

In Memory of

Lance Corporal FRED NUTTALL

**3779372, 13th Bn., The King's Regiment (Liverpool)
who died age 22 on 01 May 1943**

Son of Isaac and Ada Nuttall, of Longton, Lancashire.

**Remembered with honour
RANGOON MEMORIAL**



**Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission**

Name: NUTTALL, FRED

Initials: F

Nationality: United Kingdom

Rank: Lance Corporal

Regiment/Service: The King's Regiment (Liverpool)

Unit Text: 13th Bn.

Age: 22

Date of Death: 01/05/1943

Service No: 3779372

Additional information: Son of Isaac and Ada Nuttall, of Longton, Lancashire.

Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead

Grave/Memorial Reference: Face 5.

Memorial: RANGOON MEMORIAL

RANGOON MEMORIAL

Country: Myanmar

Locality: unspecified

Location Information: The Rangoon Memorial is situated in Taukkyan War Cemetery, which is about 35 kilometres north of Yangon (formerly Rangoon). The cemetery is on PY1 Road (formerly Prome Road), about 15 kilometres from the airport and can be easily seen from the road.

Historical Information: The RANGOON MEMORIAL bears the names of almost 27,000 men of the Commonwealth land forces who died during the campaigns in Burma (now Myanmar) and who have no known grave. The memorial stands in TAUKKYAN WAR CEMETERY, which is the largest of the three war cemeteries in Burma. It was begun in 1951 for the reception of graves from four battlefield cemeteries at Akyab, Mandalay, Meiktila and Sahmaw which were difficult to access and could not be maintained. The last was an original 'Chindit' cemetery containing many of those who died in the battle for Myitkyina.

The graves have been grouped together at Taukkyan to preserve the individuality of these battlefield cemeteries. Burials were also transferred from civil and cantonment cemeteries, and from a number of isolated jungle and roadside sites. Because of prolonged post-war unrest, considerable delay occurred before the Army Graves Service were able to complete their work, and in the meantime many such graves had disappeared.

However, when the task was resumed, several hundred more graves were retrieved from scattered positions throughout the country and brought together here. The cemetery now contains 6,374 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War, 867 of them unidentified.

In the 1950s, the graves of 52 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War were brought into the cemetery from the following cemeteries where permanent maintenance was not possible: Henzada (1); Meiktila Cantonment (8); Thayetmyo New (5); Thamakan (4); Mandalay Military (12) and Maymyo Cantonment (22).

Taukkyan War Cemetery also contains: The TAUKKYAN CREMATION MEMORIAL commemorating more than 1,000 Second World War casualties whose remains were cremated in accordance with their faith.

The TAUKKYAN MEMORIAL which commemorates 45 servicemen of both wars who died and were buried elsewhere in Burma but whose graves could not be maintained.

No. of Identified Casualties: 26856

The following is taken from the bbc.co.uk/peopleswar web-site covering the period when Lance Corporal Fred Nuttall was killed, possibly giving a history similar to what L/Cpl Nuttall experienced.

It is listed as 'A Highland Chindit' by Alasdair Sutherland

Duncan Cameron Menzies was born in Adelaide Australia, son of Duncan and Joan Menzies of Adelaide, South Australia. Joan Menzies was a native of Torrisdale in Skerray (Skerray is a small village in the North West Highlands of Scotland), who emigrated to live in Australia before the outbreak of the Second World War.

Duncan Cameron Menzies was at college in Australia in 1939 when war with Nazi Germany broke out in Europe, he finished his college years becoming the Rhodes Scholar for South Australia. The (Cecil) Rhodes Scholarship was awarded to the top college student for the year in Australia; other winners of this top award have become Australian Prime Ministers and top government officials. In early 1940 Duncan Menzies sailed from Australia to join the British Army and fight in the war, he came to Skerray on holiday when he first arrived in Britain to visit his mother's family in Torrisdale. He left Skerray to enlist as a commissioned officer in the Black Watch and was sent for officer training, to Sandhurst Military College.

He joined the 2nd Battalion Black Watch as it was on route for Tobruk in North Africa in the summer of 1941. He was one of five officers in the battalion at that time and became second in command of 'D' Company under Captain Boyle, the battalion was soon in the thick of the fighting Tobruk was cut off in 1941, re-supply was carried out from the sea as the German Afrika Corps and the Italian Army had laid siege to the town for months. The British and Australian garrison came under constant air and ground attack, the record was 21 air raids in one day. The Black Watch were placed on the left flank at Tobruk in a position called 'the Tiger', holding the line in face of heavy German tank and infantry attacks.

In February 1942 the Black Watch was relieved at Tobruk and moved by sea to a rest camp in Syria before being sent to India. The battalion arrived in Bombay on the SS 'Mauritania', the Black Watch then moved to Decca for jungle warfare training.

The Japanese Army was now at the gateway to India and the British Army was waiting for the invasion they knew would come. Superior Japanese forces had pushed the British back from Malaya and Burma, the enemy now stood poised on the border ready to attack at the end of long supply routes. The British Generals now had some breathing space to try and train British troops in jungle warfare ready for the fight back.

The 2nd Black Watch was taken off jungle warfare training and sent to the town of Ranchi in the state of Bihar to help maintain public order. The British troops now became involved in civil unrest, as some of Indian people began to campaign against British rule seeing the Japanese Forces as liberators coming to free them from Colonial Rule.

On the 16th of October 1942 a heavy monsoon storm blew up causing heavy damage to British units in its path, 'C' Company of the 2nd Black Watch was at a ferry crossing near Rasalpur. The Company Commander soon saw the tide hit the high mark and tried to swim to warn his men to get

on high ground. His attempt to swim across failed, as did an attempt to move all his men to safety on the sea wall.

Lieutenant Duncan Menzies who had been trapped by high water on a hillock until 1pm then joined the Company Commander. Lieutenant Menzies tried on a number of occasions to reach the sea wall but was driven back and the trapped soldiers were left exhausted, hungry and soaked through, clinging to a strip of road until the storm died down.

For his exploits and bravery in trying to move his men to safety during the monsoon storms on the 16th of October 1942, Lieutenant Duncan Cameron Menzies was awarded the Military Cross. In July 1942, Brigadier Orde Wingate raised the 77th Indian (Long Range Penetration) Brigade, a force to be trained in jungle fighting and to raid across the border into Burma. The force was called the Chindits from the Burmese word for lion (Chinthe) and was a totally new concept of warfare. The Chindits were to move around behind the Japanese lines destroying their supply lines, railway systems and ammunition depots before returning to India.

Duncan Menzies volunteered for service with the Chindits in early 1943 and was attached to the 13th Battalion Kings Regiment (Liverpool), this battalion was made up from Liverpool dock workers, nearly all were married men with an average age of thirty-three. The 13th Kings suffered heavy losses during Chindit training; the losses were made up by attaching volunteers from other battalions to meet the shortfalls.

The 13th Battalion Kings Regiment formed number two column of the Southern group in the Chindit expedition, under the command of Lt-Colonel L. A. Alexander. The 2nd Burma Rifles in command of Lt-Colonel L.G. Wheeler was the reconnaissance element, each column containing 400 men in the lines of an Infantry Company. All the columns heavy equipment was carried by mules with the Vickers machine-guns, mortars, ammunition, food and radios carried in baskets on the animals back. Each column was to be re-supplied weekly from the air by Dakota transport planes, any men wounded who could not be carried by the columns were to be left behind. The Chindits trained near Saugor in an area of jungle similar to that found in Burma, the 13th Kings practiced long route marches in the pouring rain. Casualties were heavy as a number of men caught malaria; parties of the Kings men were drowned as they slept, when the river they were camped beside flooded.

On the 10th of February 1943 two Chindit columns consisting of 3,200 men and 1,100 mules crossed the Chindwin River at two points and entered Japanese held Burma. The first contact with the enemy came at Maingnyaung on the 18th, when Japanese patrols ambushed the Chindit column as it left a bivouac area.

The Chindits attacked a railway and a road west of the town of Pinbon on 1st of March, they then moved on and destroyed the bridge at Bonyaung. Both columns marched on towards the Irrawaddy River, crossing the Irrawaddy with 2,000 men and 1,000 mules on March 15th. There were now thousands of Japanese soldiers trying to find the Chindits and a number of valuable bridges had been destroyed; Brigadier Wingate's men were carrying out the job they had been trained for. Once the columns had crossed the Irrawaddy they found themselves operating in increasingly difficult and hostile terrain as they constantly fought off more and more Japanese patrols. The

enemy was able to use tanks on the jungle tracks and the Chindits having no anti tank weapons, found they were unable to deal with this new threat.

On the 26th of March Brigadier Wingate gave the order for the remaining 2,200 men in his command to withdraw, the soldiers were exhausted and short of fresh water supplies. Air supply had become difficult and nothing more could be achieved, for five weeks the Chindits had moved around behind enemy lines proving they could fight as well as the Japanese. The columns had moved about 300 miles into enemy territory and taken on vastly superior numbers of Japanese troops, causing chaos and destroying enemy supply lines. The mission was hailed a success even though the losses were high with only 2,000 men from the original 3,200 men eventually returning to India, around 600 of those men were so ill they never fought again.

The 120 men of Number two column of the Southern Group under the command of Major Bernard Ferguson headed back towards India by marching north into Burma and then doubling back towards the Indian border. This column tried to cross the Shweli River with the aid of Burmese boatmen, but the boatmen only took them to a sandbar in the middle of the river, with a remaining 80yards of water to the far bank.

Some of the men tried to wade across but were swept away, crying for help in the darkness, others lost their nerve at this and decided to stay on the embankment, the remained crossed the river with one hour remaining until daylight. The column was now forced to split up into smaller groups of men and try to reach safety; the smaller groups were told to ask friendly Kachin villagers on route for help and assistance.

On the 3rd of April 1943 a group of Chindits from this column, consisting of seventy men entered a small Kachin village called Zibyugin, to try and buy food. As the patrol was negotiating with the villagers a large Japanese patrol was seen approaching and the Chindits in no condition to fight, were forced to leave the village to hide near by.

At dawn the next day Lieutenant Duncan Menzies volunteered to take a four-man patrol back into the village to see if the Japanese patrol had left. As they entered the village they were ambushed and Menzies and one British private (Private Gilmartin) were captured (the other three soldiers were killed). The Japanese sentries then took the two captive British soldiers to a small clearing and tied them to some wooden posts.

A short while later the remaining Chindits met the 2nd Burma Rifles approaching the village and quickly launched a frontal attack, clearing away the enemy patrol. Lt Duncan Menzies and Private Gilmartin were found tied to the posts with strong rope, their heads and beards had been shaved and they were dressed in Japanese uniforms. Private Gilmartin was already dead; Duncan Menzies was dying, he had been used for bayonet practice by the Japanese and then shot in the stomach

In spite of the great pain from his wounds Lieutenant Menzies gave information on the size strength and direction of the Japanese patrol. He then, knowing that he was dying gave the Burma Rifles Commanding Officer Lt-Colonel Wheeler his watch to be passed on to his parents. As Lieutenant Menzies injury was so severe he could not be taken by the Chindits. He begged Colonel Wheeler to give him an overdose of morphia and leave him behind.

As Lt-Colonel Wheeler gave Duncan Menzies the overdose of morphia to end his suffering he turned away to join his men and at that instant, was shot in the head by a Japanese sniper. Lieutenant Duncan Menzies and his close friend Lieutenant Colonel Wheeler were both buried close to the Kachin village where they were killed. Their bodies were not found after the fighting in Burma was over.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL WAR MEMORIAL EDINBURGH CASTLE

Menzies Duncan C. Military Cross. 182309. Lieutenant. (b) Australia. Killed in action Burma on the 4-4-43. 2nd Battalion Black Watch.

COMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION

Menzies Lieutenant Duncan Campbell 182309. Military Cross. The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) attached to the 13th Battalion Kings Regiment (Liverpool). 4th April 1943. Age 24. Son of Duncan and Joan Menzies from Adelaide South Australia. The Rhodes Scholar for South Australia in 1939. Face 4.

Lieutenant Duncan Cameron Menzies 182309. Military Cross 2nd Battalion Black Watch attached to the 77th Indian Brigade (Chindits) has no known grave and is remembered on the RANGOON MEMORIAL TO THE MISSING, MYANMAR (BURMA).

Rangoon Memorial is located in Taukkyan War Cemetery 35 kilometres outside the city of Yangon (formerly Rangoon) Burma. The cemetery contains the graves of 6000 men killed in action in Burma; the graves were collected from all over the Burmese countryside once the war was over. The Rangoon Memorial records the names of 27,000 men from many Armies who gave their lives during World War Two in Burma and who have no known grave. Inscribed on the memorial in English, Burmese, Hindi, Urdu and Gurmukhi are the words "they died for all free men."



**The family home of Isaac and Ada Nuttall,
and their only surviving child, Fred.**



THE KING'S REGIMENT



In December 1941 Japan declared war with Britain and the United States of America. Japan had already been at war with China since 1931 and had forces positioned in the far east ready to attack. Lightning strikes were made against such targets as Pearl Harbour, Hong Kong and Malaya. Soon after the British suffered a humiliating defeat and retreat in Burma.

Wingate arrives in Burma

In January 1942, when the Japanese invaded Burma, the British War Office offered the services of Lieutenant-Colonel Orde Wingate, DSO, to General Wavell, Commander-in-Chief India. It was thought that there would be a role for Wingate in Burma with his proven guerrilla expertise having previously carried out guerrilla operations in Palestine and Abyssinia with great success.

When Wingate arrived in March 42 he was tasked with organising guerrilla operations in Burma. Wingate then began his investigations and this was when he met Major Michael Calvert, who later became one of the most successful Chindit commanders. Together they carried out a reconnaissance of the terrain of north Burma.

Long Range Penetration Theory

Wingate then put forward his theory that formations of troops supplied from the air could operate for long periods in the jungle. The troops would be organised into columns, each large enough to inflict a heavy blow to the enemy but small enough evade action if outnumbered. The columns would march into enemy territory to disrupt the Japanese army's communications and supply lines and to create havoc behind its lines.

Wingate called this Long Range Penetration.

77th Indian Infantry Brigade (Chindits)

The Long Range Penetration theory was approved and Wingate's experimental force was formed and became 77th Indian Infantry Brigade.

The brigade was made up of

13th Bn The King's (Liverpool) Regiment

3/2nd Gurkha Rifles

142 Commando Company

2nd Burma Rifles

Eight RAF sections

Brigade Signal Section from The Royal Corp of Signals

A mule transport company.

The brigade now had to prepare themselves for two enemies, the jungle and the Japanese. Wingate did this by training them in the jungles of central India, at Saugor near Jhansi, ready for column and bivouac life, jungle warfare, river crossings and the care and handling of mules.

The mules were vital to the Chindit operation as they carried the heavy weapons, ammunition, radios and medical supplies. The airdrop of supplies to the Chindits would also include fodder for the mules.

It was during this training period that Wingate chose the name Chindits for the force. It was a mispronunciation of the Burmese word Chinthe (a mythical creature that stands guard outside Burmese pagodas).

Operation Longcloth

The original plan was that the Long Range Penetration group would be part of an offensive into north Burma but this offensive was cancelled. Wingate then proposed that the Long Range Penetration operation should still proceed, but now alone, to test the theory and gain vital experience of such jungle operations, and to test the Japanese and disrupt their planned offensives.

General Wavell agreed to this and the Chindits were ordered into Burma. The campaign was given the code name Operation Longcloth

Column Organisation

Wingate organised his force into two groups.

1. Northern Group, consisting of columns 3,4,5,7,8 and Brigade HQ, totalling 2,000 men and 850 mules.

2. Southern Group, consisting of columns 1,2 and group HQ, totalling 1,000 men and 250 mules.

(no. 6 column was broken up to replace casualties during training)

Attached to each column was a RAF section.

A rear HQ remained behind to organise the air supplies for the columns.

Each column was typically composed of –

- About 400 men built around an infantry company

- plus:

- Reconnaissance platoon of the Burma Rifles

- Two mortars and two Vickers machine guns

- Mule transport platoon (about 120 mules)

- RAF liaison officer and radio operators to direct air supplies

- A doctor

- Radio detachment to provide communications between columns.

Each column would march independently and be supplied by air. Where necessary columns would concentrate to achieve specific tasks.

Wingate's aim of this column organisation was to achieve mobility and security. Without having to rely on road-based transport and land based communications lines, a column could go anywhere it wishes. Mobile units would then make it difficult for the Japanese to find them thereby providing security.

Air Supplies

Air supply was provided by a detachment from 31 Squadron RAF and operated from Agartala in eastern Bengal. It varied in size during the expedition but seldom exceeded three Hudson and three DC3 aircrafts. Fighter escorts were provided when the range permitted but were not available when emergency drops had to be made at short notice. No aircraft was lost during the operation. The Chindits selected the drop zones when and where required. Initially it was thought that airdrops would only succeed in open clearings but by chance an emergency airdrop had to be made in jungle

terrain, this proved successful and this method was to be used again. Even though the airdrops themselves were successful, the difficulty of the operation meant that on average each man only received half of the rations they required.

Into Burma

On the 8th February 1943 the Chindits commenced that advance into Burma from Imphal. Initially the columns met no opposition but soon some of the units were sighted by the Japanese, who initially believed them to be small groups gathering intelligence. Not until there had been a number of engagements with Japanese outposts and patrols and the demolition of railway bridges did the Japanese realise the force was of brigade strength. The Chindits were beginning to hurt the enemy. The Japanese had been caught by surprise and were confused, not knowing the intention of the Chindits or how they were supplied. Three regiments, each of three battalions, were sent to the area to locate and destroy the invaders. The Chindits were now being hunted.

The Japanese were not aware that the Chindits were being supplied by air and sent troops west of sightings of the Chindits hoping to cut their land supply routes. On 13th March an airdrop attempt was interrupted and aborted as the column awaiting the supplies encountered a Japanese position near the drop zone. The Japanese now realised that the Chindits were being supplied by air and the troops searching for the supply lines were brought back to intensify the hunt for the Chindits.

By now the Chindits were deep in enemy territory. Withdrawal would be hazardous as the return route to India required crossing two major rivers, which would now be guarded by the Japanese. Despite this the Chindits continued their advance east attacking targets as they went.

Withdrawal

On 24th March Wingate was ordered to withdraw. By then the Chindits had advanced so far that they were at the extreme range for their air supplies and airdrops was becoming difficult. They also found themselves in an area short of water supplies, heavily patrolled by the Japanese and were beginning to suffer from exhaustion. The Japanese had now committed a large force in an attempt to surround and capture the Chindits.

Wingate gave the order to return. Non-essential equipment was dumped and mules no longer required were turned loose. By now the Chindits were tired and short of food, many were exhausted or sick, and faced a dangerous journey home pursued by the Japanese. Many were ambushed and captured by the waiting enemy.

One column continued to China, another built an airstrip in jungle clearings and evacuated the sick and wounded by air, the rest returned by re-crossing the Irrawaddy and Chindwin rivers either as a column or split into smaller dispersal groups to avoid the Japanese net. One column received a supply drop of rubber dinghies and lifebelts to assist with a river crossing. Some of the columns had now lost their radio equipment and were unable to call for supply but some of these units were fortunately located by reconnaissance aircrafts and received supplies as a result.

Of the 3,000 officers and men that went into Burma only 2,182 came back four months later having covered between 1,000 and 1,500 miles deep in enemy held territory. They were in poor condition, suffering from tropical diseases and malnutrition but in high spirits and proud of their achievements. Of those that returned only about 600 were passed fit for further active service.

Achievements

The Chindits had entered north Burma, caused damage to railway, inflicted casualties to the enemy and returned. They had shown that it was possible to infiltrate and operate in difficult jungle terrain deep in enemy held territory.

THE STORY OF THE KING'S REGIMENT

1914 - 1948

BY

Lt.-Colonel J. J. BURKE-GAFFNEY, M.C.



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CHAPTER I.

OUTBREAK OF WAR UNTIL 1942

Situation of the Regiment 1939; the Territorial Army embodied; defence of the Homeland; defence of Gibraltar; formation of extra battalions; death of General Harington; some new battalions transferred to other arms; 13th Battalion sails for India.

It will already be apparent that when war was declared in September, 1939, the structure of the King's Regiment 1939 bore a very different appearance to that of 1914. The two regular battalions, the 1st and 2nd, and the Depot remained, but the two special reserve battalions, the 3rd and 4th, although still in the Army List, had been inanimate since they were dispersed in 1919.

Of the old territorial battalions all but the 5th had disappeared from the Corps of the Regiment, and the 5th as we have seen had changed the colour of its cloth, for it now belonged to the Redcoats instead of the Greenjackets. True, earlier in the year the 8th Battalion (Liverpool Irish) and the 9th Battalion had been revived. But those famous old territorial battalions of the Regiment, the 6th (Liverpool Rifles), the 7th and the 10th (Liverpool Scottish), as already recounted, had left the Corps of the Regiment for other fields of activity.

Nor was there destined to grow so huge a Regiment as the first World War had produced, for armoured formations and Anti-Aircraft units now required large numbers of men. The proportion of these arms to infantry swelled, and as the Army grew, the number of infantry battalions required was correspondingly smaller.

One peculiar similarity in the dispositions of the battalions of the Regiment at the beginning of the two World Wars has already been noted; the 1st Battalion was now in Peshawar, where the 2nd Battalion had found itself in 1914. But the similarity ends there, for the 2nd Battalion, in 1939, was, as we know, in Gibraltar. For those who like analogies, a far closer one may be drawn between the situations of the two regular battalions in 1939 and their respective situations ninety years earlier, when during the Indian Mutiny they were as in 1939, the 1st Battalion in India and the 2nd Battalion in Gibraltar.

On the declaration of War the territorial battalions were quickly embodied and at once took over guard duties at many places con-

sidered vulnerable to enemy agents. Recruits began to flow in to the Depot, and it soon became apparent that the accommodation at Seaforth Barracks was inadequate. Conscription had earlier in the year been approved by Parliament, and began to operate as the National Service Act. It became necessary to form battalions to hold the troops until they could be absorbed into their appropriate units, and these 'Holding' battalions were affiliated to the various Regiments of their localities. Thus came into being the 50th (Holding) Battalion the King's Regiment.

In December the 10th (Home Defence) Battalion was formed under Lieut.-Colonel G. Rollo, D.S.O., M.C., who, in the 1914/18 war had commanded the 19th King's and later the 150 Brigade. This battalion, like all Home Defence battalions, was composed of men past the active service age; its immediate role was to relieve the Territorials on guard duties over vulnerable points.

Towards the end of the year the territorial battalions relieved of their guard duties moved off in their divisional formations to various parts of the country to carry out intensive training, the 5th and 9th Battalions with the 55th Division, and the 8th (Liverpool Irish) with the 66th Division, to which it had recently been transferred.

The Depot being still unable to deal with the recruits which were coming in large numbers, it was moved, under Lieut.-Colonel E. C. Cleveland, M.C., to Formby, some eight miles north of Seaforth, where a hutted camp* was in due course built to accommodate the troops. Here the expanded Depot, afterwards called the King's Regiment Infantry Training Centre, continued during the early part of the war to receive for training some 200 recruits every fortnight.

Meanwhile, the Expeditionary Force had moved over to France, but no battalion of the King's Regiment had moved with it, for both regular battalions were abroad and the territorial battalions were not yet ready. In France, however, the war seemed to have developed an inertia that made the situation seem unreal. Air raids occurred at home; sinkings took place at sea; but in France the opposing armies remained static.

The beginning of 1940 saw the 8th (Liverpool Irish) at Heysham, and the 5th and 9th Battalions in the Derbyshire-Leicestershire area, while the 10th (Home Defence) and 50th (Holding) battalions were finding guards over a wide area in Lancashire. Accommodation for the troops, now increased so much beyond normal peace-time figures, was found in private billets. Amongst the houses providing this accommodation was Staunton Harold in Derbyshire, the residence of Lord Ferrers, where a company of the 5th King's was billeted. Thus, in the cycle of time, troops

* Later called "Harington Barracks."

of the 8th Regiment of Foot not only returned to the County of the Regiment's origin, but were actually housed at the family seat of Lord Ferrers, whose forebear had raised the Regiment in 1685.

In India, the 1st Battalion, far outside the range of enemy aircraft, scarcely felt the impact of war. It remained in Peshawar district assisting in improving the Khyber defences, and training had until November, 1941, when it moved to Ferozepur.

The rapid building up of air power in foreign countries and our own delay in providing defensive measures had created everywhere, in the immediate pre-war years, a belated urgency in the preparation of air defence.

In Gibraltar it became necessary to revalue the reputed impregnability of the Rock in the light of this modern menace. The 2nd King's had not been long in Gibraltar before it was busily engaged in improving the air defences of the Rock.

When war came, in Gibraltar, as everywhere else, action stations were manned at once, and at the same time efforts for the improvement of the defences were intensified. Isolated as it was at the southern extremity of a potentially hostile Spain, the Rock had to be made capable of withstanding a siege, not only from land and sea, but now from the air as well. It was necessary therefore to provide adequate cover for the defenders and for their vital stores from the effects of aerial bombardment, and for many months after war had been declared this continued to be one of the main pre-occupations of the 2nd Battalion.

At home, towards the end of April, 1940, the 55th and 66th Divisions both took up tactical positions along the east coast of Britain. The 5th, now under the command of Lieut.-Colonel J. J. Burke-Gaffney, M.C., was in the Harwich-Felixstowe area, while the 9th Battalion under Lieut.-Colonel E. A. Williams, T.D., was further north, about Aldeburgh in East Anglia. The 8th (Liverpool Irish), whose Commanding Officer was now Lieut.-Colonel W. H. Hynes of the Royal Inniskillen Fusiliers, was on the Yorkshire Coast.

These were the dispositions of the various battalions of the Regiment when the Battle of France began on May 10th, 1940. The opening of the Battle of France at once altered the attitude at home and abroad to the war situation. The disaster leading to the Dunkirk evacuation brought the enemy's front-line closer than was comfortable to the homeland. The invasion of the shores of England, hitherto almost outside the realms of the most pessimistic speculation, now became a fearful possibility, and this belated appreciation of the danger of invasion was reflected in increased activity in the construction of coast defences. During those dramatic weeks, while the windows of the houses along the East coast of England rattled unceasingly, in step with the reverberations of the bombings and batteries from the coast of France, the three battalions of the Regiment, the 5th, 8th and 9th, all of which were employed on coast

defence, were galvanised into a feverish activity constructing, under the personal direction of Commanders of higher formations, defences which a false complacency had hitherto regarded as unnecessary.

As the German armies swept over the West of Europe, brushing aside the Powers and Principalities which stood in their path, many distinguished evacuees passed through the posts manned by the 5th Battalion of the Regiment at Harwich. Amongst these came Queen Wilhelmina of Holland, with her daughter Juliana, and her daughter's husband, Prince Bernhard. The Dutch Royal family, which had been offered asylum in England by the King, arrived at Harwich on May 13th, and proceeded by train to London. The 5th Battalion of the King's Regiment was given the honour of furnishing an escort for the journey of the Queen of the Netherlands and her party. This escort, under the command of Major B. St. J. Howells, accompanied the Royal Party to London where His Majesty the King received his Dutch guests.

During this period the 5th Battalion provided Anti-Aircraft detachments to accompany coastal ships ferrying between Harwich and Calais. One of these detachments, under the command of No. 3770233 Corporal J. Holmes, was in Calais Harbour while it was being heavily bombed. The ship, under the protection of Corporal Holmes' detachment was itself attacked. The detachment acquitted itself with distinction, and shot down an enemy plane. Corporal Holmes and his men on their return to Harwich received special commendations for their conduct.

During and after the evacuation of Dunkirk the defence of the coasts of Britain was more than an academic theory. Never since the days of Napoleon was the danger so real, and probably never was the army at home so badly equipped to meet the danger, for the best of the Army's equipment had been left on the shores of France. The situation of the troops, who manned the defences night after night, would have been ticklish indeed if an invader had arrived on the British coast within the first few months of Dunkirk.

From the time of the evacuation until the Battle of Britain there continued a succession of air raids of varying intensity against different targets in the homeland. Sometimes these came within the area occupied by the battalions of the Regiment, such as at Hull on June 19th or Ramsgate in August, inflicting casualties on the troops in those areas; but except for these minor interruptions, the work of the battalions of the Regiment continued, training, as the slowly increasing equipment permitted, or strengthening the coastal defences as material became available.

Meanwhile in Gibraltar Lieut.-Colonel Cross was promoted to a staff appointment, and was succeeded in command of the 2nd Battalion by Lieut.-Colonel T. E. Chad, M.C.

Since Dunkirk the position of the troops in Gibraltar was by no means enviable. The collapse of France had brought enemy air

bases within easy bombing range on the land side while the North African coast became a potential danger as well. Moreover, the Italians had now joined the fray, not only with a large air force, but with a fleet of considerable size. Both air force and fleet had acquired for themselves over the previous five years an outstanding reputation for skill and daring. The defection of the French was thus a double catastrophe in the Mediterranean area, since the Allies lost the use of the French Navy, while the enemy had the use of the Italian Fleet. Not only this, but there was Vichy France to be reckoned with.

It was clear that, surrounded as it was by enemy and potential enemy, Gibraltar would not be left unmolested, and from time to time air raids were in fact carried out. During the course of these some damage and casualties were inflicted on the 2nd King's. By and large however these raids served to show that the reputation which the Italians had acquired for themselves for skill and daring did not survive the test of war. Their bomb dropping was a matter of greater concern to the nearby Spanish coast than to the defenders of the Rock of Gibraltar.

More regrettable however, was the fact that as a result of the abortive raids made by the British Forces against Oran and Dakar, with a view to depriving the enemy of the use of French capital ships, retaliatory raids were carried out by Vichy French Aircraft, resulting in casualties on both sides.

Surrounded on all sides by enemy or hostile people, uncertain of the Germans intentions as regards Spain, uncertain as to the attitude of Spain itself, life in Gibraltar was as on the edge of a volcano. But there, the strain unrelieved by any particular excitement or opportunities of individual valour, the 2nd King's was destined to remain for the next three years.

Soon after Dunkirk several new battalions of the Regiment came into being at home. These were the 11th Battalion formed in June at the Infantry Training Centre, Formby, under Lieut.-Colonel W. J. Humphrey, M.C.; the 12th Battalion, raised in July at Seaforth Barracks, under Lieut.-Colonel G. W. P. Burden, of the East Lancashire Regiment; the 13th Battalion formed in June in Newtown, North Wales, under Lieut.-Colonel J. E. Dunbar-Kilburn, of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry; and the 14th Battalion formed in October in the Isle of Man, under Lieut.-Colonel A. U. Levick.

In addition to these Battalions, the 10th (H.D.) Battalion gave off in September, 1940, two other battalions, the 2/10th, later redesignated the 15th Battalion, and the 70th Battalion, the latter being a 'Young Soldiers' battalion.

Each of these battalions, formed, as most of them were, at what must be the darkest days in the history of the British race, fulfilled an important role while the army was being gradually re-armed.

They kept a ceaseless and vigilant watch along the coasts for an enemy who never came by sea. Inland they protected vulnerable points and important factories against enemy attack by air and sabotage. They withstood, in many places suffering considerable casualties, the onslaught of the German Airforces during the Battle of Britain. And in between times they trained for the day when the Army would once more go over to the attack.

On October 23rd, 1940, the Regiment suffered a severe loss in the death of the Colonel of the Regiment, General Sir Charles Harington, G.C.B., G.B.E., D.S.O., who, at the time of his death could boast of 48 years as a Kingsman. He was succeeded as Colonel by Brigadier C. E. R. G. Alban, C.B.E., D.S.O., who was at that time Commander of the Bombay area.

Most of the newly formed battalions had only a brief history as units of the Regiment. As the Army grew once more to its full stature the demands of the technical arms took a high priority. Indeed, during those tragic years of 1940/42 the Army at home was in the melting pot, and regiments and battalions were remodeled with little regard to regimental sentiment and less to the personal feelings of individual soldiers.

So it came about that in November, 1941, the 11th Battalion was transferred to Armour and became the 152 Regiment
1941 R.A.C. The 12th Battalion at the same time was transferred to the Royal Artillery and became Light A.A. Regiment R.A. The 14th survived as a King's Battalion in the Isle of Man until February, 1942, when it was disbanded and its personnel transferred to R.A. units. The 15th (H.D.) Battalion also was disbanded in 1941, and the 10th (H.D.) Battalion was redesignated the 30th Battalion.

Of the four battalions formed after Dunkirk, the 13th alone remained in the Regiment. While the 11th and 12th Battalions were being transmuted, the 13th was placed under orders to move to the East. In December, 1941, this Battalion now under the Command of Lieut.-Colonel W. M. Robinson, M.C., of the Sherwood Foresters, sailed via the Cape, for India.

The history of the Regiment during these first years of war was in striking contrast to its story during the equivalent period
1941 of the 1914/18 war. Then, at the end of 1916 there were 19 Battalions on active service, while another 12 were in training at home. Now, by the end of 1941, there existed in the whole Regiment, regular, territorial, and national service, no more than nine battalions, not one of which had as yet been engaged in active operations with the enemy's ground forces.

The year of 1941 was a black one. But as it drew to its end, the first spark of renewed hope appeared. It was the spark ignited by the Japanese when they attacked Pearl Harbour, for it brought a powerful Ally to the cause.

During 1942 it was obvious in spite of hard times and hard knocks endured, that a change was on the way. Although
1942 to the outsider the stock of Great Britain seemed to be at its lowest ebb, behind the scenes, as we now know, there was in progress a concentrated, highly organised, relentless activity, urged on by grim determination, a national characteristic that seems to be stimulated by disaster. All the secrecy in the world could not prevent something of the magnitude of the preparations in progress reaching the outer world, and this knowledge, imperfect and unauthenticated though it was, nevertheless gradually caused a sense of optimism to pervade the country which made discomfort and even bad tidings more bearable.

The situation of most of the battalions of the Regiment altered little during 1942, except for change of station or in Command. The 1st Battalion, in Ferozepur, was employed on internal security duties, and was even further removed from the atmosphere of war than at Peshawar. In January of that year, Lieut.-Colonel G. W. Miller had completed his period of Command and was replaced in Command by Lieut.-Colonel H. K. Short. At home the 5th, 8th and 9th Battalions continued their watch and ward along the south and east coasts of England, or when relieved, carried on relentlessly with their training. In all of these battalions changes had also taken place in the command. The 5th was now under command of Lieut.-Colonel G. W. P. Thorne, the 8th was commanded by Lieut.-Colonel K. S. Binny, while the 9th, having been Commanded in succession by Lieut.-Colonel G. D. Heyman, M.B.E., and Lieut.-Colonel R. N. M. Jones, both of whom had been promoted, was now in November, taken over by Lieut.-Colonel J. O. Stuart.

In Gibraltar too, the 2nd Battalion had experienced changes in command, for Lieut.-Colonel Chad had been promoted to command one of the Gibraltar Brigades, and had been succeeded in the Battalion by Lieut.-Colonel A. J. Newall, who himself gave place to Lieut.-Colonel C. P. Moore, M.C. in December.

Meanwhile, the 2nd Battalion, doomed to dig ever deeper into the Rock, was now at least afforded some insight into the great things that were happening. Much of the preparation for the landings on the North Coast of Africa by the First Army took place under the eyes of the troops. Gibraltar was a centre where important personages halted on their goings and comings eastward or westward. Some, such as Mr. Anthony Eden, Under Secretary of State for War, stopped to talk to the troops, and sympathised with them in the circumstances which forced them to remain passive on the Rock, whilst they watched other troops cross the strip of water that separated them from North Africa to take part in the first steps towards overthrowing the enemy.

Only the 13th Battalion, which had arrived in India in January, 1942, and was sent at once to Secunderabad on internal security

duties, experienced any alteration in the somewhat dull routine that by now was causing a sense of frustration throughout the battalions of the Regiment.

CHAPTER II.

BURMA 1943. THE CHINDITS.

13th Battalion and the first Wingate expedition.

In June, 1942, the 13th Battalion the King's Regiment was suddenly uprooted from its humdrum duties at Secunderabad 1942 and ordered to join a special brigade then being formed at Pathria. This was not merely a change of station. It was also a change in character, for the battalion, hitherto employed on garrison duties, was now warned for active service of a strange and novel kind.

At this period of the war the fortunes of the allies were at their lowest ebb. More particularly in the Far Eastern area, where the Japanese soldier was being invested with an exaggerated superiority in jungle warfare, was there danger of a lowering of morale. Anxious to disprove this growing opinion, General Wavell had approved a plan put forward by one of his Staff Officers, Colonel O. Wingate, D.S.O., an Officer whose special characteristics he had already had cause to admire.

This plan envisaged a raid on a large scale, penetrating deeply into the enemy's lines. It was to be carried out as part of "a grand design" then being made by G.H.Q. India, to drive the Japanese out of Burma, during which its role was to be, by activities behind the enemy lines, to disrupt his communications and generally to upset his plans. And it was to be entrusted to troops specially trained in jungle warfare.

For the purposes of this operation, Wingate, now promoted Brigadier, was authorised to raise and train the 77th (Indian) Infantry Brigade, and it was to this Brigade that the 13th Battalion of the Regiment was posted from Secunderabad.

Wingate organised his brigade according to his own plans, and to suit the particular employment for which it was intended. Then he set about training it for the special tasks it would be called on to carry out. Early in their training he informed the units of the Brigade that he was out to prove that, properly trained, any body of British troops would be as successful as the Japanese in jungle warfare.

The chief characteristics aimed at in the development of the Brigade, apart from the normal guerilla characteristics of mobility,

flexibility and independence of small units, were familiarity with and self-confidence in the jungle itself.

The troops in the Brigade, besides the 13th King's were the 3/2nd Gurkha Rifles, a battalion of the Burma Rifles, and the 142 Commando Company. The Brigade was organised into two Groups, the Gurkhas forming the basis of No. 1 Group and the 13th King's the basis of No. 2 Group. Each Group was organised into Columns based on the Company, and to each Column was attached a platoon of the Burma Rifles, and a detachment of 142 Company. The two Battalion H.Q.s formed the H.Q.s of the two Groups. To these H.Q.s was added a detachment of the Royal Corps of Singallers with an F.S.C. wireless set. A, B, C and D Companies of the 13th Battalion now became respectively No. 5, No. 6, No. 7 and No. 8 Columns. These Columns were organised into platoons, and to each platoon was attached an interpreter, and where possible a medical orderly. The platoons were trained to disperse into small parties if they bumped trouble beyond their own powers, and these dissipated into the jungle and so frustrated pursuit.

Each Column had its own Medical Officer, its own R.A.F. Liaison Officer, and a detachment of R.A.F. personnel with a wireless set, and its own detachment of pack transport, accompanied by Gurkha Muleteers. Each was in fact an entirely self-contained unit. No. 2 Group was therefore the 13th King's plus attached details.

When the organisation had been completed and certain eliminations of 'unsuitables' had taken place, the Brigade moved to Saugor. Here strenuous training was carried out including the craft of jungle warfare and the hardening process necessary to endure it. But it was found that enough reinforcements were not forthcoming to replace casualties. The columns in No. 2 Group were therefore reduced to three. No. 6 Column disappeared and its personnel used to make up numbers in the other three.

Towards the end of the year Lieut.-Colonel Robinson was posted to a Staff appointment and the Command of the No. 2 Group devolved on Lieut.-Colonel S. A. Cooke of the Lincolnshire Regiment. The three Column Commanders were Major B. Fergusson, commanding No. 5 Column; Major K. Gilkes, commanding No. 7 Column, and Major W. A. Scott, commanding No. 8 Column. Major Fergusson was an Officer of the Black Watch, who had specially applied for permission to accompany this Brigade. Major Gilkes and Major Scott were both Officers of the 13th Battalion the King's Regiment.

During December the 77th Brigade carried out a final exercise, which started in Sauger and ended in Jhansi more than 150 miles away. Here the columns refitted, and on January 6th 1943 moved by special train to Dimapur in Assam. From here they moved by stages down the Manipur road to Imphal. This was the point from which the expedition was to set out.

On February 5th Field Marshal Wavell arrived at Imphal. At that time he knew that the whole plan in which Wingate's Brigade was playing its role, had been upset. The question now was whether this Brigade should be allowed to penetrate unsupported into enemy occupied country, or whether the whole operation should be cancelled. The Field Marshal decided in conjunction with Brigadier Wingate that for the sake of the experience that would be gained for future use, the expedition should go forward.

The directive given to Wingate by the Commander-in-Chief included the following:—

To cut the main North and South railway line between Mandalay and Myitkyina; to harass the enemy in the Shwebo area; and then, if circumstances were favourable, to cross the Irrawaddy and cut the railway line Maymo-Lashio.

On February 6th Field Marshal Wavell inspected the troops. He addressed them on the importance of their unique enterprise, but left them in no doubt as to the grim and dangerous work it would involve. The following day the move towards the Burmese frontier began. No. 2 Group, that is the King's Group, moved on February 8th with the exception of No. 8 Column, which had been detailed, together with No. 3 Column to move ahead and protect the first supply dropping area. The Group reached Thanan on February 13th. This was nominated 'road-head' since beyond this point the track was unfit for trucks. Here five days 'light rations'* were issued to the troops. From now on they would carry their food on their backs. For replenishment they would depend on supplies being dropped from aircraft at previously arranged places on scheduled dates. Should those arrangements break down for any reason the Columns would depend on foraging in the country. Here was one of the reasons for the attachment of a platoon of 'Burrifs'† to each Column, for these troops were now about to operate in their own country, and it was hoped would be able to obtain friendly co-operation from the villagers.

During the march to Thanan 'Chindit‡ Operation Instruction No. 1' was issued. In this instruction, which was issued direct to O.C.s Columns, there was no conditional clause governing the

* The 'light ration' consisted of the following items:—

Shakapura biscuit	... 12 oz.	Sugar	... ..	4 oz.
Cheese	... ..	Acid drops or chocolate	... ..	1 oz.
Milk powder	... ..	Salt	... ..	½ oz.
Raisons and almonds	... ..	Cigarettes	... ..	20
Tea	... ..	Matches	... ..	1 box

† The term by which Burma Rifles were known throughout India.

‡ "Chindit," the name adopted by Wingate for his Force. Taken from the Brigade sign, which was a "Chinthey"—the mythological Being, half Lion, half Griffin, statues of which stand guard over Burmese Pagodas.

crossing of the Irrawaddy such as was contained in the C-in-C's directive. It contained the following instructions :

"No. 5 Column : To go direct from Tonmakeng or Sinlamaung to the Bonghaung gorge, to bring down the cliff side on the railway and ambush or destroy Japanese railway transport; on completion to cross the Irrawaddy and move towards Maymyo via Mogok.

"No. 7 Column : To assist in the capture of Indaw; when released from this duty to go direct to Bahmo-Lashio area, there to concentrate on raising Kackins, and organising heavy and continual raids on Japanese transport.

"H.Q. No. 2 Group advised to accompany No. 7 Column and establish itself independently of Column in Kachin area, where it was to foment and organise rebellion, where at a later date it would be joined by other Columns of the Group."

From this operation instruction, issued as it was direct to Column Commanders it is clear that Brigadier Wingate regarded the Columns as tactical units under his own hand, and Group Headquarters as convenient administrative sub-divisions of his own H.Q.

On February 16th the various Columns of the King's Group reached the Chindwin, the putative boundary between the opposing forces. Group H. Qrs., No. 7 and No. 8 Columns concentrated in the vicinity of Tonhe, while No. 5 Column moved a little to the North to make an independent crossing.

The Chindwin, which in this area half a mile wide, might well have been found carefully patrolled on the Burmese side by the Japanese. Because of this possibility a diversionary operation was being carried out further south by Columns of No. 1 Group, Wingate hoping by this means to draw off any enemy troops in the vicinity of the actual crossing places of the main body. This in fact was the effect of the operation, and all Columns of the King's Group were across unopposed by February 18th. The troops had for the most part crossed by rubber dinghies; some had used rafts or country boats; a few had swum. The mules were made to swim.

The task with which the men of the 13th Battalion were now faced was probably the most unusual ever deliberately undertaken by British troops. They had as their main objective two railway lines which lay respectively 100 and 150 miles in a direct line inside the enemy occupied territory. The country through which they would have to penetrate in order to reach these objectives was as difficult and formidable as can well be imagined. It consisted of thick jungle, of high steeply ridged, densely forested mountains, with few roads, or even tracks, except near the widely separated villages. The successive shoulders of the mountain ranges were separated by deep gorges. Sometimes these great mountain sides descended precipitously from their vast heights, into swampy, leech-ridden valleys. These were intersected with water courses

which in places assumed the size of considerable rivers. At certain periods of the year these valleys are infested with mosquitoes, which have the reputation of conveying the most virulent and malignant form of malaria known to medical science.

Through this forbidding country the men of the Chindit columns set off on their unique mission, carrying sixty pounds of their kit and equipment on their backs. Brigadier Wingate's plan was to move east through the Pinlebu area with his Headquarters and Nos. 7 and 8 Columns. No. 1 group, less No. 3 Column was to move somewhat to the south in the direction of the Irrawaddy, while to the north, Nos. 3 and 5 Columns, which were on an independent mission marched by different routes towards the Bonchung Gorge on the Mandalay-Myitkyina Railway. On arrival here No. 5 Column's task was to blow in the gorge on to the permanent way while No. 3 Column further south destroyed parts of the railway line.

On February 26th the main body of the Forces reached a supply-dropping rendezvous called Tonmakene. From this point, after rations had been replenished, various columns moved off on their independent roles. As he approached the Pinlebu area Wingate detached No. 8 Column to trail its coat in the direction of Pinlebu itself, so as to engage the attention of a Japanese battalion known to be in that area. It was hoped that this diversion would persuade the enemy that the British Force, which he knew by now had crossed the Chindwin, was about to attack Pinlebu.

No. 8 Column set off on its task and began an elaborate game of hide-and-seek with the Japanese. For three days it carried out its deceptive tactics, clashing with the enemy on more than one occasion, and indeed being the first troops of the 13th Battalion to gain contact with him. On the third day the Column dispersed and rejoined the main body at the Brigade rendezvous.

No. 2 Group continued its advance with the main body towards the Irrawaddy, avoiding tracks and villages, and at times hacking a path through the thick undergrowth in parts of the jungle now apparently penetrated by human beings for the first time.

Meanwhile No. 5 Column was moving by a different route on its independent mission towards Bonchaung Gorge. This Column, under its Commander Major Fergusson, came within reach of its objective on March 5th after a very strenuous approach march. Fergusson had a good look at the position and made his plan. On the following day, March 6th, he detailed No. 7 platoon, with Lieut. Harman and Lieut. Stibbé, to carry out the task of blowing down the cliff at the gorge, on to the railway. He himself took a party to deal with the bridge at Bonchaung station. A detachment of the enemy was known to be in occupation of Nankan station some miles to the south and, as this formed a potential menace to his plans, Fergusson dispatched Captain Roberts with Lieut. Kerr and 50 other ranks to deal with it. As Roberts' party moved towards Nankan at

about 12.30 hrs.* it bumped a strong Japanese patrol. Captain Roberts engaged the enemy and drove them off killing 15 of them. This was the Column's first engagement with the enemy and its successful result was heartening. It was not achieved without casualties however, for Captain Roberts suffered 5 killed and 7 wounded. Of these latter, four of the wounded, including Lieut. Kerr, were too bad to move, and the elation of success was damped by the necessity of having to leave them behind.

By midnight the Column had completed its main task. Lieut. Harman's party had blown many tons of rock and rubble on to the railway line, while Major Fergusson had riven the iron-girder bridge in two of its spans, making gaps of 100 feet in one place and 40 feet in the other. The various parties concentrated at a pre-arranged rendezvous east of the railway, and the Column continued its move towards the Irrawaddy.

Group Headquarters and Nos. 7 and 8 Columns reached the Irrawaddy on March 17th. No. 5 Column had already arrived there on March 10th. The Mandalay-Lashio Railway, the second main objective of the force lay some 50 miles further east.

Unfortunately the various Columns of the Brigade, which were intended to be spread over a wide frontage, had converged more than was intended. The whole Brigade now found itself enclosed within an area formed by the curving course of the Shweli River on the East and North, with the Irrawaddy forming a barrier to the West.

From now onwards the situation worsened. There were more Japanese in the area than had been anticipated, and these were hunting unceasingly for the Columns. Supply dropping became more difficult, because this gave the Columns' positions away, so that they were promptly mortared by the enemy. The troops had therefore, to go longer periods on short rations and were in danger of losing condition.

On March 24th Wingate decided in consultation with G.H. Qrs. India, that he would get out without making for his last objective. He ordered a supply drop for March 25th near the village of Baw on the banks of the Shweli river. In attempting to block the exits from this village, to prevent the supply drop being interfered with, the enemy was unfortunately alerted and quickly occupied strong positions which covered all approaches to the village. No. 7 and 8 Columns attacked these positions but although unable to dislodge the Japanese from their posts, by their action they kept the enemy engaged while the supply drop was being completed.

On March 27th No. 2 Group moved off, less No. 5 Column, with the remainder of the Brigade, with the intention of re-crossing the Irrawaddy. No. 5 Column had moved separately, with much

* All further references to clock time are given in the continental 24 hour system, which had been adopted in the Service since the 1914/1918 War.

publicity, in order to lead the enemy away from the main body. On March 28th, in pursuance of this policy, No. 5 Column engaged the enemy at Hintha, where after considerable fighting Major Fergusson decided to disperse with the intention of moving to the Brigade rendezvous.

The main body of the Brigade reached the Irrawaddy on March 29th and attempts were made to cross the river in the vicinity of Thabyetna south of Inywa. But after a party of No. 7 Column had got across, fire was opened on those on shore and on the boats still in the river. It was apparent that the enemy was on the west bank of the river in some strength, and the attempt to cross at that point was abandoned. The platoons which had already crossed were ordered by wireless to make their own way back to India, which they eventually did successfully. The remainder of the main body moved off to a convenient 'hide-out.'

Wingate now decided that the time had come to break up into smaller parties, each to make its way back independently. By this time one of No. 5 Column's dispersal groups had rejoined Group Headquarters, but Major Fergusson having heard the decision of the Brigade Commander to disperse, saw no point in playing hide-and-seek with Brigade Headquarters, and therefore set off with the remainder of his Column to find his way back independently.

Meanwhile, Colonel Cooke set about organising the return of the King's Columns. Group Headquarters was attached to No. 8 Column, and the men who had joined from No. 5 Column were attached to No. 7 Column. Each Column was organised into dispersal groups under named officers. When these preliminaries had been completed, the two columns separated, each to select its own route home. Each of the three columns, No. 5 under Major Fergusson, No. 7 under Major Gilkes, and No. 8 under Major Scott, set out for India independently and by different routes. Each was forced as it progressed either by physical obstacles or by the fortunes of war, to break down into smaller parties. These various parties, most but not all of which successfully reached India, covered a vast area in their different routes home, and the accounts of their adventurous journeys make most inspiring stories of courage, determination, and heroic self-sacrifice by men of the 13th Battalion and their companions, stories which it is hoped may one day be told in full.

One of these independent parties, struggling home to India, against all the hazards that beset its path, made its way as far north as Fort Hertz a distance of 250 miles from its starting point. Major Gilkes with the majority of No. 7 Column scorned to turn back across the Irrawaddy but marched with classic intrepidity through the enemy lines into China and arrived in Poashan in Yunnan on May 30th. He and his Column were most hospitably received by the Chinese army and were entertained to a banquet before being passed on to the United States Air Force by whom they were flown

back to India where they arrived on June 8th. Major Fergusson having finally broken down No. 5 Column into groups of about 25 arrived back at the Chindwin with his own party after only a four week trek. Major Scott, who it will be remembered, set off with Group Headquarters, was also forced to disperse into smaller groups, and arrived at the end of six weeks at the Chindwin with his main party and reached base in India at the end of May.

Most of these parties were dependant after a little while on such supplies as they could forage for themselves. Even those parties which had not become separated from their wireless sets, were unable to carry the instruments after the last mule had died or had been killed and eaten. It was not always possible to go into villages owing to the presence of enemy, or the fear which the villagers had of them, so this possible source of supply was cut off. Some of these parties marched for as much as five days without food, and were reduced to eating grass. One half-starved party of No. 5 Column coming upon some water buffalos shot them and impatient of delay, satisfied the savage gangs of hunger at first with raw meat.

When in the Group Headquarters and No. 8 Column party it became necessary to abandon the wireless set, as the last mule was dead, arrangements were made before doing so to fix with the R.A.F. a series of supply dropping places along the proposed route out of Burma. An approximate date was given for arrival at these R.V.s, and the R.A.F. were to search the area on those dates for smoke signals indicating the presence of a party ready for a supply drop. During the course of this party's trek it became heavily burdened with sick and wounded men, and on arrival at one of the arranged supply dropping areas a signal was laid out on the ground which read: 'Plane Land Here.' One of the searching planes saw the message and the pilot made three gallant attempts to land without success. Three days later however a plane returned to this spot and succeeded in making a landing. Even more hazardous and daring was the fly-out, which was successfully accomplished with eighteen sick and wounded men on board. It was considered certain that twelve of that eighteen would never have survived but for the gallant pilot and crew of that R.A.F. machine. Their action moreover proved the practicability of this form of evacuation, to the great advantage ultimately of the whole 14th Army.

The trials endured by these independant parties, some of which were lead by junior officers or N.C.O.s, almost pass belief. Yet with all this hardship, which broke down their physical strength, morale did not flag. Indeed, even in these conditions, deeds of outstanding valour were performed. Of such was the heroism of Colour Sergeant Glasgow and of Private Worsley, both of No. 8 Column, only two of many examples of gallantry performed in all the Columns. Each of these soldiers, in cold blood, willingly surrendered all hope of survival rather than endanger the chances of his comrades' escape.

Here surely is the highest form of heroism, the greatest embodiment of Christian charity, for no man can offer more than his own life.

Colour Sergeant Glasgow was wounded in a brush with the enemy, being hit in the knee. Private Worsley, a week later, was suffering from jungle sores which had swelled his leg to many times its normal size. In each of these cases their comrades wished to carry the afflicted men. But each of these stout-hearted soldiers knew that to burden his companions, who, themselves, were already weak with hunger and fatigue, was to jeopardise their chance of getting out alive. Each, therefore, independently and at different times, elected to remain alone in the jungle to await death in whatever form it might arrive, knowing only one thing with certainty, that this was the only alternative to the help which he had voluntarily renounced.

Between the end of April and the middle of June small parties of what were known as 'Wingate's Chindits' began to arrive back in India. Besides those who came under their respective Column Commanders, some arrived led by junior officers, some were brought back by N.C.O's. All were gaunt, bearded, emaciated men, dishevelled, and in many cases ill with one or other of the various diseases so easily picked up in the jungle by those not inured to its way of life. They did not all come back. Some were not there to hear the story told of their sacrifice. But those who had returned, had survived, by God's grace, a physical ordeal that had put their human endurance to the severest test, while many of them by coming for the first time into direct contact with the elementals, seemed to uncover a spiritual strength within themselves, the existence of which they had not hitherto suspected. It was as though artificial barriers had been swept aside and that they felt themselves in more direct touch with God.

Field Marshal Lord Wavell in his introduction to Fergusson's 'Beyond the Chindwin' says in reference to the 13th King's: "These men were not specially picked dare-devils who had volunteered for a hazardous enterprise in the love of fighting or in the hope of glory, but mostly men of an ordinary line battalion sent originally to India for Garrison duty. Yet as a tale of toughness and good comradeship their story would be hard to beat."

As they gradually returned to India the men of the 13th Battalion were rested and rehabilitated, largely let it be said, in hospital. They were then granted recuperating leave, and finally concentrated as a battalion in Karachi. Here in March, 1944, Field Marshal Wavell, who, as Commander-in-Chief had a little while before saluted the battalion as it set out for Burma, now as Viceroy of India, held a private investiture to decorate those to whom awards had been made, and to express to the whole battalion his own and the whole army's admiration of their exploit.

On September 16th, Lieut.-Colonel Cooke, O.B.E., left the 13th King's on appointment to the Staff and on 26th, Lieut.-Colonel A. J. Newall assumed Command.

In Karachi the Battalion continued recuperating and training for the remainder of the year.

CHAPTER III.

HOME 1943, REORGANIZATION AND SPECIAL TRAINING

Disbandment of certain battalions ; 5th and 8th Battalions become Beach Group battalions ; 2nd Battalion leaves Gibraltar.

While the 13th Battalion was cutting its way in and out of Burmese jungles, the shape of the Regiment at home and 1943 abroad was undergoing a great change. Only the 9th of all battalions now serving at home was to continue in its old role throughout the year.

January, 1943, found the 9th Battalion in Dover under the Command of Lieut.-Colonel J. O. Stuart, and here it was within range of the enemy long range guns mounted on the coast of France. A constant duel was kept up between these guns and the British coastal batteries. Yet during the four months that the battalion was in the shelled area it suffered no more than two casualties.

In May of that year this battalion took over an operative role on the south coast near Eastbourne, and in this area it suffered casualties from enemy air craft. But the period of usefulness of the 9th Battalion was nearly over. Under the Command of Lieut.-Colonel C. W. Harper, who had relieved Lieut.-Colonel Stuart in September the 9th Battalion moved with the 55th (West Lancashire) Division to Northern Ireland where it was stationed in Banbridge. This division, so long associated with the King's Regiment in peace and war, was now relegated to the status of a draft finding division. The 9th Battalion, the only one of the King's Regiment remaining in it, found itself providing drafts for other battalions until, in June, 1944, the 9th King's was finally disbanded*.

The 30th Battalion was also seeing its last service. Under the Command of Lieut.-Colonel W. B. Moorhead since July, 1942, this battalion moved in December of that year from Swanage to Dorchester, and there in March, 1943, it too was disbanded.

Later in the same year a similar fate befell the 70th Battalion. In December, 1942, this battalion which, under Lieut.-Colonel O. I.

* Although the 9th Battalion as such was disbanded in June 1944, the personnel of its Headquarters remained as a unit and became the Headquarters and Staff of a newly formed unit, No. 8 Primary Training Centre, which served until March 1946.

Atkins, M.C. had been carrying out a useful role in heavily bombed areas in Yorkshire, moved to Westerham, where it was organised as a field force unit. In April, 1943, Lieut.-Colonel S. H. Crowe assumed Command. Like many other battalions at this time the 70th was training personnel for other units. Now its troops were urgently required elsewhere, and in September, 1943, this battalion was broken up and the troops drafted to different Regiments.

* * * * *

Changes of a different kind were affecting other battalions of the Regiment, amongst which were the 5th and 8th Battalions. The 5th Battalion moved out of the 55th Division in March, 1943, and was ordered to Gales Camp in Ayrshire. The 8th Battalion (Liverpool Irish) followed the 5th to the same destination in July. Gales was a Combined Operations Training Camp, and on arrival there these two battalions found themselves cast for an entirely new role. It was one very different to that played by the 13th Battalion in Burma, but in common with the latter, had no precedent in the annals of the British Army. These two battalions were to form the nucleus of formations in a new organisation known as 'Beach Groups' a part of a well thought-out and highly organised machinery then under preparation for putting an allied army back into Europe.

The 5th Battalion became the foundation of the No. 5 Beach Group, and the 8th that of No. 7 Beach Group.

These organisations were to form an integral part of the invasion formations. Their function was to go ashore with the first assault wave. The primary role of the infantry in the Group was to mop up enemy posts over-run by the assault, and to form a perimeter round the beach over which the assault had passed. Other elements of the Group which, in addition to infantry working parties, included the necessary technical experts for the various tasks, would set about opening up exits and making roads from the beaches as well as forming on the open beaches all those essential installations and administrative departments normally to be found at the main base of an army.

With the infantry battalion as its foundation and all under the command of the infantry battalion Commander, a Beach Group soon became a considerable unit, including as it did detachments from every Corps which is normally represented at a disembarkation base.

Both the 5th and 8th Battalions spent the rest of the year in strenuous training, evolving the best '*modus operandi*' and gradually fitting each part of the complicated machinery of a beach group into its proper place.

Early in this training Lieut.-Colonel W. J. Humphrey, M.C., had taken over Command of the 8th Battalion from Lieut.-Colonel Binny who had been appointed to the Staff, while at the beginning of 1944 a change also took place in the command of the 5th Battalion,

when Lieut.-Colonel Thorn relinquished and Lieut.-Colonel B. H. V. Broad assumed Command.

* * * * *

In India the possibilities opened up by the experiences of 77th Brigade in the Burmese jungle had moved G.H.Q. to prepare for another "long range penetration" on a much larger scale. The 77th Brigade after its return from Burma was reformed and several other brigades were organised on the same lines.

In July, 1943, while the 13th Battalion was recuperating and refitting after its strenuous adventure, the 1st Battalion was sent from Ferozepur to join the 77th Brigade in its stead. Leaving the latter station on July 14th, the 1st King's joined the Brigade at Orchha, about seven miles from Jhansi. Other units in the Brigade were 1st Lancashire Fusiliers, South Staffordshire Regiment and the 3/6th Gurkha Rifles.

A different organisation had been evolved as a result of the experience gained. The Group Head Quarters had disappeared. Indeed its presence in the first expedition had been, as is apparent, quite redundant, for Brigadier Wingate had dealt direct with his Column Commanders. In the new organisation the battalions were divided into two columns, one under the battalion commander, and the other under command of the battalion 2 i/c.

Each of these columns had: (a) one rifle company, of four platoons, each of four sections. This company carried in addition to its normal armament 2 P.I.A.T's. and 2 flame throwers. (b) one H.Q. Company. This included Column Head Quarters Signals (Regimental and R.A.F.), transport, support platoon (2 m.m. gs. and 2 3-in. mortars), reconnaissance platoon (three Regimental sections and one Burma Rifle section), commando platoon (3 Regimental sections and one R.E. section), and an administrative platoon.

As soon as it had been reorganised on these lines the 1st Battalion began its hard training, during which, as in the 13th Battalion, the unfit were eliminated.

About this time too, Lieut.-Colonel H. K. Short was appointed G1. at G.H.Q., and his successor, Lieut.-Colonel R. A. Critchly assumed Command. Lieut.-Colonel Critchly however, was not left long with the battalion, but was succeeded in December, 1943, by Lieut.-Colonel W. P. Scott, M.C., who had so successfully commanded No. 8 column in the first expedition.

* * * * *

In Gibraltar the 2nd Battalion spent 1943 much as it had spent the previous war years. Some relief from monotony had however resulted from the success of the First and Eighth Armies in North Africa. For now that that territory had been cleared of the enemy it was possible to send over parties of troops from Gibraltar to be exercised in open warfare. The 2nd King's, in preparation for the day when it would participate itself in the battle, sent a company at

a time to Les Andalouses, where much was done to counteract the mental and physical effects of so long a period of stagnation on the Rock of Gibraltar.

Things were at last moving, however, in the Mediterranean theatre, and the situation soon took on a different aspect for the 2nd Battalion. In July the Allied armies invaded Sicily and in September followed up on to the Italian mainland. But the quick capitulation of Italy did not end the Italian campaign. A regrouping of the Allied armies became necessary, and fresh troops were brought into formations under reorganization. It was this regrouping that very soon was to affect the future of the 2nd Battalion.

In November 1943, the long awaited news arrived. The 2nd King's was to mobilise for service 'off the Rock.' On December 16th the battalion sailed for Egypt, in company with the 2nd Battalion Somerset Light Infantry (a battalion which had shared its isolation on the Rock) after a period of nearly six years service in Gibraltar. From Suez where the battalion disembarked on December 24th it went to camp at Ataka, where the two battalions from Gibraltar, as the nucleus of the recently formed 28th Brigade, now became part of the 4th Division.

* * * * *

At the end of 1943 it was clear that the tide of war had turned. In the Regiment, of the six battalions which were all that now remained, four were preparing for battle. These were the 1st in India, the 2nd in Egypt, and the 5th and 8th at home. Of the remainder, the 13th was recuperating after its Burma expedition, whilst the 9th, as has been seen, had become a draft finding unit.

CHAPTER XII.

THE END OF THE WAR.

Dispositions of the various battalions of the Regiment.

Towards the end of 1944 the 1st King's concentrated in Dehra Dun once more as a battalion. But nevertheless, as soon as leave was over and troops recuperated from the effects of their jungle episode, training began again on the column basis. The final overthrow of the Japanese had not yet been brought about and further long-range penetration was contemplated.

Lieut.-Colonel Scott, D.S.O., M.C., had meanwhile been promoted as 2 i/c the 77th Brigade, and had been succeeded as Commanding Officer by Lieut.-Colonel G. H. Astell, M.C.

In the spring of 1945 a great drive was made in India to increase the number of Parachute battalions in the army. A strong appeal was made to the 1st Battalion for volunteers.

In the result 24 Officers and 247 other ranks volunteered, and these formed the nucleus of the 15th (King's) Paratroop Battalion. The remainder consisting of those who had not passed the necessary medical category and the few who had not volunteered were made the basis on which a new 1st Battalion had now to be built.

In May of 1945 Lieut.-Colonel A. J. Newall, who, since September, 1944, had been commanding the 13th Battalion in Karachi now assumed command of the 1st Battalion, being succeeded in the 13th Battalion by Lieut.-Colonel E. P. C. Bruce of the Buffs.

Meanwhile changes were also taking place in Greece. In April General Ward gave up his command of 4th Division and left Greece. In September Lieut.-Colonel W. V. H. Robins, D.S.O., who had commanded the 2nd Battalion since May, 1944, left to take up another appointment. He was succeeded by Lieut.-Colonel H. K. Short, who had been in temporary command of the 1st Battalion in India in 1943, but who had now got his substantive promotion.

The work of the 2nd Battalion in the meantime had been various and diverse. Two companies under Major Cabrera had spent two months in Crete, after the surrender of the German garrison there, forming part of a force sent to keep the locals from attacking their late masters. The other companies had been disposed in detachments in different areas, and when Colonel Short assumed command in September, the battalion was somewhat scattered in the Amfissa

Itea area at the north of the Gulf of Corinth. In December it moved to a hutted camp at Aiyion which had been under construction for some time, intended to be the battalion's winter quarters.

In January, 1946, the 4th Division was detailed to relieve the 4th Indian Division which was returning to India, and the 2nd King's was accordingly dispatched to Salonika where it arrived by sea on January 31st. A week later the battalion moved out from there to relieve an Indian battalion at Veroia.

* * * * *

Germany surrendered unconditionally in May, 1945. Her surviving ally Japan seeing no future in further aggression followed her lead in August of the same year. Active hostilities in the second world war had ceased.

It is of more than passing interest to compare the composition of the King's Regiment at this stage of the second world war with that existing when the Armistice was signed in Europe in 1918. It is a difference common to all infantry regiments and reflects the development that had taken place in the meantime in the prosecution of war. For war had become by 1945, contrary to all previous teaching, more of an exact science, as physics and mechanics took a larger share in its development, and less of an art, the character by which it had been distinguished in the past.

Thus in 1945 there remained only four battalions of the Regiment in existence, as compared with the fourteen still serving in the line in 1918. These were the two regular battalions, the 1st Battalion in India and the 2nd Battalion in Greece, the one surviving territorial battalion, the 5th, which was the only battalion of the Regiment to enter Germany; and the 13th Battalion, the only remaining service battalion, which like the 1st Battalion was in India.

The 13th Battalion had spent nearly a year training in the Karachi district after its return from the Burmese jungle, but in the meantime many of its original members had been repatriated, until by June, 1945, the last of the old battalion had gone. The final surrender of Japan in August, 1945, had disposed of the necessity of such battalions, and on the 5th December, 1945, having sent a large draft of officers and men to join the 1st Battalion at Dehra Dun, the 13th King's ended its brief but historic career, during which it had done much in so short a time to add to the laurels of the Regiment.

The 1st Battalion which was under orders for Meerut was very glad to welcome the draft from the disbanded 13th King's, for it was still suffering from the strain of having given so many of its best to the Airborne Division. With this good material to work on the 1st King's left Dehra Dun in January for Meerut where it began once again, as in Germany in 1918, the difficult task of building up a peace-time battalion combined with that of demobilising time-expired men.

APPENDIX I.
Roll of Honour
The King's Regiment (Liverpool)

The Second World War, 1939 - 1945

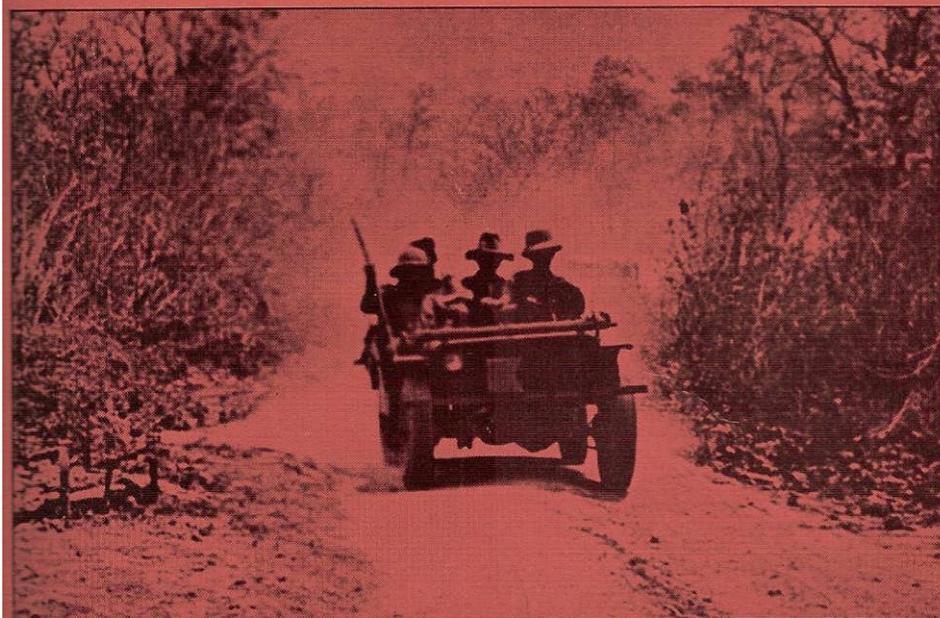
Number	Rank	Surname and Christian Name	Theatre of War	Date of Death
3783866	Pte.	MOORE, HENRY F. ..	.. Western Europe	7 June 44
5629590	Pte.	MOORE, THOMAS G. ..	.. Burma	17 June 43
1578545	Pte.	MOORES, EDWARD ..	.. Italy	17 Sept. 44
3777865	Pte.	MORGAN, JOSEPH ..	.. Italy	12 May 44
3771327	Pte.	MORGAN, TREVOR ..	.. Western Europe	7 June 44
1834791	Pte.	MORGAN, THOMAS H. ..	.. Italy	12 May 44
3776207	Pte.	MORLEY, ANDREW ..	.. U.K.	7 Dec. 40
4033981	Pte.	MORRIS, JOHN ..	.. Gibraltar	24 Aug. 43
3777388	Pte.	MORRIS, EDWARD ..	.. Italy	26 June 44
989736	Pte.	MOSS, RONALD E. ..	.. Italy	17 Sept. 44
14881881	Pte.	MOUNTNEY, DENIS C. ..	.. U.K.	19 Sept. 45
14228176	Pte.	MULLER, FREDERICK ..	.. Burma	5 Mar. 44
3772765	Pte.	MUNN, THOMAS ..	.. U.K.	8 Mar. 41
4465019	Pte.	MURGATROYD, ALEC. ..	.. Burma	Oct. 43
3861004	Pte.	MURPHY, LAWRENCE ..	.. Italy	20 July 44
34524	Pte.	MURPHY, THOMAS ..	.. U.K.	19 April 41
3766832	Pte.	MURRELL, DAVID A. ..	.. U.K.	20 April 42
3772147	Pte.	MYCOCK, LESLIE J. ..	.. Gibraltar	26 June 42
5627180	Pte.	MYHILL, HARRY J. ..	.. Burma	1 Dec. 44
4753992	Pte.	NAPIER, RONALD C. ..	.. Burma	31 Dec. 43
3775622	WO.II	NASH, FREDERICK ..	.. At Sea	1 Dec. 42
6461279	Pte.	NASH, GEORGE W. ..	.. Italy	17 Sept. 44
5110477	Pte.	NAYLOR, RAYMOND G. ..	.. Burma	30 July 44
3780156	Pte.	NEEDHAM, GEORGE ..	.. Burma	May 43
5043949	Pte.	NEWITT, ALFRED E. ..	.. Italy	3 July 44
4199398	Pte.	NEWTON, ROBERT ..	.. Burma	June 43
13097924	Pte.	NEY, DAVID ..	.. Italy	12 May 44
3766982	Sgt.	NOLAN, WILLIAM ..	.. U.K.	12 Feb. 41
3779299	Pte.	NOLAN, PATRICK ..	.. Burma	April 43
3448201	Pte.	NOLAN, ROBERT J. ..	.. Western Europe	6 June 44
5626002	Pte.	NORTHFIELD, WILLIAM ..	.. Italy	7 Nov. 44
3779393	Pte.	NUNN, ALAN ..	.. Burma	31 July 43
3782866	Pte.	NUTTALL, NORMAN G. ..	.. Western Europe	7 June 44
3779372	L/Cpl.	NUTTALL, FRED ..	.. Burma	May 43
3779861	Pte.	O'BREIN, JOHN ..	.. U.K.	21 Aug. 40
5627185	Pte.	O'DONOGHUE, JOHN D. P. ..	.. Burma	9 Mar. 43
3780708	Sgt.	O'GORMAN, ALFRED C. ..	.. Burma	10 April 43
3771086	Pte.	O'HARA, ARTHUR ..	.. U.K.	10 Nov. 39
3778558	Pte.	O'NEILL ..	.. U.K.	15 Mar. 41
3774338	Cpl.	OFFLANDS, WILLIAM ..	.. Burma	20 May 44
5111448	Pte.	ONIONS, VINCENT A. ..	.. Burma	Aug. 43
3778612	Pte.	OPENSHAW, THOMAS ..	.. Burma	April 43
3779427	Pte.	ORR, WILLIAM H. ..	.. Burma	May 43
4920978	Sgt.	OSBORN, WILLIAM ..	.. Italy	8 Nov. 44
3960978	Pte.	OTTESON, THOMAS ..	.. U.K.	30 June 44
3718984	Pte.	OWEN, HARRY ..	.. Burma	May 44
4202366	L/Cpl.	OWEN, HUGH T. ..	.. Burma	12 Dec. 43
5054545	Pte.	OWENS, ERIC ..	.. India	12 May 43
3441443	L/Cpl.	OWENS, ARTHUR ..	.. Italy	12 May 44
3656287	L/Sgt.	OWENS, RICHARD ..	.. Italy	12 May 44
5183080	Sgt.	PAGINTON, WALTER G. ..	.. Burma	April 43
5884463	Pte.	PAPWORTH, GEORGE F. ..	.. Burma	24 May 44
4469306	Pte.	PARK, GEORGE W. ..	.. Burma	17 Feb. 44
3779394	Pte.	PARKER, GEORGE A. ..	.. India	22 Aug. 42
4206761	Pte.	PARKER, JACK ..	.. Burma	22 Feb. 44
6287635	Pte.	PARKES, MARTIN ..	.. Burma	15 July 43
3773348	Pte.	PARKINSON, GEORGE ..	.. Burma	3 Dec. 43
3779270	Pte.	PARRY, WILLIAM C. ..	.. Burma	April 43

Even as the disorganised and depleted Allied army was stumbling out of Burma after its terrible, epic retreat, one of the most unorthodox British officers of the war was forcing those in authority to listen to, and act upon, his ideas for carrying the fight to the triumphant enemy. The first long-range penetration of Colonel Orde Wingate's 'Chindits' behind the enemy lines seemed to achieve little of practical importance. But its effect on morale was remarkable—for the first time in Burma a climate had been created in which Allied victory seemed possible

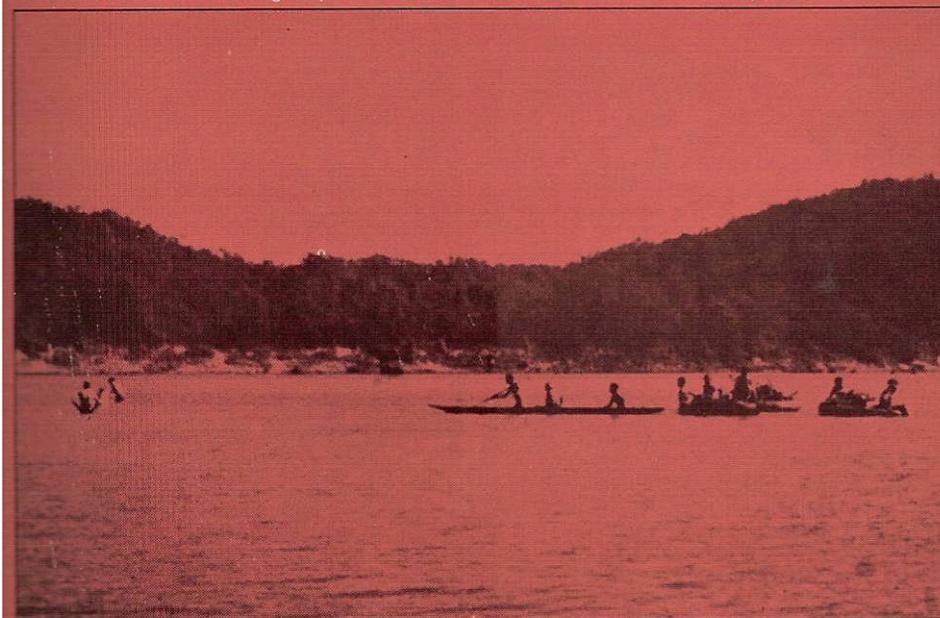
Wingate's Jungle Raiders

Arthur Swinson

THE CHINDITS



A jeep brings Colonel Wingate to the frontier, shortly before his Chindits cross into Burma. The last of the northern group of the Chindits cross the Chindwin unopposed



In May 1942, after the Japanese had ruthlessly ejected the British forces from Burma, Colonel Hiroshi Hashimoto, an officer on the staff of XV Army, was ordered to reconnoitre the frontier with India and report on the possibilities of a British counteroffensive. During the following month he flew from one end of the frontier to the other and found that it consisted of a long chain of jungle-covered mountains, some 200 miles across. There were very few roads; the tracks squirmed their way laboriously over almost impossible slopes, and plunged perilously into defiles; and every few miles there were swift-flowing and often deep rivers, which were seldom bridged. All the ridges, and therefore the rivers between them, ran from north to south and so created a barrier of formidable proportions.

Not surprisingly, therefore, Hashimoto reported to his superior, Major-General Haruki Isahaya, chief staff officer to XV Army, that 'there could be infiltration by small bodies of men, but it would be very difficult indeed to invade with large forces'. Isahaya endorsed this report, which was in turn accepted by Lieutenant-General Shorjiro Iida. The frontier, he laid down, should be watched by patrols sited chiefly at river crossings; the main body of the army should remain east of the Chindwin river; and responsibility for the frontier should be divided between the XXXIII and XLV Divisions, while XVIII Division faced the Chinese hovering to the north, and XLVI Division remained in reserve. In March 1943 Iida was succeeded by Lieutenant-General Renya Mutaguchi, the splenetic and ambitious commander of XVIII Division, and he accepted the situation as he found it. At Maymyo, where he ensconced himself in a charming villa, he even found time for his favourite hobby—rose growing.

On the British side there existed a strong determination to recapture Burma, but little else; the trained troops did not exist, and nor did the equipment and the organisation. The war was still being run from Delhi; and General Irwin remained commander of the old 'Eastern Army', with responsibilities not only for Burma but for a large tract of India as well, where troops were continually being needed to quell riots instigated by the Indian National Congress Party. Any major offensive—indeed, any offensive whatever—was quite out of the question and would remain so until the creation of SEAC

(South East Asia Command) under Lord Louis Mountbatten.

However, the man who was to lead one of the first offensive actions against the Japanese had already set up his headquarters in India and was hard at work, planning, proselytising, scheming, persuading, preaching. His name was Orde Wingate and he was one of the most extraordinary officers then serving in the British army. At this time 38 years old, he was a man of formidable intellectual and physical energy. For the past 20 years he had read voraciously on every subject from medieval France to Hegelian philosophy; and as he read he tore subjects to pieces, scattering old and orthodox ideas, and savagely formulating his own. There was a dark messianic quality about him; he had little regard for social niceties and abominated small talk. He lived continually under tension. He could be just as pungent and aggressive while discussing a taste for tomatoes as a taste for Stendhal. Furthermore, he was a revolutionary Christian, convinced that if only men would co-operate with God, justice and goodness could triumph: not in the distant future, but immediately. This belief (so his sister Sybil has stated) lay at the root of his devastating impatience.

Wingate saw himself as a boot up the backside of mankind. The fact that most of his ideas (both military and otherwise) ran directly against those of his superiors did not worry him in the slightest. While the British looked on the Arabs as their natural allies in the Middle East, Wingate proclaimed from the housetops that we should support the Jews. Israel, he argued, should become a member of the British Commonwealth. But, as even his enemies were sometimes forced to admit, his prophecies—however outrageous at the time—did not always prove wrong. In the autumn of 1939, for example, he had insisted that the Maginot Line was worthless, and that the Germans would smash through the French army in a few weeks. 'The British,' he added, 'will suffer the greatest Corunna of all time.' And nine months later there took place the evacuation from Dunkirk.

'Brilliant if unorthodox'

The circumstances which brought Wingate to India were these. On January 30, 1942, when the Japanese were poised for their attack on Burma, the War Office signalled General Wavell, Commander-in-Chief India, offering his services, as he had carried out guerrilla operations in Palestine and Abyssinia with great success, and it was thought that there might be a role for him in Burma or China. Wavell knew Wingate well: the previous year, when GOC Middle East, he had thought of court-martialing him for insubordination. Fortunately, he had a man-to-man talk with him instead and grew to appreciate his qualities which (as he put it) were 'brilliant if unorthodox'.

Wingate arrived as a major in March and (after immediate promotion to colonel) was sent to Maymyo with instructions to take command of all guerrilla operations in Burma, where by now the British were in full retreat. At Maymyo, in the 'Bush Warfare School', an organisation laying on demolition raids behind the enemy lines, he met the commandant, Major Michael Calvert, a superb soldier, who was to become one of his most successful lieutenants. As the army fell back in northern Burma these two men carried out a series of recon-

naissances, and later Wingate flew to Delhi where he submitted a report on what he called 'long-range penetration'.

His basic theory was that in a jungle-covered terrain formations could remain behind the enemy lines for indefinite periods, supplied from the air. These formations, he believed, would pay enormous dividends, as each man inserted into the enemy's supply system would be worth a hundred in the battle zone. The troops employed on such operations should operate as columns, each column being large enough to inflict a heavy blow against the enemy—but small enough to evade action when outnumbered.

For the first expedition he proposed that a brigade should be organised and trained, to be known as a LRP (Long Range Penetration) Brigade. This formation would march into enemy territory, disrupt communications, supply Intelligence information, and be ready to exploit such opportunities as arose to damage plant and installations. Wavell approved the plan, and the 77th Indian Infantry Brigade came into being. This was soon organised into eight columns, each with a platoon of men from Burma, and a small RAF section equipped with powerful radio sets. In July the brigade went into the jungles of the Central Provinces for a long period of training. Meanwhile—looking to the future—Wavell gave orders that the 50th Parachute Brigade should be formed, and that the question of gliders should be looked into.

By January 1943 the question as to when and how Wingate and his men should be employed came under active consideration. Wavell had originally intended that its operations should be linked to an advance by the Chinese and Chinese-American forces from the north, but, when plans for an offensive were jettisoned, he began wondering whether 77th Brigade should be employed at all. As might be expected, any suggestion of delay brought Wingate to boiling point, and he was soon drafting a document which gave six reasons for going ahead:

- The whole theory of long-range penetration must be tested.
- It was impossible to maintain his troops at concert pitch.
- Information concerning Burmese co-operation was vital, before any larger operations were planned.
- Any Japanese offensive towards Fort Herz should be scotched.
- Infiltration across the Chindwin should be prevented.
- Any enemy plans for an attack on Assam should be interrupted.

Wavell—not without some doubts—gave way, and ordered that the brigade should be ready to leave Imphal (Slim's forward base in Manipur, a small state between Assam and Burma) on February 8.

Faced with a definite task, Wingate now set about the detailed organisation of his force. This, he decided, would be split into two groups—a northern and a southern: the first consisting of his own headquarters, Burma Rifles HQ, and Columns 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8; while the second comprised a group headquarters and Columns 1 and 2. In strength, the groups would consist respectively of 2,200 men and 850 mules, and 1,000 men and 250 mules. The major units in the brigade were the 13th King's Liverpool Regiment (most of whose men were somewhat old for infantry); and the 3/2nd Gurkha Rifles, supported by the 142nd Commando

Company. As previously mentioned, each column had its own RAF section.

Having moved up to the Chindwin from Imphal, the northern group, Wingate ordered, should cross at Tonhe on the night of the 14th/15th, while the southern group crossed 35 miles downstream at Auktaung, both operations being covered by elaborate diversions. The orders for the groups were as follows.

- The northern would cross the hills to the Pinbon-Naungkan area, then move east and strike the railway between Bongaung and Nankan.

- The southern group would at the same time cross the hills to Thaiktaung, blow up the railway at Kyaikthin, then cross the Irrawaddy near Tagaung and make for Mongmit.

Commanding the subsidiary group was Lieutenant-Colonel L. A. Alexander, with Dunlop and Emmett as his column leaders. With Wingate himself, in the main group, were Calvert with Column 3, Bromhead with 4, Bernard Fergusson with 5, Gilkes with 7, and Scott with 8. All column commanders carried the rank of major.

'On the threshold of battle'

At Tamu on the last day before committing his force, Wingate issued an Order of the Day, couched in typical style and exhorting his men to action:

Today we stand on the threshold of battle. The time of preparation is over, and we are moving on the enemy to prove ourselves and our methods. . . . We need not . . . as we go forward into the conflict, suspect ourselves of selfish or interested motives. We have all had the opportunity of withdrawing and are here because we have chosen to be here . . . we have chosen to bear the burden and heat of the day. . . .

Our aim is to make possible a Government of the world in which all men can live at peace with equal opportunity of service.

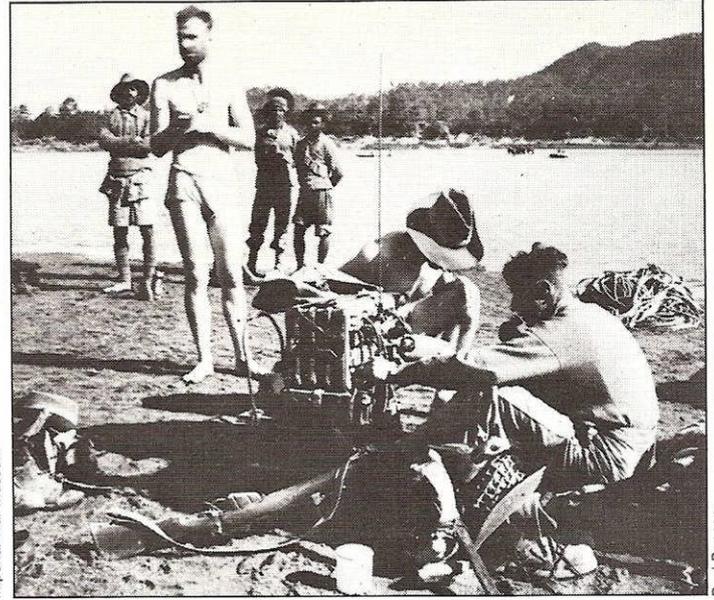
Finally, knowing the vanity of man's effort and the confusion of his purpose, let us pray that God may accept our services and direct our endeavours, so that when we shall have done all we shall see the fruit of our labours and be satisfied.

So the adventure began. Both groups crossed the Chindwin without enemy interference, headed east, and received their first airdrops as planned. The first brush with the Japanese occurred on the 18th, when the southern group hit an enemy post near Mainyaung and had to make a detour, thereby losing time. Meanwhile Wingate pushed on and by March 1 was bivouacking 5 miles to the west of Pinbon. From here he sent off Calvert and Fergusson with their columns to reach the railway and carry out their demolitions, while other columns ambushed the road running north of Pinbon and carried out movements to confuse the enemy.

On March 4, Major Bromhead's Column 4 had a clash with the enemy near Pinlebu and was dispersed, some men making their way back to the Chindwin. The following day, Fergusson reached the railway and, after a short but bloody action with a Japanese patrol, dynamited the railway bridge near Bongaung. Later he wrote of this incident: 'The flash illuminated the whole hillside. It showed the men standing tense and waiting, the muleteers with a good grip on their mules; and the brown of the path and the green of the trees preternaturally vivid. Then came the bang. The mules plunged and kicked, the hills for miles



Imperial War Museum



Paul Popper

around rolled the noise of it about their hollows and flung it to their neighbours.' Fergusson went on to dynamite a gorge to the south, blocking the line with tons of earth and rock. That same day Mike Calvert blew up two railway bridges, one with a span of 300 feet; it was his thirtieth birthday.

Reports had already reached Mutaguchi at XV Army headquarters that British troops were operating in the heart of Burma, and when the railway was blown up he began to take them seriously. The XVIII and XXXIII Divisions were therefore given orders that the intruders must be hunted down and exterminated without delay. But neither Mutaguchi nor anyone else could imagine exactly why the LRP Brigade had come or how it was supplied. Patrols working towards the Chindwin kept reporting that there were no signs of a line of communications and this seemed to suggest that, apart from breaking the railway at several points, the force's main task was to reconnoitre Japanese positions in northern Burma, before scurrying back over the Chindwin. 'If they stay in the jungle,' Mutaguchi asserted confidently, 'they will starve.'

Lieutenant-General Tazoe, however, an officer of great imagination and intelligence who commanded V Air Division, suggested that this was a misreading of the situation: there was at least a possibility, he argued, that the force could be supplied by air and kept in action for weeks or months. But, as there was as yet no evidence for his theory, he could not press it too far. And Mutaguchi thought it was nonsense. However, by the second week of March three Japanese battalions were on the move, the 3/56th Regiment heading for Tagaung, the 2/56th guarding the river crossings, and the 2/146th Regiment moving to the triangle of country between the Irrawaddy and the Schweli rivers.

No attempt at concentration

On March 6 Wingate was at Aunggon with Columns 7 and 8. The last news he had received of the southern group was that it had reached the railway line on the 3rd and successfully blown it up near Kyaikthin. News that the group headquarters and

Column 2 had been ambushed—the latter being dispersed—had still to reach him. On the 9th, still moving east through thick jungle country, he reached Tawshaw, some 15 miles west of Bongaung and 35 west of the Irrawaddy. Here he considered moving all his remaining columns to a rendezvous in the mountains north of Wuntho, but then signals arrived informing him that southern group was crossing the Irrawaddy at Tagaung, and Calvert and Fergusson with their columns were approaching it near Tigyaing. The latter asked if they might cross immediately, as their information was that they could do so unopposed. Realising that his force was already split by the Irrawaddy (southern group being on the far side) Wingate abandoned his plan to concentrate at Wuntho and told Calvert and Fergusson to go ahead. He would follow up with his headquarters and the remaining columns.

This decision was a most important one and increased the hazards now facing Wingate and his men: for there would be not one river but two rivers to cross, once he decided to retreat, and the Japanese would probably be guarding both of them in force. Some idea of the problem he was creating for himself can be gauged from the size of the Irrawaddy alone, which in parts is 1 mile across. However, Wingate's resolution was quite unimpaired; although the air drops had worked successfully, he considered that the case for long-range penetration would not be demonstrated effectively unless he remained in the field for two more months. The ground selected for his operations during this period was the triangle between the Irrawaddy and the Schweli rivers, which, according to his information, should prove very suitable.

Wingate crossed the Irrawaddy with his headquarters and the main body of the northern group on March 19, at a point 2 miles to the south on Inywa. Fergusson had already crossed unopposed, and Calvert after a battle in which he lost most of his mules, but the two columns had met south of Hmindaing on the 15th, where orders were received to destroy the Gokteik Gorge viaduct, which carried the Lashio road. By now the Japanese realised that the force was being supplied by air, a drop to Columns 7

and 8 south of Tawshaw being spotted by one of their detachments. This knowledge naturally switched Mutaguchi's tactics, and the patrols searching for Wingate's line of communications were brought back. From now on the hunt would be intensified.

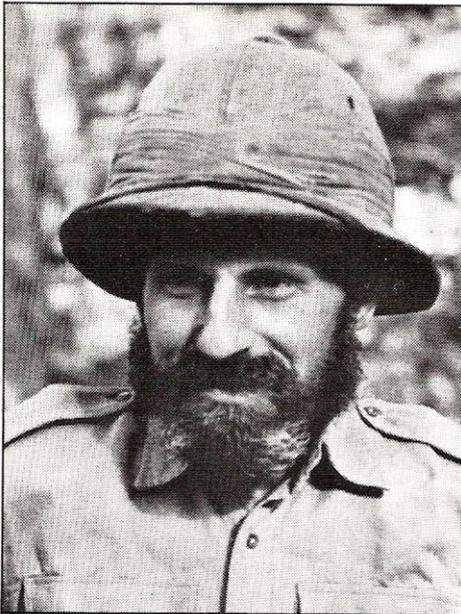
A terrible setback

This development coincided with a major setback to Wingate's plans: reaching the country between the Irrawaddy and the Schweli, he found to his horror that it was a belt of hot, trackless, and waterless jungle, intersected by roads and tracks on which tanks and armoured cars could operate with devastating effect. Troops fighting in a tropical climate need water every day, and must plan their moves ahead most carefully to avoid getting stranded. The need for water, it is no exaggeration to say, dominates tactics there even more decisively than the enemy. Somehow, therefore, Wingate had to extricate his force quickly from this arid triangle; though whether he could now do so without fragmenting it into small parties remained doubtful.

While Wingate considered this problem, Calvert and Fergusson moved south on their mission to destroy the viaduct at Gokteik Gorge. By the 19th Fergusson had reached the river at Nam Mit, near Myitson, to find the whole area alive with Japanese patrols. He signalled this information to Wingate, who arranged for the town to be bombed and also ordered Fergusson to move north to a point on the Nam Pan. Here he would receive an air drop, before covering the move south of Columns 7 and 8. This was a complete change of plan for Fergusson, and meant that he would have to leave the demolition task to Calvert.

It was at this time that Lieutenant-General Scoones of 4th Corps became anxious and signalled Wingate, asking if further operations were really possible. Wingate thought they were, and replied that he proposed to move eastwards into the Kachin hills, then operate towards Lashio and Bhamo. Scoones, however, warned him that air supply at such a distance would be extremely difficult and suggested an attack on Shwebo instead. The suggestion did not find favour with Wingate, and, in any case,

Wingate: 'a boot up mankind's backside'



Imperial War Museum

it was impossible, he signalled: information had just reached him that the Japanese had removed all boats from the river. Scoones' reaction was immediate and inevitable: on the 24th he ordered Wingate to withdraw.

For once Wingate did not argue. He ordered Calvert to return independently, unless he were close to the Gokteik Gorge and could blow it at once. He also ordered the southern group to continue moving eastwards, hoping thereby to mystify the Japanese. Then, with the rest of northern group, he decided to move on Inywa, near the junction of the Irrawaddy and the Schweli, where he hoped that boats would be available. So, having dumped all inessential equipment and turned loose such mules as were no longer required, he marched north on the 27th, covered by Fergusson and Column 5, which provided the rearguard. That night Calvert, who was near Aunggon, split his column into ten dispersal groups and also began the homeward trek.

For most of the dispersal parties the journey home was far, far worse than the journey into Burma. They were tired from carrying heavy packs through thick jungle and across mountains and rivers. Many were sick. Some were almost exhausted. Few parties had enough food and some had almost none at all. Calvert, despite his great exertion, seemed in very good heart and wrote of the march back:

Chunks of buffalo meat. Occasionally, a piece of python. And rice, endless rice. This was the food we lived on as we hacked our way back to India during the next few weeks. Our beards grew long and we were tattered and filthy. As we marched through night after night, using the jungle darkness as extra cover against the Japanese, we became desperately weary. . . . We got back in dribs and drabs.

The biggest disaster occurred to Fergusson and his column on the crossing of the Schweli. Tricked by a Burmese boatman, the men found themselves marooned on a sandbank in midstream with only a few hours of darkness left. Fergusson wrote:

There is no word for it but 'nightmare'. The roaring of the waters, the blackness of the night, the occasional sucking of a quicksand were bad enough, but the current was devil-

ish. At the deepest, I suppose it was about four feet six or a little more: I am over six feet one, and it was more than breast high on me. The current must have been four or five knots. It sought to scoop the feet from under you and at the same time thrust powerfully at your chest . . . if once you lost your vertical position you knew as a black certainty that you would disappear for ever.

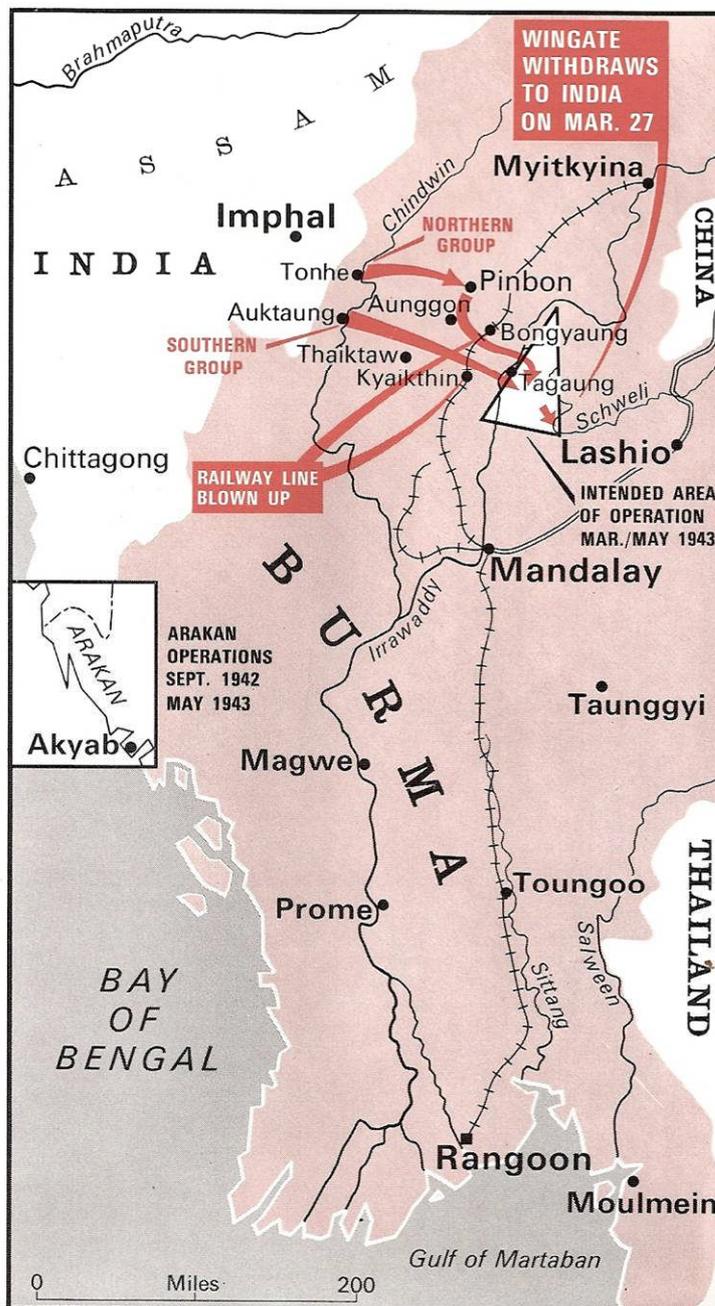
Several men did lose their balance; their shrieks and cries faded into the night. Then the boats were lost: and over 40 men—including the shorter ones—were still on the sandbank. Faced with a cruel decision, Fergusson gave them a chance to wade, then marched off into the jungle, leaving 46 men either drowned or stranded. Later on, after great hardship and many reverses, he split up the survivors into three parties, but there were many more casualties through hunger, disease, and enemy action before they reached Imphal.

Of the 3,000 officers and men who entered Burma under Wingate's command in February, 2,182 came back. Other men who were

left behind wounded or were taken prisoners-of-war survived till Burma was retaken. Comparatively few of the survivors were employed in action again.

What had the expedition achieved? In concrete terms very little. A railway had been broken in several places, but it could be repaired. A few hundred Japanese had been killed, but the enemy formations remained securely in possession of Burma. But, as events soon proved, the Allied cause in the Far East was to benefit in other ways. Blazoned across the press of the world, the story of Wingate and his men caused enormous interest and excitement. The legend of the Japanese superman had taken a savage blow; and the word went round the armies in India: that man for man British and Indian troops were superior. Wingate, in fact, had completely changed the feeling in the Far East; he had created a climate in which victory at last seemed possible. This was his greatest achievement.

[For Arthur Swinson's biography, see Vol 2, page 805.]



The first Chindit operation

On February 14/15, 1943, two groups of Colonel Wingate's Chindits moved across the Chindwin to begin the first 'long-range penetration' of Japanese-held Burma. The main object was to prove that a large force could be maintained for a long period entirely by air supply behind enemy lines. By March 9 the Chindits were nearing the Irrawaddy, and Wingate had to decide whether to cross the river, thus making withdrawal by his forces extremely difficult. Obsessed by the need to prove that his ideas were practical, he decided to cross, and to operate in the triangle (marked) between the Schweli and the Irrawaddy rivers. It was only when his forces had crossed that it was discovered that the triangle was waterless and open—conditions unsuitable for guerrilla warfare. Now began a terrible retreat—lack of food and water, disease, and Japanese attacks decimated the columns—and of the 2,182 men who returned only some 600 were ever judged fit for service again. Yet the expedition succeeded in that it created a climate in which the Japanese were no longer seen as supermen, and in which their defeat at last seemed possible.

The first passage quoted on this page is from *Fighting Mad* by Michael Calvert (Hutchinsons). The second passage is from *Beyond the Chindwin* by Sir Bernard Fergusson (Collins).

Lancashire BMD

Births, Marriages and Deaths on the Internet

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Lancashire Marriage indexes for the years: 1872

Surname	Forename(s)	Surname	Forename(s)	Church / Register Office	Registers At	Reference
NUTTALL	William	DEARNLEY	Annie	Preston, St John	Preston	229/32/249

Total records matching : 1.

No matching records were found for NUTTALL in the following years:

1866, 1867, 1868, 1869, 1870, 1871, 1873, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877, 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901

If you haven't found the **NUTTALL** that you're looking for, it may be that the indexes for your area of interest have not been transcribed yet. See our [coverage](#) page for more information.

Where the first surname is a web link followed by an asterisk (*), it signifies that there are alternative entries in the database for this reference number. Click on the surname to display the full list of alternatives and an explanation of why this occurs.

Many other counties have their BMD indexes on-line. If you can't find the entry in this area, perhaps you could try a neighbouring area. See the **Local BMD** section of



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Lancashire Birth indexes for the years: 1874

Surname	Forename(s)	Sub-District	Registers At	Mother's Maiden Name	Reference
NUTTALL	Gilbert	Preston	Preston	DEARNLEY	PRES/219/62

Lancashire Birth indexes for the years: 1876

NUTTALL	John	Preston	Preston	DEARNLEY	PRES/231/10
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Lancashire Birth indexes for the years: 1884

NUTTALL	Elizabeth	St Peters	Preston	DEARNLEY	ST.P/20/17
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Lancashire Birth indexes for the years: 1887

NUTTALL	Ephraim Isreal	St Peters	Preston	DEARNLEY	ST.P/27/73
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Lancashire Birth indexes for the years: 1891

NUTTALL	Isaac	St Peters	Preston	DEARNLEY	ST.P/41/22
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Total records matching : 5 .

No matching records were found for NUTTALL in the following years:

1871, 1872, 1873, 1875, 1877, 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881, 1882, 1883, 1885, 1886, 1888, 1889, 1890, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900

If you haven't found the **NUTTALL** that you're looking for, it may be that the indexes for your area of interest have not been transcribed yet. See our [coverage](#) page for more information.

Many other counties have their BMD indexes on-line. If you can't find the entry in this area, perhaps you could try a neighbouring area. See the **Local BMD** section of



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[Back](#)

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Lancashire Marriage indexes for the years: 1915

Surname	Forename(s)	Surname	Forename(s)	Church / Register Office	Registers At	Reference
NUTTALL	Isaac	FORSHAW	Ada	Preston, St Stephen (includes Chapel of Christ the King)	Preston	236/1/199

Total records matching : 1.

No matching records were found for Isaac NUTTALL in the following years:
1916, 1917, 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925

If you haven't found the **Isaac NUTTALL** that you're looking for, it may be that the indexes for your area of interest have not been transcribed yet. See our [coverage](#) page for more information.

Where the first surname is a web link followed by an asterisk (*), it signifies that there are alternative entries in the database for this reference number. Click on the surname to display the full list of alternatives and an explanation of why this occurs.

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[Home](#)

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[Back](#)

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Lancashire Birth indexes for the years: 1917

Surname	Forename(s)	Sub-District	Registers At	Mother's Maiden Name	Reference
NUTTALL	Marion	West Preston	Preston	FORSHAW	WP/23/19

Lancashire Birth indexes for the years: 1920

Surname	Forename(s)	Sub-District	Registers At	Mother's Maiden Name	Reference
NUTTALL	Fred	West Preston	Preston	FORSHAW	WP/27/48

Total records matching : 2 .

No matching records were found for NUTTALL in the following years:

1915, 1916, 1918, 1919, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940

If you haven't found the **NUTTALL** that you're looking for, it may be that the indexes for your area of interest have not been transcribed yet. See our [coverage](#) page for more information. **Many other** counties have their BMD indexes on-line. If you can't find the entry in this area, perhaps you could try a neighbouring area. See the **Local BMD** section of



Information regarding the purchase of certificates can be found in the [Birth Information](#) page.

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[Home](#)

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[Back](#)

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Lancashire Death indexes for the years: 1917

Surname	Forename(s)	Age	Sub-District	Registers At	Reference
NUTTALL	Marion	0	West Preston	Preston	WP/14/75

Total records matching : 1.

No matching records were found for Marion NUTTALL in the following years:

1915, 1916, 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975

If you haven't found the **Marion NUTTALL** that you're looking for, it may be that the indexes for your area of interest have not been transcribed yet. See our [coverage](#) page for more information.

Many other counties have their BMD indexes on-line. If you can't find the entry in this area, perhaps you could try a neighbouring area. See the **Local BMD** section of



Information regarding the purchase of certificates can be found in the [Deaths Information](#) page.

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[Back](#)

Lancashire **BMD**

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Lancashire Death indexes for the years: 1953

Surname	Forename(s)	Age	Sub-District	Registers At	Reference
NUTTALL	Isaac	61	Preston North East	Preston	PNE/3C/39

Total records matching : 1.

No matching records were found for Isaac NUTTALL in the following years:

1941, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975

If you haven't found the **Isaac NUTTALL** that you're looking for, it may be that the indexes for your area of interest have not been transcribed yet. See our [coverage](#) page for more information.

Many other counties have their BMD indexes on-line. If you can't find the entry in this area, perhaps you could try a neighbouring area. See the **Local BMD** section of



Information regarding the purchase of certificates can be found in the [Deaths Information](#) page.

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[Back](#)



Topic Summary **Re: Chindits 1943**

<http://thekingsregiment.proboards.com>

Posted by Stewart Mac on Jun 14, 2010, 12:57am

First post so don't necessarily know what I'm doing, or where I should put this request. Retired some years ago and at request of local vicar, have been researching local war memorials to build up a biography of all 20th century casualties.

One, L/Cpl Fred Nuttall, 3779372, k.i.a. 01 May 1943, aged 22, presumably on operation Longcloth, remembered on Rangoon Memorial.

Have tried National Archives for War Diary of 13th Kings without success. Any pointers please where I may find any details of how Kingsman Nuttall met his demise. Aware that many men just lost in jungle, but clutching at straws that an entry may be somewhere in a Diary.

Family lived locally, just south of Preston, Lancs, but have now died out, with no known relatives. Any help gratefully accepted.
Stewart Mac

Posted by [stevefogden](#) on Jun 20, 2010, 10:34am

Hi Stewart,

I have been meaning to join this forum for a good while now, but your post has finally got me to join. My name is Steve Fogden and I have been researching the 1943 Chindits for about 3 years. You may have seen my contribution to this website in the form of the 13th Kings Roll of Honour?

I have seen the War diaries for the 13th Kings at the National Archives and can tell you that Fred is not mentioned by name in the 8th column pages. However, his date of death falls right in the middle of the unit's last major engagement in their exit from Burma. This was known as the Kaukkwe Chaung action. Basically the unit was caught out trying to cross a fast flowing river and a long and serious fire fight took place.

There are some good books available about the 13th Kings in Burma and of course the War diaries from 1942/43. I can send you some more detail, but I will wait until you have replied to this post first.

Best wishes. Steve.

Posted by [stewart](#) on Yesterday at 11:03pm

Thanks Steve, grateful for anything you have. I was not aware even what column Fred would have been on as I have no family to turn to. I have acquired the Kings history by Burke-Gaffney in the meantime and am browsing through that now. If you have anything to send you can use my e.mail at big.makkATvirginDOTnet replacing the obvious, or I'll post my address if it's easier.

Many thanks
Stewart

Posted by [stevefogden](#) on **Today (27 June 2010)** at 12:09pm

Hi Stewart,

Glad you got back. I will be in contact very soon.
Cheers. Steve.

From: [Stephen Fogden](mailto:Stephen.Fogden@virgin.net)
To: big.makk@virgin.net
Sent: Sunday, June 27, 2010 1:31 PM
Subject: Fred Nuttall

Hi Stewart,

Glad to be in contact with you. I have spent a lot of time researching these men and their exploits. My Grandfather was a mystery man to us all over the years. My Nan just knew he had been a POW to the Japanese and died in their hands in June 1943. We did not know where or how?

I was lucky to find the casualty lists for the 13th King's last year and this opened up the whole mystery. That is how I know the Fred was in column 8.

I have attached to this email pages from the 8th column War diary for the time directly before and after his date of death. As I said on the Kingo forum he was almost certainly killed during or died after the Kaukkwe Chaung action. 8th column had taken a long route back to India and had been re-fitted with weapons and kit by Dakota supply drop. A couple of days later they were engaged at the Kaukkwe Chaung, this was their last real action before they dispersed into smaller groups and made their way out to India.

Fred is not mentioned by name on any document that I have seen, or in any book that I have read. But this is normal for the lower ranked soldiers on this operation. I have also attached the casualty list page for part of column 8 with Fred's entry on it.

Books that would give you a good idea of what column 8 went through are:

'With Wingate in Burma' by David Halley.

'Wingate's Lost Brigade' by Phil Chinnery, this is a very recent update on the 13th Kings and supersedes his previous book 'March or Die'.

The references for the 13th King's War dairies held at the National Archives are:

1942= WO172/866

1943= WO172/2516

8 Column diary= WO172/2519

Burke-Gaffney as you will see has a Roll of Honour at the back which will include Fred and my Grandad, Arthur Leslie Howney. If you Google my name or Grandad's name you will find some of the areas where I have been in my Chindit journey.

Sorry this email has become a bit long. Can I ask you a favour? If you find out any new info on Fred during your research, would you be so kind as to let me know. I have a 'Longcloth' database going and am always looking for new material. Even a photograph of his local memorial inscription would be most welcome.

Please do get back to me if you need further assistance or explanation.

Best wishes.

Steve Fogden.

WAR DIARY.
OR
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

Page 42

Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and information.	Remarks & references to App.
28 Apr. AMATYIGON (SH 45) 1100 hrs.	DC3 took off carrying C.O. and 17 wounded and unfit ORs. No further planes were seen or heard during the day. There was no W/T contact with 4 Corps.	
29 Apr. AMATYIGON 0700 hrs.	Recce planes were heard on the line of the IRRAWADDY returning 3/4 hr later. W/T contact was established with 4 Corps at 1000 hrs but 4 Corps had no messages for the Coln.	
1400 hrs.	Fighter plane dropped message stating SD plane was following to drop rations and clothing but would not land.	
1415 hrs.	SD plane carried out dropping. Maj SCOTT laid out the letter 'B' on the airfield to indicate his intended route (approx KADU - PAKAW - YEBAWMI - TAMANTHI). In a letter dropped the Corps Comd stated that patrols would be in YEBAWMI till 7 May and would even go as far as LAKE INDWAGGYI to contact the coln.	
1900 hrs.	After destroying the F.S.6, the coln (159 strong) moved off S.W., passed through SONPU (where there was one Burman on picket duty) and crossed and recrossed the NAPU CHAUNG.	
30 Apr KAUKKWE CHAUNG	The coln bivouaced for an hour before dawn and then moved on to the KAUKKWE CHAUNG, halting 1 mile SE of OKTHAIK (SH 32). A river crossing was then carried out with two rafts constructed on life belts. During this, Hav LAN VAL (Burif) carried out a recce of OKTHAIK, whose headman agreed to guide the coln to PUMHPYU. Burif Patrols were sent out during afternoon.	
1615 hrs.	Following a heavy thunderstorm, the bridgehead was attacked by a strong force of Japanese from the S.W. as the coln was forming up to move off. An engagement was fought, lasting until 1630. At this time C.S.M. CHEEVERS reported to the Coln Comd that the two Japanese automatic posts on the West side of the perimeter had been knocked out. The Coln Comd decided to move dispersal groups along the lower banks of the Chaung leading Westwards. R.S.M. was ordered to lead these groups out, which he did. Whilst this was in progress the Japanese attempted to put in a bayonet charge from the South. This was countered and driven back by 1st Platoon's Bren gun. At this time Lieut ROWLAND was hit in the chest and was last seen crawling towards the river bank. On its way out, following up the coln the Coln Comd came across Colour Sergeant GLASGOW who had had his knee shattered.	

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1
2
3
4
5
6

WAR DIARY.
OR
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

Page 43.

Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and information.	Remarks & references to App.
30 Apr contd..... 1615 hrs.	GLASGOW was ordered to lay low until darkness as at the time he refused all assistance of being helped along the bank and shouted after the Coln Comd not to return at darkness because if he did not shoot him he intended finishing himself off as he would not be a hindrance to his column. At this point the Burifs were seen in the Chaung. Surmised that they swung back to the far bank. Two Japanese then appeared on the top of the bank and started dropping grenades into the water. These two were shot by L/Sgt DELANEY. The coln comd collected and returned these men and led them westwards. No more was seen of the Japanese at this period. The coln continued into the jungle. After going half a mile a lot of firing took place on the left, bullets flying over the heads of the dispersal group. This was a Japanese force trying to draw our fire. The answer was silence. 15 minutes later mortar fire was heard in the direction of OKTHAIK village, where it is surmised one dispersal group attempted to go into the village and must have encountered the Japanese. Major SCOTT's dispersal group bivouaced for the night 5 miles NW of OKTHAIK. Of this party of 57 only 7 had packs. Excellent work by R.S.M., C.S.M. CHEEVERS, Colour Sgt GLASGOW and Sgt DELANEY.	
1 May.	Intending to move into the mountains, the party marched all day via the MANLAO HKA and DATANG, where rice was bought. Firing had been heard from the OKTHAIK direction at 0720. After splitting up the total rations of the party provided by the 7 men with packs (every man got 3 packets of biscuits) the first meal for 24 hrs was taken, during which the MYOOK from WASHAKAWNG encountered the party and advised it to avoid MOHNYIN and move via his village.	
2 May.	Without Burifs, language presented some difficulty but one or two knew a few words of Burmese, which enabled rice to be bought and guides obtained at RITKAWNG (SH 14) HPATWAT, MAWATAUK and SHIAMDABANG. At the latter village the headman produced Major FERGUSSON's chitthi stating his party had stayed there in early April. This was endorsed by Major SCOTT.	
1530 hrs.	Reaching SAGA (SH 0253), the Headman provided the party with a good meal and agreed to guide the party across the railway to NATMAWK between dusk and dawn. Owing to the language difficulty, his intended route was not clear.	
1830 hrs.	Leaving at 1830, the party with 3 guides, proceeded NW across country,	

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1
2
3
4
5
6

WAR DIARY.
OR
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

Page 44

ur, Date, Place.	Summary of events and information.	Remarks & references to App:
<p>May contd..... 830 hrs.</p> <p>3 May. Ry Area KADU SG 96. 0015 hrs:</p> <p>0245 hrs:</p> <p>4 May.</p> <p>5 May. NAMSANG- CHAUNG Area.</p> <p>0900 hrs. - 1200 hrs.</p>	<p>aided by bamboo flares, and crossed the main road on to the KADU track. A party of 21 in the rear of the Coln lost contact. (This party have since arrived inside our own lines, having crossed the ry just after first light).</p> <p>At 0015 Jap shouting was heard on the ry 3/4 mile South of KADU R.S. The party turned back and broke through a tree felling area towards the railway, now leading the guides. At 0045 a train halted at KADU R.S.</p> <p>Coln crossed railway, proceeded NW. A second train halted at KADU - 0310. The party, now 36 strong, bivouaced for an hour at 0415 and then moved on to a village EAST of PINMADE (SG 86), observing 'ap footprints and paper en route. Here it was learnt that the Japs (22 strong) visited this and neighbouring villages daily between 0800 and 1100. The three guided handed the party over to fresh guides who led the party into the hills via PINMADE, and the NAMSANG HKA to NATMAWK (SG 86). After obtaining rice and chickens, the party slept here, having marched 42 miles in 36 hrs.</p> <p>The party marched all day via NUMSAI (SG 78) and KAUNGRA, at both of which rice, eggs and guides were obtained, to LAMAI (SG 67). Here there was a very bad storm but the men slept in and under the village houses - The first time the party had slept under a roof since leaving MANIPUR ROAD.</p> <p>The party moved off at 0500 to LABYA (SG 68) where they re-enlisted a Karen Burif Nk. DA GYI - (ex 5 Bn B.R.) who had been left in the village last year. Here the last foraging for possibly 10 days was done, since it was decided to move to the UYU via the jungle. Every man had a drink of rice and wine.</p> <p>Led by DA GYI, the party marched to the NAMSANG via NATWIN, whose villagers reported that a party of 100 British had passed through yesterday to PAHTWE. Across the river, fishermen from MANSINGALE wished the party to spend the night in their village, where, they said, was a wounded Englishman recently brought in by a party living in the jungle. This was refused on hearing that a Jap patrol was in the area.</p> <p>The party bivouaced in the jungle off off the main MANSING track.</p>	

..... 45

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WO 172/2519
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Sheet 6.

Rank.	Rank.	Name & Initial.	Casualty.	Date of Casualty.	Remarks.
130	Pte.	Hazeldine	T. Missing	1.5.43.	
2772	Pte.	Hedekins	C. Missing	15.4.43.	
313	Pte.	Holland	J. Missing	12.4.43.	
781720	Col.	Johnson	A. Missing	1.4.43.	
4205120	Pte.	Lawton	L. Missing known to be wounded.	18.4.43.	
3781493	Pte.	Kimpton	H. Missing	24.4.43.	
3557765	Pte.	Lister	W. Missing	15.4.43.	
5115016	Cpl.	Leese	J. Missing	5.3.43.	
5119049	Pte.	Leahnan	F. Missing	15.4.43.	
5619837	Pte.	Low	T. Missing	12.4.43.	
3657218	Pte.	Mooney	I. Missing	24.4.43.	
5111944	Cpl.	Marshall	F. Missing	29.3.43.	
3628930	Pte.	Hoops	T. Missing	29.4.43.	
5111389	Pte.	Mitchell	F. Missing	15.4.43.	
1111673	Pte.	Mitchell	J. Missing	1.5.43.	
3713983	Cpl.	Martin	J. Missing	30.4.43.	
3775379	Pte.	Mollanus	J. Missing	28.4.43.	
3779239	Pte.	Nolan	F. Missing	13.4.43.	
3772372	L/C.	Nuttall	F. Missing	1.5.43.	
3778612	Pte.	Openshaw	T. Missing	30.4.43.	
5111448	Pte.	Onions	V. Missing	15.4.43.	
3781728	Pte.	Prince	H. Missing	12.4.43.	
5105644	Pte.	Pritchard	G. Missing	5.5.43.	
6287355	Pte.	Parke	M. Missing	18.4.43.	
3781503	Sjt.	Palmer	H. Missing	24.4.43.	
3777323	Sjt.	Quick	B. Missing	7.4.43.	
3781539	Pte.	Richardson	S. Missing	15.4.43.	
3563885	Pte.	Rule	S. Missing	5.3.43.	
3538443	Pte.	Robinson	A. Missing	12.4.43.	
3683229	Pte.	Royie	T. Missing	12.4.43.	
3778297	Cpl.	Roos	L. Missing believed Killed.	24.3.43.	
2653869	L/S.	Stephens	W. Missing	15.4.43.	
3781572	Pte.	Satchell	W. Missing	24.4.43.	
3781639	Pte.	Shaw	A. Missing	24.4.43.	
3772373	L/C.	Stehenson	W. Missing	24.4.43.	
5119100	Pte.	Shurdon	T. Missing	15.4.43.	
3777677	Cpl.	Smith	S. Missing	12.4.43.	
3186419	Cpl.	Sole	H. Missing	12.4.43.	
3781449	Sjt.	Scruton	S. Missing	21.4.43.	
3771389	Pte.	Thompson	J. Missing	24.4.43.	
2655844	Pte.	Tippney	J. Missing	24.4.43.	
3780143	Pte.	Till	R. Missing	15.4.43.	
4199545	Cpl.	Usher	J. Missing	24.4.43.	
3781565	Pte.	Walker	R. Missing	24.4.43.	
3538817	Pte.	Walker	J. Missing	5.3.43.	
3770353	Pte.	Webster	S. Missing	20.3.43.	
5119056	Pte.	Worslev	B. Missing	24.4.43.	
3968474	Pte.	White	L. Missing	25.4.43.	
3781547	Pte.	Wood	S. Missing	21.4.43.	
5107917	Pte.	Witheridge	W. Missing known to be wounded.	18.4.43.	
5105487	Pte.	Whymant	H. Missing	10.7.43.	
2184979	Pte.	Yates	J. Missing	12.4.43.	
3781417	L/C.	Thornton	W. Missing	2.5.43.	
3780149	Sjt.	Thornley	J. Missing	1.4.43.	
3776448	Pte.	Timsa	W. Missing	21.4.43.	
3968812	Pte.	Aves	D. Missing	10.7.43.	

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/Sheet 7.

Extracts from the war diary and casualty list of the 13th Battalion, Kings (L'pool) Regiment.

L/Cpl Nuttall is highlighted.

National Archives WO172/2519

From: stewart.mcloughlin
To: [Stephen Fogden](mailto:Stephen.Fogden)
Sent: Monday, June 28, 2010 10:38 AM
Subject: Kings

Good Morning Steve

Many thanks for your informative reply. Have surely leaned a lot in such a short space of time, but I still feel there is something out there that will lead me to that little more. Always hoping.

As I said in my intro, I have yet to trace a member of the family that would turn up those personal pieces of information that would lead us to what kind of man he was. I only know that he went to the local grammar school, but can't find out his interest and traits, nor a photo of him which is something I always try to find for our casualties.

I've found his family tree going back to 1872 but he was an only child as such, as his elder sister died as an infant, and there was no one after him. I continue to try via cousins, but as yet unsuccessful. Found his dad's death but not yet his mum's. Perhaps that will lead us down the correct path. Certainly hope so.

Shall sent off for the two books you have mentioned to build up the story of the Chindits for those that will read our story of Fred so that he is truly not forgotten. I'm finding it difficult after the elapsed sixty years to find someone who knew him, so feel I must find out as much as I can about him before the possibility is gone forever.

How did you know he was in column 8? Is there some kind of personnel list where he is shown?

Many thanks for your time and interest.

Stewart

From: [Stephen Fogden](mailto:Stephen.Fogden)
To: stewart.mcloughlin
Sent: Monday, June 28, 2010 6:24 PM
Subject: Fred Nuttall

Hi Stewart,

Sounds like you have done a fair bit of digging there. I have not really traced the 13th King's back in that way, although I have made contact with several families over the last two or three years.

I found the casualty lists for the 13th King's soldiers in the War Diary for 1943. I had looked in this document in 2007 but there were no such lists present then. I was helping out another family last year and took out the diary again, low and behold there were the 7 pages of casualties?? The lists are arranged in column sequence that being: Brigade HQ, then column 5, then 7 and finally 8. Page 6 which I sent you is the second full page of column 8 casualties. So all the men listed there with Fred are column 8. I hope that makes sense?

I may be able to get you a photograph of his name on the Rangoon Memorial, but It will take a little while to arrange.

As I said, any info you get about Fred would be of great interest to me and my research. Can you tell me the name of the Grammar School that he attended?

Look forward to hearing from you.

Steve.