 7th, 8th, and 9th strong working parties with covering forces were landed to destroy the five batteries etc. bringing off 62 guns. Several brass field pieces were brought off, two of which were given to the Battalion and are now in the Officers' Mess at Plymouth. The Battalion returned to Yokohama, but this time to the excellent huts erected by the RE, where they remained with the other troops until they embarked on 24th August 1865 in HMS *Conqueror* for home. On their way to Hong Kong they encountered a typhoon and had it not been that the *Conqueror* was such a fine ship and so well handled by Captain Luard they would probably have been lost.

Officers and men were shoulder to shoulder at the hand pumps, as the steam pumps were useless. Major Poyntz says: "I always look back with pride on the good humour and cheery behaviour of all hands amid such terrible surroundings."

Before leaving the East at this period it is necessary to place on record that there was trouble with Chinese pirates in 1868 and 1869. In November 1868 the Marines of the Fleet under Major Hall were landed for the capture of Yangchow and again in January 1869 for the capture and destruction of three walled villages at Swatoo. Major Hall and Lieutenant Baldwin were mentioned in dispatches, and Lieutenants Crosbie and Ogle, well known officers of the Corps, were in the Battalion.

New Zealand, 1800-64 - During these greater events, small detachments of the Corps were again engaged in operations in New Zealand.

Trouble had arisen with the Maories over the taking of their land for the settlers, and the Chiefs had rebelled.

In this instance land on the Waitara River, North of Taranaki, in the North Island had been sold and the question of surveying it had arisen. There was a quarrel between the Chiefs and on 29th January 1860 the Governor declared martial law in Taranaki and ordered the survey to be made. There were about 1,000 British troops in the Island - RA, RE, and 65th Regiment - scattered in four or five stations. That nearest the scene of the trouble had 200 men at Wanganui and New Plymouth. Colonel Gold, the Commander, took the field with about 400 men, with some rockets and howitzers. The Chief Te Rangiki had built a pah on the land which he was ordered to burn within 20 minutes. He obeyed, but on 15th March built another and pulled up all the surveying posts.

On the 17th Colonel Gold opened fire and after a bombardment on the 18th advanced to the assault; the pah was found deserted and there was little loss on either side. The Maoris then murdered some settlers, on which the local Militia were called out, and the 65th Regiment and a Naval Brigade of Seamen and Marines from HMS *Niger* stormed the pah in which the Maoris had taken refuge, killing 30 of them.

Reinforcements of the 12th and 40th Regiments, with some RA arrived at the end of April from Australia - all told about 600 - who landed at New Plymouth and moved into an entrenched camp at the mouth of the Waitara River. Opposite it was another pah - Puketauere - with a ditch, stockade and rifle pits on a ridge with deep gullies on either side full of brambles and bracken.

Major Nelson of 40th Regiment and Captain Seymour RN (afterwards Lord Alcester of Alexandria fame), after a bombardment by two heavy howitzers advanced with two columns, 350 men each, of the 40th Regiment and a Naval Brigade. The ground was slippery clay, soaked with rain, and they were beaten back with a loss of 30 killed and 34 wounded, mostly of the 40th Regiment. The wavering natives now joined the rebels and many settlers were murdered.

On 3rd August Major General Pratt arrived at New Plymouth from Australia and took command. He had nominally a force of 3,500, including 900 volunteers. The Coast was most dangerous, with no good harbour; the country was difficult forest and no information of enemy's movements could be obtained. The Maoris however evacuated the Puketuaere pah. On 8th September information was received about three pahas on the South Bank of Waitara River. Pratt dispatched three columns of 1,000 men over very difficult country; the Maoris evacuated their posts when he arrived and leaving garrisons in them, he moved on to three other pahas on the Kakiki River.

On 11th October he opened trenches within 250 yards of them and then sapped his way forward, whilst a Naval 8-in. gun kept up a steady bombardment. The Maoris resisted steadily for a time and then fled, leaving a lot of provisions.

News was now received that the Waikato tribes were moving South on the Waitara River. General Pratt returned and converted Puketuaere pah into a fortified signalling post, and then pro-posed to occupy a place called ilakoetaki, when in November he learned that the Maoris were already in veeeesion. He advanced on it in two columns, one about 800 strong from New Plymouth, the other about 300 from Waitara. On nearing the pah he was met by fire, so the guns were brought up; the 65th attacked in front and the Militia on the left. They contained the pah with fire until the 2nd Tailara Column (12th and 40th) came up on the right, when after a

couple of hours' resistance the enemy fled and were pursued, eight very important chiefs being killed. Leaving 300 men to garrison the pah, they returned to New Plymouth. In the London Gazette-of 5th February 1861, the gallant behaviour of the Naval Brigade and Marine Artillery (Lieutenant Morris RMA and 22 Rank and File) are mentioned.

This was a heavy blow to the Waikato tribes who considered themselves very fine fellows. General Pratt however had to leave to defend Auckland; therefore after providing for the posts of Taraniki, the remainder were embarked in sloops and taken to the port of Auckland; after a rough and crowded passage they arrived to find that five companies of the 14th had arrived from Australia, so the detachments were sent back to New Plymouth and 1200 men were concentrated on the Waitara River.

The Maoris were reported to have three pahi five miles up the river, and to be building a fourth called Matarorikoriki. Leaving 300 men to hold his base, on 29th December the General advanced to within 800 yards of the pahi, where he entrenched half his force. On 30th the Maoris hoisted the white flag and evacuated the forts.

By 14th January 1881 the remainder of the 14th Regiment had arrived, so that 1,500 men were now available. General Pratt then proceeded to sap towards Matarorikoriki; on 23rd the Maoris counter-attacked but were driven off and lost heavily; on the 24th another redoubt was ready and by 10th February there were eight redoubts and the sap was within 200 yards of the pah; they were working by rolling sap. On 11th March as the Armstrong guns were arriving, the Maoris asked for a truce and on the 19th hostilities, pending conclusion of peace, came to an end. On 31st March General Pratt returned to Australia and was succeeded by General D Cameron. In General Pratt's dispatch, Captain Morris RM was mentioned and received the Brevet of Major.

In 1862 Sir George Grey became Governor. In 1883 hostilities broke out again.

Covered by the fire of the Squadron and a battery of Armstrong guns, General Cameron with men of the 57th, 65th and 70th Regiments attacked the principal Maori stronghold on the Katikaro River, which was carried with the bayonet. On 12th July General Cameron crossed the creek and established a redoubt in the Kokeroa Hills and collected supplies. In October the Maoris retreated up the Waikato to Rangiriri and closed the ground across the isthmus, dividing Lake Waikari from the river with a strong earthwork. On 19th October after a long and heavy bombardment from the gunboats and Armstrong guns, an assault was made; the outer works were carried, but the central redoubt, which had a ditch 12 feet wide and walls 18 feet high, defied all attacks by the seamen and artillery. At dawn on the 29th the Maoris hoisted the white flag, having suffered heavy loss; the British casualties were 40 killed and 90 wounded.

On 8th December General Cameron occupied Nguwakia, at the junction of the Waikato and Waikara Rivers and halted until 24th January 1864. Replenishing supplies etc, he was joined by the 43rd and 50th Regiments from India. The Maoris then retired to the Paterangi pans which were too strong to be assaulted.

On 21st February a depot of provisions at Rangiaokia was taken with little difficulty, and on 22nd at Taawamuta he drove the Maoris South-East to Maniatori with a loss of 40 killed. On 31st March with a force of about 1,300, General Cameron surrounded Orakau, but three attempts to assault were repelled, and he decided to sap up to it.

Gate Pah - On 2nd April after bombardment the pah was summoned, but refused to surrender; the outer works were carried and then he again summoned the inner works. The defenders formed a column and coolly marched out; another chief came in and surrendered, but by cool cheek most of them got off.

The Maoris were now surrendering, but there remained Tauranga, 40 miles East of Cameron's Headquarters, the seaport of the Waikato tribes. The now celebrated Gate Pah was at Pukekinakina, three miles from Tauranga, situated on a ridge between two swamps. On 21st April, Cameron shifted his HQ to Tauranga and on 27th reconnoitred the pah. It was oblong in shape, 70 yards by 30 yards, with strong palisades and surrounded by a strong fence of timber; the slopes leading to the swamps were honeycombed with rifle pits. The strength of the Naval Brigade from HMS *Niger* and *North Star* was 429; he had also 6 companies of the 43rd and 732 of the 88th Regiments. Besides field guns he had 3 heavy guns.

On the evening of 27th April half the force encamped within 400 yards of the pah, and on that day and the next the guns were placed in position. After dusk on the 28th a feint attack was made, under which the 68th - taking advantage of the low tide - passed along the beach outside the swamps on the enemy right and extended themselves across the rear to cut off the retreat.

Soon after dawn on the 29th the guns opened fire and continued till 4 pm, making a practicable breach in the exterior fence and palisades. The assaulting party was composed of 300 men from the Naval Brigade and 300

from the 43rd. It was divided into 150 from each for storming party and 150 each for reserve. They gained the breach with little loss, but were met by a heavy hail of bullets from concealed passages and pits; nearly all the officers were shot down and the men were seized with panic, the Naval Brigade losing 4 officers and 40 men, and the 43rd 9 officers and 73 men. $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour afterwards, the Maoris tried to retire, but were driven back by the 68th Regiment. General Cameron took up an entrenched line 1,000 yards from the pah and deferred operations until the next day, but at daylight on the 30th the Maoris retreated and left the pah.

They then threatened the 68th at Teranga, four miles from the pah, but Colonel Greer with 600 of the 68th and the 43rd marched against them on 21st June and being reinforced by 259 men, charged the rifle pits. The Maoris stood for a while but then gave way, pursued by the British for miles, and suffered heavy loss. The remainder in August surrendered their lands, of which the Governor kept one quarter as a punishment.

A medal was issued for these operations.

PART VII

1870 - 1880

Fortunately for the Corps the great changes that took place in the Army were not reflected in the Royal Marines, which now became the only long-service unit in the Kingdom, though the compulsory retirement age for officers was introduced. As purchase of Commissions had never been allowed in the Royal Marines, that great army reform did not affect them.

Officers - The perennial question of the promotion of officers was to the fore: as the result of enquiries and a Committee, a scheme of promotion and retirement was established by Order-in-Council 22 February 1870, which in many ways affected the Corps.

1. The system of compulsory retirement for age was extended to all higher grades, so as to cause a more even flow of promotion. The number of General Officers was fixed at 12.
2. The posts of Colonels of Divisions were abolished.
3. The establishment was fixed at RMA - 2,877, RMLI - 11,103.
4. A Second-Commandant was allowed for command of Depot at Deal.
5. The HQ Staff at the RMO was fixed at 1 Deputy Adjutant General, 1 Assistant Adjutant General, 1 Quartermaster, 1 Chief Clerk and 3 Staff Sergeant Clerks.
6. Any Officer placed on the Retired List in no case to be replaced on the Active List.
7. The grant of a step in rank on retirement was approved.
8. The ages of compulsory retirement were laid down, as were the scales of retired pay, varying from £600 for a Colonel to £225 at 42 years of age.

Recruiting - On 17th August (Order in Council) Recruiting Bounties were discontinued and shorter periods for award of GC Badges were introduced. The 1d a day extra pay on re-engagement was abolished.

On 7th September HMS *Captain*, the first turret ship, was lost in the Bay of Biscay. The Admiralty had rigged her with masts and yards as well as the turrets, and she is believed to have turned turtle in the heavy seas. Only 18 men were saved.

Japan - On 5th November yet another Battalion was sent to Japan, consisting of 4 Companies under Lieutenant Colonel F J Richards; Adjutant, Captain A Hill; Quartermaster, Lieutenant E N H Gray; 4 Captains (E B Snow, C W Burton, A H Walsh, P R Holmes), and 8 Lieutenants. It was quartered on the Bluff at Yokohama and remained in garrison there till 1875. Japan at that period was being opened up and becoming Westernized, whilst the feudal daimios were losing their power, and it was necessary to have protection for the Europeans. At the same time our men acted as a model for their new armies, in fact Lieutenant Hawes was employed as an Instructor for many years. Other officers, among them Lieutenant Q S Fagan, were employed as Assistant Engineers in laying their new railways.

Pensioner Reserve - On 29th November 1870 the Seamen Pensioner Reserve was established, but the Royal Marine Pensioner Reserve not until 25th June 1872, when special rates of pay whilst at drill were laid down.

Schools - With a view to securing uniformity in the Schools, on 10th May 1872 a Sub-Inspector of RM Schools was appointed to the Staff of the DAQ with pay at 10/- a day, retiring at 60; the holder was a Captain T Smith. This appointment was abolished in 1895. The Schoolmaster's position was established as ranking next to Sergeant-Majors but under no NCO. (Warrant Officers were not yet in existence in the Royal Marines). Provision was also made for NCOs and Marines to be employed as School Assistants; this of course was the era when compulsory education was introduced into England.

In **1871** the numbers were 14,000.

Second Lieutenants - On 31st October 1871 the rank of 2nd Lieutenant was abolished and was not reintroduced till 1887.

In **1872** the numbers voted were 14,000.

In **1873** the numbers voted were Artillery 2,675, Infantry 10,980, Staff 7 : Total 13,660 (Order in Council) in 16 Artillery and 48 Infantry Companies.

Officers' Entry - A very important change was inaugurated by Order in Council 16 January 1873. Since 8th June 1838 and 25th February 1841 there had been a Naval College at Portsmouth to train Officers RN and RM ; this new Order abolished the College at Portsmouth and established the College at Greenwich, which included in its staff a Professor of Fortification, who was in charge of the Marine Cadets. The RMA Recruit Officers were trained for two years at this College, but the RMLI Recruit Officers after training at their own Headquarters received six months instruction at Forton or Eastney from the Military Instructor prior to confirmation in their appointments. The post of Military Instructor was instituted by Order in Council 4th August 1873; he was to be an Officer qualified at the Staff College and was appointed in lieu of one of the Adjutants of the Artillery Division. At one time Officers, who had failed to qualify for the RMA., were transferred to the RMLI, but this arrangement was soon stopped, though many distinguished officers were saved to the Corps by this means. These arrangements continued until 1889.

In May 1873 it was laid down that Probationary Officers' commissions would in future be signed by the Admiralty, but all first commissions to permanent rank would be made under His Majesty's Sign Manual and notified by the Admiralty; no other commissions would be issued, which was a great change from the old custom and a great relief to officers, as the stamp duty of 30/- on each Commission was a heavy tax.

Second-Captains - On 4th August 1873 the rank of Second-Captain was abolished. New rates of pay were laid down for Lieutenants which lasted till 1902, and an extra 2/- for Captains of over 8 years' Service when afloat introduced.

In **1874** the numbers were 14,000.

In **1875** the numbers were 14,000.

On 1st September the new ironclads *Vanguard* and *Iron Duke* were in collision off the coast of Ireland and the *Vanguard* was sunk with a loss of many lives.

Musicians - In May for the first time provision was made for the introduction of the rank of Musician for the Divisional Bands - 25 being allowed to each Division.

On 27th November the Royal Marine Schools were placed under Naval Regulations and rates of pay were laid down for school-mistresses, the maximum being £50 a year.

India - On 22nd July 1875, HMS *Serapis* (one of the Indian troopships) was commissioned to take HRH The Prince of Wales (afterwards HM King Edward VII) on his visit to India in the winter of 1875-78. The RM Officers were Brevet Major E B Snow RMLI and Lieutenant W M Lambert RMA. The Band of the Portsmouth Division, RMLI was specially embarked for the occasion, and on their return were privileged to wear the Prince of Wales' Feathers on their cap and helmet badges.

In **1876** the numbers were 14,000.

In **1877** the numbers were 14,000.

Naval Gunnery - In 1877 an important step was taken as regards training in Naval gunnery. The standard for the RMLI was ordered to be the same as that for Seaman Trained Man, and NCOs and men who attained the standard were given 1d a day extra pay (TM), for which they had to requalify every three years. There was some discussion as to the necessity of the RMLI qualifying in the Cutlass Exercise, which was one of the subjects required by Seamen, but My Lords were at last persuaded that, as RM were armed with a bayonet and not a cutlass, this was hardly necessary. The RMA, of course, who were paid as Artillerymen, were required to obtain the standard of Seamen Gunners. It was not till about 1904 that the rating of QMs at 2d a day (ie the same as Seaman Gunner) was opened to RMLI, though for many years they had formed separate guns' crews in HM ships.

In **1878** the numbers were 14,000.

This year the system of weekly payments of pay in lieu of daily was introduced by Colonel Lambrick for NCOs and men.

On 24th March HMS *Eurydice* capsized off the Isle of Wight with a loss of 318 lives.

Officers: Majors - Following a Committee in 1877, the retirement question was again raised by Order in Council 15 January 1878. General Officers were to retire at 65 instead of 70 years of age; the Reserve List of Lieutenant Colonels was abolished; but most important of all the substantive rank of Major was restored, 8 being allowed for Artillery and 24 for the RMLI at 16/- a day with forage allowance; there were also to be four Artillery Lieutenant Colonels instead of three.

A reward for Special Merit and Promise was instituted by the power to grant one special promotion per annum to be published in the London Gazette. Also selection of Colonels and Lieutenant Colonels for promotion was introduced. The Chief Clerk at the RM Office was made a Quartermaster and 5 Staff Clerks were allowed. The compulsory age for retirement of Majors was fixed at 48 years on £300 and for Captains at 42 on £225.

It was also laid down that the number of first entries of officers were to be carefully regulated according to Actuarial advice - a provision which was neglected, and led to the great blocks in promotion in later years.

In **1879** the numbers were 13,000.

Army Discipline Act - This year marks a great departure in the Acts governing the Corps. Hitherto the Army had been governed by a Mutiny Act and Articles of War passed annually by Parliament. The Marines had followed the same rule, though the Marine Act and Articles, after passing through Parliament, were signed by the Admiralty and then promulgated. The Army now consolidated their regulations in the Army Discipline And Regulation Act of 1879⁶⁵, which is brought into force by the Army Annual Act. The Royal Marines on shore were now brought into the provisions of this Act by a special provision with certain modifications; but the provisions of the old Marine Mutiny Acts 11 & 12 Vict. C63 and 20 Vict. C1 as regards conditions of service were and are retained in force.

In consequence of the provisions of s. 171 (11x) of this Act, the Admiralty issued an Order-in-Council 26th February 1880 by which Royal Marines when embarked became subject to the provisions of the Naval Discipline Act of 1868, and also made provision for the RM when landed for active service on shore from the Fleet to be subject to the Army Act. These provisions became necessary owing to the cancellation of the Marine Mutiny Act and Articles of War on these points. There were revision Orders-in-Council of 6th February 1882 and 26th February 1888, but the principle that the Marines when embarked became subject to the Naval Discipline Act was not affected.

Flogging - The Army Discipline Act was replaced by the Army Act of 1881 and with these Acts finally disappeared the punishments of flogging, as by s44 the Rules for Field Punishment were substituted for it on Active Service.

In the Navy in 1830 the number of lashes had been limited to 48. In Order-in-Council 1 July 1840 it had been laid down that no Marine wearing a Good Conduct Badge was liable to corporal punishment except for mutinous conduct. In 1871 there were further restrictions and it was practically abolished in 1879. The last case in the Navy occurred in 1882.

Operations. The Ashanti War, 1873-74⁶⁶

In 1873 renewed trouble arose with King Coffee of Ashanti, partly over the purchase of Elmina from the Dutch by the British. The Ashantis, a fierce and warlike tribe, invaded the British Protectorate and advanced towards Cape Coast Castle and Elmina with an army of 12,000 men. The local troops consisting of the West India Regiment, Volunteers and Native Levies, were not sufficient to cope with them, and the Naval Squadron on the Station was very small. The *Druid* and other small craft landed their Seamen and Marines to garrison Cape Coast Castle, Elmina, and Fort William.

On the news reaching England, a detachment of 110 RMA and RMLI under Captain and Brevet Lieutenant Colonel F V Festing RMA, Captain Despard RMLI, Lieutenants Cheetham and Allen RMA, Lieutenants J H Price and J J Quill RMLI with two mountain guns and 200 war rockets was sent out in HMS *Barracouta*. She arrived at Elmina on 7th June and Martial Law was proclaimed.

Elmina - On the night of 12/13th June, Colonel Festing with 300 Royal Marines, Houssa, West India Regiment and Volunteers occupied the land side of the town. Between 2 and 4.30, 300 men from the *Barracouta*, *Druid*, *Decoy*, *Seagull* and *Argus* were towed in boats up the river by the *Argus* and the boats were moored in line with

⁶⁵ Now replaced by the Army Act.

⁶⁶ Authorities: Coomasseie (HM Stanley), Officers' Services., *Britain's Bea Soldiers* (Field); *Globe and Laurel*.

their guns and rockets laid on King's Town, the disaffected quarter. The inhabitants were ordered to hand over their arms and ammunition and as they did not comply at 12 noon, the boats and Castle opened fire; the inhabitants fled into the bush, where they were pursued by Colonel Festing's detachment, supported by the seamen under Captain Fremantle RN

Just after their return 2,000 Ashantis were reported advancing out of the forest on the loyal part of the town. They were at once engaged by the Royal Marines and Houssas whose fire checked their advance, whilst the seamen of the *Barracouta* who had not yet re-embarked caught them in flank and they were driven off with heavy loss, being pursued by Colonel Festing for two miles. Lieutenant Quill was mentioned in dispatches for having skirmished his men with zeal and alacrity.

There was a pause in the fighting, but punishment was inflicted on several of the coastal villages, and reconnaissances of the route to Prahsu and Coomassie were made. The Royal Marines suffered heavily from fever and had to be nearly all replaced, Captains Crease RMA, Allnutt RMLI, Lieutenant T Moore RMA, Lieutenants Gray, Stephens and P Hearle RMLI being sent out with 50 RMA and 150 RMLI on 17th July in the SS *Simoon*. Captain Crease invented a filter for water which proved most valuable. Lieutenants Stephens and Hearle were sent up country to train native Levies.

The Government had now decided to send an expedition to punish the Ashantis, but as the British troops could not operate until December, General Sir Garnet Wolseley and a number of Special Service Officers were sent out to make the necessary preparations and to raise Native Regiments, organise carriers, etc.

These arrived on 4th October. At this time a large Ashanti army was encamped at Essaman, about 6 miles north of Elmina, and was being supported and helped by the local Fantee Chiefs.

Essaman - On 14th October General Wolseley attacked Essaman with a force composed of 29 RMA, 129 RMLI, 29 Seamen, 205 2/WI Regiment, 126 Houssas, 40 Native Levies and 270 Carriers with one 7 pdr and a rocket tube. They advanced in single file and when near the village fire was opened on them, to which they replied and then pushed on; the shells from the 7 pdr set the village on fire, the RM attacked in front and soon rushed the village, the Houssas turning the right flank. The village was deserted and after a short rest the column moved on to Amquana, about 4 or 5 miles further on. The RM were leading in extended order, when they were attacked from the bush. The advanced guard composed of Houssas and WI Regiment then moved over a grassy plateau, keeping up a heavy but ill-directed fire, whilst a wood on the left was attacked by the RMA under Captain Crease, supported by the Seamen with the gun and rocket tube. The main body, pushing on, reached the village - which was on the sea beach - without further opposition.

Here Captain Luxmoore of HMS *Decoy* landed with his Seamen and Marines to reinforce the Column. The village was found to be deserted and was burnt; the villages of Akimfoo and Amponee were also burnt after being bombarded by the *Argus* and *Decoy*. The loss in the column was 2 killed and 23 Officers and men wounded. They had marched 22 miles and suffered greatly from the heat.

Fortified posts were established on the road to Prahsu, where the river Prah had to be crossed. Colonel Festing was in command of Dunquah, which he had occupied on 11th October. Scouts kept the General well informed as to the movements of the Ashantis, who were variously estimated at from 10,000 to 40,000 men. The Fantees in the British Protectorate were useless as soldiers; it was therefore necessary to ensure the peace of the Protectorate before advancing into the Ashanti country.

On 27th October, Colonel resting from Dunquah (15 miles north-west of Cape Coast Castle) surprised Escaibo to the west of his post, where an Ashanti army was encamped; they fled but opened fire from the bush; the village and encampment were however destroyed. Out of 9 officers, 5 were wounded, 4 of the 2/WI Regiment were wounded and 42 of the Native Levies.

Abrakrampa - On 28th General Wolseley advanced from Abrakrampa with 100 Royal Marines under Captain Allnutt, 158 Seamen, some Houssas and Native Levies. Festing was unable to co-operate, so leaving a garrison at Abrakrampa, Wolseley returned to Cape Coast Castle.

Abrakrampa was a strategic point on the main route to Coomassie and Major Baker Russell, 13th Hussars, was placed in command with 50 Royal Marines and some Native Levies, amounting in all to 1,000 men, with a rocket tube. On 5th November, just as the Marines were falling in to return to Cape Coast Castle, the Ashantis attacked in force, estimated at 10,000 men. The RM Sniders fired volleys and after 1½ hours' severe fighting the enemy retired; but during the night the Ashantis were reinforced to 15,000 and renewed their attacks on three sides. A reinforcement of 502 2/WI Regiment arrived during the night but in response to appeals, General Wolseley

arrived at 6 pm with 50 Seamen and Marines, and 196 2/WI Regiment and Native Levies. The Ashantis then retired and returned to Coomassie, taking six weeks to reach their capital. General Wolseley reported "*the successful defence was solely attributable to the admirable conduct of Major Russell and the officers⁶⁷ under his orders who with only 50 Marines in addition to Native Levies held the town against numbers at least twenty-fold during two most fatiguing days and nights.*"

It was impossible to follow up the retreating Ashantis, but on the 26th Amanquatsia, one of their principal Chiefs, was defeated at Faisoon, the defeat being much due to rockets fired by three RM Artillerymen whose "*cool courageous bearing it was a pleasure to witness.*"

On 4th November Festing with his Native Levies had a brush with the Ashantis in which he was himself wounded. The bulk of the Marines had by now been invalided and sent to Ascension to recuperate.

British reinforcements were now arriving, among them a Battalion of Royal Marines commanded by Lieutenant Colonel de Courcy RMLI; Lieutenant A A Allen, Adjutant and Quartermaster; composed of one company of RMA and 3 of RMLI. To their great regret the RM Battalion was not disembarked, nor was the greater part of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

Coomassie - The force detailed for the advance to Coomassie consisted of the 42nd Highlanders, 2nd Rifle Brigade and part of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, two Battalions West India Regiment, 1 Battalion Houssas., 2 Battalions Native Levies, Hausa Artillery, with a Naval Brigade of 210 men under Captain Hewett VC, divided into two wings under Captains Hunt-Grubbe and Luxmoore RN with whom were 70 RM formed into two companies under Lieutenants. A B Crosbie and R N Deane RMLI of HMS *Active*.

On 23rd December General Wolseley went to Chamali, at the mouth of the Prah river in the Flagship, and landed with the RM detachment to look for the natives, but met with no opposition. The Prah River runs diagonally across the country from NE to SW. The plan was for Captain Glover, the Administrator, with his levies, to march from the Volta River; Wolseley's column to advance from Prahsu, which was 69 miles by road from Cape Coast Castle. The two columns would thus advance on two sides of a triangle whose apex was Coomassie. The advanced base was at Prahsu, where there was a well laid out camp. From Prahsu to Coomassie the distance was 78.5 miles, to be covered in 9 stages.

From 4th October to 13th December with the Royal Marines, Seamen, West India and two Native Regiments, General Wolseley had driven 20,000 Ashantis across the Prah.

On 20th December the Naval Brigade and Rifles crossed the Prah.

On 26th January 1874 Russell's Native Regiment and Giffard's Scouts with part of the Naval Brigade reconnoitred Addibasse, where they attacked and drove out the enemy without loss. On the 28th Borborassi was found occupied and was attacked on 29th; the enemy were surprised and fled, though an attack was made on the Naval Brigade, including the Royal Marines, on the left flank which was driven off. The dispatches said "*Discipline and conduct of the Bluejackets under Captain Grubbe, who formed the advance and rearguard afterwards, merited my special commendation.*"

Amoaful - On 1st February was fought the battle of Amoaful, which broke the power of the Ashantis. When the force advanced, the Black Watch were in the centre, followed by the Royal Artillery and a portion of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers; the left column was composed of the right wing of the Naval Brigade, Russell's Native Regiment, some RA and RE; the right column of the left wing of the Naval Brigade, Wood's Native Regiment, and some RA and RE; the Rifle Brigade were in reserve.

The action opened at 8 am; by 9.16 am the centre had reached the village of Eggniassie, which had been carried at 8.5 am by Lord Giffard's Scouts. The right column was then seriously engaged, the Ashantis fighting with great gallantry. Colonel Wood was wounded and the RWF were ordered up to support him to the north-east; two companies of the Rifle Brigade were also ordered up as the Highlanders were meeting with strong resistance. The Naval Brigade of the left column was hotly engaged for 1½ hours, but fighting their way forward they lost touch with the main body and then had to move diagonally through the bush and eventually came in on the right of the Black Watch to reinforce them and enable them to carry the big Ashanti camp in their front. The Ashantis retreated at 12, and Wolseley reached Amoaful at 5 pm.

Another attack was made on the rear guard 2.5 miles in rear at Quarman which lasted till midnight, but was driven off by the Rifle Brigade and Russell's Natives.

⁶⁷ Captain Allnutt and Lieutenant Moore.

On 1st February the advance was continued to Becquah; the Naval Brigade with one gun and a rocket tube, some RE, Russell's Natives and Gifford's Scouts formed the advanced guard; the main body consisted of RWF and 5 Companies of the Black Watch. They moved to the west of Amoafu by a road from the north end of the town. After going about 1.5 miles, firing commenced and the Ashantis took to the bush; at first they made some resistance, but were driven off by volleys fired by companies of the advanced guard. The main body was not engaged. Becquah was set on fire and destroyed.

Coomassie - On 2nd the advance was resumed to Coomassie, Russell's Natives and Gifford's Scouts forming the advanced guard. There was a skirmish at the crossing of a stream but the main body was not engaged. On 3rd they advanced to the Ordah river; during the morning there was a skirmish, but the RE were able to command the bridge. The Native Levies bivouacked on the north bank, the main body on the south. Very heavy rain fell, but at 7 am on 4th February the advance was continued, the Rifle Brigade leading. They were resisted by heavy fire from the bush, but the enemy was cleared off by volleys fired without aim level with the ground. The town of Ordahsu was only 1.5 miles from the river, but it was 9.30 am before they reached within 600 yards of it, when it was carried by the Rifle Brigade. The baggage was brought up, but the enemy swung round both flanks and attacked the rear; they were driven off by the Naval Brigade supported by Wood's and Russell's Natives.

The Black Watch were then ordered to advance on Coomassie, covered by the Artillery. Advancing in file they were met by fire on both flanks which was countered by volleys fired by companies to right and left without halting; when the way was cleared, the porters with SAA and medical stores went on, the Naval Brigade formed the rear guard. They passed through the deadly swamp which insulates Coomassie and by 6 pm entered the broad avenue of "pretentious looking edifices of porticoes and alcoved houses."

That night fires broke out and burnt part of the town; King Coffee fled to the bush, so the Palace was burnt and destroyed and a certain amount of loot collected. It was undesirable to retain white troops there, so the return march commenced on 8th February. The troops on return to Cape Coast Castle were re-embarked at once. Glover's Column of 4,600 natives, coming by the other route, arrived in Coomassie on the 12th, having been preceded by Captain Sartorius the day before, who found Coomassie still deserted.

Lieutenant Colonel Fasting was promoted to Brevet Colonel and given the CB on 31st March 1874, and KCMG on 8th May 1874. Lieutenant Crosbie RMLI, for this campaign and his services in the Congo in August and September 1879, and the Niger in August 1876, was specially promoted to Captain 3rd December 1878. Lieutenant R N Doane was mentioned in dispatches; after retirement from RM he joined the Royal Canadian North-West Mounted Police and became Superintendent.

HMS *Shah* On 28th May 1877 there were internal troubles in Peru and a Peruvian Turret-Ship, *Huascar*, was seized by the rebels and carried off. She was engaged by HMS *Shah* and *Amethyst*, and forced to surrender; the first occasion of British armoured ships being in action. Captain J Phillips RMLI and Lieutenant W M Lambert RMA were the RM Officers.

South Africa and Zulu War, 1870⁶⁸ During 1876-77-78 there had been considerable trouble with the natives in South Africa, in Cape Colony, Natal, etc.; parties had been landed from the Squadron, including Marines, to assist the local troops - parties from the *Active* were present on 7th February 1878 at the battle of Guintana; but at the end of 1878 a serious quarrel arose with the great military tribe of Zulus, who under their king, Ketchwayo, had been thoroughly trained in warfare and military organisation. He had 40,000 warriors and a good supply of fire-arms; they were a warlike race and the ensuing campaign was chequered with several disasters to the British Forces. The immediate cause of hostilities was a dispute over some territory on the Blood River, which was transferred to the British when the Transvaal was annexed in 1877.

It was important to secure Natal and the Transvaal from invasion; it was therefore decided to advance in three columns - the main column composed of two Battalions of the 24th Regiment under General Lord Chelmsford advanced by Rorke's Drift over the Buffalo River; the left column under Colonel Flood VC, with the 90th Regiment and mounted troops; the right column under Colonel Pearson composed of the Buffs, Naval Brigade from HMS *Active* - about 170 Seamen and Marines - under Commander Campbell, with Lieutenant T W Dowding, RMLI in command of the RM (about 60 men); they had two 12 pdr Armstrong guns, a Gatling and two rocket tubes, and details of mounted troops. All columns had Battalions of the Natal Native Contingent, 105 of whom were armed with rifles but who were very unreliable.

⁶⁸ Authorities; Official Account, Officers, Services, etc.

The right column moved through the coast district to the Lower Tugela Drift; the ground here was a high open grassy down furrowed by deep watercourses and rocky ridges, and there was low lying alluvial land along the coast. The Tugela and Buffalo Rivers crossed the track of the Right and Centre Columns.

The Naval Brigade landed on 19th November and proceeded by the Coast road to Fort Pearson, which was being built to protect the Lower Tugela Drift. Arriving on the 24th, they relieved two companion of the Buffs who went on to Thring's Post.

From 6th to 10th January 1879 they were occupied in placing a steel hawser to work a pont ferry at the Drift, whilst the stores were being collected at Stanger and Fort Pearson. Stores were also being collected at Greytown, Ladysmith and Holpmakaar for the Centre Column, and at Newcastle and Utrecht for the Left Column.

On 6th January 50 Seamen and Marines from the *Tenedos* joined the Brigade.

On 11th January, Pearson's Column was formed up, consisting of:

- 8 Companies Buffs
- 6 Companies 99th
- 2 guns RFA
- 2nd Company RE
- Naval Brigade, 220.
- 2 Battalions Natal Native Contingent.
- No 2 Company Native Pioneers.

On 12th the Naval Brigade crossed to the left bank of the Tugela without opposition and by the evening of the 18th all were across, the pont working very successfully. Fort Tenedos was constructed on the left bank by evening of the 17th, and stores and transport collected there.

Inyezane At 6 am on 18th the advanced parties, including the *Active's* Brigade, 5 Companies of the Buffs, RE, and mounted troops, reached the Inyoni River with 50 waggons and next day crossed that river to Umsundusi, the rear portion with 50 waggons reaching the Inyoni. On the 21st they reached Kwasamabela; on 22nd they came to the Inyezane River where was fought the Battle of Inyezane. The Zulus were seen at 8 am on a hill 400 yards from the left flank and the Native Company of the advanced guard was driven in. Colonel Pearson with two companies of the Buffs, two of the Naval Brigade and two guns, advanced to a knoll on the ridge leading to the Mission Station at Etshowe; the Zulus, advancing on the right, were met by the Buffs and the 99th, who forced them back. They however pushed forward on the British left but were stopped by the rockets of the Naval Brigade; portions of the Native Contingent supported by the Naval Brigade carried the kraal in their front and set it on fire; a company of the Buffs was then sent up in support and they then occupied the Maja's Hill. At 9.30 am the Zulus retreated and the troops advanced and occupied a ridge four miles further on where they bivouacked; next morning they occupied the Mission Station of Etshowe without opposition and placed it in a state of defence as a depot on the line of advance and here they were beleaguersd till 3rd April.

Isandhlawana On 22nd January disaster befell the Centre Column; the greater part of the 2/24th having gone out with Lord Chelmsford on a reconnaissance, the Zulus attacked the troops in camp - consisting of the 1/24th and details - who were massacred almost to a man when their ammunition was exhausted. The gallant defence of the River crossing at Rorke's Drift by Lieutenant Chard RE and Lieutenant Brombead 24th, with one company of 1/24th prevented the Zulus bursting into the Colony and enabled some of the fugitives from Isandhlawana to escape. They were relieved the next morning by the reconnoitring column. The left column also met with a reverse at the Inhlobane Mountain and had to withdraw to the White Umvolosi River, so that operations came to a standstill till reinforcements could arrive from England, Mauritius, etc.

Etshowe Lord Chelmsford sent instructions to Colonel Pearson's column to fall back to the Tugela, but they decided to hold Etshowe and to send back their empty waggons under escort to Fort Tenedos. On three sides the fort was commanded at short range, dangerous wooded ravines ran up close to it; there was good water but the stock of provisions was not large; they sent back all mounted men and two battalions of the Native Contingent who reached Fort Tenedos in safety. A convoy of supplies reached them safely on 30th January and the garrison took shelter under the waggons which formed their defence line; 1,000 of the animals were sent away, but the Zulus captured 900 of them and drove the rest back to the fort. They did not hear of the disaster at Isandhlawana till 7th February, but ignored Lord Chelmsford's recommendation to fall back. They were not interfered with until the 16th. On 1st March, four companies of the Buffs and one of the 99th, with one company RE and 20 Royal Marines (Lieutenant Dowding) burnt one of Dubulmanzi's kraals about 7 miles from the Fort,

communication being established with GHQ by flashing mirror.⁶⁹

On 7th March they commenced making a road back towards the Tugela. There was a good deal of sickness, but on the morning of 2nd April the relieving force was seen to be engaged at Gingihlovo and on the evening of 3rd April the blockade was raised. Four Officers and 27 NCOs and men died and there were 120 sick.

Gingihlovo - Reinforcements were now arriving; HMS *Shah*, on her way home from South America embarked one Company of the 88th and a battery of artillery at St. Helena and reached Durban on 6th March, where she also landed her Naval Brigade of 400 including her RM detachment under Captain J Phillips RMLI and Lieutenant Lambert RMA; HMS *Boadicea* also landed her Brigade of 200 including the RM under Lieutenant Robyns RMLI, on the 15th. The total Royal Marines numbered about 100.

Heavy floods in the Buffalo and Tugela Rivers had stopped the Zulus. A column was at once formed for the relief of Etshowe; it was assembled at Fort Pearson and consisted of the 57th, 91st, 2/60th and 99th Regiments, with 2 companies of the Buffs and the Naval Brigade from the *Shah*, *Tenedoa*, *Boadicea*, with mounted volunteers; they had two 9 pdr guns, two Gatlings and 4 rocket tubes. The troops were divided into two Brigades.

On 28th March they were on the left bank of the Tugela and on the 29th the advance commenced near the coast and over more open country; heavy rain on the 27th and 28th had made the progress slow; an entrenched camp was formed at the Inyoni River.

On 30th they moved to the Amatikulu River, crossing on the 31st. On 1st April they made an entrenched camp one mile from the Inyezane River close to the Gingihlovo stream, which was free from bush, but the long grass gave cover to the enemy, large numbers of whom were seen. At dawn on the 2nd, mounted men went out to reconnoitre and at 6 am the Zulu army was reported to be advancing; two columns appeared on the further bank of the river. One column attacked the south and west faces and in spite of the heavy fire the Zulus pushed on to within 20 yards of the shelter trench, but at last recoiled; mounted men then attacking their right flank they turned and fled, incurring heavy loss in the ensuing pursuit. The Naval Brigade had 6 wounded; the Zulus - who were about 10,000 strong - lost about 1,200.

The 2nd April was spent in lager, and on the 3rd, a portion being left in camp, Lord Chelmsford moved on with a force including 190 Seamen and 100 Royal Marines who belonged to the 2nd Brigade; they marched 15 miles and did not reach Etshowe till midnight; the other 350 of the RN Brigade were attached to the 1st Brigade. On 4th April a small force including the Royal Marines destroyed Dabulmanzi's kraal about 8 miles away and the whole force then returned to the Tugela.

Preparations were now made for the advance into Zululand to attack Ulundi, Ketchwayo's capital.

The force was divided into two Divisions, and the Naval Brigade was attached to the 1st Division under Major General Crealock; 350 Seamen to the 1st Brigade, and 190 Seamen and 100 Royal Marines to the 2nd Brigade.

The 2nd Division under Major General Newdigate, who was accompanied by Lord Chelmsford and his staff, and Colonel Wood's column on the left, advanced direct on Ulundi and fought a battle there on 4th July, which broke the power of the Zulus and decided the campaign. Ketchwayo became a fugitive and was captured by a patrol of the KDGs on 28th August. Meanwhile the 1st Division had marched from the Lower Tugela and Gingihlovo at the end of April; they marched through the low lying coast region which was very unhealthy and there was much sickness.

The Naval Brigade was now armed with three 9 pdrs, 4 Gatlings and 4 rocket tubes. They reached Port Durnford - about 6 miles north of the mouth of the Umlalaz River - on 28th June, where there was an open beach and on the 29th and 30th the Naval Brigade and troops were sent to land stores etc. through the surf. Two hawsers were taken ashore and made fast, the other ends being 400 yards out to sea and the surf boats were warped backwards and forwards along the hawsers; they also commenced to build a fort, called - after the Commodore - Fort Richards. General Wolseley, who had been appointed to relieve Lord Chelmsford - arrived in the *Shah* on 2nd July, but was unable to land owing to the surf and returned to Durban. He objected to the plans being followed, but before he could intervene the Battle of Ulundi had been fought and the war was practically ended.

A Battalion of Royal Marines had been asked for by General Wolseley before he left England, so 44 Officers and

⁶⁹ Heliographs were not yet in use.

1,028 men RMA and RMLI were embarked in the transport *Jumna* and arrived at Capetown. They were however too late and were not required, so returned to England on 19th July.

The Naval Brigade and Royal Marines were inspected by Lord Wolseley on 21st July at Port Durnford, and returned to Durban in a transport from which they were sent to their ships. Captain Phillips RMLI was mentioned in dispatches and received the CB Lieutenant Burrowes RMA was mentioned in dispatches and Lieutenant T W Dowding besides being mentioned in dispatches was specially promoted to Captain on 15th November 1879.

PART VIII

1881 - 1882

In **1881** the numbers were 12,400

Great changes were made in the Corps and with very far reaching results. Warrant Rank, as in the Army, was for the first time introduced into the Marines⁷⁰. It was granted to Sergeant-Majors, Superintending Clerks, Bandmasters, and Schoolmasters.

Commandants were now only to hold the appointment for 3 years and Staff Officers for 5; Lieutenants to be promoted to Captain after 12 years' service; special rates of pay for QMS and First Sergeants Instructors of Gunnery, Musketry, Infantry, etc. were granted (promotion to QMSI came many years later). The pay of all NCOs was revised and raised, in consequence of which deductions for rations when on shore continued and the 1d a day Beer Money was abolished for them but not for men. Re-engaged pay was discontinued, also Good Conduct pay for Corporals and Bombardiers (restored in 1919) and Lodging Money for Married Men was fixed at 8d a day instead of 4d and 2d.

Naval Savings Banks, which had been authorised for Marine Divisions by Order-in-Council 10th March 1882, were later assimilated to the Naval Regulations.

Chevrons - It was ordered that NCOs were to wear their chevrons on the right arm only.

Boer War, 1881 - The Navy was called on again to assist the troops in Natal, when war broke out with the Boers in 1881; a Naval Brigade, including a detachment of Royal Marines under Lieutenant Robyns RMLI was present at the engagements at Laing's Nek, but fortunately none of the RM were included in the part of the Naval Brigade that accompanied the force under General Colley, which was involved in the disaster of Majuba Hill. Peace was soon patched up with the Boers, but it was not long before large bodies of the Corps were again engaged in active operations.

1882 - The numbers were 12,400.

Ireland - In 1882 a Battalion was sent to Ireland where the Fenians and others were again causing trouble. It was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel H S Jones and was on duty in the west and south parts of the country. In addition 200 of the Corps were employed on duties far outside the scope of their ordinary duties. Those were specially picked men who, dressed in plain clothes, were used to reinforce the police in Dublin and rendered invaluable service.

HRH Admiral the Duke of Edinburgh was created Honorary Colonel of the Royal Marine Forces.

Egyptian War, 1882⁷¹ Trouble was brewing in Egypt where the Army, under Arabi Pasha, had rebelled against the authority of the Khedive, and after much hesitation owing to international complications, the British Government supported the Khedive and demanded that Arabi should cease the arming of the batteries at Alexandria and surrender them for the purposes of disarmament by the morning of 11th July 1882.

Arabi returned a confused rambling reply, which the Admiral, Sir Beauchamp Seymour (whom we have already seen in New Zealand), refused to accept, and the bombardment of Alexandria took place on 11th July.

The Mediterranean Fleet was available and the Channel Fleet had been ordered to reinforce them; it was due to leave Malta on 9th July with two regiments of Infantry and some RE, but did not arrive until after the bombardment.

In addition HMS *Orontes* was sent from England with the following Royal Marines:

RM Artillery: - Lieutenant Colonel Tuson, 2 Majors, 2 Captains, 5 Lieutenants; Lieutenant Noble, Adjutant; Lieutenant Burrower, Pay and Quartermaster; 342 NCOs and men, formed into 3 Companies.

RM Light Infantry: - Lieutenant Colonels Ley and Le Grand; 3 Majors; 5 Captains; 12 Lieutenants; Lieutenant Sandwith, Adjutant; Lieutenant L. Edye, Quartermaster; Lieutenant Frampton, Paymaster; 568 NCOs and men (298 Chatham, 170 Portsmouth, 117 Plymouth) formed into 5 Companies.

⁷⁰ Order-in-Council, 29th November 1881

⁷¹ Authorities; Official Account; Officers' Services; War In Egypt (Lieut Goodrich USN - Official USA Report); Diaries (Captain Edye, etc.) Britain's Sea Soldiers (Field)

At Gibraltar on 4th July they were transferred to HMS *Tamar* and sailed the same day and arrived Malta on the 9th. After drawing stores they left on 11th for Cyprus where they arrived on 15th; they left that night for Alexandria, where they arrived on the 17th, nearly a week after the bombardment.

Alexandria - Returning to the Fleet; for bombardment purposes it had been divided into two Squadrons, the Inshore consisting of the battleships *Invincible* (Flag), *Monarch*, *Penelope*, with the gunboats *Beacon*, *Bittern*, *Condor*, *Cygnets*, and *Decoy*; the Offshore consisting of the Battleships *Sultan* (SNO) *Alexandra* (Flag), *Inflexible* (Turret), *Temeraire*, *Superb*. This squadron was to the eastward of the Corvette Pass. Foreign men-of-war and merchant vessels were off the mouth of the Central or Borghaz Pass out of the line of fire.

To the east of Alexandria was a small circular harbour called New Port; enclosing the harbour is the breakwater; and covering the town is the reef through which are three passages, the East or Corvette Pass close to the breakwater, the Borghaz or Central Pass which was the main one, and the Marabout or West which was seldom used. The fortifications consisted of a nearly continuous series of open works, with closed works at the principal salients.

The principal Forts were:

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| East of the City: | 1. Fort Silsileh. |
| North of the City: | 2. Fort Pharos. |
| | 3. Fort Ada. |
| | 4. Fort Ras el Tin |
| | 5. Light House Fort. |
| South of the City: | 6. Fort Aga. |
| | 7. Unnamed open battery. |
| | 8. Oom-el-Kabobo. |
| | 9. Fort Kumania. |
| South-West of the City: | 10. Mex Lines. |
| | 11. Fort Mex. |
| | 12. Namusia or Mex Citadel. |
| West of the City: | 13. Warsa-ol-Khanat. |
| | 14. Marabout Fort. |
| | 15. Adjemi Fort (the newest) |

Most of them were well sited, armed with modern Armstrong ML rifled guns, mounted in the open or *en barbette*; only Fort Pharos had casemates. They were constructed of sand, with retaining walls of soft limestone bonded with coarse lime mortar. The parapets were of sand at 30 degree slope and the embrasures admitted of 60 degree of training. The guns were 10-in., 9-in., 8-in., and 7-in. MLR, and 40 pdr Armstrong BL with some 15-in., 10-in., and 6.5-in. smooth bores, 10-in howitzers and the usual 13-in. and 10-in. mortars. The Northern Line had 103 guns and the Inner line 102.

The British guns were much the same; the Off Shore Squadron could fire a broadside of 2 x 16-in. MLR, 1 x 12-in., 21 x 8-in., 2 x 9-in., with the 3 x 12-in and 2 x 10-in. MLR of *Temeraire* and was able to bring 33 guns to bear on Forts Aga and Pharos. The Inshore Squadron had a broadside of 4 x 12-in., 5 x 9-in., and 4 x 8-in, all MLR.^o

The bombardment was to commence at 6 am by a ship firing at the Hospital Battery near Fort Ada. 5 For list of RM Officers at Bombardment,

List of RM Officers at Bombardment of Alexandria:

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| <i>Alexandra</i> | Lieutenant Colonel J Phillips RMLI, Lieutenants G D Raitt, RMA, Paris RMA. |
| <i>Invincible</i> | |
| <i>Penelope</i> | Captain E S Innes RMLI |
| <i>Monarch</i> | Captain E S G Schomberg RMLI, Lieutenant W M Marriott RMA. |
| <i>Sultan</i> | Captain C J Cleethsn RMA, Lieutenants A G Tatham RMA, J Swanton RMLI |
| <i>Inflexible</i> | Captain W Campbell RMA. |
| <i>Temeraire</i> | Captain A Allen RMA, Lieutenant F White RMLI. |

<i>Superb</i>	Captain Matthias, Lieutenants G Trotter, H Talbot RMA
Channel Squadron, arrived later:	
<i>Achilles</i>	Captain de la P. Beresford RMA, Lieutenant Ussher RMA. , C H Willis RMLI
<i>Minotaur</i>	Captain A Frenoh RMA, Lieutenant G Kappey RMA Lieutenant J R Johnston RMLI
<i>Agincourt</i>	Captain F A H Farquharson RMLI, Lieutenant W Gaitskell RMA, Lieutenant J Oldfield RMLI
<i>Northumberland</i>	Captain G A Gore RMLI, Lieutenant Swinburne RMA and Peake RMLI
Ismalia:	
<i>Orion</i>	Captain R B Kirchoffer RMLI
East Indies:	
<i>Euryalus</i>	Captain J Baldwin RMLI

The Ras-el-Tin batteries were to be attacked, especially the Light House Battery; when silenced the *Sultan*, *Superb*, and *Alexandra* were to move to the Eastward and attack Pharos and Silsileh Forts; the *Inflexible* in the afternoon was to deal with the Mex Lines from the Corvette Pass and to support the Inshore Squadron, whilst the *Temeraire*, *Sultan*, and *Alexandra* dealt with the flank works at Ras-el-Tin; the gunboats to remain outside until there was a favourable opportunity to attack Mex. It was to depend on the state of the weather whether they anchored or remained under weigh. The Admiral himself was in command of the Inshore Squadron, and Captain Hunt-Grubbe of the Offshore. Shell was to be used with caution. Should the *Achilles* arrive in time she was to engage Pharos.

Fire commenced at 7 am and was kept up steadily till 10.30 am, when the *Sultan*, *Superb*, and *Alexandra* anchored off the Light House Fort and assisted by the *Inflexible*, which had weighed and joined them at 12.30 pm, silenced most of the guns in Ras-el-Tin; but some heavy guns in Fort Aga remained in action. At 1.30 pm a shell from the *Superb* blew up the magazine of the Fort and the garrison retreated. The ships then turned on Pharos, and one of its guns was dismounted. The Hospital Battery was well fought but was silenced by a shell from the *Inflexible*; it however came again into action later on.

The *Invincible*, *Penelope*, and *Monarch* assisted at intervals by the *Inflexible* and *Temeraire* after some hours silenced and partially destroyed the Batteries and lines at Mex. Marsa el Khanat was apparently destroyed by the explosion of its magazine after half an hour's duel with the *Monarch*; as a matter of fact the fort itself was undamaged, the explosion having taken place in a guncotton store in rear of the fort.

At 2 pm the gunners in the Lower Mex Battery abandoned their guns, when twelve volunteers under Lieutenant Bradford RN, and some officers, under cover of the gunboats, destroyed two 10-in. MLR guns with guncotton and spiked some others. HMS *Condor*, commanded by Lord Charles Beresford, with only a 7-in. MLR gun attacked the forts most bravely.

The action terminated at 5.30 pm when the Fleet anchored for the night. The Offshore Squadron bore the brunt of the fighting; the upper works of the *Inflexible* and *Invincible* were much knocked about, whilst the *Sultan*, *Superb* and *Alexandra* were hulled, the latter being hit sixty times.

On the morning of 12th the *Temeraire* and *Inflexible* engaged Fort Pharos, but after two or three rounds a flag of truce was hoisted at Ras-el-Tin, and in the evening it was found that the town was evacuated.

Yet another lesson of the difficulties of attacking forts with ships was learnt. The British fuses had proved very bad and there were a large number of prematures and failures; they had fired vast quantities of ammunition and in fact some ships could not have continued much longer. They found that when anchored the advantage of knowing the range outweighed the risk of being hit; they used their machine guns, but results were unknown. The British casualties amounted to 6 killed, 27 wounded.

"The Forts were bruised but not knocked out and could have been repaired in a night. It was only ships that could attain a steep angle of descent for their shells who did any good."⁷²

An American observer summed up in his report: "*Ships cannot continue the action beyond a certain time, limited by the capacity of their shell rooms and magazines; the garrisons of the forts may quietly wait under cover until*

⁷² . Goodrich.

the fire slackens and can then return it with interest and continue it indefinitely and absolutely at their leisure."

Policing of Alexandria - On the 12th under cover of the white flag, Arabi withdrew his troops and took up a position in rear of the town, and the town was left at the mercy of the mob. As an American observer reports: "*This memorable battle was followed by one of the most shocking, wanton and deplorable catastrophes of the century.*" The town was set on fire in two places, the main square and many other streets were burnt down, massacres, pillaging and disorder reigned and it was with the terrible conditions prevailing that the Corps had now to deal.

Admiral Seymour in his report says that on the 12th, Arabi Pasha was reported to be at Pompey's Pillar and that he had to proceed cautiously; that he sent two parties from the *Invincible* and *Monarch* under Captain Fairfax RN, to spike the guns bearing on the harbour and that he sent the gunboats to bring in the Marines of the Offshore Squadron. "Ras-el-Tin Palace was occupied and the guns spiked and at 4 pm the Khedive surrendered at the gate of the Palace and was guarded by a guard of Marines from the Fleet."

He also says; "*On the evening of 13th landed all the Marines of the Offshore Squadron and sent a small patrol into the streets, but they were of little service*" which was not a fair way of putting it and shows how little he knew of what was going on ashore. Under Lord Charles Beresford the Royal Marines and the few seamen landing parties were doing invaluable work.

The first party - consisting of 150 RM and 250 seamen - who were landed from *Monarch*, *Invincible* and *Penelope*, reached the Ras-el-Tin Palace at 10.30 am on the 13th and seized the western end of the peninsula; they threw out a line of sentries north to south from shore to shore. At 12.30 pm a small party of seamen with a Gatling gun pushed towards the town and guarded the streets in the immediate neighbourhood and occupied the Arsenal, which became a place of refuge for the Europeans. In the afternoon the seamen re-embarked, their places being taken by the Royal Marines of *Superb*, *Inflexible*, and *Temeraire*. A patrol of RMA went through the Arab and European quarters and shot some natives and police who were pillaging. In the evening the RM of the *Achilles* and *Sultan* also landed; the *Inflexible*, *Temeraire*, and *Achilles* anchored off Ramleh to cover the land approaches to the south and east. On the 14th as many men as could be spared were landed and Captain J A Fisher RN was appointed to command the Naval Brigade. The RM were formed into a Battalion, Major J Phillips RMLI in command.

The damage to the town was enormous by this time; the Channel Fleet had arrived and also landed their Marines and the entire City was occupied -

- the Ramleh Gate by the Marines of the *Monarch*
- Rosetta Gate by the Marines of the *Temeraire*
- Moharrem Bay Gate by the Marines of the *Alexandra* and *Inflexible*
- Fort Kam-el-Dih Gate by the Marines of the *Sultan*
- Pompey's Pillar Gate by the Marines of the *Superb*
- Caracol by the Marines of the *Achilles*
- Gabarri Railway Station by the Marines and Seamen of *Alexandra*
- Zaptieh and Arsenal by the Marines of the *Invincible*

Major Phillips was at Ras-el-Tin in charge of Khedive and the United States Marine Corps and Seamen occupied the European Quarter and Club.

On the 15th there were rumours of an attack by Arabi Pasha, so Seamen and Marines were landed and each reinforced its own detachment. The *Minotaur's* Marines reinforced the Ramleh Gate, the Seamen between Pompey's Pillar, and the Marines at Barsab; the *Alexandra's* seamen were sent to the Bridge over the Mahmoudieh Canal; but Arabi had retired to Kafr Dewar, where he proceeded to erect strong fortifications across the isthmus that connects Alexandria with the mainland. Large numbers of Royal Marines were now formed into a police force under Major A. French, RMA who, under Lord Charles Beresford, cleared the streets of looters and re-established order in the town.

On 17th July the 1st Bn South Staffords and a company of RE were landed from HMS. *Northumberland* and relieved the Marines between Pompey's Pillar and Ramleh, who were nearly worn out, by attacks of insects, fleas and mosquitoes and want of sleep. "*Up to this time a few hundred men had held the City against a force estimated to be ten times as strong and in presence of an inimical and violent population.*"⁷³

⁷³ Cdr Goodrich USN

Defence of Alexandria - On the 17th the RM Battalions arrived and were landed that afternoon and went to the Gabarri Gate and took charge of the Western Lines from Pompey's Pillar Gate to the Mahmoudieh Canal with two Companies of RMLI and one of RMA on Outpost. Lieutenant Colonel Le Grand assumed command of the Battalion from the Fleet.

On 18th July the 3rd Bn 60th Rifles arrived in HMS *Agincourt* and relieved the Staffords at the Moharrem Cate who were then concentrated at the Rosetta Gate and the land defence was assumed by the Army, assisted by the Royal Marines of the *Alexandra*, *Superb*, and *Temeraire* at the Ramleh Gate under Lieutenant Colonel Le Grand with the seamen and Gatlings. Major General Sir Archibald Alison had now arrived and assumed command.

The remainder of the Royal Marines were employed policing and patrolling the town, being allotted as follows;

Ras-el-Tin	half <i>Agincourt's</i> detachment
Coast Guard Station	<i>Sultan's</i> detachment
Zaptieh	<i>Monarch's</i> detachment
Tribunal	<i>Minotaur's</i> detachment
Caracol	half <i>Agincourt's</i> detachment
Caracol	<i>Achille's</i> detachment
Gabarri Railway	<i>Inflexible's</i> detachment

It was not possible at first to raise: a Native Police, so the RM were acting as Police Constables. It may be of interest to note that the RM from the Fleet were wearing blue serges and their caps had white covers with a "cape or havelock".

On 25th July Lieutenant Colonel Ley was invalided home and Major Strong was temporarily in command of the RMLI Battalion; Captain Sandwith, the Adjutant, was appointed a DAQMG on the Army Staff.

Reinforcements of troops were now arriving in large numbers and on 24th July Ramleh was seized and occupied by Sir Archibald Alison, and fortified, the RMA of the *Inflexible* under Captain Campbell being sent to help the RA in mounting the 40 pdr guns there.

On the 28th, 300 of the 35th Regiment were told off to relieve the RM of the police duties in the town, and on the 30th all Royal Marines belonging to the Fleet were withdrawn to their ships, but on 2nd August 200 from the *Alexandra* and *Superb* were sent to the Mex lines under Lieutenant Colonel le Grand to guard that important outpost.

On the 26th July, one Company RMA and three Companies RMLI of the Battalion under Major Strong took part in a reconnaissance in force, but with no result returning to quarters at 4 pm. Again on the 29th a company of RMA and one of RMLI under Colonel Tuson with a party of RE were sent out to repair the railway line from Gabarri Station towards Cairo which was effectively carried out under a screen of Mounted Infantry without opposition.

The Egyptians had retired to their entrenchments at King Osman and Kafr Dowr. At the eastern extremity of the Alexandria Peninsula were the Aboukir Forts, very powerful and held by 5000 men. The main body was at Kafr Dowr. Lake Mareotis, as it was summer time, was nearly dry and the Egyptians could easily advance. The length of the line to be held by the British was ten or eleven miles; the Fleet could guard the ends, but troops were necessary; the waterworks and tower being the centre of the defence.

Mellaha Junction - On 5th August Sir Archibald Alison made a reconnaissance in force, known as the action of Mellaha Junction. The left column was composed of a half Battalion each of DCLI and South Staffords with some Mounted Infantry and a 9 pdr gun, and advanced along the east bank of the Mahmoudieh Canal; the 60th Rifles and a 9 pdr gun along the west bank to where the railway from Cairo approaches the Canal.

A strong Battalion of Royal Marines drawn from the RMA and RMLI Battalions under Majors Ogle and Strong, the whole under Colonel Tuson, left Gabarri Station by train and detrained about 800 yards from Mellaha Junction and formed up under cover of the railway embankment, where it acted with the Naval armoured train with a 40 pdr gun and two 9 pdr guns, under Captain J A Fisher and formed the right attack under Sir Archibald Alison himself.

The left attack advanced at 4.45 pm and soon came into action against the enemy who were strongly posted; the positions were carried and the enemy retired to a new position on the east bank, half a mile in rear, from which they were also driven with loss. The right attack closed the chord of the arc formed by the left attack, and moved forward under cover of the railway embankment rapidly and out of sight to within 350 yards of the enemy, but

the enemy discovered them and opened artillery fire. They pushed on in file, the 9 pdrs coming into action on the embankment, to the junction of the railway and canal, where Major Donald's Company of RMA doubled across, dislodging the enemy from their entrenchments and which they used in reverse. The RMLI companies lined the embankment and fired volleys; here they were enfiladed by a house on the railway line; Captains Heathcote's and Byrch's RMLI companies were sent to reinforce Donald's towards the canal and then four more companies still more to the left upon the bank and across the canal so that they formed a diagonal line across the canal and railway, and the enemy fell back slowly. The enemy were completely dislodged from their works except on their left, where the entrenchments were very strong. At about 5.30 pm the enemy opened with rockets, on which the 40 pdr came into action with great effect. As there was a chance that the companies might penetrate the lines too far, the GOC sent orders to prevent any further movement to the front. At 6.15 the GOC having obtained all the information he required, ordered the Battalion to retire. This they did by alternate companies, A, B, and C, RMLI forming the rearguard. Sergeant. Holdstock distinguished himself in bringing in a wounded man. They withdrew by alternate companies, covered by the Naval guns. General Alison in his dispatch said, "*Movement was carried out with the most perfect gallantry and precision by the Marine Battalion under Colonel Tuson*" and "*fell back by alternate companies with the regularity of a field day.*" They entrained and returned to Alexandria and the left attack was also withdrawn, the casualties being:

Army	1 Officer,	1 Man killed;	3 wounded.
Navy		1 man killed;	4 wounded.
Royal Marines		1 man killed;	20 wounded ⁷⁴ .

The reconnaissance was unfortunately barren of results, as the Egyptians who were 12,000 to 10,000 strong, did not develop their strength and they regained the positions from which they had been driven.

On 8th August another Battalion consisting of RMA - 1 Major, 2 Captains, 2 Lieutenants, 108 NCOs and men, and RMLI - 1 Major, 5 Captains, 8 Lieutenants, 432 NCOs and men under command of Major and Brevet Lieutenant Colonel S J Graham RMLI who had left England on 27th July in SS *Dacca* arrived, who were sent on to the *Northumberland* at Port Said. Lieutenant Colonel E S Jones RMLI also arrived and assumed command of the RMLI Battalion.

On 12th August the *Alexandra's* and *Superb's* detachments were relieved by a company from the RMA Battalion at Mex and the guns were destroyed by the seamen. A garrison was left in Alexandria under General Sir Evelyn Wood, which included some Marines, and on 19th and 20th September some Marines of the Fleet under Major French RMA occupied the Aboukir Forts.

At Suez, Admiral Hewett, C-in-C East Indies, in *Euryalus* with *Eclipse*, *Ruby*, and *Mosquito*, had landed 450 men to protect the town and docks without opposition.

Suez Canal, Seisure of - Admiral Hoskins was at Port Said with *Penelope*, *Agincourt*, *Monarch*, *Northumberland*, *Tourmaline*, *Ready*, and *Beacon*. The *Orion* and *Carysfort* were at Ismailia, but Arabi's troops were holding these places.

General Sir Garnet Wolseley, the C-in-C, arrived on 16th August and the Army was formed into two Divisions and a Cavalry Division. There was also an Indian contingent to arrive at Suez. The First Division was composed of the 1st or Guards Brigade under HRH the Duke of Connaught, the 2nd Brigade under General Graham with Divisional Troops. The RM Battalions were attached to the First Division, the RMA (acting as infantry) to the Divisional Troops and the RMLI Battalion to the 2nd Brigade, the other regiments of which were 2nd Bn Royal Irish, 1st Bn Royal West Kents, 2nd Bn York and Lancaster, 1st Bn Royal Irish Fusiliers.

General Wolseley's objects were:

- i) Crush Arabi Pasha.
- ii) Save Cairo from the fate of Alexandria.
- iii) Re-establish the Khedive's authority.

He therefore determined on a secret change of base to Ismailia, leaving a garrison in Alexandria, and to make his advance along the railway and Sweet Water Canal to Cairo; the distance was only 96 miles and the route was more healthy; there was also a sheltered inland harbour for the transports.

To cover his movements a feint was made on the Aboukir Forts. The *Temeraire*, *Inflexible*, *Minotaur*, and *Superb* anchored in Aboukir Bay at 3.30 pm on 19th August with transports. The transports *Euphrates* with the

⁷⁴ Several of whom died later

DCLI and 60th Rifles, the *Rhosina* with the RMLI Battalion and *Nerissa* with the RMA Battalion and RE pushed on to Port Said; the last two broke down but were towed by the *Alexandra* and *Euphrates* and after dark the other transports followed, arriving the following morning.

But meanwhile Admiral Hoskins with the Seamen and Marines of his Squadron and Colonel Graham's Battalion of RM had secured the Canal. The following account is extracted from the reports of Admiral Hoskins and Captains Fairfax and Fitzroy RN

Commander Edwards was sent; down the Canal on the night of 19/20th to seize the telegraph station at Kantara, etc, also all barges and dredgers and to make sure that the Canal was clear.

On 18th two companies of RMLI under Major Scott and Captain Pine-Coffin and Eden from *Northumberland* were placed on board *Monarch* and *Iris*, and on the evening of the 19th the remaining three companies under Colonel Graham were placed on board *Dee* and *Ready*, to proceed to Ismailia with two launches to facilitate landing. At sunset the *Falcon* and, after dark on 10th, the *Northumberland* went off to Fort Ghemil to prevent the exodus of the coal heavers.

At 4 am on the 20th the movement was executed simultaneously at all places and the Canal was in British hands, despite the unfriendly attitude of M. de Lesseps and his French employees and the presence of Arabi's troops in all three ports.

Port Said - At Port Said, Captain Fairfax RN reported that the landing commenced at 3.30 am and that they got ashore without being observed. A Colonel Tulloch and six Marines, landing from an open boat, had seized the sentries on the quay. The *Iris* Brigade (80 Seamen and 28 Marines) with Captain Pine-Coffin's Company of the RM Battalion landed abreast the ship and seized the beach and the RM went to one side of the Barracks.

From the *Monarch* two companies (100 Seamen and 48 RM) went out and barred the egress from the town and Captain Eden's Company of the RM Battalion went to the other side of the Barracks and the two RM Companies secured the 160 soldiers quartered there. The *Monarch's* guns commanded the main street, and the *Iris* was to seaward where she could command the beach and town. Port Said was held by the Seamen and Marines of the Fleet until relieved on 16th September by 207 RMLI and 78 RMA under Major Colwell, RMLI, who left England in SS *Quetta* on 7th September.

Ismailia - At Ismailia where Captains Fitzroy and Stephenson RN were in command with Commanders Kane and Napier, 565 Seamen and 74 Marines were landed including:

From <i>Orion</i>	40 RM (Captain Kitchoffer), one 9 pdr, one Gatling, and a Torpedo party.
From <i>Northumberland</i>	1 Rifle Company and one Gatling seaman.
	21 RMA under Captain Swinburne.
	1 RM I.I. under Captain Gore and Lieutenant Neils.
From <i>Coquette</i>	One 7 pdr
From <i>Nyanza</i>	100 Seamen and Marines from <i>Northumberland</i> .

Enemy pickets were in the town; there were also 2000 can and six guns at Nefiche Station and there were also an unknown number of Bedouins.

At 3 am the *Orion's* and *Coquette's* landed, followed by the *Carysfort's*, and seized the Canal Lock Guard. The Governor's Guard laid down their arms to Lieutenant Napier and Lieutenant Swinburne RMA

Commander Kane seized the railway and telegraph stations and the *Orion's* men the Canal Lock Bridge and town. Captain Stephenson's party (*Carysfort*) met with no opposition in Arab Town. He advanced his 200 men, including 74 RM under Captain Gore, with a strong advanced guard through the European and Arab quarters, the latter was occupied and loopholed for defence. At 3.40 am the ships had bombarded the Guard House and by 4 am the whole place was occupied.

Nefiche - Later it was reported that the enemy were advancing on Nefiche Station in force, and it was decided to dislodge him from there before reinforcements could arrive. The *Orion* and *Carysfort* began a slow bombardment at 11 am on the 20th at 4200 yards, and by noon the camp there was destroyed and the enemy were retreating towards Cairo. One train on the railway to the south was damaged, but at 4 pm another train was observed discharging men, so the bombardment was continued and that train was wrecked, blocking the line from Nefiche to Suez. The shelling continued till 10 pm and afterwards on Nefiche at intervals of half an hour to prevent the lines being cleared.

At 6 pm 340 of Colonel Graham's Royal Marines were landed; 200 reinforced Commander Kane at Nefiche and

140 were sent to Captain Stephenson, who had entrenched himself in advance of Arab Town and the Royal Marines were posted along the high canal bank. Lieutenant Napier had secured himself in the Governor's Palace.

Arabi Pasha with 3000 men had advanced to within three miles of Nefiche.

At 10.30 pm 20th, General Graham arrived with the advanced guard of the Army and assumed command; he relieved Stephenson's party in Arab Town with 300 of the 1st Royal West Kents. On the evening of the 20th Captain Fitzroy, expecting a night attack, had placed the *Ready* and *Dee* close inshore in a position that would cover the retreat of the parties if necessary through the town. At 4 pm on 21st August Captain Fitzroy with the Seamen and RM guards were relieved by the Army. On the 21st the transports with the RMA and RMLI Battalions arrived at Ismailia; they were landed and went into bivouac there, on the 22nd.

At Suez Admiral Hewett in *Euryalus* with 200 Seaforth Highlanders, and his Seamen and Royal Marines after slight opposition had secured the approaches to the town.

On 21st the *Tourmaline* and *Dee* were sent to Kantara to establish a permanent post. Troops were now arriving at Ismailia in large numbers and were pushed on along the railway and canal.

The RM Battalions were amalgamated into two; the RMA acting as infantry, under Lieutenant Colonel Tuson, 13 Officers and 450 men; the RMLI under Lieutenant Colonel H S Jones, 37 Officers and 1,006 Men.

Transport was the great difficulty, and also the horses of the cavalry had not recovered from the effects of the sea voyage.

The country in front of Ismailia was a desert with loose sand; the railway and Sweet Water Canal ran side by side; there is a ridge to the north and the ground slopes to the south past the canal; there are a lot of hummocks and mounds; the sand increases in firmness towards Tel-el-Kebir where it is fairly compact gravel. From 9 am to 4 pm the heat was intense, but it was cold at night; the flies and mosquitoes were terrible; water could only be obtained from the Canal, where it had to be filtered to get rid of sand etc. and it became very contaminated.

El Magfar - General Graham started on 21st August with 800 men and a small Naval party under Captain Stephenson, including 104 RM from HMS *Northumberland* under Captain Gore and Lieutenant Peile. They reached El Magfar station at 1.30 pm and captured 30 trucks with provisions and ammunition; here they entrenched to cover the railway from Suez and that from Zagazig. On making a reconnaissance the enemy was located four miles away.

The 22nd and 23rd were occupied in bringing up stores, the RM Battalions being in bivouac near Ismailia.

Tel-el-Mahuta - On 24th the action of Tel-el-Mahuta took place; this place was 9 miles west of Ismailia. It was necessary to secure the Canal and prevent the water being tampered with; the enemy was building a dam across the canal, so the Cavalry and Artillery were sent forward. Starting at 4 am on the 24th the Household Cavalry, Mounted Infantry with two guns RHA, the York and Lancaster Regiment, and the RMA Battalion reached Nefiche at daybreak; at 7.30 they reached a point on the canal half way between El Magfar and the village of Tel-el-Mahuta, where the enemy had constructed a dam which was captured by the Household Cavalry; the enemy in force were holding a line across the canal about 1½ miles further on and also a ridge curving round the British right flank on north site about 2000 yards off.

The canal and railway were close together and passed through cuttings with mounds which were strongly entrenched. At Mahuta there was a solid wide dam across the canal and an embankment across the railway; reinforcements were reaching the enemy, whose strength was later ascertained to be 7000 men with 12 guns and an unknown number of Bedouins. It was decided to hold the ground and await reinforcements from Nefiche.

At 9 am the British left was on the captured dam and the enemy were trying to work round it and opened artillery fire. The two RHA. guns arrived and the enemy infantry formed a line of shelter trenches about 1000 yards off; they approached close on the left, but were checked by the York and Lancaster Regiment. From 10 to 11 am the attack developed; fortunately the enemy only used common shell. General Drury Lowe manoeuvred the Cavalry and Mounted Infantry on the right and checked the enemy, but his horses were not fit to charge. The Naval Gatlings arrived and came into action; the "*energy shown by them and by the Marine Artillery drew my highest commendation*". N Battery RHA worked their guns with great steadiness, exposed to the fire of 12 guns; later in the day "*when the men were extremely tired, the men of the RMA requested permission to help them and did so until the close of the action.*"

At 3.30 pm the Household Cavalry and MI moved forward on the right, and the DCLI arrived at 1 pm.

At 5.15 pm the enemy advanced his left, again bringing four guns into action and moving cavalry and infantry down the slope, but did not come under effective infantry fire. At 6 p.m the 4th and 7th Dragoon Guards and the Brigade of Guards arrived but the enemy retired across the ridge to Mahuta.

The RMLI Battalion under Colonel Jones left Ismailia at 4 pm on the 24th, reached El Magfar at 1.30 am on the 25th and left at 4 am with the general advance. At 5 pm on the 25th they marched into camp at Mahsameh. *"Such a good piece of work deserves record."*

Mahsameh - At daybreak on the 25th General Graham's force advanced and occupied Tel-el-Mahuta, the enemy abandoning their works retired to :Mahsameh. At 6.25 am the artillery came into action and the mounted troops pushed forward and occupied Mahsameh, which was an extensive camp where they captured 7 Krupp guns, ammunition, and two large trains of provisions.⁷⁵ The enemy fled in confusion, but the British horses were not yet fit to gallop.

The water supply was now secure and the canal cleared for more than half the distance between Ismailia and the Delta; the railway line also for 20 miles was in the possession of the British. The troops were undergoing considerable privations as food supplies were not yet organised and Colonel Field tells us how useless were the RM transport carts purchased at Malta.

Kassassin - On the 26th, the 7th Dragoon Guards occupied the Lock at Kassassin and later in the day the DCLI and the York and Lancasters, and the RMA Battalion, with a small Naval Brigade under Captain Fitzroy consisting of two Gatlings and 70 RM from *Orion* and *Carysfort* marched up and established themselves there.

The cavalry were permanently quartered in Mahsameh Camp, and the RMLI Battalion was also there.

The enemy fell back to Tel-el-Kebir and commenced entrenching; on the 27th the advanced British troops were distributed between Kassassin Lock, Mahsameh and Tel-el-Mahuta.

On 28th August the Egyptians made a serious attack on Kassassin astride the canal, but were driven back and the cavalry inflicted severe punishment. General Graham had now about 1,875 troops (including 427 RMA) with two guns, fronting north-west and west. At 11 am a large force of the enemy was reported moving round the right flank behind the ridge and two heavy guns opened fire on our left front. At 3 pm the Mounted Infantry reported that the enemy were retiring and the troops were ordered back to camp.

At 4.30 pm the enemy advanced again in great force, their skirmishers supported by artillery overlapped on the left. The RMA were posted on the south bank of the canal facing north to north-west; in the centre were the DCLI, about 800 yards in rear of the RMA, with 2nd York & Lancasters on their right. The Mounted Infantry and Dragoon Guards were covering the gap between the RMA and the DCLI and prevented all efforts to break through; *"the steady fire of the RMA stopped attempts to cross the canal."*

At 4.30 pm the Cavalry and the RMLI Battalion at Mahsameh were sent for, and the cavalry fell on the left flank of the skirmishers and rolled up their line. At 5 pm enemy reinforcements arrived by train.

"Near the right of our position an 8 c. Krupp gun, captured at Mahsameh, had been mounted on a railway truck and was worked by a detachment of RMA under Captain Tucker; it was admirably served and did great execution, as our other guns had to cease fire from want of ammunition; it became the target but no one was hit, man or gun, and it expended 93 rounds."

At 6.45 pm the order was given to the infantry to close, as the cavalry charge was expected; the RMLI came up on the right and advanced in order of attack and the advance continued for two or three miles, supported by the DCLI; the 1st York & Lancasters being kept in reserve, *"the enemy fell back, only one attempt at a stand being made on our left which broke at the first volley from the Royal Marines."* The infantry had been advancing for 1½ hours in the moonlight and as there seemed no further chance of co-operating with the cavalry, the DCLI and RMLI were ordered to return to camp at 8.45 pm. The Household Cavalry had made a most dramatic charge in the moonlight and dispersed the enemy. At daylight the next morning the battlefield was clear. Lieutenant Colonel Tuson was mentioned in dispatches and he had brought to notice Major Ogle, Captain Rawstorne, Lieutenants Pym and Talbot, with Captain and Adjutant E Noble. The RMA lost 7 killed and 23 wounded. *"The RMLI. Battalion under Lieutenant Colonel Jones although arriving too late to take any decisive share in this action, shewed by the promptitude of their march to the field a steadiness of their advance that they are well capable of sustaining the high character of their Corps."*⁷⁶

⁷⁵ The two RM Battalions are mentioned as the only ones who kept up with the mounted troops.

⁷⁶ Official Dispatch.

Captain Tucker's gun, by constant shifting of the truck on the rails and protected by sandbags, escaped injury.

Till the locomotives arrived from Suez, the troops underwent great privations: the water in the canal was very polluted and there was always the danger of the railway being cut by raiders.

On 1st September the 3rd Brigade of the 2nd Division (Highlanders) arrived, and on the 2nd the Indian contingent reached Suez.

On 6th September the distribution of the Royal Marines was as follows;

At Kassassin.

RMA	15 Officers, 424 NCOs and men.	21 Horses.
RMLI	37 Officers, 850 NCOs and men.	61 Horses.

At Ismailia.

RMLI 3 Officers, 101 NCOs and men.

The artillery staff were preoccupied in getting up stores and provisions ready for a further advance and troops were concentrating, when there occurred the second Battle of Kassassin on 9th September. The Egyptians, employing a force of 30 guns, 17 battalions, several squadrons of cavalry, and some thousands of Bedouins, advanced in two columns, one from the north from the Salileh direction, the other direct from Tel-el-Kebir.

At daybreak 50 men under Colonel Pennington, 17th Bengal Lancers, when posting vedettes, discovered the enemy advancing; first dismounting and opening fire, they then counted and charged 5 squadrons of cavalry which gave the alarm. The enemy guns came into action on the North Hill at 2000 yards on the British right front where they made good shooting. The 1st Division moved out to attack; the RMA and DCLI were to the south of the canal; the RMLI and 60th Rifles formed the firing line with other Battalions in support between the canal and the railway. The RMA Krupp gun and the Naval detachment with the 40 pdr gun on a truck were on the railway; the cavalry and artillery to the north of the railway.

Advancing in attack formation they gradually drove back the enemy and the "*RMLI Battalion advancing in regular formation for attack came on a battery of four Krupp guns*", which were in action. The RM did not return the fire but kept on until within 400 yards when they opened volleys by half companies, still continuing to advance; the steady fire proved too much for the Egyptians who fled; two of the guns were captured by Captain Pine-Coffin's company, Lieutenant B C Money being mentioned in dispatches for gallantry in capturing them.

The ground was held for 1½ hours, till it was clear that the attack from the north had been dealt with, and at 8.30 the advance was resumed, the right being refused. The enemy was again engaged and at 9.30 am they retired and the British advance was continued to within 5 or 6000 yards of Tel-el-Kebir entrenchments. At 12.30 pm they returned to Kassassin. General Wolseley in his dispatch of this action says, "*General Graham has specially brought to my notice the dashing manner in which the Krupp guns were taken by the Battalion RMLI and the excellent manner in which that Battalion was handled by its CO, Lieutenant Colonel H S Jones.*"

The total loss was 3 men killed, 2 officers and 70 men wounded; one RM diary speaks of 42 casualties, but does not specify if they were all RMLI.

Tel-el-Kebir - Till 12th September the Battalions remained in camp at Kassassin. When General Wolseley was ready to attack, he determined to make a night march and attack on the entrenchments at Tel-el-Kebir, which one diary speaks of as a second Plevna.

The Tel-el-Kebir entrenchments were about 9 miles distant and were held by about 24,000 infantry, 1000 artillery with 60 guns, 1000 cavalry and about 2500 irregulars.

Near Tel-el-Kebir station the ground rises gradually to the west, culminating in a range of hills that stretch from the railway (about 1½ miles east of the station) northward to Salihieh; to westward of this range and parallel to the Sweet Water Canal, there is a second line of hills intersecting the first at a point about two miles north of the railway; viewed from the railway this east and west rise appears as a moderate hill, really it is a tableland sloping northward with rather a steeper descent to the south. The country is barren and

desolate. The Egyptian entrenchments ran along the crests of the two ranges, the north and south line being prolonged over two miles beyond the intersection; the east and west line faced north-west and so could be taken in rear and flank when the front line fell.

The works consisted of a breastwork about four to six feet high, with a banquette: there was an ample ditch in

front, 8 to 12 feet wide, and 5 to 9 feet deep; there were occasional salients with well designed. redoubts with wide command on either flank. In rear were frequent shelter trenches irregularly placed, and there were passages at intervals for field guns etc. to come through, protected by traverses and breastworks. The sand and gravel was revetted with grass and reeds, but readily gave way, the passage of a few men invariably broke down the side of the trench, making a causeway for those in rear.

The southern portion near the rail and canal was practically completed, but work was still in progress on the north and western lines, in fact at the north end the works were hardly more than traced out. The extent of the works was very large for the numbers of defenders. At the south end of the line were two well built, redoubts, one on each side of the canal with three guns each, and there was a dam across the canal; also a gun emplacement on each side of the railway. In front of this portion of the line was a formidable redoubt with 8 guns. At the intersection of the two lines above mentioned was a most elaborately finished redoubt with 5 guns, traverses, etc. This was the point struck by the left of the British main attack - the 2/HLI.

Further North was another formidable redoubt mounting five guns, which was also completed; luckily the attack of the 2nd Division passed to the southward of this and turned it. Two other redoubts north of this, opposite the front of the 1st Division, were only just begun.

As Lord Wolseley says in his dispatch, there was no cover between Kassassin and Tel-el-Kebir; a daylight attack would have entailed an advance over a glacis exposed to artillery fire for five miles, whilst to have attempted to turn either flank would have entailed long marches and have been a slow business, so that the enemy could probably have retired to the cultivated ground in rear, out up by irrigation ditches and canals; no decisive action would have been possible and the enemy would have been able to make a desperate resistance and possibly destroy Cairo, etc. He therefore determined on a night march.

Orders were issued at 2 pm on 12th September. Men carried two days' rations and 100 rounds SAA with 30 rounds on mules in rear. Valises, blankets and baggage were stacked alongside the railway. The battalions left parade at 6.30 pm and formed in brigade where they bivouacked. The 1st and 2nd Divisions advanced in line. Commencing from south and facing the railway station were the Indian contingent and Seaforth Highlanders; then the 2nd Division, its left directed on the point of intersection of the before-mentioned entrenched lines and the redoubt, covering a front of 1000 yards. The Highland Brigade in the front line from left to right, the HLI, Camerons, Gordons, and Black Watch; the 4th Brigade - 3/60th Rifles and DCLI in rear. In rear of the 60th was GHQ with the RMA Battalion and a troop of 19th Hussars as escort. Battalions were in line of half battalions in column of double companies at deploying interval. Then an interval of 1200 yards filled by the seven batteries of Royal Artillery and connecting files at 10 paces distance; the artillery in line with the supporting brigades. Then the 1st Division, with the 2nd Brigade in front line and the Guards Brigade in support. The 2nd Brigade was formed from left to right: RMLI Battalion, Royal Irish, Royal Irish Fusiliers, York and Lancasters; they occupied a front of 1000 yards and were formed in line of half battalions in column of companies at deploying intervals. The Cavalry Division with the Mounted Infantry and RHA were about 2½ miles to the right rear of the 1st Division. When formed they bivouacked till about 1.30 am when they advanced to within two miles of the works. "The night was very dark and it was difficult to maintain formations."⁷⁷ They marched by a line of telegraph posts till they ceased, when Lieutenant Wyatt Rawson RN directed them by compass and stars, connection being maintained by connecting files.

The Indian Brigade and the Naval Brigade did not start till 2.30 am. The works were reached just at daylight; an enemy scout had dashed into the 2nd Brigade just before but had been captured. The official account says, "*Leading Brigades reached the enemy works within a couple of minutes of each other.*" The enemy were completely surprised, but were sleeping in their works and when roused by the sentries they quickly opened fire from guns and rifles. The official report says, "*Troops advanced steadily without firing, in obedience to orders they had received, and when close to the works went straight for them, charging with a ringing cheer.*" The HLI on the left hit the enemy picket in front of the redoubt at 4.55 am, and the enemy opened a heavy artillery and musketry fire, which the Brigade did not return, but advanced another 100 yards when the fire became a perfect blaze; at 150 yards bayonets were fixed and the men charged. The centre companies of the HLI hit the redoubt fair, but the flank companies got round, the rest of the Brigade swept over the parapet and took three field batteries, also taking the next big redoubt to the north in flank and the east and west line of entrenchments in rear. The enemy halted at sixty yards and opened fire, but Arabi Pasha fled at once and the Highlanders seized his quarters.

⁷⁷ Official Report

The 2nd Brigade also swept over the line of entrenchments in their front; in the official dispatch it is said that the 2nd Brigade supported by the Guards Brigade reached the works a few minutes after the Highlanders. The American observer reports that at dawn the 2nd Brigade was 900 yards from the entrenchments and that partly owing to the difficulty of keeping the proper alignment during the night march, partly to the fact that the line of march was not at right angles to the line of works, and partly to the surprise caused by the Egyptian scout who galloped into the lines, the 1st Division had to change front forward on its left company (the RMLI) before assaulting and deploying, and then deployed into attack formation. This coincides with Colonel Field's account⁷⁸, who says that four companies formed the firing line and four were in support. At 300 yards the British fired a volley and then rushed to 100 yards, fired a second volley, and then reached the ditch (Colonel Field says they advanced by rushes, firing volleys). Here the firing line was joined by the supports; they delivered a last volley, jumped the ditch and the works were cleared at the point of the bayonet. As soon as they reached the parapet the Egyptians broke and ran, some stopping to fire back at their pursuers, who chased them for a mile, only desisting when the artillery got over the entrenchments and started shelling the fugitives; *"they were longer exposed to the fire than the Highlanders, who had surprised the enemy."* It was argued for some time as to who was the first over the parapet - the Highlanders or the RMLI but it was never settled. Colonel Field says that Major Strong was killed as he dismounted near the entrenchments, and Captain Wardell as he crossed the parapet, his assailant being decapitated by Lieutenant Luke.

General Graham in the official despatch says, *"The steadiness of the advance of the 2nd Brigade, 2/Royal Irish, RMLI, 2/York & Lancasters, 1/Royal Irish Fusiliers under what appeared to be an overwhelming fire of musketry and artillery will remain a proud remembrance.."*

The Seaforth Highlanders and the Indian contingent had also carried the entrenchments on the extreme British left in a most gallant manner. The Cavalry Division now came round the right and sweeping along the rear of the entrenchments cut up the fugitives and continuing the pursuit to the railway station captured locomotives and trains, and then formed up ready to advance to Cairo. General Drury-Lowe, without wasting any time, started on his journey to Cairo with the Cavalry, Mounted Infantry and RHA. He bivouacked for the night at Belbeis, struck across the desert and reached Cairo at 4 pm on the 14th, having covered 65 miles in two days. Here he demanded the surrender of Arabi and the troops, 10,000 of whom laid down their arms, and Cairo was saved from the fate of Alexandria which had been planned by Arabi. The Guards Brigade arrived there on 15th and every-thing was secured.

The total British casualties were:

Killed:	9 Officers, 43 NCOs and men.
Wounded:	27 Officers, 353 NCOs and men.

The RMLI Battalion casualties were:

Killed:	Major H Strong, Captain Wardell, 11 NCOs and men.
Wounded:	Lieutenant E McCausland, and 50 NCOs and Men.

Cairo - The battalions remained at Tel-el-Kebir clearing up the battlefield till the 18th, when they entrained at 6.30 am for Cairo, arriving there at 12.30 pm and occupied the Kasr-el-Nil Barracks.

On the 21st they marched out to the camp at El Gezireh, where they remained for the rest of their time in Egypt. On 25th September they marched into Cairo to line the streets for the formal entry of the Khedive. On the 24th Colonel Graham was invalided home and on the 25th Lieutenant Coke RMLI died at Alexandria.

On 28th the RMA were ordered to occupy the Aboukir Forts, but not for long.

On 30th September the RMLI Battalion was inspected by the Khedive and General Sir Garnet Wolseley, and marched past in white helmets, scarlet tunics, and white trousers: Major Scott was in command.

On 9th October they started for home, leaving Cairo at noon and arriving at Alexandria at 1.15 am on the 10th they embarked in the ss *City of Paris*. After calling at Malta on the 13th, they arrived at Plymouth on 21st October.

⁷⁸ See Britain's Saa Soldiers

The following honours were awarded in the London Gazette of 17 November 1882.

To be CB	Colonel H S Jones RMLI Colonel S J Graham, TMLI Colonel H B Tuson, RMA
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To be ADC to The Queen	Lieutenant Colonel H S Jones RMLI. Lieutenant Colonel H B Tuson RMA
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To be Brevet Lieutenant Colonel	Major A French RMA Major F A Ogle RMA Major J O Scott RMLI
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To be Brevet Majors.	Captain E J W Noble RMA Captain W G Tucker RMA Captain J Craigie RMLI Captain J H Sandwith RMLI Captain R W Heathcote RMLI Captain R Pine-Coffin RMLI
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Medjidie	
2nd Class	Lieutenant Colonel H S Jones RMLI
3rd Class	Lieutenant Colonel H B Tuson RMA
4th Class	Captain J H Sandwith RMLI Captain R W Heathcote RMLI Captain R H Les Barres RMLI Captain and Adjutant E J W Noble RMA Captain W G Tucker RMA

Oemanieh	
4th Class	Lieutenant Colonel S J Graham RMLI Major J Scott RMLI Major F A Ogle RMA

PART VIII

1883 - 1886

In 1883 the numbers were 12,400.

An Order-in-Council of 31st December 1883 dealing with various rates of extra pay throws great light on the activities and employment of the Corps in these days:

Officers' Mess - Officers' Messes were now allowed a grant of £450 a year (Depot £250) which included Regent's Allowance, and from this all charges for fuel and light, furniture, crockery, glass, linen, wages etc, had to be met; as these amounts were obviously insufficient for upkeep, a considerable levy on officers' subscription was entailed.

Paymasters - The pay of Paymasters was fixed as for other officers instead of a salary of £500 per annum and 5% on the amount of imprests.

Allowances were given for the upkeep of the Men's Recreation Rooms.

An allowance of £100 a year for each Divisional Band was granted.

Clothing compensation was very different from what it is today: £3 for Sergeants, £1-10-0 for Rank and File.

As shewing the varied employments open to NCOs and men, provision was made for pay of RM Wardmasters in the RN Hospitals at Bermuda, Yokohama, and Cape of Good Hope. Scales of working pay were laid down for the working party at Bermuda who lived in Commissioner's House; Officer Superintending, Subalterns, Sergeants and Corporals, whilst Artificers were paid as first class 1/6, second class 1/4, and labourers 1/3 a day. These included masons, carpenters, sawyers, painters, plumbers, smiths, and shoemakers. Similar artificers at Ascension received 1/6 a day and boot money, where the men employed included also the various kinds of farm labourers such as cowmen etc.

On 26th November 1884 the pay of the DAG was fixed at £1500 and of the AAG at £800 a year.

Naval Gunnery - A departure which has led to great developments was made by an Order-in-Council dated 27th January 1885, which authorised the payment of 2d a pay to Captains of Guns (ie Gunlayers) Royal Marines. This payment had hitherto been confined to seamen. It was now extended to the Marines, and from now on the RM have shared in the various gunnery ratings of the Navy.

On 27th June 1885, prizes for good rifle shooting and judging distance were introduced.

Separation Allowance - By the same order, Separation Allowance under Army Regulations and conditions was allowed for wives of NCOs and men, and proved an inestimable boon during the Great War of 1914-18.

Ward Room Servants etc - An Order of 19h January 1886 authorised a departure that had had very for reaching effects on the Corps. It says, "*It would be advisable to employ men of the Royal Marines on board ship in the ratings of Barber, Butcher, and Lamptrimmer, and to grant extra pay at the rate of 2d a day*"; and about the same time the provision of attendants for wardroom officers was inaugurated. The provision of these ratings has often strained the resources of the Corps and rendered the revision of drills and the provision of specialist ratings very difficult, but they have undoubtedly solved a very difficult Naval problem. A precedent which also enabled the provision of printers for the Navy to be solved in 1917, instead of instituting another branch of the Navy.

In 1886 the system of Divisional Numbers to distinguish NCOs and men was introduced; and they ceased to be known by the number of their Divisional Company.

The Soudan, 1884-1885 ⁷⁹ As early as 1881 a carpenter, Mahomed Ahmed, had proclaimed himself as the expected Mahdi, and the revolt in the Soudan had been spreading, very inadequately coped with by the Egyptian garrisons. After the defeat of Arabi Pasha and the occupation of Egypt by the British, some British officers were lent to the Egyptian Government to endeavour to deal with the situation. In an attempt to relieve El Obeid, Hicks Pasha with his army was annihilated at Kashgil in October 1883, losing 7,000 rifles and 14 guns, and by this time the Mahdi had possessed himself of large numbers of rifles and guns. In January 1884 General Gordon was sent from England and appointed Governor-General of the Soudan with a view to withdrawing the garrisons and dealing with the revolt.

⁷⁹ Authorities; Official History of Soudan Campaign; RM War Diaries and Returns; Officers' Services; *Britain's Sea Soldiers* (Field)

Meanwhile in the neighbourhood of Suakin on the Red Sea, Osman Digna, a slave trader and merchant, who had been ruined by the suppression of the Slave Trade, encouraged by the success of the Mahdi, had raised a revolt of his own on 3rd August 1883. He demanded the surrender of Suakin and Sinkat and attacked the barracks at the latter place, but was driven off with loss; he invested it again in October and it surrendered. A relief force accompanied by the British Consul at Suakin was sent to relieve Tokar, but was annihilated at El Teb on 5th November. Suakin was again attacked and 700 black troops were cut to pieces at Tamai on 2nd December. Colonel Valentine Baker Pasha was sent with 3,000 Egyptian troops to relieve Tokar; after establishing Fort Baker on the XNA.RANXX inland side of the morass that separates Trinkitat (the port) from the inland country, he advanced and was attacked by Osman_ Digna in great force. His force was annihilated and massacred, and on 8th February Sinkat was evacuated and the garrison annihilated on its way to the coast. The British Government, as paramount power in Egypt, felt constrained to interfere.

On 8th February 1884 it was decided to defend Suakin. Admiral Hewett, in command of the East Indian Squadron, was informed that 100 Royal Marines on their way home from China were at his disposal, but he demanded 500. In consequence of which a Battalion was formed at Malta from the Royal Marines of the Fleet under Major G H T Colwell RMLI from HMS *Temeraire*, Captain Allen RMA and Lieutenant F White RMLI; HMS *Superb*, Captain Tucker RMA, Lieutenants Prendergast and C Rogers RMLI; HMS *Alexandra* (Flag), Major Colwell RMLI, Lieutenant G Aston RMA and D Kysh RMLI; *Monarch*, Captain Schomberg RMLI, Lieutenant E Brittan RMA, and 463 NCOs and men. They were embarked in HMS *Hecla* and arrived at Port Said on 12th February, where they picked up the *Monarch's* detachment and the whole were transferred to HMS *Orontes*. They arrived at Suakin on 19th February and left for Trinkitat where they arrived the same evening. Here they landed on Sunday 24th and were placed under the Army Discipline Act and attached to the 2nd Infantry Brigade under Major General Davis. On the 27th Colonel Tuson CB ADC RMA, who had arrived from England, assumed command with Captain W H Poe as his adjutant.

Captain F Baldwin RMLI of *Euryalus* (Flag) had been landed with detachments of *Euryalus* and *Carysfort* and the East Indian Squadron and the men on their way home from China at Suez, so that the force of RM available on 28th February was:

At Trinkitat:

RMA	5 Officers	116 NCOs and Men
RMLI	7 Officers	289 NCOs and Men

At Suakin:

RMA		36 NCOs and Men
RMLI	3 Officers	177 NCOs and Men

Orders had been sent to the GOC in Egypt to organise a force at Suakin to be reinforced by troops on their way home from India, and General Sir Gerald Graham was appointed to command.

El Teb - In consequence on 26th February a force of 2850 infantry, 750 mounted troops, 150 Naval Brigade, 100 RA, 80 RE with 6 mountain guns and 8 x 7-pdrs of the RA was concentrated at Trinkitat and marched to Fort Baker about 4 miles off. Trinkitat and Fort Baker were garrisoned by some companies of 3/60th Rifles; each place also had a Krupp gun and two bronze guns which were manned by the RMA

On the 29th the troops advanced to El Teb (about 5 miles) where the rebels were found entrenched with the captured Krupp guns. Their strength was estimated at 6000. The other British regiments were the 1/Gordons, 2/Royal Irish Fusiliers, 1/York and Lancasters, and the 3/60th. The enemy were on a low range of hills covered with scrub. The Krupps were in a redoubt on the enemy's left; there were three brick houses and an old sugar mill in the centre and in front shelter trenches and rifle pits. On a higher knoll in rear was a village of reed huts and the wells were below the knoll. The cavalry and mounted infantry were skirmishing in front; the square approached the enemy's right and then moved to the right in order to turn the left of the entrenchments which were then stormed. To quote Colonel Tuson's report: "*the Royal Marines formed part of the 2nd Infantry Brigade under Major General Davis. Formed left side of square with 1/York & Lancaster Regiment in passing the enemy's position at Teb to their left flank; became front face in attacking left position and redoubt mounting two Krupp guns and one mountain gun (carried by both regiments at the point of the bayonet).*" He also reported that Lieutenant White was ordered with his Company to charge the left redoubt, which he carried after a hand to hand encounter with the enemy in which he, Sergeant Major Hurst and Privates Birtwhistle and Yerbury displayed the greatest gallantry. The Diary also says: "*Manned the guns in the redoubt by Major Tucker with RMA and turned them on the enemy's right position (very good practice).*" General Graham in his Dispatch dated

6.5.84 says: "*Brevet Major Tucker RMA showed great readiness and intelligence in at once turning the captured Krupp guns, taken in the first position at El Teb, on the enemy's remaining battery, thereby facilitating the advance of the infantry.*" A rapid advance was made on the enemy; he stood firm in the central position and was bayoneted out of the Mill; he then stood again round the wells whence he was driven by two companies and the Gordons worked round his rear, whilst the cavalry charged round the left flank. After three hours' desperate fighting they fled. The British losses were 34 killed and 155 wounded, of which the RM lost 4 men killed, 3 officers and 13 men wounded. Captain and Adjutant Poe though wounded in the leg continued to perform his duty.

General Graham in his Dispatch of 2nd March 1884 says: "*The York & Lancaster Regiment which had some hand to hand encounters with the enemy, and the Royal Marines behaved with great steadiness and gallantry.*"

On 1st March they advanced to Tokar and relieved the Egyptian garrison; bringing back the inhabitants of Tokar on the 3rd they marched to Port Baker and then to Trinkitat where they embarked in HMS *Humber*, and returned to Suakin on the 4th; here they disembarked and encamped. On the 5th they were joined by the detachments under Captain Baldwin RMLI and he became Adjutant vice Poe to hospital.

Tamai - As no answer was received to the proclamation calling on the rebels to submit, General Graham decided to march to Tamai, Osman Digna's camp. The force, including Cavalry, was 116 Officers and 5216 Men, including the RM Battalion now formed into six companies, of 14 Officers and 464 NCOs and men. Lieutenant Brittan RMA, and 100 NCOs and men were left to garrison Suakin.

They left Suakin on 11th March and moved to Baker's zeriba about 8 miles from the town. On the 12th they advanced to within about a mile of Osman Digna's position, where they formed another zeriba for the night; from 1 am the enemy opened a sniping fire. On the 13th they advanced in two squares. The 1st Brigade under General Buller composed of KRR, 1/Gordons, 1/Royal Irish Fusiliers, and the Camel Battery in echelon to the right rear of the 2nd Brigade under General Davis, which was also formed in square and was composed of the Black Watch, 1/York & Lancasters, and the RM Battalion with the Naval Brigade and 9 pdr Mule Battery.

The Official Report says that: "*On arriving at the edge of the ravine in which the enemy were concealed, the 2nd Brigade was attacked by a great mass of Arabs from the front and right flank, which for a moment made it fall back in some disorder and allowed the enemy to capture the machine-guns which however had been locked by the Naval Brigade.*"⁸⁰ The retirement also left the battery of four guns unprotected, but the gunners stood by them and fired inverted shrapnel.

The 1st Brigade was also attacked but stood firm and by its steady fire helped the 2nd Brigade to rally whilst the cavalry protected its left. But Lieutenant Colonel Tuson's diary gives a more detailed picture;

"Formed outside zeriba about 7.30 am and advanced on wells of Tamai, formed the rear face of the square. Y. & L. formed the front and right faces, Black Watch front and left face with RN machine guns in centre between them. Enemy attacked guns and right front face of square in great numbers, forced back Y. & L. on to the Royal Marines, took the machine guns temporarily, spearing the RN officers and men defending them. Highlanders were then attacked and forced back on our left, causing a temporary check in the advance of the square. Major Colwell and Captain and Adjt Baldwin with great exertion getting two of our companies through the temporary retirement of the square⁸¹ which were the last to come back, as we reformed into line; Highlanders on left, Y. & L. in centre, Royal Marines on right of the line, with the 1st Brigade square on our right, charged the enemy's position again, the Royal Marines retaking the guns and although charged in numbers along the 2nd Brigade line, succeeded in forcing back the enemy who were completely routed."

Colonel Tuson reported also that

"Major Colwell, Captain Baldwin, and Surgeon Cross I have brought to notice of the GOC for their gallant conduct, Major Colwell being the means of bringing two of our companies through the temporary retirement of the square; Surgeon Cross attending the wounded till shot in the forehead."

The 1st Brigade then carried a ridge 800 yards off and Tamai was seen; by 11.40 am Osman Digna's huts and wells were in our possession.

Besides the above officers Private S Patterson was specially brought to notice for bravery in saving the life of a

⁸⁰ It was here that Admiral Sir Arthur Wilson, then a Captain, earned his V.C..

⁸¹ Major Colwell, who had a very fine voice, is reputed to have called out "Men of Portsmouth Division Rally:"

comrade at the risk of his own and was awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal, as were Gunner Bretwell RMA, and Private D Brady RMLI, who gallantly saved the life of Surgeon Prendergast RN, carrying him to the rear; Private John Davis was also brought to notice for gallantry and Corporal Bale RMLI, who although twice wounded returned to his company till ordered by his company commander to the rear.

On the 14th the wells and huts were burnt and the force returned to Suakin on the 15th. The British loss was 5 officers killed, 8 officers wounded, 104 NCOs and men killed and 104 wounded, of whom the Royal Marines had killed 1 gunner RMA, 2 Privates RMLI, and wounded 2 gunners RMA and 12 Privates RMLI.

It is well to remember that this Battalion, which displayed such gallantry and with such disciplined results was drawn from the ships of the Mediterranean, East Indies, and China Fleets; only brought together 14 days before this action. As the CO says, "*The number of officers was totally inadequate to its strength, the NCOs and men, especially those who had served abroad for many years in different stations were not so well up in their drills as I should have wished; but with all that the work they have done has been admirable and I feel proud of having commanded them in the field.*"

On 17th March, Captain Baldwin with 17 RMA and 58 RMLI rejoined their ships *Euryalus* and *Briton*.

Tamanieb - On 22nd March a reconnaissance was made to Tambuk, but it was decided that want of water etc rendered it inadvisable to advance to Berber. However on the 25th the RM Battalion, forming part of the 2nd Brigade, advanced to the first zeriba on the road to Tamanieb, 78 men falling out exhausted on the march owing to the heat. The next day they escorted a convoy of provisions to the second zeriba, which was formed at the foot of the mountains; on the 27th they advanced at daybreak on Tamanieb in two squares with cavalry and mounted infantry on the flanks and front; the mounted troops had a brush with the enemy and after burning the village the troops returned to Suakin the next day, where 19 RMA and 109 RMLI re-embarked in *Orontes* for home.

In the London Gazette 6th May 1884, Sir Gerald Graham reported that the Royal Marines under Colonel Tuson CB ADC were in the fighting line at El Teb and by their gallantry and steadiness contributed largely to the success of that day's operations. At Tamai they were in the square of the 2nd Brigade and assisted in forming the rallying line.

The following were mentioned in dispatches;

Colonel Tuson for the admirable manner in which the RMA and RMLI were handled.
Major Colwell RMLI
Surgeon Cross RN
Sergeant-Major J Hirst RMLI
Private J Birtwhistle RMLI
Private Yerbury RMLI
Gunner Rolfe RMA
Private S Patterson RMLI
Private J Davis RMLI
Gunner A. Bretwell RMA
Private D Brady RMLI

Captain Tucker RMA was specially promoted to Major, Major Colwell to Brevet Lieutenant Colonel, and Captain W N Poe to Brevet Major. Lieutenant Colonel Colwell was later awarded the CB

Suakin - It was decided to abandon the attempt to relieve Khartoum from Suakin. On 3rd April Sir Gerald Graham left for Suez and the troops were withdrawn, only the Royal Marines and the 3/60th being left to garrison Suakin. The latter were withdrawn in May, being replaced by two Egyptian battalions, and the Royal Marines were left to hold Suakin throughout the rest of the year through all the hot weather. Colonel Tuson's Battalion rejoined their ships and the work was done by a battalion from England under Lieutenant Colonel Ozzard RMLI, whose doings we must now chronicle.

On 7th February 1884 orders were issued for a force of Royal Marines to embark on 9th February at Portsmouth and the 10th at Plymouth in SS *Poonah*, consisting of

RMLI

1 Major (Rose)
4 Captains (Montgomery, Bridge, Robbins, Gordon)
8 Lieutenants (Roche, Horniblow, Darling, Money, Stamper, Holman, Townshend, David)

181 NCOs and men from Chatham
54 NCOs and men from Portsmouth
204 NCOs and men from Plymouth.

RMA

1 Captain (Connolly)
2 Lieutenants (Orford and Campbell)
98 NCOs and men.

They disembarked at Ramleh, Alexandria, on 3rd March, were joined on 6th by Lieutenant Colonel Ozzard RMLI to command, with Quartermaster J Murphy.

On 5th April, Captain Montgomery with 2 Lieutenants and 100 NCOs and men - reinforced later to 189 - were detached to form the garrison of Port Said, and Captain Poe became Adjutant of the Battalion and Gritton became Paymaster.

The Battalion left Ramleh by rail on 30th April for Suez, where they embarked in HMS *Orontes* on 1st May and arrived at Suakin on 6th May, transferring to HMS *Tyne* when two detachments of about 4 officers and 100 men took over the garrisoning of Forts Eurylaus and Carysfort. The Battalion remained for the time on board the *Tyne* and the detachments on shore were relieved every week.

On 7th May another draft of four companies RMLI - two Majors (Way, Alston), 4 Captains (McKechnie, Hobart, Burrowes, Pearson), 8 Lieutenants (Onslow, Cotter, Brine, E Evans, Lloyd, N White, Curtoys, Logan-Home) with 283 NCOs and men - embarked in SS *Deccan* and were landed at Port Said on 19th May; these joined the Battalion at Suakin on 17th June. The officers and men left at Port Said under Captain Montgomery had joined the Battalion per HMS *Iris* on 10th June.

The rebels continued to make night attacks on the garrison, but contented themselves with firing at long ranges. The RMA manned all the guns and on 26th May Lieutenant Townshend RMLI with 22 NCOs and men were detached to join the mounted infantry, who were composed of Egyptians. Lieutenant Orford and 36 RMA joined the Battalion as also some regimental transport from Egypt, which was put under charge of Lieutenant Onslow.

The Companies in the forts and in the ship were regularly exchanged owing to the heat and trying conditions on shore. In the first week of June the rebels made several night attacks, but nothing serious resulted.

When the drafts arrived, the New Barracks on the north-east side of the island were taken over and eventually became the HQ, whilst the garrisons of the forts were strengthened, Fort Euryalus to 200 men; also the Police Post, Camel Post, Right Water Fort and Left Water Fort. The health of the Battalion began to give cause for anxiety and it was considered that after six weeks or two months service at Suakin the men should be exchanged with men at Port Said; this was not found to be practicable and it was decided that a depot should be formed at Suez to take men from Suakin; therefore on the day that Colonel Way's draft arrived, Major Rose with 218 NCOs and men embarked for Suez, and from now on it was arranged to send companies in rotation to Suez for recuperation. At Suez they were quartered in the Victoria Hospital and in huts. On 28th June they reported that the weather had been somewhat cooler at Suakin, viz; 95-100 degrees in the buildings, and 105-112 degrees in the tents!

A company of RE arrived to commence the construction of piers, jetties, etc for the proposed railway to Berber. The works were also strengthened and the Mounted Infantry increased to 40 men.

On 18th July the Mounted Infantry under Lieutenant Townshend had a skirmish with the enemy and narrowly escaped being ambushed; but were well handled and firing from the saddle galloped round the enemy's flank and returned to Suakin.

On 20th July, Major General Lyon-Fremantle arrived to command at Suakin and relieved the Commodore of all responsibility for defence.

On 28th July owing to a threatening advance of Osman Digna the Battalion, with all the Marines from the Squadron with some seamen, manned the defences; no attack was made, but owing to the men having to man the defences in the midday heat there was a great increase in the number of sunstroke cases and general sickness.

Captain Crooke with 58 NCOs and Men, relieved a similar number under Captain Swinburne, who went to Suez to recuperate.

On 4th August it is reported that the heat in the tents ranged from 110 degrees to 125 degrees. The Headquarters

of the Battalion were transferred from HMS *Tyne* to the New Barracks. All through August the diaries are full of the arrangements to exchange the companies with those at Suez, and complaints of the rising sick list; the night attacks also continued.

By 20th September the sick had risen to 142.

On 27th September, Captain A St L Burrowes assumed command of the mounted infantry in place of Lieutenant Townshend, but on 11th October in view of Army arrangements they were broken up.

As separate returns were now being rendered of the RMA, we learn that they were manning the following guns:

Fort Euryalus	2 Krupps, 1 Howitzer, 2 Gardners, 1 Gatling, with 2 Officers and 41 NCOs and men.
Right Water Fort	1 Krupp, 1 Howitzer, 1 Gardner, with 1 Officer and 15 men.
Sphinx Redoubt	1 Krupp, 1 Gatling, with 7 NCOs and men.
Island Redoubt	1 Gardner with 3 NCOs and Men.

There were of course infantry garrisons in these places as well.

Lieutenant Stamper RMLI died at Suez on 17th October, and on the 24th the SS *Bulimba* which had brought out drafts and reliefs was retained for use as a hospital ship; the sick had hitherto been retained on board the *Tyne* until they could be sent to Malta, Suez or Ramleh. The sick list from fever seemed to be increasing.

At home the Government were occupied with the question of the relief of General Gordon at Khartoum, and though the War Office had raised the subject as early as April and were pressing for a decision, Mr Gladstone's Government could not make up their minds, and it was not till August that it was definitely decided that the advance was to be made up the Nile and the wonderful expedition under Lord Wolseley, when the troops rowed themselves up the river in 800 whalers was undertaken. Lord Wolseley arrived in Cairo on 9th September 1884.

As well as the troops moving up in boats it was decided to form four Camel Regiments of detachments; one from the Mounted Infantry, one from the Guards, one from the Heavy Cavalry, and one from the Light Cavalry regiments.

The Guards Camel Regiment was formed of 40 men from each of the Battalions of Guards at home making three companies; the fourth company was provided by the RMLI from Suakin. The officers were Captain and Brevet Major W H Poe, Captain A C Pearson, Lieutenants C V F Townshend, and H S N White, Colour Sergeant Drew (Ply), 4 Sergeants, 6 Corporals, 2 Buglers, 80 Privates, who left Suakin for Egypt on 10th October 1884.

Lieutenant Townshend transferred to the Indian Army and afterwards became famous for his defence of Chitral 1896, and later as commander of the British forces in the early part of the Mesopotamian Campaign at the Battles of Ctesipleon and the siege of Kut-el-Amara. Lieutenant White afterwards became Commandant, Depot RM, 1913-1917. Lieutenant David transferred to the Egyptian Army and was commanding a Brigade in Lord Kitchener's reconquest of the Soudan when he died.

By 15th October a new post at Suakin - called the Sandbag Redoubt, about 2000 yards outside the lines - had been erected to protect the head of the railway, and a post of 25 RMLI under Lieutenant E F David was sent to garrison it; on the 22nd two companies RMLI were sent to the same place from Fort Eurylus, who formed an entrenched camp.

By the end of November the night attacks by the rebels had recommenced.

The sick list had assumed the alarming proportions of 250; on 20th November it was ordered that the Royal Marines at Suez should be formed into a separate Battalion under Major and Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Way to include all the sick in Egypt and those recuperating there; in fact what nowadays would be called a Base Depot. The Battalion at Suakin was reduced to a strength of 500.

On 7th and 8th December there were attacks by the rebels, which were dispersed by artillery fire from the forts and ships; they again attacked the advanced posts on the night of 12th, but without result. The diaries state that sickness was now going down.

The state at the end of the year 1884 was

	<u>RMA</u>	<u>RMLI</u>
At Suakin	3 Offrs. 46 NCOs & men	27 Offrs. 534 NCOs & men
At Suez	2 Offrs. 31 NCOs & men	11 Offrs. 88 NCOs & men
Sick Hospital Suez etc.	20 NCOs & men	2 Offrs. 74 NCOs & men
Camel Corps (Nile)	4 Offrs 95 NCOs & men	

Camel Corps (Nile) - We must now turn to the detachment of RMLI under Major Poe which was on its way to join the Guards Camel Regiment. As it was such an unusual duty for the Corps it may be of interest to describe how they were equipped. Each man had:

1 Serge Frock (Scarlet)	I Spine Protector
1 Serge Frock (Grey)	Clasp knife and Lanyard
1. Greatcoat or Cloak	Tin of Grease
1 White Helmet	Housewife
Veil	Canvas Bag
1 Pair Goggles	Waterbottle
Puggaree	Haversack
2 Pairs Ankle Boots	Surgical Bandage
1 Pair Puttees	Pocket Filter
1 Blue Jersey	Grey Flannel Shirts and socks
1 Pair Tartan Trousers	Rifle and Sling
1 Pair Pantaloons (Bedford Cord)	Sword Bayonet
1 Pair Jack Spurs	Bandolier
2 Flannel Belts	Infantry Waistbelt and Pouch

They had a Namaqua Bucket for the Rifle and Sword Bayonet (as used by RMA) instead of the triangular bayonet. They had a Sulleetah which was passed over the saddle tree and covered by a red saddle cover which carried on the rear side - shirt, towel and soap, cleaning gear, knife, fork and spoon, holdall, cavalry canteen, and 50 rounds of SAA; on off side - days' rations

and 50 rounds SAA. A water skin to hold 6 gallons was attached to the back of the saddle, an Egyptian waterbottle to hold 2 quarts on cantle of saddle. Picketing gear, tente d'abri between two men, whip, knee lashing, headstall and rope, nose ring. Forage - 3 days' grain. The blanket was generally carried in lieu of great coat, also a tripod to keep the water skin off the ground. A camp kettle and fuel was distributed between 8 men.

On 19th October it was decided to concentrate at Debbeh, south of Dongola, in advance of the infantry and mounted force, so that if it became necessary to send urgent help to Gordon they might be able to cross the Bayuda Desert to Metemneh where they could meet Gordon's steamers from Khartoum. The Commandant of the base was therefore ordered to send on the Camel Battery, the 19th Hussars and the RMLI Company by the first opportunity, and on 26th October a general order was issued constituting the four Camel Regiments. They had to march from Wady Halfa to Debbeh, a distance of 337 miles, and by 13th November the Guards Camel Regiment was between Dongola and Dal, with the RM Company at Sarras. On 16th December Lord Wolseley made his Headquarters at Korti, which became GHQ during the campaign. The Guards Camel Regiment with the Mounted Infantry had arrived there on the 15th, where also the Royal Sussex Regiment. and the South Staffordshire Regiment had arrived by whalers.

At the end of Decemher Lord Wolseley had decided that the column must be sent across the desert under Brigadier General Stewart. Owing to want of sufficient camel tranport it was necessary to establish a depot at the Jakdul Wells, about 98 miles from Korti.

Accordingly on 30th December 1884 a column consisting of the 19th Hussars, the Guards Camel Regiment (19 Officers and 365 Rank and File), and the Mounted Infantry Regiment - in all about 1100 men, with the camels of the Heavy and Light Cavalry Regiments acting as transport - left Korti, and after halting at Tambuk and El Howeiya Wells arrived at Jakdul at 8 am on 2nd January. Here the Guards Regiment and RE were left to improve the water supply and make fortifications, in which work they were occupied for the next nine days. General Stewart returned to Korti with the remainder and reported. In his Dispatch he said that during his absence the Guards had built two strong forts of stone, *"made roads and footpaths over stony ground and the water supply for men and camel had been improved. Nothing but extreme hard work on the part of officers and*

men could have effected so complete a metamorphosis in this post." And we may be sure our old soldiers, with their varied experience, had a large share in this work.

General Stewart started again on 8th January with half Battery RFA, one Squadron 19th Hussars, the Heavy Camel Regiment, the Mounted Infantry Camel Regiment, HQ and 400 men of the Royal Sussex, one Company the Essex Regiment, Naval Brigade and details; they arrived at Jakdul on the 12th. The Essex were left at El Howeiyah and 150 of the Royal Sussex at Jakdul, and the remainder with the Guards Camel Regiment left Jakdul on the 14th - a total of about 1800 combatants.

On 16th January the Hussars gained touch with the enemy, and at 11.30 am the enemy was reported to be in force between the column and the Abu Klea Wells. The column therefore halted about 3½ miles from the Wells and constructed a zeriba for the night. It was decided to attack next day - 17th January leaving the sick and baggage etc. in the zeriba with a guard of the Royal Sussex.

On the 17th the square was formed on foot - front and right faces the Guards Camel Regiment, front and left face the Mounted Infantry Camel Regiment, the RA in front face between them; the rear and left face the Heavy Camel Regiment; the remainder of the right face the Royal Sussex Regiment, the Naval Brigade and machine guns in the centre of the rear face. Camels for SAA and water in the centre. The enemy were reported in force on the left on high ground. When the square advanced with skirmishers out, it came under a heavy fire. The guns were brought into action against the enemy on the right and right rear, and the cavalry checked the enemy trying to work round to the zeriba. The square at first moved down the centre of the valley to the Wells, which was covered with clumps of long grass and bushes, but when it took ground to the right, parallel to the Khor. Here there was a little command, though the ground was more difficult and undulating. The advance was slow and they were obliged to halt constantly. A line of flags on the left front was observed and when shells were fired at them at a range of 1500 yards, large bodies of the enemy sprang up and retreated, and their fire was silenced. When 500 yards from the flags, the right front corner of the square (Guards Camel Regiment) was on a slight rise, and halted to allow the rear face to close up. Five thousand of the enemy from behind the line of flags charged the left front corner of the square; unfortunately the skirmishers, running in, masked the fire of the square; the 7 pdrs were run out from front and left faces, and these with the fire of the front and left faces forced the enemy to swerve to their right, so that the weight of the charge fell on the Heavy Canal Regiment and the Naval Brigade on the left and rear faces, where they were a little disordered by lagging of the camels etc. In spite of their fire they were pressed back by sheer weight of numbers, the Gardner gun jammed and nearly half the Naval Brigade was killed. Many rifles also jammed. There was a desperate conflict in the centre of the square; the Guards and Mounted Infantry on slightly higher ground brought a heavy fire to bear over the heads of the combatants and stopped the rearward Arabs, causing them to fall back. In five minutes *"by sheer pluck and muscle"* the Heavy Camel Regiment had killed the last of the fanatics. The dispatch said: *"Steadiness of the troops enabled the hand to hand conflict to be maintained, whilst severe punishment was still being meted out to the enemy continuing to advance, with the result that a general retreat of enemy under heavy artillery and rifle fire took place."* At the same time the fire of the Royal Sussex checked a charge of Arab cavalry on the right rear face of the square and the enemy fled.

The square moved to the wells where they bivouacked at 5 pm, but 9 officers and 65 NCOs and Men had been killed, 9 Officers and 85 rank and file wounded. The RM Company lost 2 killed, 2 wounded.

The camels and party in the zeriba were brought in to the wells during the night and next morning. A fort was constructed and garrisoned by the Royal Sussex Regiment; at 3.50 pm on the 18th the Column moved off for Metemneh, aiming to strike the Nile two or three miles above that town. At nightfall two companies of the Guards and two companies of the MI were dismounted to form the advanced guard as they had to pass through the Shebakat Bush. There was no moon, the camels were tired and they had to move through most difficult country; the men were sleepy and tired, and great difficulty was experienced with the civilian camel drivers; the result was a good deal of confusion, but the head got through the bush and they halted at dawn, having taken 14 hours to cover 18 miles.

At 7 am on the 19th the Nile was sighted, and the enemy were seen in force, prepared to contest the road. Consequently a laager of camel saddles and biscuit boxes was made and the men were sent to breakfast; a detachment was sent to occupy a knoll that commanded the zeriba. The enemy kept up a hot fire from the long grass and General Stewart was severely wounded, with many others. The command then devolved on Colonel Sir C Wilson. The baggage was placed in the zeriba and at 2.30 pm the square was formed to fight; Colonel Boscawen of the Guards Camel Regiment being placed in executive command. The Guards and Mounted Infantry were in front, Royal Sussex and Heavy Cavalry in rear. There was a gravel ridge between the zeriba and

Abu Kru on the river, and the long grass was full of the enemy. No skirmishers were sent out and they felt their way by halting and firing volleys, the guns and Gardners doing good service.

At 600 yards from the ridge the enemy fire ceased and they charged in good numbers, but as there were no skirmishers the full force of the fire could be developed and only one got within 100 yards, whilst a large force on the left front of the square was held in check by the artillery and machine gun fire from the zeriba.

The square continued the march to the Nile, which was reached half an hour after dusk; the casualties were 1 officer and 22 men killed, 8 officers and 90 men wounded, of which the RMLI had 5 killed and 13 wounded; in the reports Plymouth Sergeant Chislett and Bugler W Shire, who were wounded, were specially mentioned. The latter died of his wounds.

On the 20th-the greater part of the force moved back to the village of Gubat, on the gravel ridge, which was placed in a state of defence, and the wounded were brought in and placed under a guard of the Royal Sussex; the Guards occupied the side facing the desert. Gubat was about 700 yards from the river and 3500 yards from Metemneh. On 21st January the British made an attack from the south on Metemneh, a long village with loop-holed walls and two or three guns, but they met with a strong resistance. During the attack Gordon's steamers arrived and their troops were landed to join in the attack. As however they brought reports of heavy enemy reinforcements moving down from Khartoum, the attack was broken off and the force returned to Gubat after destroying the intervening villages. Major Poe and 1 Private RMLI were severely wounded; the former suffering amputation of the leg.

In view of the reported advance of the troops from Khartoum, the camp was moved down to the banks of the Nile, and Gubat was only held as an outpost.

On 22nd, Colonel Wilson and Lord Charles Beresford with two companies of Mounted Infantry went down the river to Shandi in the steamers to ascertain what was between them and the column coming up the river. After shelling Shandi, they returned, and the next day was spent in repairing the machinery of the steamers and changing their crews. At 8 am on 24th January, Colonel Wilson left with the two steamers for Khartoum, which he reached on the 28th, only to find that Khartoum had fallen and Gordon had been killed on the 26th. Having come under heavy fire the steamers had to return, but on the way down both were wrecked; Colonel Wilson and his party were rescued after desperate adventures by Lord Charles Beresford in the *Saf'iyeh*, which after a severe fight, in which the boiler was pierced by a shot and repaired under fire by Chief Engineer Benbow RN, succeeded in reaching them and bringing them back to Gubat on 4th February.

On 23rd January a column was sent to bring up supplies from Jakdul so that the garrison at Abu Kru was reduced to 73 officers and 912 rank and file; on the 27th a party of the Guards and Mounted Infantry Camel Regiments turned the enemy, who were firing on the outposts, out of a village close by. Convoys were now being sent to and fro to Jakdul bringing up supplies and taking back wounded and sick. General Sir Redvers Buller, the Chief of Staff, arrived on 11th February with the Royal Irish Regiment to take command vice General Stewart.

The news of the fall of Khartoum altered all the plans and necessitated communication with the Home Government for fresh instructions. Lord Wolseley felt that he had not sufficient troops and the season was too late for an advance to retake Khartoum; at first the troops, of both the river and desert columns, were ordered to stand fast; the Royal Irish and Royal West Kent Regiments were sent to reinforce the Desert Column; but General Buller had already decided that as the position at Gubat was impossible, he would fall back to Abu Klea. The River Column fought the action of Kirbeka on 10th February, where General Earle was killed, and though the Dervishes were heavily defeated it was not considered advisable to advance further at present.

On 13th February a convoy left Gubat under Colonel Talbot, taking with it General Stewart and all the remainder of the sick and wounded, those unable to walk being carried on stretchers by the Egyptian soldiers.

The escort was provided by the RM Company and one other of the Guards Camel Regiment, a wing of the Heavy Camel Regiment and a company of the Mounted Infantry Regiment. After going about 8 or 9 miles through the bushy district of Shekabat, a large convoy of camels was sighted. The Royal Marines were sent out in skirmishing order to take the convoy. Captain Pearson found the enemy too strong for him and was reinforced by a company of the Guards and some men of the Heavy Cavalry.⁸² The MI were in rear and the sick and wounded were placed among the camels, with the Egyptians on the flanks. The enemy came round the convoy on three sides and kept up a well directed fire for 1½ hours, when a body of troops were observed advancing on the left flank and were received with a volley which fortunately did no damage, as they proved to be the Light

⁸² Official Report

Cavalry Regiment At 1.15 pm the enemy withdrew and the convoy proceeded to Abu Klea with a loss of two killed and six wounded, where they arrived on the 14th. Marching again on the 16th, General Stewart died of his wounds and was buried at Jakdul.

General Buller evacuated Gubat on the 14th. On 20th February, General Sir Evelyn Wood, now in command at Jakdul, reported that the Heavy Cavalry and Guards would require all new camels, and as on this day Lord Wolseley had decided that no further advance was possible, orders were issued to both columns to return to Korti.

On 23rd February Abu Klea was evacuated. On 21st the Guards had left Jakdul for Abu Halfa, where they remained strengthening the post till they marched to Korti, arriving on 4th March; the rest of the Column did not get in till the 14th.

With a view to an autumn campaign, the Guards were to have spent the summer at Dongola, but on 12th April the Government decided that the expedition must be abandoned (no doubt owing to the threatening state of affairs on the Afghan frontier) and on 11th May the withdrawal of the troops from the Soudan was ordered. The Guards Regiment left Assouan on 21st June and had left Egypt by the beginning of July; they arrived at Cowes on 15th July, where the RM Company with the remainder of the Guards regiment were disembarked and inspected by HM Queen Victoria.

On arrival at Portsmouth they were invited to an entertainment in London by the Brigade of Guards, which took place at Chelsea on 20th July, -and from here they rejoined their Divisions.

Major Poe was awarded the CB; Captain Pearson was promoted to Brevet Major: Colour Sergeant Drew, the Company Sergeant, who had acted for some time as Sergeant Major of the Regiment, was noted for advancement, as were Sergeants Chislett and Walton (the QMS). Privates Mees, Slade, McEntee, and Golding, with Bugler Brown were specially promoted to Corporals.

Suakin - Returning to affairs at Suakin. On 8th February in anticipation of the summer occupation of the Soudan and the renewal of the campaign in the autumn, Lord Wolseley had requested that Osman Digna should be dealt with at once and the Government decided that the railway from Suakin to Berber should be constructed. On 20th February, Sir Gerald Graham was appointed to command the Suakin Field Force, and orders were issued by the RM Office that the Royal Marines at Suakin were to be organised into an RMA Gardner Gun Battery and a Battalion RMLI of 8 Companies with a detachment of Mounted Infantry.

The force at Suakin which had been increased by the addition of a battery of RHA, a Company of RE, the 2/East Surrey and 1/Berkshire Regiments etc, was further increased by the 5th Lancers, 20th Hussars, a four Company Battalion of Mounted Infantry, the Guards Brigade of three Battalions and two Batteries of RFA. The 2nd Brigade was formed of the RMLI, the above two regiments, and the King's Shropshire Light Infantry, who had relieved the 2nd RM Battalion at Suez. A Brigade of Native Infantry and a Regiment, of Cavalry came from India; also a Battery of Artillery and an Infantry Battalion from New South Wales; with the latter was Lieutenant Colonel S Spalding, late RMLI.

On 12th March, General Graham arrived and assumed command, with General Greaves as Chief of Staff. General Sir John McNeill VC was in command of the 2nd Brigade.

On 13th the contractors commenced laying the railway. General Graham had been instructed that his first objective was the destruction of Osman Digna's power, and then to push on and secure the road for the construction of the railway and to pacify the tribes. The water supply was however one of the main difficulties.

Before dealing with the operation, we must go back a little and record the doings of the RM Battalion since the beginning of the year. The 1st Battalion, in garrison at Suakin, was subjected to the nightly sniping and attacks by the rebels, but the sickness decreased and the health of the Battalion improved; the Musketry Instructor from Malta (Captain Byron Woods) with his staff was sent to them and they commenced a musketry course.

On one day - 17th January - the rebels appeared in force, but were driven off by the guns of HMS *Dolphin*, *Sandbag*, Right and Left Water Forts, but soon all was in preparation for the expedition to Berber.

On 19th February, a detachment of 50 RMA under Captain Swinburne arrived from Suez.

Mounted Infantry - On 6th February. Captain A St L Burrowes RMLI with 2 Sergeants, Corporals, 1 Bugler, and 21 Privates were detailed for Mounted Infantry and joined E Company of 2nd Battalion Mounted Infantry; Captain F D Bridge became Adjutant of the Battalion, as Lieutenant Congdon who had been appointed was sick. By 28th February the RMLI Battalion was organised into eight Companies under Lieutenant Colonel Ozzard, and

on the 2nd Battalion joining on 11th march, Major Way became 2nd-in-Command and the 162 officers and men were incorporated in the 1st Battalion. Soon after the remainder of the 2nd Battalion under Captain Edye also joined from Suez. The officers now were Majors Way and Alston, Captain Allen, McKechnie, Woods, Pine-Coffin, C G Gordon, Pyne, Hawkins, Kitching; Lieutenants Horniblow, Darling, Cotter, Brine, Holman, David, Marchant, Maclurcan, Evans, Curtoys, Trotman, Lalor, Harries, Hubbard, Onslow (Transport Officer), Kysh (Signal Officer); Captain Edye (Signals); Captain Hungerford (Paymaster).

Gardner Battery - By 16th March Major Crooke had organised the RMA Battery of four 5-barrelled Gardner guns on the lines of a Field Battery drawn. by mules, which were led by men on foot, with Captain Swinburne and Lieutenants Orford and Slessor. They were encamped with the RE; Lieutenant Bonnon RA was attached and they came under the orders of the CRA of the force. The RMLI was encamped with the 2nd Brigade to which it was attached on 9th March.

The enemy was very bold and active, penetrating the camps. stabbing sentries, sniping etc, and the force had a taste of what had been the lot of the Marines for so many months.

Before starting the construction of the railway it was necessary to destroy Osman Digna's forces, and the first point of attack was Hasheen where there was an enemy gathering.

Hasheen - From the seacoast a sandy plain rises quickly in a westerly direction for a distance of 10 or 12 miles to a height of about 200 or 300 feet above sea level; till it meets the foot of a volcanic range of mountains. In the immediate vicinity of Suakin, one or two miles of the country to the north and west is fairly open; beyond the radius and to the south-west (ie towards Tamai) there is thick scrub of prickly mimosa six to eight feet high, and belts of lower bushes lining the numerous khors or watercourses which run generally in a north and north-east direction. The railway was roughly to follow the caravan route to Berber in a north-west direction from Suakin.

The enemy were on a line Tamai-Hasheen-Handoub. It would be necessary to make two advances, first to Tamai to crush Osman Digna, and secondly to clear the railway route.

Hasheen threatened the right of the advance on Tamai, besides being the place from which the nightly raids on Suakin were organised.

On the 19th the mounted troops made a reconnaissance, supported by infantry. Hasheen lay 7 miles due west. At this point a group of rocky hills rises up; the highest was called Zeriba Hill; here is the beginning of the thicker undergrowth spreading west to the base of the Waratab range. Dihilbat or Hasheen Hill is an isolated ridge, 1½ miles further on, running East and West, culminating in the centre with steep and rugged sides destitute of vegetation and almost precipitous, with bushy thorny thickets, six to eight feet high, at the base; it is separated from Zeriba Hill and Beehive Hill by a ravine with gullies and slopes.

On 20th March a force composed of the Guards Brigade, 2nd Brigade less the Shropshire Light Infantry, the Indian Brigade, Cavalry Brigade and G/RHA with the RMA Gardner Battery, Ammunition Column etc., left Suakin at 6.20 am. The 2nd Brigade in line of company columns in fours, the Guards and Indian Brigades in column of companies, with the cavalry on the flanks.

Zeriba Hill was occupied at once and the East Surrey Regiment was left to build redoubts and strengthen it. The enemy fell back on Dihilbat and Beehive Hills, between which were the huts of the village. The Berkshire Regiment and RMLI were ordered to occupy Dihilbat Hill, supported by the Indian Brigade and RHA. The Guards Brigade, with which was the RMA Gardner Battery, was in reserve.

The Berkshire Regiment advanced up the hill in attack formation; four companies RMLI under Colonel Way in support. The other four companies under Major Alston with Colonel Ozzard were on their right rear to turn the enemy's flank. Reaching the crest of the first spur, heavy fire was opened by the enemy, but volleys drove them off the summit, which was occupied by Berkshires and RM. Colonel Ozzard's half battalion "*pushed up the gorge on the right; the gorge was covered with thick scrub and in it were a quantity of native huts and wells; turning movement was successful as enemy fell back.*"⁸³ The RMLI crowned the heights on the right of the Berkshires and the Mounted Infantry moved through the village and passed the wells and engaged a large force beyond. The Guards and Indian Brigades with the RHA and RMA Gardners moved forward and occupied the gorge between Dihilbat and Beehive Hills; the Cavalry charged the enemy with great effect.

The huts, wells, etc. having been destroyed, the force fell back to Zeriba Hill, formed in two squares. The Gardner Battery with the Guards Brigade came into action outside the square (mules inside) to cover the

⁸³ Colonel Ozzard's Report

retirement, sweeping the bush with volley firing. The retirement was also covered by the MI; Captain Burrowes reported that he dismounted his men and held the enemy off by cool and accurate fire and then retired into the square.

When the force was reassembled South of Zeriba Hill, the East Surrey Regiment and the RMA Gardner guns were left to hold the fort and zeriba and the remainder returned to Suakin. The mules of the RMA Battery accompanied them. During the action some of the RMA had manned two Krupp guns(9 cm). The RM only had one wounded. The arabs had lost heavily and the destruction of the village stopped the harrassing night attacks on Suakin.

Tofrek - The next objective was to crush Osman Digna at Tamai; but it was first necessary to establish an intermediate post for supplies, water etc, so a force under General Sir John McNeill, commanding the 2nd Brigade, composed of one Squadron 5th Lancers, the Berkshires, a Field Company RE, the Naval Brigade with Gardner guns, the Indian Brigade etc⁸⁴ was detailed. They moved off in two squares on 22nd March, marching south-west towards Tamai, the British square in advance. Their orders were to advance 8 miles and then form three zeribas, two to hold a battalion each and one to hold 2000 camels. The march was very difficult owing to the scrub in the watercourses crossing the route, and the camels were overloaded and badly packed. The enemy were reported retiring, but on reaching a place with a horse-shoe clearing - known later as Tofrek - only 6 miles out, the General decided to halt and form the zeribas, otherwise the Indian Brigade could not get back that night. The British Brigade formed up on the east, clear of the ground intended for the zeriba.

The RMLI formed their zeriba at the north-east corner on the side nearest Suakin, half the Berkshires at the south-west corner, the large zeriba for the camels between them. The 28th Bombay NI and two companies of the 17th Bengal NI were placed in line to cover the north front during the building, the 15th Sikhs, similarly formed, faced west, and six companies of the 17th Bengal NI faced south. The other half Battalion Berkshire Regiment were in square on the east guarding the camels etc as they were unloaded. Two Naval Gardner guns each were with the Berkshires and RM zeribas. The zeriba building went on rapidly and men were out on all sides building and getting in material. By 1.30 pm the RMLI zeriba was nearly complete and guns mounted, as was also the Berkshire zeriba. Of the main zeriba, only about half was completed; the other half-Battalion of the Berkshires were having their dinners, the camels were unloading and filing out of the central place, when at 2.30 pm the cavalry reported the enemy to be advancing and the working parties were recalled; the cavalry however suddenly came galloping in, and in their retirement rather unsteadied the 17th NI. The weight of the attack came from the west and south, and fell on the Berkshires, the 15th Sikhs, and the 17th Bengal NI. The enemy came swarming over the zeriba; the Berkshire Regiment put up a magnificent defence, as did the Sikhs on their right, but the 17th Bengalis after firing one volley broke, some into the Berlshires square but the rest to Suakin. The enemy came swarming round, charging the fence in every direction and came in masses into the large zeriba, stampeding the camels and transport animals who streamed back to Suakin; the half-Battalion of the Berkshires to the east formed rallying squares and repelled two successive attacks and held their ground; they then marched to their own zeriba. The RMLI held their own zeriba with volleys and then with the Berkshires cleared the arabs out of the central zeriba where they were killing followers and the animals. The attack took place at 2.50 and fire ceased at 3.10 pm

In that short time 1500 Arabs were killed and more than that number wounded. Colonel Oezard reported that *"the conduct of the officers and men merited the highest praise; the enemy penetrating into the zeriba were instantly killed."*

Parties of the RMLI and the Swere then sent out to examine the field and by 4 pm all was quiet. The RM had 9 killed and 17 wounded, but the total losses were 100 killed, 148 missing (mostly followers), and 174 wounded. The RMA lost 13 out of their 27 mules.

Two cavalry squadrons on the road to Suakin were able to charge the enemy and by dismounted fire to stop the pursuit and save many followers and transport animals.

This affair was known as McNeill's Zeriba, but the medal clasp is inscribed 'Tofrek'.

On 23rd March, General Graham with the Guards Brigade and a convoy of camels arrived at the zeriba, which was completed and strengthened. The Indian Brigade with wounded and sick and two battalions of Guards then returned to Suakin.

On 24th March another convoy with 8000 gallons of water, escorted by the Indian Brigade, left Suakin and three

⁸⁴ The RMA mules under Lieutenant Slessor were lent to the Naval Brigade.

miles from Tofrek was met by the RMLI and Coldstream Guards, who had advanced in square to meet them. *"Large numbers of the enemy were discovered on our right flank and we occasionally halted and returned their fire. Lieutenant Marchant and one Private were wounded.....On returning with the convoy to Tofrek both battalions were formed in one square, the RMLI forming rear and half right and left faces, the enemy attacked persistently but failed to penetrate though making several attempts."*⁸⁵ Lieutenant Maclurcan, and 5 Privates were wounded.

On 25th March the East Surrey Regiment and the RMA Gardner Battery were withdrawn from Hasheen and the zeribas there dismantled. On the way back the enemy annoyed them with long range fire so Captain Swinburne brought one of the Krupp guns into action and dispersed them after a few rounds at long range.

Tamai - Convoys were sent out daily to the zeriba to accumulate supplies of water, stores etc, prior to the advance to Tamai. On 27th March, Colonel Ozzard was taken ill and later invalided, but died shortly afterwards. Major and Brevet Lieutenant Colonel N F Way assumed command of the Battalion and on the 28th the RMLI Battalion was brought back to Suakin for a rest.

On 1st April the Mounted Infantry and Cavalry reported that Tamai was still held, and at 4.30 am on the 2nd, the three Brigades and Artillery left Suakin formed in one long oblong Square 70 yards front and 750 yards deep, with the convoy inside. On reaching Tofrek, the 28th Bombay NI and two of the RMA Gardners were left as garrison (the mules being used for the Naval Brigade) and the Grenadiers and Berkshire Regiment joined the column. At 4.30 pm they reached Teselah Hill and formed a zeriba 300 yards in rear where they bivouacked.

At 8.30 am on 3rd they advanced in two squares, the 2nd Brigade leading with the Berkshires in line, the RMLI on the right the 15th Sikhs on the left each in column of companies, the rear being open and the guns being in rear of the Berkshires. The Guards Brigade in line of columns with the NSW Infantry in rear. The East Surreys, Shropshire LI and the two RMA Gardners were left to guard the zeriba and transport at Teselah. The Cavalry and Mounted Infantry were out in front and flanks.

The ground between Teselah and the khor where Tamai was situated, was broken by three low ridges between which lay the village. This was occupied without serious opposition and by 9.30 am the squares had reached the edge of the khor. The 2nd Brigade crossed to the far side, supported by artillery fire; the Berkshires occupied the high point in the centre and the 15th Sikhs crossed the detached hills on the left and in front. The RMLI Battalion came under long range fire from the enemy who shot well; *"after surrounding the hills at Tamai the square was halted, and my face being annoyed by enemy fire I sent out Captain Woods and some marksmen and they soon drove the enemy away. This duty was well performed."*⁸⁶

G/RHA and the mountain guns came into action on the far side of the khor; the Guards and NSW Infantry crowned the ridges on the north side of the khor and the arabs withdrew to the mountains to the south-west. Wells were found closed and only a thin brackish stream in the khor. It was useless to pursue and as Osman Digna's power was broken, the village was burnt and a quantity of ammunition was destroyed; they marched back at 10.30 am and reached Teselah at noon. Lieutenant Lalor and one Private were wounded. After dinner they marched back to Tofrek, the Cavalry and Artillery to Suakin; and on the 4th April the force returned to Suakin. During the next few days stores etc were withdrawn from Tofrek and attention turned to clearing the line of the railway.

The tribes were becoming willing to submit, but unfortunately in view of the absence of any settled Government policy the General was unable to guarantee them protection, so that it was necessary to guard the route of the railway. On 6th April a small force of the Guards established No 1 Post half way between Suakin and Handoub, where they formed a zeriba, and on the 8th occupied Handoub. On 9th April the RMA Battery received four of the new 2 Barrelled Gardner guns (out of six) in lieu of the 5-barrelled guns.

On the 11th the RMLI Battalion proceeded to a zeriba four miles out towards Handoub with the Berkshire Regiment and on the 16th proceeded to Handoub, on which day the advanced troops occupied Otao 4½ miles beyond Handoub without opposition; and on the 19th advanced troops occupied Tambuk, 5 miles beyond Otao. The railway had reached within one mile of Handoub.

Camel Corps On 18th April, 500 riding camels having arrived from India, the Camel Corps of five Companies was formed; the RMLI contributing Captain G T Onslow, 1 Sergeant, 1 Corporal and 30 Privates, who formed

⁸⁵ Colonel Ozzard's Report.

⁸⁶ Colonel Way's Report.

No 2 Company, with detachments from 2/East Surrey and RE Each camel was ridden by two men, as three camels were ridden by 5 soldiers and one native driver. Lieutenant Cotter became Transport Officer of the Battalion, vice Onslow. The Camel Corps consisted of 400 British soldiers and 100 native Indian drivers.

The railway was pushed on and by 30th April was completed to Otao. On 24th April the RMLI Battalion with the Berkshire Regiment marched four miles towards Otao, and there formed a zeriba and the diary records that the health of the Battalion was very good.

But the Government, as before stated, had now made up its mind to discontinue the railway and to evacuate the Soudan as quickly as possible. On 28th April at 5.30 am the RMLI Battalion left their zeriba and marched into Handoub, where they entrained for Suakin and embarked that afternoon in SS *Australia*. The baggage and gear was carried in on camels (16 miles) and also arrived during the afternoon.

That day a telegram was received from England directing that Captain C G Gordon, Lieutenants Horniblow and Holman, 1 Colour Sergeant, 4 Corporals, 2 Drummers and 65 Privates were to embark in SS *Arab* for passage to China, which was done; this detachment formed the garrison for Fort Hamilton.⁸⁷

The *Australia* left Suakin at 6 am on 29th April with the RMA and RMLI and arrived at Alexandria on 5th May.

Captain Onslow and the Camel Corps, and Captain Burrowes with the Mounted Infantry were left at Suakin.

The Battalion state on 5th May was RMLI:

In S.S. <i>Australia</i>	32 Officers	1 W.O.	528 NCOs and Men
At Suakin	4 Officers		85 NCOs and Men
At Suez	1 Officer		3 NCOs and Men
Total	37 Officers	1 WO	816 NCOs and Men

There was of course also the Camel Corps still up the Nile, and the RMA numbers.

On arrival at Portsmouth on 16th May the Battalion was inspected by the DAGRM before dispersal to their Headquarters.

General Graham sent the following message to the Commander-in-Chief Mediterranean, who forwarded it to the Admiralty and it was promulgated in Divisional Orders at all Divisions.

"As the RMLI are under orders to embark, the Lieutenant General Commanding takes this opportunity of recording his high appreciation of the services rendered by them since he has assumed command and he wishes to thank them for the spirit with which they have carried out their duties under him after their long exposure to this trying climate."

T'Hakool - The Mounted Infantry and Camel Corps had still to undertake some operations.

A Mohammed Adam Sarden had assembled a force at T'Hakool, 18 miles west of Suakin and 10 from Otao; it was the only organised Arab force remaining, so a combined attack was made from Suakin and Otao. The Camel Corps with two companies of MI and the Bengal Cavalry left Suakin at midnight on 6th May and at daylight reached the head of the T'Hakool Valley; the Bengal Cavalry closed the south-west entrance of the valley and the main body the south entrance. The Otao column of 1 Company MI and the 15th Sikhs reached the north end of the valley, drawing the enemy to attack them; the enemy were driven back in confusion by the fire of the MI and were pursued by the friendly native tribes to the south-west. Two companies of the Suakin MI crowned the lower heights to the westward, gained the higher ridges and drove them from spur to spur; the enemy fled and large flocks of sheep and goats were captured and the village destroyed. On the way home they met parties of the enemy, coming up to take part in the fight, who were driven off.

This finally broke all resistance and the tribes were ready to submit, but evacuation had been finally ordered and on 17th May General Graham and the Guards Brigade left Suakin, quickly followed by the other troops.

On the breaking up of the Mounted Infantry the Commanding Officer published the following Order: *"I am anxious to record my sense of the very excellent service rendered by Captain Burrowes and every NCO and man of his detachment. Crime has been absolutely unknown. Men rode well; cheerful and willing as they have always been, no officer could have desired to command a finer body of men whether in camp or the field."*

⁸⁷ See Page 184

In Lord Wolseley's final Despatch, 15 June 1885, the following were mentioned:

Brevet Major J H Sandwith	RMLI	(Army Staff)
Brevet Major W H Poe	RMLI	(Nile Camel Corps)
Captain A C Pearson	RMLI	(Nile Camel Corps)
Lieutenant D Kysh	RMLI	(Battalion & Staff)
Sergeant Major Scudamore	RMLI	(Bn Signal Officer Suakin)

London Gazette, 25th August, 1885.

Lieutenant Colonel Way and Major Poe were awarded the CB , and Captain Pearson a Brevet Majority. Lieutenant Kysh was specially promoted to Captain dated 15th June 1885. Later Captain Crooke RMA was awarded a Brevet Majority and Sergeant Major Scudamore a DCM.

The following extracts from General Graham's final despatch are of interest.

"19. Looking upon all these operations as trying the qualities of the troops, it cannot be denied that they were severe tests and that no troops could have stood them better. The harassing night alarms with enemies, having all the stealthy cunning and ferocity of wild beasts, prowling about in their midst, only served to increase the vigilance of the men in outpost duties, and while teaching them caution made them more eager to meet their enemy in open fight. The long march and toilsome convoy duties under a tropical sun; the repulse of the enemy's sudden charges in the bush; the toilsome ten nights' watch in the zeriba amid the carnage of a battlefield, are achievements of which any troops may be proud.

"20. By their effort the power of Osman Digna was so broken that for all practical purposes the country was completely cleared; the railway was being pushed on as fast as the plant could be landed; the tribes were submitting to us..... I am convinced the enterprise could have been successfully carried out."

With reference to the harassing night attacks etc., it is well for us Marines to remember that General Graham is speaking of the three months when the Expeditionary Force was engaged; but further that the Royal Marines had been exposed to these harassing tactics in addition to the great sickness for over 12 months.

Port Hamilton. 1885-1887 - In the early part of 1885 a dispute known as the Penjdeh incident took place with Russia over a violation of the Afghan frontier near Herat, and war appeared imminent.

In these circumstances it was desirable to have an advanced base for the Fleet nearer to Vladivostock than Hong-Kong; for this purpose the China Squadron occupied Port Hamilton on 14th April. This place comprised a group of islands - Sodo, Sunhode, and Observatory Islands - enclosing an anchorage in the Nan-How group off the South Coast of Corea [sic] about 120 miles to the westward of Nagasaki. The Fleet protected the anchorage with booms and mines, and a telegraph cable was laid to Shanghai. Corea, China, and Russia protested, but the British Government ignored their protests; however unless it had been heavily fortified it would not have been much use to the Fleet. As related, the draft under Captain Gordon was taken from the RMLI Battalion as it was leaving Suakin⁸⁸ and proceeded to Suez. Here they met a detachment from England of Lieutenant Trotter and 25 NCOs and men RMA, and Lieutenant Macdonnel RMLI in relief of Lieutenant Horniblow invalided. They proceeded on 18th May to China.

On arrival at Hong-Kong on 1st July the war scare was over, but a considerable part of the China Squadron was still at Port Hamilton. Tents and stores were drawn and the men re-equipped as the majority had been on active service at Suakin since February 1884, and had little more than the clothes they stood up in. They reached Port Hamilton about 23rd July, and were quartered on Observatory Island; at first in tents which were blown down once or twice by typhoons, and later in huts. Here a telegraph station and camp was established and they settled down in garrison. They asked for the same pay and allowances as the Japanese Battalion 1870-75, ie double pay and Field Allowance, but this was not granted; they however received Field Allowance and 1/6d a day ration money. They established a canteen and Lieutenant Trotter started a poultry farm and imported sheep and goats for milk; and as usual with Marines in such circumstances, they made themselves very comfortable. Captain Gordon went home in 1886 and Lieutenant Trotter, having been promoted, relieved him in command. They were withdrawn in January 1887, and arrived home in April 1887.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ See Page 182.

⁸⁹ See *Random Records*, pp 55-57 for fuller details.

Burmah, 1885-87- The Third Burmese War was caused by King Theebaw, as a culmination of pinpricks, trying to extort an impossible fine from the Burmah and Bombay Corporation, which led to an ultimatum on 22nd October 1883. On 9th November the Burmese refused the terms and an expedition was dispatched with a view to the occupation of Mandalay and the dethronement of Theebaw.

It was decided to advance by the River Irrawaddy to the capital and a Naval Brigade was landed from HMS *Bacchante*, *Turquoise*, *Woodlark*, *Osprey*, *Ranger*, *Mariner*, and *Sphinx*. The total force was 9,000 troops, 67 guns and 24 machine guns. The Naval Brigade under Captain Woodward of *Turquoise* included the Royal Marines under Major Lambert RMA. They manned the light draught steamers armed with machine guns, whilst heavy guns from the *Turquoise* were mounted in barges which were secured alongside the steamers and protected by iron plates etc. The troops were embarked in the steamers.

The force assembled at Thayetmyo on 14th November, the Burmese being taken by surprise at the rapidity of the advance. The armed steamers *Irrawaddy* and *Kathleen* engaged the Burmese batteries and brought out the Burmese armed steamer from under their guns and also the barges which had been prepared for sinking to block the passage of the river. The Burmese were in force with a strongly fortified redoubt commanding the river.

On 17th November at Minhala on the right bank of the river, the enemy held a barricade strongly fortified, and a pagoda. A brigade of Native Infantry was landed, which, covered by the ship's bombardment, advanced and defeated the enemy and captured the place with a loss of 4 killed and 27 wounded. The advance was continued on the following days, the Naval Brigade and the heavy artillery leading, and silencing in succession the enemy's river defences at Nyangu, Patukhu, Myingan (24th November). On 26th November the flotilla approached Ava, the ancient capital, which had been strongly fortified. There the Burmese envoys came out to meet the General, and on the 27th they acceded to his demands when the ships were off Mandalay ready to commence firing, and King Theebaw surrendered.

Three strong forts full of men were occupied, many Burmese laid down their arms, but considerable numbers escaped into the jungle to give trouble as Dacoits for the next two years.

By 28th Mandalay had fallen and the king was a prisoner; 186 pieces of artillery had been taken. On 28th December, Bhamo was occupied, but the real work of the campaign etc only just beginning, as owing to the chaos in the country and the activity of the Dacoits, it was not until 1887 that the country was finally subdued and during this period Naval Brigades were patrolling the rivers. Large numbers of troops were employed and eventually Lord Roberts assumed command and finally settled the operations.

Major Lambert was awarded the DSO

PART X

1887 - 1901

1887 - The numbers voted for this year were 12,709.

Jubilee - In this year were celebrated the ceremonies in connection with the Jubilee of HM Queen Victoria on completion of fifty years of her reign. A Brigade of Royal Marines took part in the Review at Aldershot, and during the procession for the Thanksgiving Service at St Pauls, a Battalion of RMA lined the streets and a Battalion of RMLI lined Cockspur Street. A Review of the Fleet was also held at Spithead.

From this event a new spirit arose, and the feelings that bound the Dominions and Colonies to the Empire were freshly aroused by the thronging of all the sons of the Empire to render homage to the Great White Queen.

Among other matters a new impulse was given to the Royal Navy, which at that time was still in transition from sail to steam; all the cruisers and many of the battleships still having masts and yards, whilst the squadrons consisted of a heterogeneous mass of samples of Naval architecture, mostly useless for either fighting or keeping the seas. The personnel, including the Royal Marines, were few in number, and training was at a low ebb, the greater part of the energies of officers being devoted to 'spit and polish'.

The ranks of Probationary Second Lieutenant and Second-Lieutenant were reintroduced, but officers were promoted to Lieutenant on qualifying for their commissions, though they did not draw the increased pay till they had completed 3 years' service.

Training - In 1838 there were a few efforts to improve the Royal Marine training; the importance of signalling was being recognised and a paid NCO instructor was allowed to each Division by Order-in-Council 3rd May 1888. It was also laid down by Order-in-Council 17th March 1888 that vacancies for General or Lieutenant General and RMA or RMLI should be filled by the promotion of a Lieutenant General or Major General of RMA or RMLI, unless there was good cause otherwise; and when a vacancy occurred for Major General any qualified Colonel might be recommended by the DAG for promotion; in absence of such recommendation promotion was to be given to the senior Colonel on the serving strength of that branch, so that even as late as this the separation of the RMA and RMLI was not complete.

On 3rd May prizes and rewards were offered for the study of foreign languages, and many officers became Interpreters.

Quartermasters - On 17th December the honorary rank of Major for Quartermasters when holding positions of trust and responsibility was instituted; for many years these were only considered to be the Quartermasters at the RM Office.

In **1889** the numbers voted were 12,700.

Naval Defence Act - In consequence of the growing uneasiness of the country at the state of the Navy, and the general dissatisfaction with its condition, the Naval Defence Act was passed by which a homogeneous squadron of eight battleships of the *Royal Sovereign* class was built and also classes of cruisers of greater speed, armament, and protection; destroyers also came into being; great increases were made to the Naval personnel, whilst the dockyards were also enlarged.

Arrangements were made for improving the mobilisation plans, and large working parties of the Marines, as many as 100 rank and file under a Captain and Subaltern, proceeded to the dockyards daily to arrange the stores etc. for the Reserve Ships; for this a very welcome addition to the meagre pay of those days was given in the shape of extra pay.

Steam Reserve - This was followed by the embarkation of a small proportion of a detachment (about one-fifth) in the ships of the Steam Reserve, who lived in the depot ship - *Pembroke* at Chatham, *Duke of Wellington* or *Asia* at Portsmouth, and the *Indus* at Plymouth. Several hundreds of men were employed in this way, doing purely working party and dockyard work, which had most disastrous results on the training and even the discipline of the Corps, as the Major and two Subalterns borne in the depot ship could not exercise adequate supervision, and the men though nominally drilling once a week rarely did so more than once a month. This system was followed in 1904 by the nucleus crews, in which a proportion of the detachments with their officers were embarked, and the ships were treated as practically fully commissioned. This had good results as to discipline, but it rendered the training of specialists very difficult, and resulted in large numbers of men

practically never revising their drills at Headquarters.

Officers - In October 1889 a great departure in the entry and training of Officers was made. The RMA had for many years attended the RN College, Greenwich, for two years prior to joining their Division. The RMLI Probationary 2nd Lieutenants, who had hitherto joined their Division direct and later undergone a six months' course under the Military Instructor at Forton or Eastney, were now also sent to Greenwich for a year's training (actually nine months) in Military Subjects, Riding, and Gymnastics with the RMA before joining their Divisions to complete their training.

Field Training - The first attempts were also made/to send detachments at Headquarters through what is now known as Tactical Training. It was then known as Military Training and was based on a book of Questions and Answers. Both officers and men were much at a loss and doubtless much time was wasted, and it is difficult now - watching a detachment at training - to realise what elementary difficulties, even in such matters as pitching a tent, building a fire, or digging a trench, were then experienced, when Officers and NCOs knew very little, if anything, more than the recruits they were instructing.

In the gun-batteries the drill was mostly concentrated on the muzzle loading guns; only a few breech loaders were available and these varying very much in type, whilst the variety of machine-guns rendered it very difficult to give a general training.

1890 - The numbers were 13,882

Depot Band - There were no outstanding events in this year, but by Order-in-Council 21st March 1890, the band at the Depot Royal Marines was established with a Sergeant as Bandmaster and 17 Musicians, in lieu of 17 Privates RMLI; no doubt some Buglers were attached. They were given an annual grant of £100; as the Order-in-Council said, it would "*tend to discipline and good health among recruits passed through Depot*"

Slave Trade - For many years past the Navy had been endeavouring to put down the slave trade, and for this purpose the cruisers on the East Indian and African stations were not only occupied in chasing slave vessels, but their boats were frequently away cruising and looking for dhows etc., in which officers and men of the Corps took their part. It was now beginning to be realised that the matter would have to be dealt with by attacking the centres of the trade on the mainland. For this purpose a Naval Brigade landed from the East Indies Squadron under Admiral Sir Edmund R. Freemantle to attack the Sultan of Witu.

Witu - This potentate had massacred some German Colonists and refused to give up the assassins; as it was in the British sphere of influence, a force was landed, consisting of a field battery of four 7 pdrs ML, and 4 Gardner guns, 2 Battalions of Seamen (450), RM Battalion (200) under Major E Poole RMLI, and Lieutenants J R Lalor and J E Hoskyns-Abraham RMLI, and an Indian Contingent of 150 Askaris from Mombasa. A landing was effected under fire at Lamu, covered by the armed boats, on 24th October, and the natives driven off and villages burnt. HMS *Conquest* had landed men and occupied Kipini, and the fleet assembled there on 25th October where the landing party was disembarked. A zeriba was made about 3 miles inland by the advanced guard where the night was spent; during the night the natives made a most determined attack on the advanced party, but were driven off by fire. The main body spent the night on the beach.

Marching at 8 am the next day, on reaching the zeriba the force was formed in square with flanking parties; one company of RMLI forming the rearguard who had also to keep up the carriers. They encountered occasional sniping and reached the Kall wells at 5 pm, which proved to be only a swampy marsh. Three zeribas were built in echelon, one being built by the RM. Sniping drove in the Indian skirmishers, so the RM were ordered out to engage the enemy and advanced up the hill, two companies of seamen coming up on their left; the enemy were thus repulsed with heavy loss. On the morning of 27th October they advanced on the town at first in square; then, with the RM in the centre and the RN Battalions on the right and left, the gate was blown in under heavy fire from the enemy and the town was carried with few casualties. The stockade was well built and in a good position. The town having been burnt and the remainder of the enemy driven off, they returned to the wells that night, and re-embarked the next day, having suffered a great deal from the heat.

Malta Clothing Depot - By Order-in-Council 29th November owing to the large increase in the Mediterranean Squadron, a Clothing Depot was established in the Dockyard at Malta, with a Warrant Officer in charge, who combined the duties of Sergeant Major of the ship battalion when landed; he was given 5/4d a day pay and allowed one tailor or storekeeper to assist him. The Depot was under the supervision of the Captain of Marines of HMS *Hibernia*, who acted as Examiner of Accounts.

Royal Military Tournament - In 1832 the Royal Military Tournament for the encouragement of skill at arms and to help the military charities was inaugurated at the Agricultural Hall at Islington. In 1886 competitions in regiments or districts were started, but it was not till 1890 that 10 prizes of 10/- each were offered to each of the Light Infantry Divisions and Depot for Fencing and Bayonet, but up to 1894 not all these prizes were claimed, which in these days seems astonishing.

In 1894 however the RMA entered a team for the tug-of-war, as did the Depot, Royal Marines, and also a squad for the new competition in Physical Drill which had not long been introduced.

In 1891 the numbers were 13,882.

Again there is nothing of interest to chronicle, but the expansion of the Fleet was steadily progressing, and in May the Naval Ordnance Department was constituted so that the Navy henceforth became responsible for the provision of its own guns and ammunition, and the scandal of new ships lying idle for months in the dockyards waiting for their guns was put an end to.

1891 Staff Officers - The system in existence since 1763 by which the Senior Adjutant became the Office Adjutant for the conduct of the correspondence etc. of the Division was abolished, and he was replaced by a more senior officer, generally a Major, who became Staff Officer to the Commandant. In 1913 their title was changed to that of Brigade Major.

Printers - The printing of Orders, which had hitherto been duplicated by copying press; which in its turn had replaced the system of dictating to the Orderly Sergeants daily, was recognised, and commencing from 1st October 1891, extra pay of 6d a day was approved⁹⁰ for the printers employed; the type and machines were however purchased locally and were the property of Divisional Funds.

RMA Recruits But by Order-in-Council a very important change was made in the training of the RM Artillery recruits; hitherto on completion of their infantry drill they had been sent to Eastney to undergo a course in Field Battery drill, if they failed to qualify they reverted to the infantry; by this Order-in-Council 25th June 1891 this test was abolished and a short elementary course in Naval Gun Drill was substituted to qualify for Gunner 2nd Class; if they failed they reverted to the infantry.

In **1892** the numbers were 14,505.

Naval Gunnery - Training was more to the fore, and the gun-batteries at the Divisions were being re-armed with breech-loading guns; though the instruction was still principally given at the muzzle-loaders.

Training - A battalion of RMLI was sent to Aldershot for a month's training with the Army, from which all ranks gained great benefit, and from this time annually up to 1899 one or more battalions took part in the annual army Manoeuvres at Aldershot or Salisbury Plain, which included always a march from Portsmouth to Farnborough, Pirbright or later Salisbury, the bands of the Divisions taking it in turns to accompany the battalion.

For several years also at Plymouth a battalion marched with the regiments in garrison to Okehampton, and in co-operation with the artillery, took part in the field firing exercises at Okehampton.

1892. A new drill book was published this year which simplified some of the drill, and introduced physical drill with arms for the old backboard and pole drill.

Military Instructor and DAAG - The Military Instructor, who had hitherto instructed the young RMLI officers at Eastney, was not now required and was abolished; instead, by Order-in-Council 28th October 1892, an officer with the title DAAG was appointed to the Staff of the DAG RM to combine his remaining duties with those of the Acting Deputy Judge Advocate who had been formerly attached to the Staff and paid by fees. The new DAAG was paid a salary of £600 a year from 28th September 1892. He was available for all duties in the office, which included many of those of a DA&QMG.

Globe and Laurel - In May 1892 the first number of the *Globe and Laurel* was published at Chatham through the public spirited efforts of a small group of officers, among whom Captain C G Brittan, G T Onslow, and G E Matthews were prominent.

1893 - The numbers voted were Staff 13, RMA 2868, RMLI 11,930.

Esquimalt Defences - An experiment was made of sending a detachment of RMA to take over the defences of Esquimalt in Canada; a party proceeded in August 1893 to British Columbia and took over the defences under

⁹⁰ Order-in-Council, 6 February 1892

Lieutenant Barnes, and the remainder followed at intervals. Brevet Lieutenant Colonel G A Rawstorne was in command with Lieutenants Barnes, Templer and Poole.

A proportion had been trained as Submarine Miners and took over these duties from the Royal Engineers. Extra pay was granted of 15/- a day to the Commanding Officer, other officers 10/-, NCOs and men 1/6, whilst NCOs and men employed as Submarine Miners were paid at army rates. This party remained at Esquimalt until 1899 when they were relieved by the Royal Garrison Artillery.

Equipmentu - The old 1882 pattern valise equipment was exchanged for the Slade-Wallace. The former with its heavy buff straps and large black waterproof canvas valise (much the same pattern as the present web valise) fitted badly; besides being heavy it was very painful to wear and contained a lot of useless articles eg tartan trousers etc. The Slade-Wallace, though better balanced, had the coat rolled on the waistbelt and therefore unprotected from the weather, with the canteen on top; whilst the valise was small but rode awkwardly on the shoulders, it could however be detached and left behind. The old wooden waterbottles were superseded by enamelled iron, covered with felt. The haversack was of white duck canvas.

HMS Victoria - On 22nd June, during manoeuvres off the Coast of Syria, the flagship, HMS *Victoria*, was rammed by HMS *Camperdown* and lost with nearly all hands; after doing what was possible to close watertight doors etc. the detachment under Major A C Smythe and Lieutenant H G Farquharson RMLI fell in on the quarterdeck where they remained until the ship heeled over and sank; 68 out of 98 NCOs and men were drowned, those saved clambering over the side and bottom as she heeled over. Lieutenant Farquharson was awarded the Royal Humane Society's silver medal for saving the Fleet Paymaster. As Kipling says of this incident in his poem on the Marines:

*"To stand and be still to the Birkenhead drill
Is a damn tough bullet to chew."*

Swimming - After this disaster great attention was paid to swimming instruction; baths were built at the Depot and all recruits had to qualify, and on 2nd July a paid staff was allowed of a Superintendent at 2/6d a day, 1 Swimming Instructor 1st Class at 3/7d, Sergeant Instructors etc.

Works Department - Considerable numbers of artificers were employed in the Works Department and in the Dockyards at Bermuda and at Ascension, whilst the men under training at Headquarters were also employed on the maintenance of the Barracks, so that there might always be trained men for these places and later Wei-Hai-Wei. Rates of pay were fixed from 1st Grade 1/6d a day for skilled men to the 5th Grade at -/10d a day.

Pumwani - There was again trouble in East Africa; a Naval Brigade from the *Blanche*, *Swallow* and *Sparrow* assisted by Soudanese and Zanzibar troops landed from 7th-13th August 1893 to punish a robber chief, Fumo Omari. His fortified strongholds of Pumwani and Jongeni were stormed and captured with great gallantry. A clasp to the African General Medal was awarded for this service.

The Royal Marines were commanded by Sergeant J Battin RMLI (afterwards Major and Quartermaster) and the SNO in his report said, *"I should have mentioned also the coolness and gallantry of all under my command, particularly the Marines under Sergeant J Battin RMLI."*

With a view to improving the rifle shooting this year was formed the Royal Marine Rifle Association, and this competition for the selection of those to shoot in the United Service Cup at Bisley, and the institution of the Eight Badge the next year, 1894.

Ascension - The island of Ascension which was run on the lines of one of HM Ships, had been garrisoned in 1815 when the Emperor Napoleon I was imprisoned at St. Helena. The garrison was principally composed of Royal Marines, a number of Seamen and Kroomen, but there was a Captain RN in command.⁹¹ The Royal Marines, in addition to their military duties, had gradually assumed all the Works Department services, besides providing men to run the farm, turtle ponds etc, established to provide fresh food for the garrison. later the island became a cable station and employees of the Eastern Telegraph Company were stationed there. When some guns were mounted a Subaltern of the RMA was added to the garrison as OC Artillery and Ordnance Officer. About 1893 the RMLI Officer Commanding the detachment before proceeding to the island underwent a course of instruction at the School of Military Engineering and became Officer-in-Charge of Works with a Sergeant as Foreman of Works under him. In 1905 the Naval Officers and Men were withdrawn, and the Officer Commanding Royal Marines became Officer in Charge of the island, the Royal Marines being borne on the

⁹¹ During the period 1828-1843 a Royal Marine officer appears to have been often in command.

books of the flagship of the Cape Station. This arrangement continued until 1922, when in consequence of cable stations becoming neutral under International Agreement, they ceased to be fortified and the Royal Marines were withdrawn. The hundred years' connection with the island left many pleasant and interesting memories to members of the Corps.

1894 - The numbers were Staff 13, RMA. 2686, RMLI 12,085.

Gambia - The penetration and civilisation of West Africa had begun, but some of the local chiefs were troublesome and interfered with the settlements. Such a case occurred in February 1894, when Fodi Sillah made himself a nuisance to the settlements on the Gambia. An expedition consisting of two columns, one under Captain Gamble RN, and the other under Major Corbet RMLI, were dispatched: Captain Gamble's column, after effecting its object, was ambushed on its return to the boats and badly cut up; Lieutenant F W Hervey RMLI commanding the rearguard with his Marines charged the enemy with great gallantry, which enabled the force to make good their retreat to the boats. Lieutenant Hervey, 2 Naval Officers and 10 Men were killed and 40 men wounded. Major Corbet's column with 50 Marines and 50 men of the West India Regiment with one 7 pdr ML gun dragged by the Marines left Bathurst on 22nd February and, accompanied by the Administrator and Admiral Bedford, proceeded to Sukotta, where the headman was made to hand over his guns and powder which were destroyed; his stockade was pulled down and burnt. The Column then returned to Bakotti and bivouacked; next day they marched to Busamballa, fording two rivers and dragging the gun through the jungle. As soon as the head of the column emerged from the bush, fire was opened on them from the stockade and men in the grass; a couple of shells cleared the village and set it on fire; the defenders joined the enemy in the grass and kept up a heavy fire, retiring slowly; the Marines and WI Regiment followed them up in skirmishing order for 5 miles. The pursuit was then discontinued and the stockade, which was very strong with two rows of palisades, was burnt; the force then marched to Aboka in British territory, having marched 20-24 miles dragging the field gun. On the 24th the column marched to Cape St Mary, but on the next day, hearing of the disaster to Captain Gamble's Column, they marched to Sabajee to take up an entrenched position to protect the frontier of the Colony; the tools had not arrived so they could only clear away the bush. On 26th February they were attacked by 1500 Mandingoes who were repulsed and driven back over the border. On 1st March, being reinforced with 50 more Royal Marines and 10 WI Regiment, Major Corbet took up another position at Isawary, and on the 5th having received further reinforcements of seamen etc, bringing his force to 500 men, he marched to relieve 200 West India Regiment under Major Madden RA, entrenched at Busumbula. He then returned to Sabajee. The Royal Marines, having been re-embarked, Major Corbet went round with the *Alecto*, *Satellite*, *Magpie*, and *Widgeon* to Gunjar and after two days' bombardment landed with the Royal Marines, 270 seamen, and a portion of the WI Regiment and destroyed the place. The General South African Medal with clasp for 'Gambia 1894' was awarded for this service. Major Corbet was awarded the CB

Colours - On 22nd August at Osborne, Isle of Wight, HM the Queen presented new Colours to the Portsmouth Division RMLI, the battalion being conveyed to Osborne in gunboats. The opportunity was taken to revert to the design of the Colours as established by HM King George IV in 1827 with modifications signed and approved by Her Majesty in her own hand.⁹²

Cycle Corps - In 1894 Major L Edye RMLI, with Lieutenant H D Farquharson as his assistant, formed a Cycle Corps, which was semi-officially recognised by the DAGRM. The head-quarters and one section were at the Depot, and a section of one officer and varying numbers of members at each Division. The members were volunteers and mostly came from the Sergeants' Mess. They provided their own cycle and a uniform which was very smart. When available, they were employed at field days and at manoeuvres. As organised units they remained in existence for a few years.

1895 - The numbers voted were 15,005.

Brass River and M'Weli - There was more fighting on the West Coast of Africa in which the Royal Marines were concerned. In February a punitive expedition had to be undertaken against King Koko of Nimby in the Brass River; a Naval Brigade from the *St George*, *Thrush* and *Widgeon* under Admiral Sir Frederick Bedford was landed and destroyed the chief town of Brass on the River Niger. Major R Denny RMLI was the senior RM Officer. In August a Brigade was landed from HMS *St George*, *Phoebe*, *Barrosa*, *Racoon*, and *Blonde* under Admiral Rawson to punish a Chief called M'Baruk on the East Coast of Africa. The force landed at Mombasa and accompanied by 60 Soudanese and 50 Zanzibar Askaris advanced and captured the stronghold of M'Weli on 17th August. Instead of a clasp M'Weli was engraved on the rim of the General African Medal. Major Denny

⁹² See *Random Records* for full account.

was made a Brevet Lieutenant Colonel for this and his services on the West African Coast.

Arms - The Corps was re-armed with the Lee-Metford Magazine Rifle Mark II, the long rifle with smokeless powder and a short sword bayonet in lieu of the Martini Henry and the old triangular bayonet which with the sergeants' swords, a link with the past, disappeared. It was a curious experience to fire a rifle with very little recoil in lieu of one whose recoil was like the kick of a horse; and in the light of later experience to hear the old shots complaining that it was not so accurate:

Recruiting Staff Officers A great innovation was made as regards recruiting. All active service officers except the officer in London were withdrawn, and replaced by 10 retired officers (3 Class I at £350 per annum, and 7 Class II at £300) who were allotted certain districts; it was further ordered that the London Recruiting Officer should be replaced by an Inspector of Marine Recruiting at £800 a year who was to be in charge of all recruiting for the Royal Marines.⁹³

Schools - At the same time the Sub-Inspector of Schools was abolished and the Director of Naval Education arranged for the Inspection of the RM schools.

Quartermasters - Owing to the growth of the Divisions and the great increase in instructional stores another Quartermaster was added to each Division who took over charge of all instructional stores, the shoemaking fund and similar duties from the other two.⁹⁴

By Order-in-Council 22nd April the white clothing required on foreign stations was issued gratuitously instead of on repayment as hitherto.

In **1896** the numbers were 16,000.

In consequence of the threatening state of affairs in Europe, a Particular Service Squadron was commissioned from 14th January to 21st October, and cruised in the Channel and the Atlantic.

Soudan - In the Soudan the Anglo-Egyptian forces commenced the first advance against the Mahdi, which led to the reconquest of the Soudan; several Royal Marine Officers were employed as Special Service Officers with the troops, and a small body of RMA NCOs served in gunboats in charge of the guns at the capture of Dongola etc.

Zanzibar - On 27th August owing to the recalcitrant behaviour of the Sultan of Zanzibar, his palace was bombarded by the Squadron; the Royal Marines under Major T de M Roche RMLI being landed to protect the British Agency during the action.

Colours - On 22nd June HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, the Honorary Colonel of the Corps, presented new Colours to the Chatham Division, and on 3rd July he presented another pair to the Plymouth Division.

Uniform There were several changes in uniform; the most important being the introduction of the new pattern straight thrusting sword for RMLI officers with a steel hilt instead of the brass-hilted cut and thrust sword hitherto in use. This was designed to meet the new Italian exercise recently introduced with a straight arm guard.

The RMLI following the Guards, adopted the present pattern Mess Jacket in lieu of the gold laced shell jacket and laced waistcoat.

The Austrian pattern Field Service Cap replaced the Glengarry in the RMLI and for drill in the RMA, who however retained their pill-box for walking out.

1897 - There was an increase in numbers; Staff 12, RMA 3591, RMLI 12,828 - a total of 16,431.

West Africa: Benin - In the early part of the year the Corps was again involved in hostilities in West Africa. A mission sent to the capital city of Benin was massacred and it was decided that the Cape Squadron should undertake the punitive expedition in conjunction with the Houssas of the West African Regiment (Five companies under Colonel Bruce-Hamilton). Admiral Rawson was in command and he landed a Naval Brigade from HMS *St George* and smaller ships; the RM of the Naval Brigade were under Major T de M Roche of the *St George*, with Lieutenant N F J French RMA and F D Bridges RMLI; to reinforce them HMS *Theseus* and *Forte* were detached from the Mediterranean Station, Captain G L Beaumont being the RM Officer. A detachment of 100 RMLI under Captain G T Byrne and 20 RMA with a machine-gun under Lieutenant Dibblee were sent from England and were known as the Royal Marine Battalion.

On 10th February a base was formed at Warrigi and the force landed and advanced on Benin. On 13th there was

⁹³ Order-in-Council 22 June 1895

⁹⁴ Order-in-Council 22 June 1895.

a skirmish at Oglobo and the enemy driven off. On 16th the force consisting of the Marine Battalion, the RMLI of the *St George* and *Theseus*, two companies of seamen with a demolition and rocket party advanced on Benin City; after covering only 5 miles owing to the heat and thick bush they halted at Ogaji.

On 17th, starting at 4.30 am, the troops bivouacked at Awoke where they were attacked by the natives who were driven off. On the 18th they started to attack Benin City, under constant fire from the bush, but fortunately with few casualties. On reaching a wide open road leading directly to the city, considerable opposition was encountered including the fire from several guns loaded with scrap iron; two gunners RMA were killed, Captain Byrne was mortally wounded⁹⁵; four Privates were wounded as well as five Naval ratings. The Maxim guns and rockets replied and drove off the gunners. Admiral Rawson then ordered a charge, which being sounded by Bugler Allen RMLI, Houssas, Marines and seamen charged the guns and into the town where they opened fire on the fleeing enemy. The king escaped, but was captured a few weeks later; a good many trophies were secured. Major Roche was awarded the DSO and Captain Beaumont a Brevet Majority.

Crete - In February an insurrection against the rule of the Turks broke out on the island of Crete, and the Royal Marines were landed from the squadron on 15th February at Canea to protect British interests. From January to March Major Bor RMA had been in charge of an International Gendarmerie but in March he resigned. The island was blockaded by the squadron to prevent the Greeks interfering, and Marines were also in garrison at Candia where they were relieved in March by the Highland Light Infantry. In April HMS *Camperdown* was obliged to open fire on the insurgents outside Port Tzeddin, and Major Bor was landed with the detachment and took possession of the Fort till relieved by the Army. Major Bor was awarded the CMG.

Diamond Jubilee - In June, HM Queen Victoria, celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of her reign by a procession and thanksgiving service at St Paul's Cathedral. A Battalion of RMA lined the street at St George's Square in South London, and a Battalion of RMLI with Colours in Trafalgar Square opposite the National Gallery. A Guard of Honour with Colour and Band was mounted near St Paul's Cathedral.

A Review of the Fleet was held at Spithead, when there were 165 ships and 38,577 men, and 12 foreign men-of-war.

On the occasion of the Jubilee, the first Grand Cross of the Bath was awarded to the Corps in the person of General Sir Anthony Stransham RMLI, who had been Inspector General in 1862. He entered the Corps on 22nd December 1805 and retired in August 1875. He died 6th October 1900, aged 94.

KCBs were awarded to Lieutenant General H S Jones CB and Major General J Phillips CB and a civil CB to a retired officer, Colonel Somers Lewis.

Edinburgh Cup - HRH the Duke of Edinburgh presented a handsome cup for competition between the Divisions, half of each team to be composed of young soldiers.

The RMRA had now collected a considerable number of prizes in the Annual Competition.

1898 - The numbers were 18,000.

Soudan - Although there were great operations up the Nile, resulting in the capture of Khartoum, the Corps was only concerned with a few Special Service Officers and NCOs, RMA and RMLI, lent to the Army. But when the advancing British met the French troops under Major Marchand at Fashoda, who had come across from West Africa, the tension between the two nations became acute, and in the autumn the British Fleet was partially mobilised and the Coastguard Battleships and Cruisers, filled up to full crews, assembled at Portland.

Wei-Hai-Wei - On 24th May 1898 Wei-Hai-Wei, having been leased by the British Government from the Chinese, was taken over from the Japanese who had captured it in the late war; as usual in the Corps, Captain Mercer RMLI, and 25 RMLI were sent to take over from the 4000 Japanese who had been holding it and had great difficulty in preventing the camps etc from being looted; they were relieved later by a garrison of RMLI under Major Maclurcan with 2 Captains and 4 Subalterns, and the Army authorities raised a regiment of Chinese to assist in the garrison duties. The place became a Naval Base and RM artificers were sent out for the Works Department as at Ascension; the Marine guard remained at varying strength till the end of the Great War in 1919.

Rations - Efforts were made to improve the rations and in consequence of more compulsory physical training, the issues to recruits at the Depot and Eastney was raised to 1 lb of meat and 12 lbs of bread from 1st January 1898 – (Order-in-Council 2nd February 1898) without any increase of the charge of 4½d to the men.

⁹⁵ . He reached England but died in St Thomas's Hospital on 14th March

Games and Sports - During this decade the importance of games for NCOs and men became more recognised. Hitherto cricket had been the only game for which any efforts were made to maintain Divisional and Corps Teams. Both rugby and association football had depended on spasmodic efforts of officers who had been sufficiently keen to play themselves and who formed the majority of the teams. Though the Army Association Football Cup had been won once or twice, a regular team at each Division was unknown. It now became a recognised sport and teams were regularly played, and in time became almost entirely formed of NCOs and men. Hockey also began to be played.

Crete - On 6th September an unexpected attack was made on the troops stationed in Crete at Candia, cutting them off from the shore and causing casualties; HMS *Hazard*, a gunboat, at once landed her Sergeant (Bunn) and 8 Marines, who behaved magnificently and rescued the Colonel of the Highlanders; the Captain of the *Hazard*, landing just after, had two of his boat's crew killed and others wounded, but covered by his Marines they held the landing place for four hours. Private Priestner was promoted to Corporal. HMS *Camperdown* came round as soon as possible from Canea and landed Major Drury and 60 Royal Marines. They had to land on the beach in the surf as the harbour was held by the insurgent Turks and brought welcome aid to the hard-pressed Highlanders; later in the day the remainder of the *Camperdown's* Marines and those of the *Astraea* were also put ashore and reinforced the Highlanders until the French, Italian and Russian troops arrived; later also a British Battalion from Malta arrived, when the Royal Marines returned to their ships.

PART XI

1899 - 1901

1899 - The numbers voted were 18,005.

RMA Recruits - In 1897 the Artillery recruits had been withdrawn from Deal to be trained at Eastney, when an additional Sergeant Major, Sergeant Instructor of Infantry and Instructor of Gymnastics were added to the staff and by Order-in-Council 2nd February 1899 an Assistant Adjutant was allowed at Eastney. This had important results, as the Artillery ceased to pick and choose their recruits at Deal, and soon afterwards, owing to the rising standard of Naval Gunnery in the Infantry, the transfer of RMA recruits who failed to qualify for Gunner 1st Class to the Infantry was stopped.

QMSI - On 11th July 1899⁹⁶ the 1st Sergeants Instructors of Infantry, Gunnery, Musketry, Swimming, and Gymnastics, were raised to the rank of Quartermaster Sergeant with the title of QMSI with Class II rates of pension.

Rations - Further efforts were made to improve the rationing of the men, and on 8th August increased pay was granted to the Sergeant Cooks and on the same day was published an Order-in-Council which had the effect of raising the men's pay by about 2d a day, but its wordind is so involved that it is a monument to the mentality of the Treasury and the Finance Branches of the Admiralty, and most be quoted:

"From 1st July 1899, the emoluments of NCOs and men to be increased by 2d a day. To be arrived at by abolishing 1d a day Beer Money for Privates⁹⁷ and making the following alterations in deductions for Bread and Meat Rations. (a) As regards NCOs a deduction of 2½d a day instead of 4½d. (b) As regards men a deduction of 1½d a day instead of 4½d. When rations in kind were not issued 2d to NCOs and 3d to men, except when on furlough, when allowance to all ranks was 2d a day "⁹⁸

Training - Men were also allowed a free issue of canvas shoes per annum to relieve the feet after marching. At this time, in consequence of some rather disastrous experiences on manoeuvres in the Army, great attention was being paid to route-marching and training in march discipline; a training which was carefully followed by the Royal Marines and which was to bear fruit in the next few years.

Bandmasters - By Order-In-Council 27th December; provision was made for two Bandmasters, Royal Marines, to become 2nd Lieutenants.

But we now approach a period when the energies of the country were concentrated on the South African War and the Boxer Rising in China; though comparatively small bodies of the Corps were employed in each theatre, they had great results on its training and organisation.

South African War, 1899-1902 - Tho quarrel between the Boers in the Transvaal and the British had been growing for some time, and in October 1899 came to a head. The first British reinforcements for the South African Garrison from India were sent to Natal, so that there was a great shortage of troops in Cape Colony. HMS *Terrible*, which was relieving the *Powerful* on the China Station was also sent out via the Cape, as was the *Powerful* on her homeward journey, so that these two large cruisers were available. To reinforce the troops a small Naval Brigade of two 12 pdr guns, some seamen and 260 RM under Major Plumbe RMLI from HMS *Doris* (Flag), *Powerful*, *Terrible*, and *Monarch* were landed at Simonstown under Commander Ethelston of the *Powerful* and sent to Stormberg to protect the railway junction there. They arrived on 21st October and reinforced the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Berkshire Regiment. Remaining here for about a fortnight, they were recalled to Queenstown, further from the border. Remaining here for 10 days, they were ordered to return to their ships, as the troops were now coming up to relieve them. On arrival at East London, the detachment of the *Terrible* (under Captain Mullins RMLI) was sent on to Durban to rejoin their ship, where they were employed in guard duties in Durban and the Umlass Waterworks, and also in the armoured train guarding the Zululand Border and the railway. A 12 pdr gun's crew under Sergeant Roper RMLI, accompanied the Naval Brigade, manning the heavy guns, which was attached to General Roper's Army and took part in all the engagements that were undertaken for the relief of Ladysmith.

The others on returning to Simonstown were at once re-organised, the command being assumed by Captain Protheroe RN , and with more seamen to two more 12 pdr guns under Commander Ethelston at once proceeded

⁹⁶ Order-in-Council

⁹⁷ Abolished for N.C.C.s in 1881

⁹⁸ This left the stoppage for food 5d. a day instead of 7d.

up country to join Lord Methuen's column advancing to the relief of Kimberley.

Graspan - They left De Aar Junction on 22nd November; during the night 22nd/23rd November the Guards and 9th Brigades advanced to the attack of the enemy in position at Belmont, but at daylight the position had not been taken, so the field artillery and the Naval 12 pdrs were pushed across the railway in support, the Marines acting as escort to the guns and helping to drag them into position as well as bringing up the ammunition. The enemy was driven off, and the next day the column advanced; the guns going with the armoured train, 50 seamen and 190 Royal Marines marching with the main column. Bivouacking for night 24th/25th, the Naval Brigade was detailed with the KOYLI in support to carry a strong hill about two miles off. The Guards and 9th Brigades were in support. At 5.45 am the cavalry located the enemy in a position about 3 miles long on some broken kopjes, known as Enslin or Graspan, with an ideal field of fire and the flanks drawn back; there were no positions for the attacking artillery, but one battery RFA on the right and the Naval guns on the left managed to shell the position.

The Naval Brigade and 1 Company KOYLI extending to single rank advanced on the enemy's right centre with the remainder of the 9th Brigade in support; inclining to the right, the Naval Brigade attacked the enemy's left, making a diagonal march of about 2 miles. At 7.45 am, when they were 700 yards from the base of the principal kopje, the enemy opened fire and the Brigade turned instinctively to meet it. Advancing by rushes, they carried the ridge, the men moving as if on parade; whilst the ridge was being secured, Major Marchant taking some men cleared out the remainder of the enemy who were hanging to the kopje in front.

The ridge had been carried, but at great cost. Major Plumbe RMLI and Captain Senior RMA were killed, and Lieutenant N Q C Jones RMLI wounded; 6 NCOs and men were killed and 82 wounded, out of 180. Commander Ethelston was killed and Captain Protheroe wounded, so Captain Marchant brought the Naval Brigade cut of action. Lieutenant Jones who, though wounded, had continued to lead the advance, was awarded the DSO, as was Lieutenant Saunders RMLI later on. So ended the action of Graspan, one of the brightest episodes in the long history of the Corps.

Modder River - On 27th November the Boers destroyed the bridge across the Modder River and occupied the low lying ground on the river banks, where they collected a considerable force to defend the crossing. Lord Methuen continued his advance on the 27th and on the forenoon of the 28th attacked with the Guards Brigade, but it was not till the afternoon that the British reached the south bank of the river and not till 7 pm that the left flank detachment got across and cleared the way.

The Boers retreated during the night, unmolested. A bridge was thrown over the river and the Division occupied Modder River station; a bridge for the railway was commenced and completed by 7th December. Reinforcements now came up, for the Naval Brigade - 2 Officers (Captain Morgan and Lieutenant Wilson RMLI) and 50 Marines with 40 seamen under Commander de Horsey, who assumed command until relieved by Captain Bearcroft RN, on 3rd December; the latter brought up further reinforcements, with Lieutenants Raikes and Poe RMA, and Lieutenant French RMLI, whilst a 4.7 in gun on Captain Scott's mounting joined the Brigade. Major Urmston RMLI of the *Powerful*, who had been sent home sick from China, rejoined his detachment and took command of the Royal Marines till March, when he was appointed Provost Marshal of the 9th Division on the arrival of Major Peile appointed to the *Doris* vice Plumbe killed. More 4.7 in guns came up later.

Magersfontein On 4th December the Boers took up a position at Magersfontein, barring the way to Kimberley. Here they were attacked by Lord Methuen on 11th December in a severe action which proved disastrous to the Highland Brigade. The Naval guns, escorted by the Marines, took part; the British were repulsed with considerable loss and matters came to a stand-still; especially as General Buller had also suffered a repulse at Colenso on 15th December in Natal.

1900 The Naval Brigade remained opposite Magersfontein until 16th February 1900, when in consequence of Lord Roberts' great flanking march with the Cavalry, 6th and 7th Infantry Divisions to relieve Kimberley, the Boer Commander, Cronje, broke up his laager and retreated to the eastward.

Paardeberg On 17th February, the Naval Brigade moved on Jaobsdaal; Captain Bearcroft with Major Urmston and Lieutenant Saunders RMLI, with the 12 pdr guns and escort of Royal Marines moving into the Free State; Commander de Horsey with the remainder moved direct on Jacobsdaal. The whole Brigade of three 4.7 in. guns and four 12 pdrs with the Royal Marines, followed the 6th Division to Paardeberg, making a splendid march covering the distance from Jacobsdaal to Paardeberg, nearly 31 miles, in 23 hours.

Arriving in the evening of 19th February, they came into action from Gun Hill with the artillery of the 7th Division. On the 20th Major Peile RMLI, joined the Brigade and took command of the Marines. Two of the 4.7 in guns were sent to the north bank over the river, and came into action on Signal Hill; the bombardment was not

very successful, and the Boer riflemen, creeping out, made it uncomfortable for the gunners on Gun Hill.

The Boers finally surrendered on 27th February and the advance was resumed on Bloemfontein. The 4.7 in guns were in action at Oosfontein on 1st March and again on the 8th at Poplar Grove. On the 15th the Brigade moved into Bloemfontein, the capital of the Free State, where it remained for nearly two months, losing heavily from enteric fever, the result of the conditions at Paardeberg, so that when the advance was resumed only Majors Peile and Marchant, Lieutenants Wilson and French were still on duty. On 3rd May Lord Roberts' centre column with which was the Naval Brigade, advanced from Bloemfontein along the railway, the guns were dragged by teams of oxen. Halting for 10 days at Kroonstadt to regulate the advance of General Buller's and other columns to right and left, the advance was resumed on 22nd May, crossing the Vaal River at Viljoen's Drift on the 27th. Here the Free State troops went back into their own state to raise trouble in the British rear, and the Transvaalers retired on Johannesburg. On 28th May Lord Roberts attacked the Boers east of Johannesburg, the guns coming into action. The Boers were outflanked by the cavalry and evacuated their positions on 30th/31st, retiring on Pretoria, and on the 31st Johannesburg surrendered.

Pretoria - Resuming the advance on 3rd June, the two 4.7 in guns (one of which was now manned by the Royal Marines) came into action against the Boers near Pretoria on 4th June. Commander de Horsey was wounded. On the 5th Pretoria surrendered to Lord Roberts, the Naval Brigade marching past him at 1 pm in the Grand Square. Out of 300 Royal Marine Officers and men who had joined the RM detachment since it started, only 3 Officers (Major Peile, Lieutenants Wilson and French, RMLI), 22 RMA and 41 RMLI were still on parade, Major Marchant RMLI with 25 men was however coming up from Bloemfontein.

Diamond Hill - On 11th-13th June was fought the Battle of Diamond Hill to the east of Pretoria, in which the 4.7 in guns participated, and the Boers retired to Middleburg.

Belfast - The two 4.7 in. guns accompanied General Pole-Carew's Division to Belfast. On 24th August Belfast was occupied and the Boers were found in a strong position beyond; the Cavalry Division was sent round the north, whilst Buller's force, which had come up from Natal, was pressing in on the south. The guns were present at the Battle of Belfast on the 26th; about 4.30 pm the RM gun came into action on the north-east corner of Monument Hill; Lieutenant Wilson was wounded and the gun was now commanded by Major Marchant. The next day the Naval gun was sent to the right flank and the 12 pdrs prepared to follow the advance of the Army. On the 27th the RM gun had a duel with a Boer gun and put it out of action at 10,500 yards, having sunk the trail into the ground. This was their last action, as the country was now too hilly for their further employment. On 5th September the Naval Brigade was split up and soon after the remnants returned home. Majors Peile and Marchant RMLI were awarded the CB, Lieutenants Wilson and Saunders the DSO.

There were a considerable number of RM Officers lent as Special Service Officers, who filled various positions on the Staff, with the transport, and lent to various units, whilst Colonel Paris RMA was in command of one of the flying columns. Lieutenants Clark and Nelson RMLI served as Company Officers with the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Major F White RMLI gained the DSO for a very gallant defence of Ladybrand. Detachments of several ships were landed to protect various outlying places, such as Walfisch Bay, Mossel Bay, Saldanah Bay etc.

1900 - Before dealing with the operations in China there are a few administrative details that should be noted.

The numbers voted for the year were 18,000.

On 20th January the Greenwich Hospital Pensions for retired officers were reorganised and fixed at:

- 10 of £65 per annum for Field Officers and Captains
- 2 of £50 per annum for Quartermasters.
- 1 of £25 per annum for Warrant Officers.

Band at Depot - The numbers of the Band at the Depot were also raised to the same as at a Headquarters, viz: Bandmaster (WO), 2 Sergeants, 2 Corporals, 25 Musicians, and 10 Supernumeraries.⁹⁹ The Order said that the number of recruits at Deal had risen to 1300; as a matter of fact they often touched 1800 during this year.

Clothing Depot - Owing to the great increase in the numbers of the Fleet in China, a Clothing Depot with a Warrant Officer in charge, on the same lines as at Malta, was established by Order-in-Council 15 May 1900, with the RM Officer of the *Tamar* as auditor. Native tailors were employed as necessary.

Naval Gunnery - On 27th September 1900 a new rating of Second Captain of Gun RMLI was introduced, as the

⁹⁹ Order-in-Council, 3rd March 1900.

order said certain guns were manned by complete crews of RMLI and with the exception of the Captain of Gun the only gunnery rating was TM. An extra ld a day whilst afloat was allowed for this rating.

China. The Boxer Rising 1900¹⁰⁰

Peking - At the end of May anxiety as to the safety of the Legations in Peking was felt owing to the growth of an anti-foreign movement, semi-religious in its character, but encouraged by the Imperial authorities as against the foreigners, for they were smarting under the encroachments of the foreign nations made in the form of leases of territory and spheres of influence after the Chino-Japanese War of 1894. Captain Strouts RMLI had been detached from Wei-Hai-Wei with 25 RMLI as a winter guard in the British Concession at Tientsin.

It was decided that Allied guards should proceed to Peking, so on the 30th Captain Wray with 25 more RMLI from Wei-Hai-Wei arrived in Tientsin and joined Captain Strouts; these two guards and 50 RMLI from HMS *Orlando* under Captain L S T Halliday were ordered to proceed to Peking; as this would have made the British guard too strong in proportion to the other Allies, 25 of the *Orlando's* Marines were left in Tientsin where detachments of seamen had arrived to guard the Settlement. The total force for the Legations was 3 Officers, 70 RMLI with 3 Naval ratings as armourer, signalmen, and sick birth attendant. They also had a five-barrel Nordenfeldt gun, but were very short of ammunition, but fortunately just as the train started the First Lieutenant of the *Orlando* gave them two more boxes.

Reaching Peking at 7 pm they marched to the Legations, a distance of five miles, leaving Captain Halliday and 18 NCOs and men at the station as baggage guard until the following morning, when the German and Austrian guards also arrived.

It was found that the Austrian Naval Captain was the Senior Officer of the Allies. This proved unsatisfactory after the siege had begun, and the British Minister, Sir Claude Macdonald, an old officer of the 74th HLI, took over command with Captain Strouts RMLI as his Chief Staff Officer.

The total force available was 543, which included 125 volunteer civilians, student interpreters etc, many of whom were English. The regular British troops consisted of the 79 RMLI and 3 Naval Ratings with Captain Poole, East Yorkshire Regiment, Captain Percy Smith, South Staffords, and N Oliphant, Scots Guards. The guns consisted of one Italian 1 pdr, the British 5-barrel Nordenfeldt, and an American Colt gun. The American Marines under Captain Myers and Hall, and Surgeon Lippett who worked with the British, numbered 53. It was decided that the British and American Legations should be the final point of defence; the former was surrounded by a wall 10 feet high and contained 5 wells of good sweet water; a small bastion called Fort Halliday was pushed out covering the main gate of the Legation, and flanking the canal and road on the north side. The area to be defended was about half a mile long by half a mile broad, bounded by the Austrian and Italian Legations on the east side; on the north by the street running over the North Bridge of the Canal; on the west by the Russian Legation; on the south by the street running at the foot of the Great Wall of the Tartar City on which the barricades were erected, to the Austrian Legation. On the west was the Mongol Market; at the north west corner adjoining the British Legation (between it and the Imperial City) were the buildings of the Han-Lin University; the area to be defended also included the Fu (ie the palace and grounds of Prince Su) where the Christian refugees were accommodated.

Working parties were organised from these under the missionaries.

The guards were occupied in preparing defences and bringing in native Christians.

By the 9th June the situation became so threatening that a telegram for further assistance was sent to Admiral Sir Edward Seymour lying with the Fleet off Taku. In response he and the allies at once landed a column at Tong-Ku (although the Chinese still held the Taku Forts) which left Tientsin on 10th June and whose proceedings will be dealt with later. The Admiral took command himself.

At Peking on 13th June the Boxers attacked the French Legation and the Methodist Chapel, but were driven off. Vigilance was redoubled and the excitement in the City grew, because the Boxers commenced massacring the native Christians and fires in the City were innumerable.

At 10.30 pm on the 14th, Captain Halliday's picquet on the North Bridge was attacked, but a volley stopped the Boxers whose bodies were left lying there as a warning that they were not invulnerable, which was one of their tenets.

¹⁰⁰ Authorities: *World's Navies in Boxer Rebellion* (Lieutenant C. Dix, RN); *Britain's Sea Soldiers* (Field); Lives of Sir P. Scott and Admiral Sir D. Beatty, letters of Officers, etc. *Commission of HMS Terrible* (Crowe); *History of US Marine Corps* (Collum); Diaries Lt. Armstrong and Captain Mullins RMLI

From the 16th to the 19th the guards were occupied in patrols, completing the defences, and bringing in what native Christians they could, and incidentally in killing a number of Boxers; there were also some attacks on the North Bridge.

News now arrived that the Allied Fleets had bombarded and taken the Taku Forts on the 17th and this materially altered the situation, as the Imperial Troops which had hitherto been neutral now joined the Boxers.

At 4 pm on the 19th the Chinese Government sent an ultimatum that the ambassadors and all with them should leave the City within 24 hours. Although several were in favour of obeying this order Baron von Kettler, the German Ambassador, objected and volunteered to go and interview the Chinese authorities; on his way there on the morning of the 20th he was murdered, which prevented any further idea of evacuation. Preparations for defence were pushed on; more native Christians with a guard of American Marines came in and at 4 pm firing opened. On 22nd June an alarm of an attack caused all the guards, except the Japanese in the Fu, to fall back on the British Legation, but it was a false alarm and fortunately all the posts were recovered except the Austrian Legation, which necessitated a rectification of the defences in the Fu and the Austrian Captain was replaced in command by Sir Claude Macdonald as before explained.

The Chinese now attempted by setting fire to buildings contiguous to the Legations to drive out the defenders; on the 23rd they set fire to the Hanlin University which adjoined the north-west corner of the British Legation, thereby burning priceless manuscripts, etc. The flames came over the Legations, so a small party of Royal Marines under Captain Poole, East Yorkshire Regiment, drove out the Chinese and extinguished the fire, many of the buildings having to be pulled down. A timely change of wind turned away the flames. The Russians, Japanese and Americans were dealing with similar difficulties.

The Chinese also brought a Krupp gun into action from the Chien Men Gate, which caused the defenders to construct dugouts. The missionaries and refugees were used as working parties. The Germans and Americans advanced along the City Wall to try and capture the gun, but the opposition was too strong for them.

On 24th June the Boxers and Imperial troops made a fierce attack on the West Wall of the British Legation, setting fire to the West Gate of the South Stable quarters; the fire was with difficulty extinguished owing to the firing of the Imperial troops; the presence of these troops in the buildings was a grave danger to the Legation, so Captain Strouts organised a sortie by Captain Halliday and 20 Royal Marines - *"a hole was made in the wall and Captain Halliday leading, was at once engaged with the enemy."* Before he could use his revolver he was shot through the left shoulder at point blank range, the bullet fracturing the shoulder and carrying away part of the lung; notwithstanding the severe nature of his wound, Captain Halliday killed four of his assailants and telling the men to 'carry on and not mind him' walked back unaided to the hospital, refusing aid so as not to diminish the number of the men in the sortie. It was feared that the wound was mortal, but happily he recovered and was awarded the Victoria Cross.¹⁰¹ Captain Strouts then took charge and led the men forward and the enemy were cleared out with heavy loss, Captain Strouts being slightly wounded and one Marine severely.

Sniping continued, the Royal Marines using Martini-Henrys to save the Lee-Metford ammunition. On the 28th the Chinese brought up a Krupp gun to bear from the Mongol Market about 300 yards away, and did considerable damage to the south end of the British Legation. A sortie was organised but the Allies lost their way and it proved a fiasco; however the gun was withdrawn and more buildings were burnt, which improved the field of fire for the garrison.

On 28th there was a fierce attack on the French at the south-east corner and on the 30th the Germans and Russians were hard pressed on the City Wall; Corporal Gregory and 7 Royal Marines were sent to reinforce the Germans, and eventually relieved them. Private Tickner was wounded in the legs but refused help to take him to the first-aid post. At daylight on 1st July the Germans and Royal Marines found the Chinese had brought up three field guns at about 100 yards distance; as there were only 8 Germans and 3 British, the German NCO ordered a retirement; the Americans on the wall seeing their rear thus uncovered also retired; fortunately this was not observed by the Chinese and 12 Royal Marines under Captain Wray were able to reoccupy the position; Captain Wray was wounded whilst trying to build a barricade to replace the German one in order to cover the Americans; owing to the heavy fire this proved impracticable and the Americans had to build another for themselves.

Seymour's Column - Turning to the movements of the relieving column, on receipt of the telegram from Peking an International Force was at once landed, by means of a flotilla of destroyers, tugs, and boats, which slipped past

¹⁰¹ He became General Sir Lewis Halliday, CV KCB, AGRM 1927-30.

the Forts at Taku in the dark and landed their men at Tong-Ku, the terminus of the railway, on 10th June. This force was about 2,000 men, commanded by the Admiral himself and his Flag-Captain Jellicoe; it included 915 British Seamen and Marines; the Royal Marines were under Major Johnstone RMLI and Lieutenant Beyts RMA (*Centurion*), Captains Doig (*Endymion*) and Lloyd (*Aurora*). They entrained in four trains and took with them railroad repairing material. They left Tientsin on 11th June.

Beyond Yantsun where the railway crosses the Pei-ho River, the track was found pulled up and it was necessary to bivouac and wait whilst repairs were made. Starting at 11.30 am on the 11th near Lofa, the line was found to be torn up in several places, and an advanced guard under Major Johnstone was sent ahead; they were attacked in the afternoon by a strong force of Boxers, but reinforcements coming up, the enemy were driven across the front and sought shelter in the villages, which were then stormed and the Boxers driven out.

By 6 pm the trains were able to advance and arrived within 3 miles of Langfan, which was their furthest point. On the 12th a party of Seamen tried to push on to Antung, the next station, but failed and had to return. The trains now closed up and on the 13th Major Johnstone and 60 Royal Marines went to Antung. On the 14th the line was out behind the column at Yangtsun, and a determined attack was made on the trains which was repulsed with heavy loss. Lo-Fa was attacked and the Admiral went down with reinforcements and in the evening of the 14th Major Johnstone was withdrawn from Antung.

On the evening of the 15th two trains were left at Lo-Fa and two at Lang-fan and by the good work of the working parties a train got through to Yangtsun; here it was found that not only was the station wrecked, but also the bridge over the River Pei-Ho, so that return by train was impossible: on the afternoon of the 17th the force at Lang-Fan was attacked by 7,000 Imperials, who had evidently received news of the taking of the Taku Forts. Only one course was now open to the Admiral, viz to retire on Tientsin by the road along the left bank of the Pei-Ho. Crossing by junks, the column started the retreat at 4 am on the 18th, carrying half rations for two days in their haversacks. The wounded and stores were towed in junks by captured Boxers.

They marched over very difficult country, numerous villages and irrigation ditches lying in the way; these had to be cleared of Boxers and the exposed left flank was threatened by masses of cavalry and horse artillery. The Royal Marines formed the left flank guard; marching at 4 am they reached camp at 7 pm, having made good little more than six miles. The bivouac the first night was on damp ground and they were tormented by mosquitoes. Marching at 1 am on the 19th, as the ammunition for their field guns was short they were placed in the junks. At 3 am the Royal Marine companies routed a Chinese outpost and found the town they were moving on to be deserted. They were then suddenly challenged and a heavy fire opened: fortunately the darkness saved them and they replied.

The junk with the guns foundered and others broke adrift, but two gallant seamen swam over and towed them back; only one field gun and 4 machine guns were saved, five of each being lost. The foreign contingents were by now mostly out of ammunition; on the 20th after a severe fight - in which the Flag-Captain Jellicoe was wounded - they captured the town of Pei-Tsang, but they were still ten miles from Tientsin.

Hsi-Ku - On the 21st they had to pass the fortified Hsi-Ku Arsenal on the opposite bank; it was determined to try and pass it in the darkness. During the advance the Royal Marines took one village in column of fours, but it caught fire and lit up the country round. The Americans and Germans were leading the column, the British and Russians bringing up the rear. When opposite the arsenal they were challenged and as soon as they replied fire broke out all along the parapet; but luckily the Chinese fired too high. Major Johnstone with the Royal Marines and half a company of Seamen hastened back up the bank and by means of a bridge of junks got across to the arsenal side; cover was available up to 200 yards and the Chinese surprised at seeing this party, deserted the North Wall and the Marines charging over with the bayonet, the Boxers and troops fled; the Germans who were opposite the gate of the arsenal kept down the fire of the Chinese artillery. There was fierce fighting inside the enclosure, made more difficult by the local knowledge of the Chinese of the buildings and enclosures. But after an hour the place was cleared and the Chinese guns, manned by the Allies, were turned on the village near. It was 3 pm before all the force had crossed.

The arsenal was about 40 acres in extent with a mud wall 15 feet high and 12 feet broad at the top. The store houses were at the south end, surrounded by a brick wall, which was made the inner line of defence. Guns were mounted and preparations made to hold the arsenal. At 3 pm General Nieh sent 8,000 regular Chinese troops and 3 field batteries to try and recapture it, but they were driven off after hard fighting. In making arrangements for the defence it was unfortunately considered that the perimeter was too large to be held by their strength and it was decided to hold only the inner line.

The 22nd passed quietly, but on the 23rd the Chinese made a determined attack and charged up to the south-west corner and a party, getting into some long rushes inside the embankment, were discovered by a RM patrol under Lieutenant Beyts RMA, who at once counterattacked them with the bayonet and drove them out. Unfortunately Lieutenant Beyts and 2 Sergeants were killed. The main attack by 25 Chinese Battalions was beaten off, but ammunition and medical supplies were getting very short; the puggarees of the Marines' helmets being used for bandages.

In the Arsenal were found large quantities of modern field and machine guns, ammunition, medical supplies, and a large quantity of rice.

On the night of the 23rd an attempt was made by 100 Royal Marines under Captains Doig and Lloyd RMLI, to make a way through to Tientsin with a view to obtaining help. They left the arsenal at 9 pm and crossed the river by boat, the idea being that some might at least get through with the information of the plight of the column. They were guided by a railway official; who at first led them in the wrong direction and they had to return to the river. Starting afresh, they had marched three miles when they were fired on, and after returning the fire they captured the position with the bayonet; reaching the railway embankment they were engaged on all sides and bugles sounded the 'Cease Fire'; they found they were in the centre of General Nieh's forces. Tientsin railway station could be seen about 11 miles away and they tried to advance towards it, but fire was opened all round so Captain Doig ordered a retirement which was carried out in square, leaving 5 casualties. They reached the arsenal at 2.30 am, being taken across the river in junks. Admiral Seymour reported that "*the attempt was made with skill and credit*", but the strength of the enemy was overpowering. Captain Doig, died of enteric fever at Wei-Hai-Wei about a month after the column was relieved.

On the 24th there was a bad sand storm, a well was dug and the good water was most desirable as they had been drinking the water from the river. This day the defences were rearranged, the British and Germans taking the three most dangerous walls, the Russians the fourth wall. The French and Japanese manned the Inner Line.

They were subjected to long range fire till 10 am when the American and Russians were attacked on the North Wall and had to be reinforced by the British, when the attack fizzled out and the Chinese contented themselves with sniping. Up to this time the British losses were 27 killed and 97 wounded.

Tientsin - Leaving Admiral Seymour's column temporarily in safety in the arsenal, it is necessary to trace the events that had been taking place at Tientsin. By the 11th June trade had ceased in the settlements and on that day a reinforcement of Seamen and Marines from HMS *Bardleur* under Commander Beatty, viz 2 companies of Seamen with Major V Luke and Sergeant H Armstrong RMLI and 26 RM and two Maxims had reached the place. The RM joined with the remainder of the *Orlando's* RMLI detachment under Lieutenant Carpenter to form one company under Lieutenant Armstrong and were quartered in a 'go down' where the seamen of the *Aurora* already were. Preparations were made to put the place into a state of defence, under Captain E H Bayley RN. German and Russian reinforcements were also arriving and were stationed on the left bank of the river. Communication with the Fleets was very precarious, as the Taku Forts were still in Chinese hands and the river was mined.

The foreign settlements on the right bank of the Pei-Ho were surrounded on three sides by a mud wall which also enclosed the native city. It was 12 feet high and broad enough at the top to allow four men to walk abreast. It was continued on the left bank. It enclosed a total area about 6 miles long from north to south and 5 miles from east to west. Four miles north-east of the British settlement was the Pei-Yang Arsenal on the left bank of the river, whilst 12 miles south-west was the Hai-Yuan-Su Arsenal. Six and a half miles to the north was the Hsi-Ku Arsenal where Admiral Seymour had taken refuge. The foreign settlements were two miles south of the Native City, but the railway station from which the railway ran to Peking and Tong-Ku was on the opposite or left bank of the river; here the Russians were quartered. The Native City was surrounded by high walls, it was about 2 000 yards long by 1,400 yards wide and situated at the junction of the Grand Canal with the Pei-Ho River. The ground between the city and settlements is covered with houses and gardens and there is some marshy land to the south of the city.

Large numbers of Chinese troops were seen on 15th June and fires broke out all round the city of Tientsin. On the night of 15th/16th June a great part of the French Settlement was destroyed. Two trains - one manned by the RM under Major Luke and the other with Lieutenant Armstrong and a 3 pdr gun - were sent to patrol the line to Tong-Ku; they went and returned without opposition. Two hundred Russians were sent to garrison a station half way between Tientsin and Taku. On the night of the 16th/17th an attack in force was made by the Boxers who burnt the native suburbs between the Concessions and the city; they were driven off by the Russians and drifted across the front of the British also and they retired at 5 am. On the 17th an armoured train under Lieutenant Field

RN , with the Russians drove the Chinese off the line. Heavy shell fire opened on the Concessions as the Chinese were well supplied with artillery, in which the Allies were very deficient. The Chinese had two 4 in. guns south-west of the city, and the Black Fort at the angle of the canal and the river; the Tree Battery with two 15 pdrs; two 3 pdrs. were at the intersection of the canal with the Mud Wall about 200 yards north-east of the railway station. There were also guns in the villages to the south of the city. The Chinese had about 15,000 troops, the Allies about 2,400 with some old 9 pdr ML field guns and a few machine guns. The perimeter to be defended was about five miles long, one-third protected by the Mud Wall, one-third by the river, but one-third had the Chinese houses close up; the Allies' Ammunition supply was also very limited.

Outside the east end of the British positions on the Bund, on the opposite side of the river, stood a number of buildings forming the Military College, where a battery of Krupp guns was established which was causing casualties. The College was held by the Military Cadets. On the 17th, before they could open fire, they were attacked by a party of Royal Marines under Major Luke, supported by some British and German seamen; they stormed the buildings and after some desperate fighting hand to hand in which numbers of Chinese were killed, they were driven out; the guns and buildings were destroyed. The RM had 1 killed and 3 wounded.

The Chinese guns continued the bombardment and on the 10th they attacked the defences thrown up all along the Bund. The 200 Russians at Chin-Liang-Ching station were cut off and the armoured train was sent to relieve them, but failed to get through owing to the breaking of the line. As the Russians at the terminal railway station were being hard pressed, two companies of seamen under Commander Beatty were sent to reinforce them and deployed on the Russian left; there were four hours of heavy fighting and the Russian Field Battery was forced to retire; the 9 pdr ML of the *Orlando* however, in spite of losses, turned the scale and at 4 pm when the Russians advanced, the Chinese broke and fled. The RM Company was sent to reinforce the Germans at the Taku Gate who were also being hard pressed.

On the 19th there were attacks and counterattacks, an attempt by 180 seamen under Commander Beatty and 400 Russians to capture two guns on the Mud Wall failed, Beatty and 4 other officers and 13 men being wounded, and the shelling of the Concessions continued. A civilian named Watts rode through to Tong-Ku on the 22nd and informed the Allied Commanders there of the serious state of affairs and asked for reinforcements. On the 20th the bombardment continued, and on the 21st the Hospital at the Club was hit and the French Settlement shelled, but at last on the 23rd relief arrived.

Taku - Great events had been taking place at Taku. Alarmed at the stoppage of communication with the forces up the river, the Commanders of the Allied Fleets (in the absence of Sir Frederick Seymour, Admiral Bruce in the *Barfleur* was the senior officer) decided to attack the Taku Forts and summoned the Chinese to evacuate them by midnight on the 16th. As we have seen in 1860 there were four forts, two on each side, and the stretches of mud covered by sea in front of them prevented a landing in front. The severe lesson of 1858 was not forgotten. The large ships had to lie 11½ miles out owing to the bar, and their guns were therefore useless. The forts were armed with modern guns and the river was mined. On the landward side it will be remembered there is a large plain intersected by small canals and irrigation ditches, having in rear the villages of Tong-Ku (the railway terminus) and Taku on the other bank.

There was a small Naval Yard at Taku where four new Chinese destroyers were lying. The ships available for bombardment were HMS *Algerine* (six 4 in QF guns), *Fame*, and *Whiting* TBDs with one 12 pdr and five 6 pdrs each. The *Iltis* (German) with four 1 in guns, *Gilyak*, *Bobre*, and *Korsetz* (Russian), *Lion* (French), *Atago* (Japanese), with a miscellaneous collection of BL guns and the *Monocacy* (American), a wooden sloop with ML guns.

On the 16th June a tug left HMS *Barfleur* with the British portion of the landing party (320 Officers and men; there seem to have been some Marines from Wei-Hai-Wei under Captain Dustan in this party - doubtful) who were told off into companies on the way ashore. The tug went alongside the *Algerine* and transferred her men, and the ship then moved up to her appointed station after dusk; she was the van ship of the line. The *Fame* and *Whiting* went up the river (Lieutenant Keyes RN¹⁰² in command) and seized the four Chinese destroyers at 1.30 am. The bombardment was to have commenced at 1.30 am but at 12.45 am the Chinese opened fire on the *Algerine*, fortunately firing too high, for her decks were crowded. The landing party at once got into the boats and the bombarding ships opened fire.

The bombardment lasted 6 hours, for the first hour of which the landing parties remained alongside, then landed at 2.30 am.

¹⁰² Now Honorary Colonel, Portsmouth Division RM

The force Consisted of:

British	23 Officers	298 men
Japanese	4 Officers	240 men
Russian	2 Officers	157 men"
Italian	1 Officers	24 men
German	3 Officers	130 men
Austrian	2 Officers	20 men

The *Gilyak* used her searchlight and was badly hit. After capturing the Chinese destroyers and taking them to Tong-Ku, the *Fame* and *Whiting*, joined the line.

The landing party commanded by Commander Craddock RN (*Alacrity*) attacked the north-west fort (the one attacked in 1860). The British, Japanese and Italians in the front line, the Germans, Austrians, and Russians in support and reserve. They advanced 1,300 yards to within 30 yards of the moats on the north front, then swung to the right and charged along the military road. The fort had suffered very slightly from the bombardment and they waited till daylight at 4 am. The fire of the ships, especially the *Algerine*, was very accurate and the magazine of the south fort exploded. In the north-west fort the Chinese fought their guns very pluckily. By 4.30 its guns were silenced and the stormers advanced and carried the north-west corner of the fort: after advancing over a hard mud flat with no cover. There had been crowding to get on the road where they suffered casualties. After rushing the west gate, they gained the outer fort and the enemy fled to Peh-Tang; it was some minutes before the Inner Fort (ie the old Cavaliers) was gained and the flags hoisted.

The North and South Forts opened fire on the Inner Fort, but the attackers brought the captured guns into action and as the fire from the North Fort diminished, they made their way along the covered way between the forts. A shell from the *Algerine* exploded the 6 in magazine of the North Fort, but the Chinese maintained their fire, the *Illis* suffering heavily, until the Chinese lost heart and the Germans entered by one gate and the British by the landside embrasures.

A 6 in QF gun in the South Fort continued its resistance, but was eventually silenced by the gunboats and guns of the North Fort after a hard fight. Boats were procured and parties crossed to the right: bank and secured the South and New Forts; the guns in the latter would not bear it and surrendered. By 7 am the parties, after garrisoning the Forts, returned to their ships. The Allies lost about 172, mostly wounded. The British garrisoned the North-West Fort and made new magazines.

This action had serious repercussions on the campaign, as it brought in the Chinese Imperial Regular troops who had not up to this time supported the Boxers. Unfortunately a small fort up the river still remained in the enemy hands and obstructed communication with Tientsin. Tong-Ku became the shore base (Captain Warrender, RN was Base Commandant) but matters appear to have been rather chaotic.

On the 21st, HMS *Terrible* arrived, bringing 300 Royal Welsh Fusiliers and 40 RE with Brigadier-General Dorward from Hong Kong; she also had four 12 pdr guns mounted on extemporised field carriages ready for landing.

A Relief Column was at once organised at Tong-Ku, consisting

- 1,200 Russians (General Stoessel)
- 30 Italian Seamen
- 150 American Marines
- 300 Royal Welsh Fusiliers
- British Naval Brigade under Commander Craddock, RN:
 - 50 Seamen (*Terrible*) with one 12 pdr gun
 - 100 Seamen: various ships.
 - 50 RMLI Captain Mullins (*Terrible*)
 - 50 Royal Marines (*Barfleur*) under Lieutenant Lawrie (*Terrible*)

For some unexplained reason in spite of the urgent need of artillery, Admiral Bruce only allowed one 12 pdr to accompany the force; the others had to be sent up later.

When eighteen miles from Tientsin the engine and some carriages were derailed. The night was spent at Chin-Liang-Ching held by the Russians; an attempt by a small force of Russians and Americans to reach Tientsin was repulsed. On the 22nd they cleared the neighbouring villages and the train advanced six miles; they were reinforced by two 6 pdr QF guns and on the night of the 22th/23rd, part of the 1st Chinese Regiment from Wei-

Hai-Wei, and the *Terrible's* 12 pdr joined them. Starting at 3 am leaving the gun and their heavy gear with 50 men to guard the camp, the British and Italians with the Americans advanced on the left of the railway embankment with their left flank on the river, the Russians and Germans with a six gun battery advancing on the other side of the railway. They were checked opposite the Pei-Yang Arsenal. The Germans and Russians tried to take it but failed and were driven over the railway, but this covered the flank of the other contingents whilst clearing the villages; the Red Ensign was seen on Tientsin Town Hall, so the villages were burnt and the pursuit continued up to the Military College, where they crossed the river on a raft of logs and the Settlements were relieved. The Russians remained on the left bank. The 12 pdr gun with some of the Hong-Kong Regiment (Pathans) arrived shortly after.

On the night of the 23rd/24th a signal was got through from the top of the Gordon Hall to Admiral Seymour at Hsi-Ku and again on the night of 24th/25th.

The first duty was to send out a relief column to bring in Admiral Seymour's column. It consisted of 1,000 Russians with 2 Maxims, 600 British (including the Royal Marines under Major Luke, who had been formed into 3 Companies under Captain Mullins and Lieutenants Dustan and Armstrong; and the Royal Welsh Fusiliers) and 300 other Allies under the command of Colonel Shirinsky (Russian). On the evening of the 24th the Naval 12 pdr set Hai-Kuan-Su Arsenal on fire; the column started at 11.30 pm on the 24th, rendezvousing at 1 am on the 25th. At first they missed the bridge over the Lutai Canal, but crossed by means of sampans and planks placed on the ruined bridge under fire from the forts; advancing up the left bank of the Pei-Ho, they arrived opposite the arsenal. As they approached, Admiral Seymour shelled the city and forts with the guns of Hsi-Ku Arsenal and the relief was effected. The Marines of the relieving column drew up in line and sounded the Admiral's Salute. The wounded were transferred across the river under continuous shell fire and a small attack of the Chinese was driven off. At 2.30 pm on the 26th the whole force retired. The arsenal was set on fire, but they failed to destroy the heavy gun ammunition and the field guns. They reached Tientsin railway station at 11 am on the 26th.

Before any attempt could be made to relieve the Legations at Peking, it was necessary to clear the ground round Tientsin.

The first objective selected was the Pei-Yang Arsenal on the left bank of the river about 21½ miles north-east of the Concessions. The Russians commenced the attack at 10 am on the 27th, but very soon needed reinforcement. Six companies of seamen under Commander Craddock and six companies of Marines under Major Johnstone with two companies of the Wei-Hai-Wei Regiment with 50 American Marines crossed the bridge; the RM were in their shirt sleeves, but only the *Terrible's* were in khaki. The *Barfleur's* were actually in white uniform. They prolonged the Russian left, the advance was resumed under heavy fire covered by the fire of the *Terrible's* 12 pdr. At 11 am the main magazine was hit and exploded. As the attack advanced the seamen and Marines wheeled to the right so as to be nearly at right angles to the attacking line; the Chinese after letting off a lot of crackers dispersed in a disorganised mob, suffering great loss from the fire of the Marines. Four thousand Boxers however attacked the left of the British in rear, but were met by the Chinese Regiment in support, who drove them back. The RM casualties were 2 Marines killed, 1 Sergeant and 1 Marine wounded. The seamen had 5 killed and 19 wounded.

On the 30th there was desperate fighting at the railway station held at that time by the Russians.

Reinforcements continued to arrive for both sides, including RM from Wei-Hai-Wei. On 1st July the British and Russians made a reconnaissance in force and discovered that the Chinese artillery had been greatly reinforced. On 2nd July the British HQ Barracks caught fire and on the 3rd the attack was renewed, so the women and children were evacuated to Taku.

The Chinese attacked the railway station, but were driven off by the *Terrible's* 12 pdr and the French and Japanese artillery. The Russians declined to hold the station any longer, and it was occupied on the 4th by Captain Mtullins and 50 RMLI from HMS *Terrible*, with 50 men of the Hong Kong Regiment and some details of French and Japanese. About 3 pm the Chinese launched a fierce attack on them, in which they got to within 100 yards of the buildings; strong reinforcements were sent up, when the enemy were driven off with severe loss. The *Terrible's* detachment had 4 men wounded. The little force had fired not less than 100 rounds per man.

On 5th July two 4 in guns from the *Algerine* and *Phoenix* were mounted and manned by *Terrible's* seamen at Pei-Yang; on the 6th the Allies bombarded the Native City with 25 guns; the Royal Marines manning two 15 pdr Krupp guns that had been captured, when the breech of one blew out, wounding Captain Mullins and two men. The Native City was much damaged. The bombardment was repeated on the 7th.

On 9th July a sortie was made to capture the Hai-Kuan-Su Arsenal by 2,200 British, Japanese, and Russians; the

RM were under Major Luke. Issuing from the Taku Gate in the Mud Wall at 2.50 pm, they made for the racecourse; the Japanese guns shelled the enemy out of their trenches, and they were driven across the plain pursued by Japanese cavalry; some guns were found in the village. The Allies changed front to the right and covered by shell fire from the Japanese and an Indian mountain battery, the British and Japanese made a frontal attack and the American Marines under Major Waller made a flank attack which carried the arsenal at 10 am, the Chinese offering but slight resistance.

On the 10th a fierce attack was made on the railway station held by the *Terrible's* Marines, who made a most gallant defence; the seamen of *Barfleur* and a company of the Hong-Kong Regiment were sent to support them; when they arrived the Chinese were within 30 yards of the Royal Marines. The Chinese then retired, losing heavily when they got into the open, but they replied with such heavy artillery fire that at dawn on the 11th the Allies had to leave the locomotive shed and take shelter in the engine pits and content themselves with holding the trenches etc round the platforms. When a company of Sikhs arrived in relief, they drove the Chinese from the railway trenches round which the enemy had taken cover.

On 12th July Admiral Seymour returned to his ship, taking with him the seamen and Major Johnstone with the Marines of the *Centurion*.

It was now necessary to attack the Native City, which was held by 12,000 regular Chinese troops and about 10,000 Boxers.

Hsi-Ku Arsenal had been re-occupied by General Ma's troops.

The Allies had about 6,000 men (710 British, 900 American, 1,500 Japanese, 40 Austrians, 900 French, the remainder Russians and Germans). The Royal Marines, commanded by Major Luke RMLI, consisted of 4 companies - *Barfleur* and *Orlando* (Lieutenant Armstrong), *Terrible* (Captain Mullins, Lieutenant Lawrie), Wei-Hai-Wei (Captain Harris, Lieutenant Dustan), *Aurora* and *Endymion* (Captain Lloyd).

Leaving the Taku Gate, with the British leading, they circled round by the racecourse where the position was untenanted, and then formed into 5 columns, the RM with the Naval Brigade and Royal Welsh Fusiliers forming the left column, and advanced on the arsenal. After an artillery bombardment, the Japanese occupied the arsenal, meeting with only slight resistance. On issuing from the arsenal they were met by heavy fire which checked the advance; the RM and RN who were in support, whilst lying down in the open, had some casualties and Captain Lloyd RMLI was killed. After a time the advance was resumed to attack the South Gate of the city, the Japanese on the left, the Americans on right of the line, the British in support. The road from the arsenal was held by the French and Japanese. As they advanced a terrific explosion of dynamite occurred on the other side of the City.

On a report that the Japanese were in the city, the Royal Marines and one company of seamen went up the road, which was a causeway about 1,200 yards long and 15 feet wide, with a canal on both sides; one company of seamen was sent to reinforce the Americans opposite the south-east corner of the city. The *Terrible's* RM Company who were in khaki and so escaped casualties which fell on the others, led in single file followed by the others. About half way there were some huts in which they halted under enfilade fire, and then gained some houses which were put into a state of defence, when some more Allied troops came up. The night was spent there, the *Terrible's* 12 pdrs covering them by their fire. The Royal Welsh Fusiliers were protecting the left flank; after dark the Americans and the Seamen Company fell back to the arsenal.

The Japanese recommenced the attack on the suburbs and the South Gate was blown in at 2.30 am. The British rushed in and occupied the South Wall, the *Terrible's* RM were sent along the wall to the westward to fight their way round to the gate on the other side of the City, which they accomplished and were relieved at 5 pm by a company of the Wei-Hai-Wei Regiment. After the Japanese had captured the city, the French cleared the villages on the north side of Boxers and the Japanese helped the Russians to take the city forts and batteries on the east of the city. There were about 775 Allied casualties.

Indian troops were now arriving for the British - cavalry, artillery, and infantry - whilst reinforcements for all nations also arrived. Field Marshal von Waldersee (Germany) was appointed to the Chief Command, but did not arrive till long afterwards. General Sir Alfred Gaselee was in command of the British. In consequence of the arrival of the troops the British Naval Brigades were withdrawn to their ships on 21st July for rest and refreshment, and preparations were made for the relief of the Legations. A Naval Battery was formed and on 31st July a small Battalion of Royal Marines was formed to accompany the relief column, commanded by Major Luke, Lieutenant C L Mayhew Adjutant. The Company Commanders were Captains Harris, Mullins, Lieutenants Dustan and H Armstrong, and Lieutenant Harnmar.

Our sister Corps, the US Marines, who were clothed in khaki, solved the difficulty of our men being clothed in white by providing them with the necessary khaki garments.

Peking In the Legations at Peking the month of July was productive of some fierce fighting and heavy casualties.

A strong attack was made on the Japanese in the Fu and a Krupp gun was brought into action; a combined sortie under the Italian Officer was made. Unfortunately the party lost their way and lost 3 men killed, and the officer and 1 man wounded. The next day in spite of a desperate resistance the Japanese under Colonel Shiba were driven further back. The Chinese had been making approaches to the City Wall and created a tower to command the American barricade which it was necessary to clear away; a sortie commanded by Captain Myers USMC with Sergeant Murphy, Corporal Gregory and 26 Royal Marines and 15 US Marines and 15 Russians was made, the British and Americans attacking on the left, the Russians on the right. The Chinese were surprised and driven from their barricade with loss; this barricade was strengthened and held.

On 5th July the British Legation was subjected to a bombardment from smooth bore 14 and 7 pdrs to the northward, fortunately receiving little damage. The Japanese were however being severely pressed in the Fu, whilst the Austrian and Italian men, shaken by the loss of their officers, were proving rather unreliable. An old British gun was found in the Legation Street and proved capable of firing Russian ammunition; it was mounted on an Italian carriage and proved very useful.

On 10th July, Captain Wray was sent over to command the British and Italians who were holding the left portion of the entrenchments in the Fu. On the 13th the Chinese sprang a mine under the French Legation, and the French and Austrians were driven back to an inner line which they held tenaciously. The Chinese who had effected an entrance into the Club near the German Legation were thrown out by the Germans. A mine also was dug under the British Legation, but they were evidently diverted by the British countermining.

On 14th July, Corporal Preston RMLI gained the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal for the following gallant act: After the enemy had been driven from their barricade on the Imperial Carriage Park Wall, near the West Hanlin by shell fire, this NCO climbed on the wall some 12 feet high, with the intention of capturing a banner left on the barricade by the enemy. Finding that he could not reach it, he called for his rifle to be given to him, and pushing down part of the barricade kept the enemy - some fifty in number - at bay, while an American gunner named Mitchell was enabled to lay hold of the flag. Corporal Preston, then jumped down and assisted Mitchell in drawing the flag over with difficulty, as the enemy had laid hold of the other end. He was struck on the head at the same time by a brick which partially stunned him.

On 15th May the enemy succeeded in making a strong attack on the north-west corner of the Fu and had battered down the barricade, which however was rebuilt during the night. At 7 am on the 16th Captain Strouts RMLI with Colonel Shiba and Doctor Morrison was making his rounds when crossing a dangerous place Captain Strouts was mortally wounded in the thigh and died soon after, a victim to shock and fatigue; an irreparable loss to the besieged.

From this date to the date of the departure of the relieving column from Tientsin, with the exception of sniping the guards had to meet no real attacks, but on 19th July the Chinese began a barricade and sniping near Fort Halliday (an improvised caponier in front of the main gate). Firing recommenced vigorously on 5th August and again on the 8th and 9th, and attacks defeated by the Allied machine guns were made.

At 6 am on the 14th the shells of the relieving force were seen to be bursting over the eastern gate of the Tartar City, and that afternoon General Gaselee and his staff appeared, having come via the Chinese City through the Water Gate in the Tartar City Wall to the south of the Legations. The besieged at once assumed the offensive, the Russians and Americans advanced to the Chien Men Gate and let in the 1st Sikhs and Hong-Kong Artillery. The British Marines and Volunteers under Captain Poole occupied the Carriage Park, the Japanese and Italians cleared the Chinese out of the Fu, whilst the Germans drove back the enemy to the Hata Men Gate.

The relief was thus effected after two months' siege.

It remains to tell of the movements of the relieving column. The Allied Forces, now comprising all arms, the British contingent consisting mostly of Indian troops but including the Naval Brigade with heavy guns, and the small RM Battalion, left Tientsin on 3rd August.

On 7th August was fought the battle of Yang-Tsun, which cleared the way. On the 8th they marched to Tsi-Tsun; there was no fighting but it was very hot and the RM suffered terribly, two men dying of sunstroke. The enemy had retired to Ho-Si-Woo (which evokes memories of 1860). On the 9th the Naval guns and Royal

Marines marched 5 miles to take up a position, but the Chinese had departed and Ho-Si-Woo was occupied at 4.30 pm Captain Mullins with 50 RM, a troop of Indian Cavalry, G Company 9th US Infantry, 300 Russians, 140 Japanese and 30 Germans, were left to hold this post, which was very important. The banks of the river had been tampered with by the Chinese, which fortunately was discovered in time.

On the 10th the Japanese reached Matao; the Naval guns going by river had to travel 30 miles, the land distance being 8 miles. At 4 pm the force pushed on to Shai-Matao. At 3.30 am on the 11th they started for Tung-Chow; before which occurred a short engagement.

On the 12th the Allied formed for attack; at 1 am the Japanese blew in the South Gate and marched into the town; this day was a rest day. On the 13th was made the final march and they halted 3 miles from the walls of Peking. On the 14th the Russians entered by the Tung-Pin Gate and were reinforced by the Americans at daylight. A sortie in the centre was beaten back by the Japanese, and after a heavy engagement the Japanese entered the City, blowing up two forts. The British as related had entered by the Shan-Huo Gate unopposed. A small party of officers and men, with whom was Lieutenant Harmar and 4 Marines, who had come up by river, followed the Japanese and entered with them, reaching the Legations at 7 am. The RM Battalion entered not long after.

On the 15th there was hard fighting, falling chiefly on the Americans who occupied the approaches of the palace. The RM Battalion with some Indian troops and 500 Russians were detailed to relieve the French and native Christians who had been bravely defending the Peitang Cathedral. The Royal Marines were ordered to assault one of the large gates on the inner wall, Captain Harris' Company advancing along the top of the wall and one company on either side. They advanced covered by a French battery; when they reached the gate the Chinese fled. Capt. Harris' Company was detailed to hold the gate, the other two with the Russians went on and encamped outside the Palace grounds. On the 18th the Royal Marines and the Russians entered the Palace grounds and encamped at Coal Hill. From now on they supplied Officers' Guards for the Palace and parties for organised looting; the loot was taken to a central loot committee for division, but never was.

On 21st August the RM Battalion assisted the French to clear their quarter of Boxers, a very terrible business.

On 28th contingents from all nations marched through the Palace and on that day the RM Battalion started to return to Tientsin by river, arriving at 10 pm on 4th September. They returned to their ships on 7th September. Just after they returned 400 RM under Major Kappey RMA, arrived from England in SS *Jelunga* and were sent to garrison the north-west forts at Taku where they remained until July 1901. During the campaign detachments of Royal Marines had been landed at various places in China such as Shan-Hai-Kwan etc, to protect British subjects and interests.

Besides the VC awarded to Captain Halliday and the CGM to Corporal Preston, Captain F Wray received a Brevet Majority; Sergeant Murphy, Corporals Gowney, Preston, and Gregory received the DCM and all members of the Legation Guard were granted six months' service towards pension or retirement.

Majors Johnstone and Luke RMLI were promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in the Gazette of 9 November 1901, Lieutenant Armstrong RMLI was specially promoted to Captain, and Captain Dustan mentioned in dispatches. Majors Luke and Johnstone were subsequently awarded the CB

The casualties at Peking were Captain Strouts killed, (Capts. Halliday and Wray wounded; 2 NCOs and Men killed, 20 wounded. The casualties at Tientsin and in the relieving columns were Captain Lloyd, RMLI killed; Captain Doig, RMLI, died of fever.

In conclusion we may quote Sir Claude Macdonald's Report on the Legation Guard and also Queen Victoria's telegram to Major Wray.

"They were exposed day and night for two months to the most arduous, irksome and responsible duties, which they fulfilled with a cheerful alacrity and with a courage and endurance which excited the admiration of everybody. Their bearing under fire was quite excellent and could not have been surpassed by the best veteran soldiers. During the entire siege I did not observe the slightest signs of liquor in any of the men, neither was a case reported to me and this though the facility for obtaining drink was great. To sum up, the general good conduct, soldierly bearing, and steadiness under fire of the men of the detachment was worthy of the highest traditions of the British Army and the Corps to which they belong. This high state of excellence was undoubtedly in a great measure due to the Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers. Captain Strouts was an excellent soldier and a gallant gentleman. He was killed in the defence of the Legation on 16th July and his loss to me and to the defence generally was irreparable. Had Captain Strouts lived I should certainly have recommended him to the Lords of the Admiralty through Your Excellency for promotion or for the Distinguished Service Order."

Telegram from HM The Queen.

“I thank God that you and those under your command are rescued from your perilous situation. With my people I have waited with the deepest anxiety for the good news of your safety and a happy termination of your heroic and prolonged defence. I grieve for the losses and sufferings experienced by the besieged.
VRI”

1901 - The numbers voted were 19,800.

On 2nd January, HRH the Duke of York, now His Majesty King George V, was made Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Marine Forces, an office which he graciously continued to hold on his accession to the throne in 1910.

On the 26th February he sailed in the *Ophir* for a tour of the Dominions and Colonies, returning in November. A special RM detachment under the command of Major C Clarke was embarked; also the Band of the Chatham Division RMLI, which in commemoration of their services was granted the 'White Rose of York' to be worn on their helmets and caps.

At the end of the year a change was made that affected the NCOs of the Corps a great deal; all Active Service Recruiters who had performed the duty since 1755 were withdrawn and replaced by pensioners, who received 2/- a day pay and levy money with their pension, free uniform clothing: this followed on the abolition of the Active Service Officers.¹⁰³

On the evening of 22nd January HM Queen Victoria died at Osborne, Isle of Wight, and for a time the world seemed to stand still; it was impossible to realise that that great personality had passed away.

The ceremonies connected with her funeral have been described, but we must put on record the part played by the Corps.

The Band of the Portsmouth Division RMLI, under Lieutenant Miller, played the procession from Osborne to the pier at East Cowes; being relieved at intervals by the Massed Drums of the RMA and RMLI (no bugles or fifes) who played a special funeral march for drums only which had been originally selected by Her Majesty to be played at the funeral of HRH Prince Henry of Battenberg which tore the heartstrings of all who heard it. Those who saw the Royal Yacht bearing the coffin passing through the lines of the Fleet at Spithead and heard the minute guns, will not forget the wonderful gleam of sunlight that bathed the Yacht as she turned and made for the harbour at Portsmouth. The Yacht was berthed in the Victualling Yard at Gosport and immediately a Guard of RMLI under Captain C J Thoroton from Forton was mounted with a sentry with reversed arms at the head of the coffin and one at the foot, and a similar line of sentries on the quayside above the Yacht. They were relieved every half hour as it was a cold and foggy night, and the Guard was inspected at 10 pm by HM King Edward and the German Emperor. The next morning the coffin was placed in the train for London and the Guard dismounted. As the train passed the Drill Field at Forton, the Division was drawn up with the Colours which she had presented to them, draped in crepe, and paid their last salute.

A guard of honour from Chatham Division RMLI was mounted at Paddington Station under Captain E H Morris, and paid the last salute as the funeral party left on its last stage to Windsor.

¹⁰³ Order-in-Council 4 November 1901

PART XII

1902 -- 1914

The twelve years that followed the close of the South African War were a period of reorganisation of all the British Forces, the raising of new units, the perfecting of mobilisation and other arrangements. In the Royal Navy it was a period of feverish building of new classes of ships. The possibility of war with our old enemy France had passed away, being finally sealed by the Entente Cordiale in 1904, but a new competitor - the German Empire - was rising to the east, threatening our existence in all spheres and evidently bent on world conquest.

Royal Fleet Reserve - In 1901 the question of reserves for the Fleet on mobilisation and to replace casualties in war was dealt with. Though arrangements had been made in 1863 to make Seamen and Marine pensioners available, this was not considered sufficient and a more trained reserve was now necessary. For this purpose the Royal Fleet Reserve was instituted in 1901 consisting of three classes: Class A of pensioners up to the age of 50; Class B of men who had completed 12 years or less with the colours and who voluntarily joined this Class; Class C Immediate Reserve to consist of men of Class B who voluntarily undertook to come up within 48 hours without waiting for the proclamation calling out the reserves. Classes A and B were required to perform one week's drill a year, Class C one month if required. During drill they received pay and allowances of their rank. Classes B and C received also retainers and on completion of 20 years' service; or attaining the age of 45, a gratuity. Class A were to receive the 5d a day additional Greenwich Pension on attaining the age of 55. All were required to keep a minimum kit, and supplies of arms, equipment and clothing were maintained at Headquarters to fit them up on mobilisation. When war came in 1914 these reserves were invaluable.

Cadet Corps - In 1900-01 Major Harkness RMA started the RMA Cadet Corps at Eastney for the sons of Non-Commissioned Officers and men of the Corps, an example quickly followed by the Depot Royal Marines, Gosport, Chatham and Plymouth. By November 1903 the Corps at all Divisions were in working order, and have provided many fine soldiers to the Corps.

1902 - The number voted were 19,600.

Selborne Scheme - The year 1902 saw the inauguration of Lord Fisher's reforms of the Navy when as Second Sea Lord he began to deal with the personnel. He was inspired with no friendly feelings for the Corps and in fact is reported to have tried to abolish it.

The first to see the light was that known as the Selborne Scheme, by which boys were entered for training as officers at Osborne at the age of 13 for all the three branches of the Navy - Executive, Engineering, and Marine - and after a common training at Osborne, Dartmouth, and at sea, they were to become specialists in one of the three branches. Elaborate scales of pay, relative rank, and training courses were drawn up, but like most of Lord Fisher's schemes the War of 1914-19 dissolved it into thin air. As far as the Corps was concerned, only three officers were obtained from this source and it gave two to the Navy. It is therefore unnecessary to go into the details.

Unfortunately it had very disastrous repercussions, because entry under the old system ceased after 1907, and with the exception of three Corps Commissions from the Sandhurst and Woolwich lists entry of officers ceased for five years. Alteration of training of the officers entered between 1902 and 1907 was also made; both RMA and RMLI remained at Greenwich for two years and passed all their examinations there, and in the Gunnery Schools together, those passing out at the top of the list being allotted to RMA. At last when matters were becoming desperate it was decided to recommence Direct Entry into the Corps, and the Order-in-Council 9th August 1911 was published, which provided that officers for the Corps should pass in by direct examination; they were granted the same relative rank and rates of pay as in the 1902 scheme and a most rigorous course of Naval and Military training lasting 4½ years, of which six months was spent in a training cruiser, was laid down. Only one batch completed a full course as owing to the War of 1914-18 all training had to be suspended or modified. But as a result of all these experiments the war found the Corps short of over 40 officers. As long as the two branches RMA and RMLI existed officers were allowed to select their branch according to their places on the passing-out list. This last scheme with modifications exists today.

Reviews - The year 1902 was principally notable for the ceremonies concerned with the coronation of HM King Edward VII. A review was held on Laffans Plain on 13th June which was attended by a Marine Brigade of one Battalion from the RMA and three from the RMLI. Colonel Commandant Pine-Coffin was Brigadier. The Battalions were encamped at Rushmoor Hill, Aldershot, for four days. The weather was very bad and the infantry had to march past before the cavalry owing to the state of the ground. The RM Brigade which was led past by the the Colonel-in-Chief, HRH the Prince of Wales (now HM King George V), followed after the Royal

Navy and preceded all the Army troops. Owing to the illness of the King, the salute was taken by Queen Alexandra.

During his convalescence on board the Royal Yacht, the Band of the Portsmouth Division, RMLI was embarked and His Majesty conveyed to them his thanks for their services. He also paid a visit to the Portsmouth Division RMLI at Forton and inspected the Battalion on parade.

The actual coronation took place on 9th August, when a Battalion RMA was stationed in St George's Square, Southwark; they exercised the right of marching through the City with fixed bayonets, Colours flying and bands playing. A composite Battalion RMLI under Lieutenant Colonel H C Money with the Portsmouth Colours lined the streets in Cockspur Street and had considerable difficulty in keeping back the weight of the crowd in the Haymarket. A guard of honour with Colour under Captain A W Wylde RMLI, with band from Chatham was mounted in Trafalgar Square. The RMA Band played at the Admiralty, the Portsmouth RMLI in the grounds of Marlborough House, the Plymouth Band at the War Office in Whitehall, and the Depot Band with the Battalion.

Uniform - HM King Edward directed many alterations in the uniform of the services and this year the old slashed cuff worn prior to 1870 was restored to the RMLI. The frock coat (double-breasted) with waist sash and a forage cap very similar to 1840 were reintroduced, whilst white belts for officers, sabretaches and some of the horse furniture were abolished. For the men the Brodrick cap replaced the field service cap.

Physical Training - In consequence of the abolition of masts and yards and the increasing numbers of machines to replace manual labour on board ship, it was realised that it was necessary to introduce some form of physical exercise to be undertaken afloat. A form of Swedish drill was adopted by the Navy and a School of Physical Training started at Portsmouth on 24th March 1902 under a Captain RN. Two Lieutenants RM were attached to the School as well as several NCO instructors; pay was allowed for instructors afloat, so that the extension of the gymnastic training at Deal, which had hitherto followed Army lines, was made general and the new exercises were used at all Headquarters and in ships.

Naval Gunnery - On 2nd August 1902 there was a revision of the pay granted to Captains of Guns (the present Gunlayers) RMA and also the ratings of Captain and 2nd Captain of Gun were thrown open to the RMLI

On 11th June an Order-in-Council authorised an increase of pension of £50 a year for each year of service to the DAGRM, the total not to exceed £950.

1903 - The numbers voted were 19,800

For some years Intelligence Officers, in connection with the Intelligence Department of the Admiralty, had been allowed in various Coaling Stations overseas; their services had been found so useful that an increased number of appointments were made and an Order-in-Council of 16th February 1903 authorised pay to Naval and Marine Officers holding these appointments.

Reserves and Drafting Officers - The question of mobilisation and drafting had been engaging attention, and the matter was now placed on sound lines. At each RM Headquarters a senior Major was appointed to superintend the drafting, to be called the Drafting Officer. He took over the duties of keeping the rosters, drafting and mobilisation arrangements etc which had hitherto been performed by the Staff Officer and Adjutant.

By Order-in-Council 12th March 1903 it was ordered that all officers under the rank of Lieutenant Colonel who retired from the service at their own request on retired pay or gratuity should automatically become liable to recall for service up to the age of 50; also officers who had resigned might apply to join if medically fit and under age. They were placed on a list of Reserve Officers. These provided a most valuable reinforcement to the officer cadre in 1914-18.

Officers' Employment - With the increasing activities of the Fleet the transfer of officers to the Indian Army, Army Service Corps etc practically ceased, but new openings were being provided. The Intelligence Officers have been mentioned above, but now one of the factors that was to revolutionise the world was making its appearance, to wit, wireless telegraphy. Many RM officers became expert in this new science; at first by Order-in-Council 11th August 1903 RM officers were employed as instructors at the Torpedo Schools and were granted 2/6d a day extra pay and in 1907 they were also employed at sea; by Order-in-Council 21st December 1907 instructors at 2/6 and assistants at 1/- being allowed. Many officers also qualified at the Royal Artillery College for the Army Ordnance Corps.

Naval Gunnery - By Order-in-Council 10th August 1903 the higher gunnery ratings of Turret Gunlayers and Turret Sight-setters were opened to both RMA and RMLI NCOs. By the Order-in-Council of 16th November the

old titles of Captain and 2nd Captain of Gun were dropped and that of Gunlayers and Sightsetters instituted. A new rating of QM for RMLI at 2d a day was created, the qualification being the same as for Seaman Gunner RN. And the whole trend of the training both of RMLI and RMA became more and more concentrated on naval gunnery.

RN School of Music - The question of bands in the Navy was now dealt with. Hitherto they had grown up in a haphazard way, the oldest practice being to engage musicians from the shore for the ship's commission and to discharge them on paying off. This practice served very well in the Mediterranean, where foreign bandmen were easy to obtain, but it was most unsatisfactory in every respect on other stations, besides being very expensive for the officers who had to pay the whole cost. The Admiralty then entered bandmen for non-continuous service and later for continuous service and some sort of training was given in the Naval training ships to boys, but men still entered from the shore. The whole cost of instruments and music were borne by the officers of the ships. Lord Fisher took the matter in hand in 1902 and the result was the Order-in-Council 20th May 1903. *"We are of opinion that it is desirable to improve the efficiency of Naval Bands and to reduce the expense which at present falls upon officers of Your Majesty's Naval Service:"*

- i. Band Ratings to be enlisted as Royal Marines and form part of HM RM Forces; the total number of the Force being correspondingly increased, existing ratings to be transferred as far as possible.
- ii. Pay to be at rates except Boys at 8d a day. Sergeants were called Bandmasters I and II and Chief Bandmasters.

They were granted an Instrument Allowance for care of instruments which became public property.

Training - A School of Music was established at which all Bandmen and Band Boys were to undergo a course of training with the following staff: Commandant, a Major RM at 5/- a day; a Musical Director (a Warrant Officer) at £250 a year; an Adjutant and a Quartermaster RM with extra pay. Two Bandmaster Instructors and a Sergeant RM as Schoolmaster.

Major F M B Hobbs RMLI was the First Commandant and the first Musical Director was Mr C Franklin from the Egyptian Army.

It was found at once that the Central School at Eastney was insufficient. The Band Boys and other ranks were therefore distributed to all Divisions, where they were placed under the supervision of the Adjutant and Divisional Bandmaster for instruction; civilians and musicians from the Divisional Bands being employed as instructors and the boys were brought up with the Drummers under the care of the Drum Major.

By Order in Council 24th October 1904, the Central School at Eastney was re-organised and rates of extra pay were laid down for the Staff for the Divisional Schools.

Boys were enlisted from 14 to 17 years of age but could not be rated Musicians until they were 18 or if embarked before that age.

The School was not concentrated at Eastney until 1910 when the quarters that had been used originally for married families and later for the RMA Recruit Depot, were handed over to them.

All boys were trained in two instruments, one for military band and the other for string orchestra, whilst the NCO:s have to pass a very high examination in music. At first they were also trained in First Aid so as to act as stretcher bearers, but later it was considered that they would be more useful if trained in the Fire Control Instruments on board ship, which is now the case universally.

This School has now become an integral part of the Corps, imbued with all its traditions.

1904 - The numbers voted were 19,000.

This year witnessed the coming into the Fleet of the new type of *Dreadnought* ship which, heralded with a loud flourish of trumpets, was said to revolutionise the whole of Naval warfare and the Navy proceeded to give itself up to a period of technical and material development to the exclusion of all thought of its strategic use.

Early in the year the old Steam Reserve was abolished.¹⁰⁴ The officers and men returned to barracks and as at the same time a large number of obsolescent ships on foreign stations were paid off the barracks for a short time were full of them. V This year's Order-in-Council gave the numbers as 19,845 and was the last published prior to the

¹⁰⁴ See page 105

War, the Admiralty having decided that the annual issue of this Order-in-Council which had existed ever since 1664 was unnecessary; about this opinions are divided. The numbers within this limit are now fixed in the Annual Parliamentary Estimates; for many years the numbers did not approach this establishment.

Nucleus Crews - Lord Fisher now produced his scheme of Nucleus Crews, by which with a certain proportion of the battleships and cruisers were kept manned with three-fifths complements of active service men and on mobilisation were to be completed with active service officers and men from the RN and RM Barracks who were undergoing courses; whilst the remainder known as the Third and Fourth Fleets only had one-fifth crews on board to be completed by reservists etc. The Second Fleet carried out all drills and exercises as if fully commissioned and was always completed each year for manoeuvres; the rest of their time was spent at their Home Ports where the RM carried out as much musketry and field training as possible.

Revie - On 17th March Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales visited the RMA and Portsmouth Division RMLI and made a short inspection.

In 1904 war broke out between Russia and Japan which kept the China Squadron on the *qui vive* and the number of ships was increased. The Russian Fleet from Europe on its way from the Baltic, when crossing the Dogger Bank on 22nd October opened fire on the British trawlers fishing there, which caused serious diplomatic disturbance and a Special Service Squadron was commissioned, but nothing came of the incident.

Somaliland - The Colonial Forces had been contending with the Mullah in Somaliland for some time, and in order to prevent his obtaining supplies of arms etc it was decided to attack Illig, his chief seaport. Illig was situated about 3½ miles south of the Gullule River and consisted of an upper and lower village situated on hilly ground with caves: the lower village was strongly fortified, zerebas and embrasures had been constructed and covered the entrance to the caves over the whole face of the cliff. HMS *Hyacinth*, *Fox*, and *Mohawk* bringing 125 of 1st Bn Hampshire Regiment. arrived off the mouth of the Gullule River on 20th April.

The landing place was a strip of beach where the cliffs on either side were precipitous and 300 feet high. The advanced party of 162 seamen under Captain Hood and 43 RMLI under Major Kennedy landed to find a road; the right bank was found impracticable but on the left bank after a steep climb they reached the top of the height and extended to wait for the main body. This consisted of 327 seamen with 4 Maxims and 51 RMLI (under Lieutenant Colley) and 125 1st Bn Hampshire Regiment. Owing to the surf the landing was very dangerous and they were all wet through. As soon as they had formed they advanced, 3 companies of seamen on the right and the RMLI in the centre, the Hampshires on the left with 3 companies of seamen in reserve. After sighting the enemy, who opened a heavy fire, they advanced by rushes and when at 75 yards charged and soon took the upper village, losing 3 seamen killed and 6 wounded. After a short rest they were ordered to clear the lower village which, owing to the desperate men taking refuge in the caves and sniping from them, proved to be a very dangerous business. It was some time before fire ceased. One Private was wounded. Corporal Flowers was specially mentioned for gallantry as he dashed through a burning hut to the cave behind and succeeded with Captain Hood RN and Midshipman Onslow in dispatching the four occupants who refused to surrender. He was awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal.

After the capture Lieutenant Colley and 50 RM were left to assist the Hampshire Regiment to build a zereba to prevent the Mullah reoccupying the place. Next day the *Fox* shelled parties of the enemy who were approaching and dispersed them. The parties remained on shore till 26th April, blowing up the towers and walls etc. The re-embarkation owing to the surf was very difficult, but was carried out without loss.

Pay and Ratings - The Order-in-Council 7th March 1904 made some long overdue concessions. Dealing first with the rations. The stoppage of 7d a day for bread, meat, and groceries modified in 1899¹⁰⁵ for men ashore was abolished; issues of bread and meat were in future to be free, but the stoppage of 2½d a day for vegetables and groceries remained in a way, as an allowance of 2½d a day per man was allowed for purchase of these articles, the money being drawn and expended by Captains of Companies; there was a proviso also that a man must have completed training or attained the age of nineteen. These concessions were a very great boon and enabled the food of NCOs and men to be much improved.

There was also a very substantial increase of pay, but this was given in a very wise manner and not in the haphazard methods of 1919.

¹⁰⁵ . See page 27

- i. NCOs as well as men were allowed to receive 1d per day for each badge. '
- ii. 2d a day was granted to all WOs and NCOs and men who attained certain standards in field training, gunnery, and musketry provided they had 18 months' service or embarked before that time. This allowance was forfeited if they failed to requalify after three years. It was known as EA (Efficiency Allowance)
- iii. 1d a day to all who qualified as First-Class Shots or above, which was known as GSA (Good Shooting Allowance)

For Bandsmen and Buglers EA and MPA were allowed for special qualifications.

These allowances led to the introduction of the well-known Drill History Sheets and also to a great improvement in the standard of training.

A further concession was made to WOs and NCOs that they were allowed to count 'lance' time towards pension if subsequently promoted to substantive rank.

One result of these reforms was that the curious ¼d a day hitherto included in the pay of Gunners and Buglers RMA disappeared.

Clothing - A Clothing Committee was also held this year under the presidency of Lieutenant Colonel Bor RMA which made considerable alterations in the patterns, scales of issue etc for NCOs and men.¹⁰⁶ The main effect on the appearance of the Corps was the abolition of the red kersey of the RMLI which had hitherto been used for all drills, duties and walking out, and the substitution of a plain blue frock. White cap covers were introduced for all ranks, the RMA lost their pill box cap; and brown canvas leggings, the curse of the Corps for the next generation, were introduced in place of the black leather which had superseded the old spatterdashes.

Tattoos.-For some years Torchlight Tattoos had been held at practically all Divisions in aid of the various Divisional charities, the initiative having been taken by Captain and Adjutant Luard and Lieutenant Colonel Johnstone RMLI at Portsmouth; in this year a departure was made by the RMLI at Portsmouth to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the taking of Gibraltar, when a display of Trooping the Colour in the uniforms and with the drill of that date was given, this being the first of those displays that have since become so popular.

In **1905** the numbers were 18,266.

In 1904 the Entente Cordiale with France had been ratified and to further cement the bonds of friendship in the summer of 1905 the French Fleet visited Portsmouth where it was received and entertained by the British Fleet. Among the other events the Royal Marines at Eastney and Forton gave sports and entertainments for the amusement of the visitors.

Review - In the summer of this year a Brigade of one Battalion RMA and one of RMLI (from Portsmouth) attended a Review held in honour of the King of Spain on Laffan's Plain at Aldershot.

In November HMS *Renown* was specially commissioned to convey Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales to India to hold a Durbar on behalf of HM the King. Major H S N White with a specially picked detachment were embarked, returning to England early in 1906.

1906 - The numbers voted were 17,000.

Recruiting An anomaly which had long intrigued the Royal Navy was swept away by Order-in-Council 8th January 1906. The fee fixed on 3rd December 1883 for raising a Royal Marine recruit was £1, whilst for a Naval recruit it was only 5/-. In future it was ordered that the fee for both services should be 10/-.

HMS Indefatigable - In 1906 in consequence of the concentration of the squadron in Home Waters and also the withdrawal of the regiments from the West Indies, it was felt that a mobile landing force was necessary in the event of local disturbances. For this purpose the 2nd Class Cruiser *Indefatigable* was especially commissioned on 9th January and the experiment was made of giving her only sufficient seamen to work helm and lead and a few other similar duties, and also a full engine-room complement, all the rest of the crew being RMLI under Major Chown, Captain Dalton and two subalterns. The Royal Marines provided all duties, boats' crews etc, whilst the officers did Officer of the Watch both at sea and in harbour, cable duties etc. The experiment proved most successful and was continued till the outbreak of War in 1914.

Physical Training.- In view of the increasing importance of physical training, RM instructors were granted pay

¹⁰⁶ Vide Order-in-Council 14 November 1904.

at 6d a day for seven days a week instead of only being paid for days on which employed.

1907 - The numbers voted were 17,426.

The Fleet which had been increasing in size was now principally concentrated in Home Waters and the Mediterranean. After the spring manoeuvres off the coast of Portugal in which both Fleets were engaged, the Home Fleet was re-organised into six Battle Squadrons of 8 ships each, and six Cruiser Squadrons of 6 ships each.

In this year occurred the tereentenary of the founding of the colony of Virginia USA. Celebrations were held in Hampton Roads which were attended by the 1st Cruiser Squadron from England.

Non-Commissioned Officers - A reorganisation of the Petty Officers of the Navy in August 1907, which abolished the rating of Petty Officer 2nd Class, caused a certain amount of difficulty for the Royal Marine as their relative rank was Corporal, a substantive NCO, whilst the leading seaman who took their places was only an acting rank.

In **1908** the numbers voted were 17,426.

In the spring of the years up to the war of 1914, the Fleet usually carried out cruises and exercises with the Mediterranean Fleet off the coasts of Spain and Portugal; whilst a larger mobilisation of nucleus crew ships and sometimes of the Third and Fourth Fleets took place in the summer, when various strategical problems were worked out.

Training - Training at Headquarters continued on intensive lines, the greater part of the time being taken up by naval gunnery. In this year the now well-known terms GL I, GL II, and GL III, took the place of the various Gunlaying and Sightsetting ratings.

On 1st August an increase of pay was granted to Captains RM, the amounts being:

after 11 years to receive	RMA 15/1
	RMLI 14/7
after 14 years to receive	RMA 15/7
	RMLI 15/1

Gunlayers Tests - During those years the Corps was earning a great reputation in the Gunlayers Tests, carrying off the prizes in all classes of ships. About this time owing to the expansion of the Fleet it was laid down that the RM Artillery were only to be embarked in ships carrying more than 4 power worked guns and in flagships on foreign stations, which resulted in the RMLI being placed in charge of turrets in some of the older classes of ships.

1909 - The numbers were 16,000.

By Order-in-Council 11th August the old list of Reserve Colonels¹⁰⁷, was re-established, by which Colonels Commandant on completion of their term of command could be placed on a special list and be eligible for selection for DAGRM

Brevet Rank - Another Order-in-Council on 22nd November regularised a matter about Brevets providing that officers of the Corps whether RMA or RMLI when employed on the duties of the Corps when holding brevet rank for length of service took precedence according to their substantive rank in the Corps. It is curious that this matter had arisen in 1766 and been similarly settled.

In **1910** the numbers were 15,800.

On 6th May this year occurred the lamented death of HM King Edward VII, and our Colonel-in-Chief HM King George V ascended the Throne and was graciously pleased to continue as our Colonel-in-Chief.

The Corps took the following part in the funeral arrangement:

On 17th May the coffin was taken to Westminster Hall, a Guard of Honour with Colour under Captain W T C Jones DSO from Chatham Division being mounted at Westminster Hall and a composite battalion of RMA and RMLI under Lieutenant Colonel A Orford RMA lining the arcade in Whitehall. On 20th May, the day of the funeral, a Guard of Honour RMA under Captain Troup was mounted at Paddington Station; in the actual procession were 100 RMA under Captain J Brough, and 100 RMLI under Major Lywood from Portsmouth.

¹⁰⁷ Established in 1870 but abolished in 1878

Lining Whitehall under Brigadier General L T Pease was No 1 Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel H L Talbot, 300 RMA and 300 RMLI Chatham and No 2 Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel Roe, 400 RMLI Portsmouth and 200 RMLI Plymouth. The Chatham RMLI Band was among the massed bands in the procession.

Arms and Equipment - The Corps was re-armed with the short Lee-Enfield rifle and long bayonet. Also with a new pattern of web equipment. For reasons of economy these were at first issued only to detachments embarked in certain ships, so that considerable time elapsed before all the Corps was so equipped, and in fact when war broke out in 1914 there was only the Slade-Wallace equipment available for the reserves.

Musicians - A great concession was made to the Musicians in the Divisional Bands by Order-in-Council 10th January 1910, whereby they were allowed to count all service above five years on the establishment as Corporal's time for the purposes of pension, and this privilege was extended to Privates and Buglers of the Bands on 4th June 1914.

RM Gunners - In consequence of the increasing employment of Royal Marines in the turrets of battleships, it was decided that a rank of Warrant Officer, called Gunnery Sergeant Major and later RM Gunner, who would be responsible for the working of the ammunition supply etc under the Officer of the Turret, should be introduced. These were specially selected from the younger sergeants with gunnery qualifications who were put through a special course in HMS *Excellent*, and on passing were given the rank of Warrant Officer with the same status as Naval Warrant Officers, ie above the usual Marine Warrant Officer, and with the same pay as Gunners WO RN with gunnery allowance of 1/6 and 1/- a day. They were however pensioned on the RM scales plus -6d a day. Between embarkations they were borne in the local Gunnery Schools. The rank caused a great deal of heart burning and was never very satisfactory, though most excellent men came forward and received promotion in due course.¹⁰⁸ The title was changed by Order-in-Council 29th February 1912 and after 1918 (when the status of all RM Warrant Officers was assimilated to that of Naval Warrant Officers) when not afloat they were borne at Headquarters and utilised for ordinary duty and in the gun batteries; they then became eligible for and received promotion to Lieutenant and Captain RM. The rank was abolished in 1931.

Dubai - Persian Gulf - On 24th December occurred one of the few cases of active service. The East Indian Squadron was constantly on the watch to prevent gun-running in the Persian Gulf into Baluchistan etc. A Naval Brigade from HMS *Hyacinth* under Captain Dick RN, with Major Heriot and Lieutenant Brewer RMLI and 33 NCOs and men were landed at Dubai to search for arms. While so occupied fire was opened from the houses on the search parties and men on the beach; Major Heriot entrenched himself on the beach and the guns of the ship quickly silenced the enemy. One Sergeant and 1 Private were killed and 4 Privates wounded. Major Heriot was awarded the DSO

1911 - The numbers voted were 15,820.

The year was principally occupied in the ceremonies connected with the Coronation of Their Majesties King George and Queen Mary, in which the Corps took part.

Captain Scott's 'Director' which had such an important influence on the gunfire of British ships, was first experimentally fitted to HMS *Neptune* and tried out in the Mediterranean and elsewhere.

Coronation - For the Coronation ceremonies a very large Fleet was assembled at Spithead and practically denuded Headquarters of officers and men. The result was that on the day of the Coronation, 22nd June, the RMA provided a Guard of Honour at Westminster, whilst a composite Battalion of RMA and RMLI which lined the streets in Whitehall was drawn from the Fleet, under the command of Major Harkness RMA SO RM at Portsmouth. On 23rd June for the procession through the City, the RMLI Portsmouth provided a Guard of Honour with Colour under Captain Filmer-Bennett at St. Paul's, and Headquarters provided a representative detachment under Major St G B Armstrong who took part in the procession. The composite battalion RMA and RMLI was drawn from the Fleet, and which lined Constitution Hill was commanded by Major H E Blumberg RMLI (the Fleet RM Officer). Colonel Commandant Daniell with staff from Chatham was in command of the Marine details on both days.

The following day, the Royal Marines having rejoined their ships during the night and morning, Their Majesties reviewed the Fleet at Spithead and were received with the usual salutes and guards.

The Home Fleet then proceeded to Kingstown, Ireland, for Their Majesties' visit. On 8th July a Naval Brigade lined the roads from Kingstown to Monkstown, the RMA Battalion (Major S Gaitskell) and the RMLI Battalion

¹⁰⁸ Order-in-Council 7th November 1910

(Major H E Blumberg) being posted near Monkstown.

On 11th July a Review of the troops was held in Phoenix Park in which a Royal Naval Division took part and furnished a very magnificent sight, there being two Brigades of seamen and a Brigade of two Battalions RM. The RM Bands of the Fleet were massed. (The RM Brigade was commanded by Major S Gaitskell the Battalions RMA and RMLI by Major Patterson and Blumberg respectively.) The weather was very hot, the dress being tunics and white trousers. The Battalions marched past in Column of Double Companies; which, as they were formed of the detachments of nearly 100 ships, was a sufficient test of training and discipline.

Agadir - On 26th July there was a war scare owing to movements in Germany which passed over, but was revived in October when occurred what is known as the Agadir crisis between France and Germany which very nearly plunged the world into war and caused the Navy and Marines to take stock of their arrangements. The next two years consequently witnessed many improvements in mobilisation and training arrangements.

India - In the autumn the SS *Medina* was re-commissioned to convey the King and Queen to hold the Coronation Durbar at Delhi. A special Guard of Honour of RMA under Captain P Phillips with Lieutenants Tuke and Hutton were embarked with the RMA Band. They accompanied Their Majesties to Delhi. On their return the RMA Band was granted the privilege of wearing a special badge in their helmets and caps.

1912 - The numbers voted were 16,500.

Recruiting - On 10th June the title of Inspector of Marine Recruiting was changed to Inspector of Recruiting, as he was now responsible to a certain extent for Naval Recruiting also.

Relative Rank - By Order-in-Council October 1912 the question of relative rank of Naval and Marine Officers afloat was altered. It had originally been laid down by Order-in-Council 10th February 1747, but in course of time the age of officers had altered and the position was very anomalous. For officers entered under the 1900 and 1911 schemes the matter had been adjusted, but nothing had been done for those entered prior to that date. As the order said "Owing to the extended periods served as Lieutenant and Captain and the later ages at which promotion is obtained in Royal Marines, compared with officers of other branches, as well as by the nature of the duties allotted to them while afloat." Therefore it was ruled that Lieutenant RM over two years' seniority and also Captains should rank with Lieutenants; Majors with Commanders, according to dates of seniority; though very soon modifications were introduced. It only applied afloat.

Pay - On 10th December 1912 a very welcome increase of pay to the Rank and File was made in the shape of an increase of 3d and 4d to all ranks when afloat only, but the officers' allowance did not come in till the following year.

1913 - The numbers borne were 16,500.

Promotion from Ranks With a great flourish provision was made for promotion of Warrant and Non-Commissioned Officers and men to commissioned rank, by Order-in-Council 11th February, though as we have seen this was already by no means unknown in the Marines.

This however provided a chance for younger men who might have a reasonable chance of reaching the higher ranks.

Two commissions were to be awarded each year to men specially selected with the necessary educational and other qualifications and under the age of 23. They were to be appointed to Acting RM Gunners and after undergoing courses in HMS *Excellent* and *Vernon* and a modified musketry course, if qualified, they were granted the rank of 2nd Lieutenant. After further courses at Greenwich and in military subjects and passing for Lieutenant RM, they were embarked as Probationary Lieutenants for six months and if satisfactorily reported on were confirmed as Lieutenants. In 1922 this was modified so that on selection the chosen candidates were promoted to Probationary 2nd Lieutenant and underwent all their courses with officers entered by direct entry.

Provision was also made for promotion to Lieutenant RM of any Warrant Officer, NCO or Private who might perform some specially meritorious service or for distinguished war service. These commissions were in addition to the numerous commissions for Quartermaster and later for those promoted to RM Gunners so that the Corps may be said to have made ample provision for commissions from the ranks even under peace conditions.

Brigadier Generals - By Order-in-Council 14th October, Colonels Commandant were given the temporary rank of Brigadier General without any increase of pay or emoluments; and the old Office Adjutants who had been entitled Staff Officers in 1891 or 1892 became known as Brigade Majors.

Signalling and Naval Examination Service - The School of Signalling was also expanded and a Superintendent appointed at 3/6 a day¹⁰⁹ because the Royal Marines had assumed the responsibility for the Naval Examination Service at the majority of the defended ports at home and abroad, so that it was necessary to train considerable numbers of men for this duty.

Cromarty - As it became necessary at this time to create Naval Bases on the North Sea, it was decided to fortify Cromarty as an advanced Naval Base, and to garrison it with Royal Marines. As the War Office methods were considered too slow and elaborate, the Admiralty decided to erect the fortifications themselves, making use of some older ships' guns and mountings. A nucleus garrison under a Lieutenant Colonel with a Staff Officer was to be provided in peace time, expanded as necessary in war. The necessary work was begun and on 29th December 1913, Cromarty was declared a Dockyard Port and in June 1914 the nucleus Marine garrison under Lieutenant Colonel Conway-Gordon, RMA, took over the guns and mountings. By Order-in-Council 16th July 1914, the Lieutenant Colonel received £100 per annum and the Adjutant 3/6 a day extra pay.

1914 The numbers voted were 16,900 and 1450 RN School of Music, but the Corps was considerably under establishment, officers being 40 short and the RMA as many as 300.

Adjutant General - By Order-in-Council 21st January, the title of DAG Royal Marines, was changed to that of Adjutant General Royal Marines, and an order of 16th July altered the arrangements of the emoluments of the ADCs to the King who lost the £150 a year allowance, but the number of GSPs for Commandants was raised to four of £150 a year. The net result to the Royal Marines was the loss of two appointments of £150 a year which apparently went to the Accountant Officers RN.

Bandmasters - By Order-in-Council 14th May two Musical Directors with the rank of Honorary Lieutenant were allowed to the Divisional Bands in lieu of Bandmasters, to be promoted to Honorary Captains after 10 years, and Honorary Majors after 15 years.

But the Great War of 1914-18 was at hand, which changed the world- and with it the Corps was subjected to upheavals which it met in its usual manner and survived with an enhanced reputation but a considerably changed outlook.

¹⁰⁹ Order-in-Council 13th October