



WAR DIARY OF L. C. MULLETT
1942 - 1944

1641438 Bdr. (RA. S/L.)



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Essex Regiment India 1930. Dad front centre.

FOREWORD

BY STEPHEN JOHN MULLETT (SON OF LESLIE CHARLES MULLETT)

Dad was born in 1908 and died peacefully aged 80 in 1988 at the home of my sister Kathryn after a short illness.

Dad was affectionately known as John by friends and family.

Dad married just after the war in 1947 to Iris Paine, they had a long marriage separated only by death, and were the parents of 4 children, although tragically the 2nd child Richard died as the result of an accident while still an infant.

Dad was a hardworking man, proud but humble, with a strong sense of honour and justice, he believed in the importance of education.

In the 70's which were my teen years the youth of Britain were rapidly changing in behaviour. I became aware that Dads sense of tradition seemed out of place amongst the peer groups of my friends parents, what could be described as "old fashioned," however now I reflect on those days I recognise that Dad passed on to his children the importance of loyalty and justice.

As children we had been brought up on Bible stories and to say our prayers at night, which led to Kathryn and later me, then Margaret coming to faith in Jesus. On the 7th September 1944 Dad made a diary entry that Mark chapter 4 v20 was an answer for him, this entry was one of many that reflected his inner search to know God. I believe that in the loving home of his daughter Kathryn, who cared for him in the last few days of his life, that this journey of dads came to a peaceful fulfilment.

Between them Mum and Dad taught us to stand up for ourselves and not be put down. I remember as a young child of around 10 years old how I had been tormented by a group of boys at school one day, which led to an exchange of blows. I didn't say anything to my parents about what had happened, however, the next day the headmaster sent me home with the blood stained shirt of one of the boys involved, with instructions to get it cleaned thinking I would get a further telling off from my parents for fighting in school. When I explained to them what had happened my parents gave me a shilling

and commended me for sticking up for myself, they didn't like bullies!

Mum and Dad both had an affinity for growing things. Mum for flowers to which our gardens gave ample testimony of, through awards and comments of all that passed by. But for Dad it was vegetables which he grew on his allotment. As children we frequently went on trips to the allotment at weekends to bring back the produce and here, to, Mum and Dad were successful in passing on their love of the garden to myself and my sisters. Dividing the allotments, was a small river where I whiled away hours gazing in to the water and fishing for small creatures within. To this day I cannot pass by a river or lake without going to the edge and peering in. Although I didn't know it at the time, there was something else there on those allotments. For me it was a place of adventure and discovery, a chance to get out of the house, but for dad it was a place of peace and tranquillity where he could get close to Gods creation and reflect on his own experiences. Dad very rarely told us about those experiences or the effect they had on him, although I recall him sharing them with old comrades who he met from time to time. When I read dads diary I became aware of just how much of life he saw in his service not only the 2nd world war, but also during the 1930's when he served in the Essex regiment in India.

It is a regret to me that I didn't ask him more about his experiences while I was still living at home, however in my early twenties I became aware that he didn't have his service medals and when I questioned him about it he said he had never bothered to apply. When I offered to write to the M.O.D. on his behalf he said he would do that himself, and a few months later they were received through the post. Dad's diary comes to an abrupt end, and it's a mystery as to why that is. Regrettably at the time it didn't seem important to know, and like so many surviving veterans he said little about his time with the Commandos. Of one thing there is no doubt, he was very proud to have served as a Commando, and his children are very grateful that he left us this diary as a memento.



Mum and Dad with friends on a reunion trip.

Campaign Stars, Clasps and Medals instituted in recognition of service in the war of 1939-45

NUMBER OF STARS, MEDALS,
CLASPS or EMBLEMS ENCLOSED **3-0**

Order in which the awards should be set up e.g. for framing	Description of Ribbon	Clasp or Emblem (if awarded)
1 1939-45 Star	Dark blue, red and light blue in three equal vertical stripes. This ribbon is worn with the dark blue stripe furthest from the left shoulder.	Battle of Britain
2 Atlantic Star	Blue, white and sea green shaded and watered. This ribbon is worn with the blue edge furthest from the left shoulder.	Air Crew Europe or France and Germany
3 Air Crew Europe Star	Light blue with black edges and in addition a narrow yellow stripe on either side.	Atlantic or France and Germany
4 Africa Star	Pale buff, with a central vertical red stripe and two narrower stripes, one dark blue, and the other light blue. This ribbon is worn with the dark blue stripe furthest from the left shoulder.	8th Army or 1st Army or North Africa 1942-43
5 Pacific Star	Dark green with red edges, a central yellow stripe, and two narrow stripes, one dark blue and the other light blue. This ribbon is worn with the dark blue stripe furthest from the left shoulder.	Burma
6 Burma Star	Dark blue with a central red stripe and in addition two orange stripes.	Pacific
7 Italy Star	Five vertical stripes of equal width, one in red at either edge and one in green at the centre, the two intervening stripes being in white.	
8 France and Germany Star	Five vertical stripes of equal width, one in blue at either edge and one in red at the centre, the two intervening stripes being in white.	Atlantic
9 Defence Medal	Flame coloured with green edges, upon each of which is a narrow black stripe.	Silver laurel leaves (King's Commendation for brave conduct. Civil)
10 War Medal 1939-45	A narrow central red stripe with a narrow white stripe on either side. A broad red stripe at either edge, and two intervening stripes in blue.	Oak leaf

INTRODUCTION

EARLY in January I volunteered for the s/s troops after an interview with the Capt of the troop I was accepted.

On the 18th of March 1942 I left Taunton for Achnacarry near Ben nevis, On arrival we were met at the station by a Sgt Sharp who was from beginning to end a perpetual moaner. Interviewed by O.c and reverted to the ranks.

Training was hard I thought I was fit but it was soon proved otherwise. Training was much on the similar lines as the peace time field firing exercises with the exception that you were impressed with the fact you have to work on your own initiative. The fellows are fair not yet having learnt to much in. Barry load mouthed seems to want a good drubbing.

After six weeks left for Dunoon there three days and left for Clydebank intensive course of street fighting. interesting weeks. but not enough practice with weapons. Firing lacks the imaginative touch so that each individual feels that he is on his honour to hit it.

Walked into a shop and got a few lbs of oranges to send home. yet down south they are scarce yet here plentiful.? Distribution.

Was asked to take over batman to O. C troop accepted but do not like it very much. Although you dodge a bit of rifle drill etc. Moved to Southampton and had a brush with Red Caps over shifting kit from one train via the lines.

Ideal place where we are stationed sunbathing and swimming a few minutes walk from shore. Digs fair. old lady still dwells in Victorian House does not believe in fresh air. Food only fair.

Started to drink fairly heavy but will have to give it up. Lost my badge at a dance last night and met a nice girl in restaurant who gave six pcs of sugar for a pot of tea.

When ever we go out I wonder the civis do not keep a still tongue in their head as a cross word with these high spirited lads leads generally to a fight. One bright incident stands out in my training;- In Scot. it is the custom of the keepers to burn large tracts of heather to improve grazing a large part got out of hand when we saw the fires in the morning. Cpl Farnsworth said, Oh they will just wait till tonight before they call us out. All thro the day it got larger and larger. Training for that day was fairly stiff. and we were thro at 7.30pm. True enough at nine general assembly sounded and we were bundled into lorries and rushed off to the scene, the fire was on a hill 2700' high. On arriving we jumped down and the Co was there waiting for us. Come on double up, grab those brooms and get a move on. After toiling all day it was just a matter of slogging fwd. I found it much easier to walk up in a zigzag. After beating, beating out one patch of flames you would plod on a few more paces and put some more out. When it was all finished we had to struggle down. Whoever has been on the Scottish hills only knows how rotter they are just after winter.

I found it much easier to slide down on my bottom than to walk, the snag being the rocks jutting out. We arrived in at about 1:30am three boards tresles and blankets were never so sweet. My muscles simply ached with fatigue.

MONDAY.
FATHER THY PEACE IS WITH ME. FILLING ME, HOLDING ME UP INTO IN THY WAYS.
TUESDAY.
FATHER THY WISDOM GUIDETH ME
WEDNESDAY
WHILE I AM LEARNING TO KNOW THEE, TEACH ME TO TRUST.
THURSDAY
THY LIFE IS IN ME, ~~BY~~ THY LOVE RESTORES ME.
FRIDAY.
I AM HE. THAT ABIDETH WITHIN THEE, LISTEN TO MY VOICE.
SATURDAY.
THY SPIRIT WITHIN ME, THY LIFE SUSTAINS ME THY JOY MY HAPPINESS ALL THINGS BITEW THY GLORY

SUNDAY
BE STILL & KNOW THAT I AM WITH THEE. THAT I AM THE PEACE THAT THE WORLD KNOWS NOT, I AM LIFE, JOY, PURITY LIGHT,
REMOVED FROM OUR LIFE ALL STRAIN & STRESS
By HE WHO HUNG, IS READY TO BLESS THIS LIFE OF MINE, WITH INWARD PEACE
IF I, HIS WORK WILL INCREASE.
IT MATTERS NOT WHO IT BE NEITHER THE STATE OF WHAT YOU SEE LISTEN TO MY INWARD VOICE
AND ~~KEEP MY KINGDOM TO PURITY~~ MY KINGDOM, THY CHOICE
LORD, PLEASE GRANT THAT THE NINE WHO MAY ALWAYS BE MY DAILY CHOICE TEACH ME, TRUST ME, LEAD ME ON SO THAT ~~THIS CHOICE~~ ~~WAS DONE~~ ~~OR THY WILL~~ WAS DONE, NOT GONE.



Above: Copies of additional pages found within the diary.

Left: Commandos Badge.

A FEW EXTRA LBS OF UNEATEN RATIONS & LANDLADIES POT.

ARRIVED BACK @ 12.30. FEET ACND AND 2 BLISTERS ON RIGHT FOOT. ENJOYED IT.

9.7.42 FEET OK AFTER A GOOD NIGHTS REST.

10.7.42. RAINING ALL DAY. WEEKEND TOMORROW.

17.7.42. HAD FINE WEEKEND. SAW EDDY HE LOOKS AND SAID IT WAS A BAD TRIP.

20.7.42. LEG HAS TURNED SEPTIC AND ATTENDING HOSP.

27.7.42. TODAY GOING ON LEAVE FOR 10 DAYS. HANGING ABOUT TILL GONE 1 PM. BOYS CHEERED WHEN COTTON BUFFALO ARRIVED.

5.8.42. ENJOYED LEAVE VERY MUCH. PRN IS WONDERFUL AND MAKES ME HAPPY. BUT HER POSITION AND RELATIONS MAKE ME RAISE A DOUBT. WITH HER I AM VERY HAPPY TALKED ABOUT HOME. AM I REALLY IN LOVE? I AM

10.8. RECEIVED LETTER FROM SYBIL WITH BEST WISHES FOR BIRTHDAY ON THE 7th. FORGOT ABOUT IT TILL I RECEIVED CARD FROM DORA TODAY.

12.8.42 RECEIVED CIGARETTES AND PAPERS FROM DORA

16.8.42 AWAY ON 3 DAY SCHEME. STARTED TO RAIN AS SOON AS WE LEFT THE BOATS. RAINED ALL DAY AND ALL NIGHT.

STOPPED AT A GIRL GUIDES HOLIDAY CAMP AT LYNDBURST.

LT. COLTON MINCHIN & I GAVE A BRIEF TALK.

CHAPTER ONE 1942

02.06.42 We were told of an attack on the 2 guns tonight starting at midnight. Crept through barbed wire. For first time at night. Anxious moment when two r.a. discovered some entered the camp o.k. Crawled over potato field. Got to guns and lost count of huts and guns marked.

L.M. D.12.Com. captured the guard room. Nearly strangled umpire walking about alone.

Cut tell cable. Alarmed I nearly crawled on to 4 post. Getting away one of the sentries walked within a yard of me. Carried on till 1.40am. Entirely successful

03.07.42 Moving the Cpt today time he dumped half his kit. Seeing B.C. this evening.

06.07.42 Detailed for firing course and bivouacking for a couple of days.

08.07.42 Enjoyed the bivouacking emmensely. Mosquitos a nuisance. Not shooting so well as I used to. All the boys moaning about the food in the British rest. I cooked mine and the Cpts started back Wednesday night at 9 o'clock. Marched to Warsah. Onto ferry. Thence to Netley. Then FSMD including a few extra lbs of uneaten rations & land ladies pot. Arrived back @ 12.30. feet ached and 2 blisters on right foot. Enjoyed it.

09.07.42 Feet OK after a good night rest

10.7.42 Raining all day. Weekend tomorrow.

12.07.42 Had fine weekend saw Eddy he looks and said it was a bad trip.

20.07.42 Leg has turned septic and attending hosp.

27.07.42 Today going on leave for 10 days. Hanging about till gone 1pm. Boys cheered when cotton buffalo arrived.

08.08.42 Enjoyed leave very much. Prn is wonderful and makes me happy. But her position and relations make me raise a doubt, with her I am very happy talked about home. Am I really in love? I am

10.08.42 Received letter from Sybil, with best wishes for birthday on the 7th. Forgot about it till I received card from Dora today.

12.08.42 Received cigarettes and papers from Dora

15.08.42 Away on 3 day scheme. Started to rain as soon as we left the boats. Rained all day and all night. Stopped at a girl guides holiday camp at Lyndhurst. Lt. Colton Minchin & I gave a brief talk.

16.08.42 Started to march to Lyndhurst. Scheme cancelled. Put on 2pr socks. Feet very sore. Took off socks when halted. Easier. It's a wonder the army does not fit boots scientifically. Had 6 pr. During last 3 months. Arrived at digs 1.30pm after 12.15 miles march. Feet very sore 1 blister. New equipment rotten.

- 17.08.42 Money missing from wallet £4 or £5 couldnt of lost it. Thou, almost sure I put it in T.L.H. Draw on dresser when I came back.
- 21.08.42 Capt off to Scotland.
- 23/24.08.42
Very easy time. Trying for new digs not much chance. Found new digs very comfortable.
- 16.09.42 Spent a week at Lyndhurst. Demolition work. Eciting and lazy.
- 20.09.42 Saw Sybil at Boscombe and spent a very enjoyable afternoon. Has a new post near Brighton.
- 23.09.42 Unexpected 7 days leave granted. Wondering if something is in the wind.
- 24.09.42 Everyone ill at home. Dad looks very bad.
- 27.09.42 Spoke to Doras father. The worst 15minutes I have had. Gave his semi approval. Dora very very sweet.
- 30.09.42 Not a very good leave rain best part of time.
- 01.10.42 Back today. Sunshine beautifull.
- 02.10.42 News of a move or a raid. Capt. Away for week.
- 04.10.42 Rumours strong on a raid. A & B loading mags and away on lorries we get packed up to move.
- 05.10.42 Moving to unknown destination. Arrived at Bridport.
- 06.10.42 Back to N. to fetch Capts kit. New digs very plain but food good.
- 10.10.42 Settled down in new billets, have borrowed .22 rifle from Lt. Col. Castle-Smith permission from a Mr Marsh and have shot so far 4 rabbits. Night scheme tonight Sunday.
- 11.10.42 A cross country march. By compass pitch black not very successfull owing to detours of finding way through heavy hedges. Map reading not so good. Dismissed ten miles away from home. Cross country on return asked position chid (chideock) once and came out 20x on left of starting point.

REMAINDER OF OCT.

One or two night schemes of brigade origin weather fairly good. Though cold at night sleeping in haystack for two hours. Off again and completed training. Stiff march at fairly hard pace. Finished stunt. & told roughly where Chid. Lay. Beeline over rough country with timoshenco. And came out 20x left of starting point from road re last previous night.

Enjoyed a good hot bath. Cln Castle-Smith arranged for me. Shot several lots of rabbits and sent them home. Field day:- Left chid at 11.15pm and marched till 3am. I break hard going through ploughed fields. Slept in ditch bank in Gas cape for an hour & half, slept soundly woke up cold & slightly stiff. Moved on & attacked objective. Got breakfast of porridge & sandwiches, tea went down well. Washed in ditch others in pudles of rain water. Left at 3pm. and marched back. Tired but singing well. TRP let it rip going thro villages when marching in to chid smartened pace up and sung our loudest. Afterwards a woman remarked thought peace had come. The day in regards actual training & shooting poor the sun shone beautifully.
Rumours of move very powerfull.

01.11.42 Instructions to pack up Cpt. Kit. & our own left chid for sher. Got in train and started for?

02.11.42 All day in train. S.service P. well organized tea & sandwiches at main halt.

03.11.42 Out of train at 10am. All stores on B. left for unknown dest. At night. Arrived inv.g. rest camp. Everybody looking at SS.S.U.

04.11.42 Disem and arrived at SHET.B.S bleak dreary raining moved into old house. Filthy condition. Remainder of day cleaning up.

05.11.42 Hear of interesting times ahead. Now called M. Capt F. lectured. all frightfully bucked at getting a Gerry. We are now in S.S.

6/7/8/9/10.11.42

Cleaning up generally. Explored part of island and loosed a few shots at birds. Trip in M.T. dropped target over and fired at it with new rifles. No hits. Tried my hand at 2pdr dir good ele rotten. Caught a few fish & had them for supper, pretty good and tasty. S.S. rations pretty good. unlimited supply. Rum ration issued taken neat makes you feel drunk. Issued with S.Westers comp. Fired rifle today 11th fires left. will move foresight over & fire tomorrow at my own target. wireless set has arrived & listened to the news the first time for weeks. Bought wool @ 9/- for 10 hanks. Lost A/C of days & date not knowing what day it was. Left B.S. on sat 21st arrived at L during early hours & transf. To T.B. remained below decks & set our Sunday morning for Lin N. Action stations on boat and tested all guns. Speed of crew remarkable. & very good shots. Pity poor gerry. Heavy swell & boats pitching & rolling. Sick. after breakfast felt better. Had good dinner. Gale blew in afternoon and evening feeling blue. Arrived N. at 10.30. Crept into Fiord & the three tied up for night. Touched rocks of N. in

bright moonlight. house with light shewing one of the crew said it was his aunts house.

... Still felt anyhow. Did not care what happened. Another of crew said his fiancée lived 7. kilm away. No ships in harbour. Moved away from moorings at about 4.45am Monday 22.11.42. Left slowly challenged by German P.B no reply kept on course. Challenged again. Sent "Heil Hitler" by lamp. Reply "Heil Hitler" & challenge full speed ahead under noses of shore. Btrys'. still ill but not carrying a scrap. Hit rough sea at full speed. Sick as a dog but we got away. Gale blowing thrown out of bunk several times and sat with my chin on lav pan sick. Crawled back in bunk and stayed there till we anchored. Felt better.

- 23.11.42 Felt weak but hungry. Stayed below decks all day.
- 24.11.42 Dressed in N. sailors clothes & helped strip & clean two .55 V.M.G. first time they had ever been to pieces. Went to pictures in N/S clothes & laughed to hear Soldiers talking that these Nor B.good & strapping fellows. They are the best treated us like lords.
- 25.11.42 Pack to B & off; mess like pig sty.
- 26.11.42 5 letters from home & sweater one from the dearest girl in the world. Princess. Starved for those.
- 27.11.42 Hard work in O.M. getting cleaned up.
- 28.11.42 Other crews back. Drew first blood by sinking two ships in harbour Fiord with two torps. Heard nothing of Capt. Crew.
- 29-6.12.42 House keeping, cooking etc thoroughly fed up.
- 28.12.42 Away on 10 days leave.
- 29.12.42 Delayed by rough weather 24.hrs.
- 30.12.42 Delayed at Lerick.
- 31.12.42 Set off in destroyer. Oakleigh. Rough journey to Invergordon.
- 01.12.43 Arrived Invergordon. 8.30. Train at 11am. Have been traveling since wed with little food. No places open managed to get cup of tea at hotel. Station master a little Hitler. Eventually on train. No eats. Managed to get tea and sandwich at Carlisle.
- 02.12.42 Arrived London 8.30. Got home about 11am.

- 03.12.42 Dad ill mother looks bad. Dora ill.
- 04.12.42 Sent letter to Sybil.
- 05.12.42 Saw Syb at land army HQ. Lunch & flicks very refreshing.
- 06.12.42 Not much doing Dora with flu.
- 09.12.42 Got Arthur & Ed home. Grand night at welcome.
- 10.12.42 Saw Mar. & Bri with Sybil at Wimbledon. Thoroughly enjoyed afternoon and evening. Just managed to catch train up.



Dad back centre with his brothers in arms.

*Left: Eddie
Right: Arthur*

IN THE WORLD. R.B. BEING ATTACKED WHILE

ON BOATS. TWO KILLED SEVERAL INJURED. COMPLETE

SUCCESS

24.1.43. 14 HOURS TO COME BACK. NO BED NOTHING

TO EAT. BAR. BACON AND BEANS. LOUSY.

25.1.43. PAID AND A LECTURE. SOUVENIRS

26.1.43. HOT BATH AT SAILED. MICHEN AND GRAND MEAL

CHAPTER TWO

1943

28.1.43. ON WAY. MORE MESSING ABOUT.

28.1.43. BACK TO FITTING WORK.

1.2.43. HAVE MADE UP MY MIND TO NOT TO BE RETURNED

TO DUTY WITH TROOP. THIS LIFE DOES NOT AGREE

WITH ME. INTERVIEW WITH MAJOR. IN TURNING.

2.2.43. WHAT FOR INTERVIEW THIS MORNING AND FOUND THAT

I WAS ON TRUMPED UP CHARGE FOR ROSTY STEV FORN.

THE SAME BEING RED RUST THRO OUT WHEN DRAWN.

WHICH I CLEANED TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY

AND NANNED INTO LE HELVINSON 29TH TODAY THE FIRST

I HAS HEARD OF IT. FINED 7 DAYS PAY. BUT ACCEPTED COURT.

JARRIAL IS HA REFERED TO HEAR EVIDENCE FOR ME.

GRANTED PERMISSION TO RETURN TO DUTY. VERY HAPPY.

3.2.43. UP AT OFFICE THIS MORNING WHEN CASE WAS DISMISSED

AWAY TO LAFER OF QUIN. SEVERAL DEF. SEN. LINDHURST

11.01.43 Said GB to D and told her of A.W.T Clark.

12.01.43 Back at Inverg.

13/14/15.1.43

Messing about at Lerw bought wool and sent it off to D.&C 22/-

16.1.43 Back to daily grind

17.01.43 A big job at last.

22.1.43 All set for job left BS

23.01.43

Set off on MTB arrived bit late crept in Fiord. Warned 15 minutes to go. Said little prayer and took some out of the box. Up on deck saw T.F fired, all hell let loose. Nosed our boat into Quay. Jumped. nearly broke leg with heavy load. Set off at hard pace, gerry getting it hot huts on fire, not frightened. just stolid. People out of houses and told to go home. MTB firing at Lervich. Very heavy. Pack strap broke 1/2 way to objective. Strugling to fix it and keep up at the same time. knife dropping out. People peeping out of windows brilliant moonlight night. Arrived dumped demol. Having look round Blew door to O.C. 1 hour later big bangs starting. Tried to blow safe no luck. Pinned on door achtung commando. Aufweidisan. going back. still with all luck in the world. R.B. being attacked. Safe on boats. Two killed several injured. Compette success.

24.01.43 14 hours to come back. No bed nothing to eat bar bacon and beans. Lousy.

OPERATION CARTOON

DATE: Night 23-24.01.43

LOCATION: Stord

UNIT(S): 10,12 Cdos

NUMBERS: 63

DESCRIPTION: A complete success, this operation's aim was to destroy the pyrite mine on the island of Stord near Leirvik. Members of 12 Cdo were accompanied by 10 men from the Norwegian troop of 10 (IA) Cdo under Captain Harald Risnes, 7 MTB's of the 30th (Royal Norwegian Navy) MTB flotilla were used as transport. Half the force were landed at Sagvåg quay and engaged the defending German positions there whilst the remainder were landed on the other side of the bay. The mine which was 2 miles away was reached in 25 minutes by the men who were carrying 50lbs of explosives each. The charges were set and the mine put out of action for a year. Meanwhile 3 of the MTB's went on to Leirvik in search of shipping but found none. However on the way back a ship was attacked and left in a sinking condition, mines were also laid. The raid netted 3 German prisoners as well as a quantity of papers and equipment, this was achieved for the loss of 1 commando killed, 2 commando's and 8 sailors injured.

- 25.01.43 Paid and a lecture souvenirs.
- 25.01.43 Hot bath at sailors mission and grand meal at café. Everyone listening to wireless
- 25.01.43 On way back more messing about
- 26.01.43 Back to filth & work.
- 01.02.43 Have made my mind up to ask to be returned to duty with troop. This life does not agree with me. Interview with Major in morning.
- 02.02.43 Went for interview this morning and found that I was on trumped up charge for rusty sten gun. The same being red rust thro out when drawn. Which I cleaned to the best of my ability and handed into LT Hollinson 29th. Today the first I had heard of it. Fined 7 days pay but accepted court martial as he refused to hear evidence for me. Granted permission to return to duty, Very happy.
- 03.02.43 Up at office this morning when case was dismissed owing to lapse of over 24hrs between incident and charge. Severly lectured on it and my letters on security. warned by MJR that on being brought before him on any charge he would give me the utmost limit of punishment as he did not like a person who had not the guts to take his punishment. Actual words stated in presence of RS.M Powell & SGT MJR Metcalf at about 10.30am. SGT Major brought gun this afternoon for recleaning. Have cleaned it with ashes have improved it slightly but still pitted with rust impossible to remove. Had letter returned which had been very harshly and unnecessary censored. Two lots of words could have been construed as a breach of security. Will save letter because I think that the officers now are definitely prejudiced towards me and will do there utmost to catch me out.
- 04.02.43 Excellent day's training and thoroughly enjoyed it. Legs stiff and slight attack of cramp. Recce on RD.F.S. managed to withdraw earlier than was stated and had tea at RAF vans.
- 05.02.43 Fatigues getting ready four party. 2 letters from home.
- 06.02.43 Fatigues loading BT. For move to new camp.
- 07.02.43 Fatigues loading stores finished afternoon. Done a little washing. Played Hat won about 15/-
- 08.02.43 Loading stores on trawler. Crew I expect will help themselves. 1 blanket taken under my nose
- 08.02.43 Stayed on board from 11.30 to 4.30 no dinner mess from MJR. Collect and pay for laundry 5/5- what with 6/9- owing doubt if I will get it. Lost supper thro same. Saw Sandison and have permission to take a few books.
- 09.02.43 Fatigues loading boat soaked to skin. took cisi letter to mrs Mouat.
- 10.02.43 Fatigues loading drifter. tin of marmalade and pkts of tea from one of the Canadians.
- 11/12/13/14/15/16.02.43
Fatigues cleaning camp in preparation for moves.
- 17.02.43 Left for new camp. all kit on open decks and thoroughly soaked as a gale was blowing but not too rough, arrived at camp in a storm. Hung every scrap of kit up to dry.
- 18.02.43 Out for short march this morning. Beautiful wild and desolate spot. Legs stiff and slight touch of cramp. Rain and hailstones so violent that it was impossible to face it. Enjoyed afternoon. Pay and fatigues. Clothes still not dry. Checked for slight touch of rust in bolt. Letters from mum, Dora and papers from both. Enjoyable day.
- 19.02.43 Fatigues nothing much today. Gales and rain.
- 20.02.43 March this morning of 10mls in just under 2 hours. A bit stiff at end of march. on return. Foot inspection remainder of day of Water failed in wash house.
- 21.02.43 Room inspection at 11am. Went up into hill to try and putt dam right. No luck. Tried to send mess to camp. my semaphore bad.
- 22.02.43 Fatigues at dam. Built 4 dams under SGT All hopeless. Could have done better on my own. Managed to get some water flowing into pipe. Afternoon off, boys being briefed for job, wish I was on it. Fatigues at Lerwick tomorrow. Managed to get laundry done by old woman. Looks a dear old soul.
- 23/24/25/26.02.43
General cleaning up of the camp. The usual 10 minutes work and 2 hours scrounge. Have caught a rotten cold.
- 27.02.43 A good healthy march this morning across the hills. Cold getting worse. Went sick M/D with a dose of medicine can't sleep very well. Boys overdue from Nor.

28.02.43 Rotten night have lost voice altogether. Fatigues that are senseless. No news of boys overdue.

01.03.43 March over the hills. Raining. Saw plenty of artic hares reached about 7mls then had to guess in what dir camp was and get back to it. Clouds low on hills and visibility about 50%. Just over 5.5mls out. Got soaking wet. Called at house and asked way back which I knew. Got cup of tea as I expected. Lift on lorry back. Milling camp in afternoon.

02.03.43 Camp fatigues cookhouse spud peeling. 2 small baths full, seven men all morning and part of afternoon. What an army. Cold worse, wrestless night. No news of boys. Giving up hope.

03.03.43 Rotten night. Sick temp 97.2. ATT A. morse and treasure hunt. Very enjoyable morning. got 1/2 doz eggs. Field firing with little or no object behind it. Actually a waste of good amn. Boys arrived after 10 days in Nor. Looked pretty rough.

04.03.43 Fatigues in cookhouse today. Sick this morning a little better, bit easier night. Fine cold day. Raining tonight. Electric motor failed issued with 2 candles to light hut. Borrowed 2 lamps from naffi. Letter from D.

05.03.43 Cold a little better. Visit to Lerwick had good meals. Pictures & dance in evening. Free fight at end caused by two fools in R.A who said commandos supposed to be tough. and these German Norge. B___ that started it.

05.03.43 M.P. civil police. Our boys were there like a lot of flies attracted by honey. The agitators were a sorry sight left ler. In open truck. Wind and rain. Glad of oileskin. Nightmare 27mls. Arrived back at 1am.

06.03.43 Scrounge all day. Paraded for laundry tabs. Rumours of leaving at end of month.

07.03.43 Scrounging all day.

08.03.43 Better night. Sick this morning. Scrounging the remainder. Pictures this evening. Very good thoroughly enjoyed every moment.

09.03.43 Fatigues cold improving.

10.03.43 Fatigues fed up with picking up paper around camp.

11.03.43 Arrival of 4 yanks to do training with us not bad fellows.

11.03.43 On assault course today not bad.

12.03.43 Fatigues

13.03.43 Assault course again and got a bit muddy. Lewick & pictures afternoon. No wool for D. Had a good fish and chip meal.

14.03.43 Sunday. Nothing much today.

15.03.43 A nice march in a gale of hailstorms, soaking wet and still holding onto cold well. Guard tonight, pretty cushy keeping fires going.

16.03.43 Lovely hot shower at 6am. Called Piper and made him play reveillee 15 mints earlier. Boys cribbing.

17.03.43 P.T. at 7am. Stunt all day at 10am on artic rations of choc. Concen. Fruit. 2 barley sweets and 1/2 doz biscuits and a pint of tea. Lucky job. Managed to wangle tea and sandwiches at c of scot at RAF camp Sollum. Then tea at R.D.F station. Enjoyed walks over hills. Going hard stiff back muscles. Must make alteration to rangers equipment next time. Made complaint about food. Mess meeting tomorrow.

18.03.43 Cleaning up for Brig. Inspection tomorrow. Mess meeting on shortage of food.

19.03.43 Scheme for Brig who did not arrive till afternoon. Fairly hard day. Show tonight fair. Arrived back to hear night scheme at 10.45. Feeling much fitter.

20.03.43 Finished night scheme at 2am. PT @ 7.30. Fatigues remainder of day.

21.03.43 All troop bussing with rumours of leaving. Boot & clothes inspection.

22.03.43 Everybody told we leave on Wednesday 24th. Handing in special kit. All a wee bit mad. Nothing much to do.

23.03.43 Nothing to do today except scrounge and pack our kit. Hurray for leave soon. Joining com. at Braemar.

24.03.43 All packed up & waiting to go. left Sollum Voe at 6.30 to the sound of 3 mighty cheers. Embarked on Amsterdam. Remained all night aboard. Lost 10/- playing Nap

25.03.43 Sailed at 9.00 today. Played NAP and lost 10/- to 12/-. No luck. Arrived Invergordon 9.00pm. Arrived Braemar after a 12 hour bus ride.



Essex Regiment India 1930. Dad right.

- 26.03.43 Nothing to do all day save draw equipment and clean up same. Have hunted for scrubbing brush and place to clean it up so will have to take it home. and do it. Have seen pay master about pay.
- 27.03.43 Drill parade for RSM very good indeed. Saw local boot maker and repaired two pr of shoes. Spent evening cleaning equipment and polishing shoes for leave. Bed 10-15. Fine day. Saw first daily paper for months.
- 28.03.43 Nothing to do than laze the day away
- 29.03.43 Arms drill, RSM. very pleased. Handing in kit for leave tomorrow. Left Braemar 05.45. Ar: Edinburgh 1.20. 2 hr wait their and at
- 30.03.43 Newcastle. 3 of our lads hopeless in Edinburgh. put rifles & res in station masters office.
- 31.03.43 Arrived Kings Cross 06.05. Home at 08.30. Breakfast and up to town saw Mr Mitchell. Dora at 5.30 wonderfull evening. Dinner at strand C.H. - phoned S.&B. a perfect joy to be home.
- 01.04.43 TO 07.04.43
Up town at 12 have seen Guv and rest very pleased to see me. Have had the finest leave since joining. Thanks to Dora she is the finest sweetest girl any man could wish for and have felt awfully proud of her. I love her so much.
- 08.04.43 Arrive Dorch @ 6-pm. Snack at church army. Reported looked for billets and heard it was pretty hopeless.
- 09.04.43 Fatigues till 3pm. Remainder of day looking for billets pretty hopeless. Went to pictures "nine men" not bad. Phoning Pr tonight. Slept at Y.M.C.A
- 10.04.43 A few fatigues today. No billets in Dorch. Suddenly moved this afternoon to Upwy quite a large house with lovely gardens and an old lady of 76 with house keeper.
- 11.04.43 This morning busy cleaning up and unpacking quite a good lunch. Walked and hitchhiked to W not much there.
- 12.04.43 Dorch. For fatigues. Fine weather
- 13.04.43 Not much doing. Digs are first class and very kind people
- 14.04.43 Weather marvelous. A Small compass march over hills ok.

15.04.43 Piquet quite day

16.4.43 Sgt R. Feeling his feet and plenty of B about.

17.04.43 Dorch. R.S.M. parade fine weather and enjoyed it. Sad news we have to look for fresh digs at Dorch. No luck though. None of the lads are looking because we do not want to leave UPWE. Lovely walk over hills in the moonlight.

18.04.43 Dorch. Exchanging clothes etc. remainder of day lazing.

19.04.43 P.T. 7am enjoyed it. Small march. Enjoyed the day.

20.04.43 P.T. have to go to Dorch on N.CO.S course.

22.04.43 New digs grand. Enjoying course went to whist drive tonight moving to Weston on Wednesday. No letters or telegramme this week. Discussion on theology with 3 landladies daughter. Thought of church did not go. would have with Dora.

26.04.43 Bank holiday no work. Short walk pictures and cards

29.04.43 General duties nothing exciting happening. Small Recce.

30.04.43 Party got split up. rode on lorry back.

01.05.43 RSMs parade good drill. Commando improving in smartness saw credit slip up to Feb. 1st time for a year. Rumours of stiff training in the near future. Off to Taunton for a few hours to see how all the friends are. Letters from Sybil and her aunt. Took 10 days to arrive. Caught train to Taunton 6.30.

02.05.43 Gwen convalescence. Stayed with Mr & Mrs Bailey. Saw Mr & Mrs Jones returned to W.S.M early on Piquet.

03.05.43 Piquet all day. Nothing much to do. Fairly quiet eveing with RA fiend from G.L. Late night 11.30am

04.05.43 Early on range. Shooting fair but mag useless for radio. Won 2nd prize in a pool shoot out of 19. Seeing R.A for darts match tonight.

26.05.43 Have moved to HMS Vectis on 21st. Found billets hard job gone into intensive training. Very hard and feeling a bit stiff. P.T every morning 7-15. out to Newport and Elmsford Farm in rope soled boots. feet blistered and sore.

03.06.43 & 04.06.43
P.T on river all day and out at midnight. Wet through three times and enjoyed it. Weather severe showers.

05.06.43 Out tonight cold coming on. Sick bay for dose of medicine could not sleep. Feverish. Dory holed in bottom. So had naps curled up in corner of Bulkhead with roar of engines for a lullaby. Also stung for piquet out of my turn.

09.06.43 Have been tired out too complete diary daily. Been having strenuous time on boats every night. Sat & Sundays soaked on average three times in 24 hours. Leaving IOW tomorrow at 8.30 not sorry to see the end of boating.

10.06.43 Move to D today passed thro Lewisham and felt a wee bit homesick. Looking over part of D and it is not half so bad as reports make out.

11.06.43 Busy day house cleaning, making nothing go a long way. Good prospects of a weekend tomorrow. Phoned to D grand to hear her speak. Pictures saw cassablanca. Not much behind it. Lacks gripping power.

19.06.43 Home for weekend.

20.06.43 Most glorious afternoon with P.R memorable

25.06.43 All night work. Feeling tired thro lack of good nights sleep. Out tonight 9 o'clock.

26.06.43 First night in bed for long time. Feeling bit tired.

27.06.43 Briefed for job. out tonight. Training. Gerry shelling Dover.

03.07.43 Embarked @ pens 10 o'clock. in M.T.B. Landed in France 1-50 cut wire and laid ambush on road. Very easy. Saw no patrols but our aircraft busy bombing. MTB gave us a scare by following us out. Prepared to bomb when she came alongside.

04.07.43 Breakfast at Pens all day in bed.

05.07.43 Short march. Signalling then fatigues all day pictures bored stiff. France last night. Nothing doing.

06.07.43 Fatigues all day. Pictures this evening. Boring. Might be leave at end of week. They would because Dora will have had hers. I have missed her a lot lately, in sad need of her love.

08.07.43 Leave 7 days after messing about.

09.07.43 – 16.07.43
Had wonderful time with D at Stowmarket and at home especially the last day. It was heaven. Saw Sybil.

17.07.43 Settled down to work on Dory. 5 mile run and walk in afternoon. Swim after it. Here they are breaking commando up and we have to make up our mind whether to go back or to another commando. Don't like the idea at all.

18.07.43 Church parade 9.15. Padre preached a sermon on tradition in the navy. Never heard a word of religion. Hated it. Decided to go back to unit after this job is over and start again.

19.07.43 P.T 7am. Run not very good for physique. Out boating in power Dory. Soaked to skin. Back at 1.30. 3pm 2 hours morse etc. 8-10pm lecture on mines.

20.07.43 P.T. 7am don't feel fit after it at all. No body likes it so do not do it properly. Out in boat wet through again. Out tonight 10pm. Henry is a big bore. Not one of det. like him.

22.07.43 Moving again to Dover. Have said G.B to H and would like to see them again. They are very nice people.

23.07.43 Left IOW by lorry traveled all day arrived D @ 9pm. Fed up with little Hitler Rafferty. A pompous ass of a SGT.

24.07.43 Looking for digs for another 14. PT this afternoon enjoyed it. Pictures this evening. Saw The Edge of Darkness on Norge. Not bad. Parade tomorrow 9.15pm.

25.07.43 Painted D in morning. Afternoon slept. Paraded 20.00 night scheme finished 04.00 not bad.

26.07.43 Lots of messing about. P.T patrol nothing much finished on B. Pipe broken so returned earlier than expected home by 0200. 1 Letter received from island.

27.07.43 Paraded 10. Briefed. Swim this afternoon.

30.07.43 Left S.D @ 10. 1/2 way turned back weather to rough.

31.07.43 Left S.D. ok reached shore 12.45 could not determine place turned back. Thunderstorms severe lightning shore alarm given on way back ran into 3 R boats, anxious time holed in few places. Just looked at bullet holes appearing. Felt no fear just curiosity. Up on deck every one lying flat. 1 severely wounded arrived back 4.30 had breakfast bacon & eggs.

01.08.43 Easy day in bed.

02.08.43 PT & swimming this afternoon. Night SCH. Through wood worst one I have been through. Finished 1.30. Back at 3am. Blistered feet in rubber boots.

03.08.43 New Dorios rolling them up the beach. Roller went over foot. Badly bruised miss night scheme sick tomorrow.

04.08.43 Sick parade Apt.B. light duties all day. Glorious to have a rest all day. Shelling tonight for a few hours.

05.08.43 Easy day pictures. Letter from mum 10/- for birthday present.

06.08.43 P.T. morning. fairly easy day but training boring lacks imagination. Spoke to Dora on phone grand.

07.08.43 P.T. 7.15am messing about till 10.30 Briefed. cancelled. Letter from loved one. How marvelous to be loved.

08.08.43 Easy day. Bored stiff nothing to do. All day to do it in.

09.08.43 My birthday. Cards from all. Hear we are returning to B.R. burning ? leave. Letter from Sybil's aunt. Unexpected gift of £1-00 from Fox III. Easy day handing in s/kit.

10.08.43 No leave. Hell with Henry. He is a miserable old devil. Sprint march this morning. Morse and swimming this afternoon. Wrote 3 letters.

11.08.43 Swim at 7.15. Shelling started 10.30 no one hurt. Put in for farming in evenings. Start tomorrow.

12.08.43 Moved to Peac; in a great hurry. By road. Arrived 3pm found very nice digs with a Mrs Kaye widower.

13.08.43 Spent all day getting billets. Fairly successful.

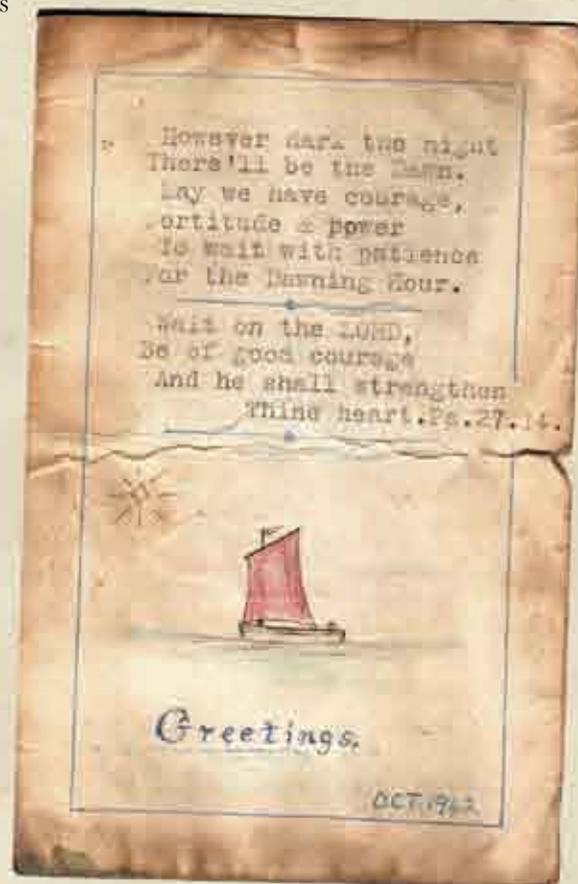
14.08.43 Had a good nights rest. Billets splendid. Remainder of the day getting last billets & 4 of them came in today.

15.08.43 A day off today. a very nice warm SXXling day. Nothing to do except a few stores to unload.

16.08.43 Boys moved in to day. Busy putting in stores.

17.08.43 More stores in. PT on front easy day. Mrs Kaye very nice billet the best I have had and the bungalow perfect. Ideal for PR & I. Bombshell moving borrowed £1 for lodgings.

- 18.08.43 Traveled all day in truck arrived destination Fal. @ 9o'c
- 19.08.43 Slept at salvation army. Out getting billets with SGT R. rotten fellow to work with.
- 20.08.43 Got last of billets picked I think nice one moved in on sat. Borrowed another £1- and drew a £1 from bank.
- 21.08.43 Slept at S.A sailor pinched bobs toothpaste now tel. Orderly all day.
- 22.08.43 Looking for more billets. Boys coming in tonight. Then for dinner. The first decent meal for a long time. Boys coming in on 10pm train. Arrived 11.30. Directing them to various billets finished at 2am. Tired and sleepy. Paraded today have to meet convoy at + roads. Waited from 1.30 to 4pm. Went back to HQ. Now arriving @ 5.30. Returned to spot @ 5. Walking about to keep warm. Farmers wife gave me 2 cups of tea, jam tart with clotted cream it was marvelous. Late night again.
- 23.08.43 Out in boats getting wet, swimming & PT on beach this afternoon. Pictures in evening.
- 24.08.43 Out in boats all day heavy seas running & soaked through tired out finished letters home supper & bed.
- 25.08.43 Routine. boats wet & tired.
- 10.09.43 left F to return to D. Saw all at home Dora looked ill.
- 11.09.43 Billetting. Nice sunny day.
- 12.09.43 – 27.09.43
Training of usual type. New officers. Joined by French & rangers. Breaking up & posted to 1 COM. 10 days leave.
- 20.10.43 Have left out quite a large amount. Transferred to No 1 COM. After 10 days leave. Fired a course result marksman & earnt weekend. Had glorious time with beloved. PR. Now driving a jeep.
- 21.10.43 Maintenance on jeep with a little driving thrown in. Applied for commission and permission granted by Co. though lack of education may mean failure. Raining all day.



- 22.10.43 Leave tomorrow. Embarkation. The real job at last.
- 07.11.43 Not much doing. Had glorious holiday with dear PR. Out in jeep with 25 mile night drive.
- 10.11.43 Left win this morning 11.30am. A rotten journey. Train crowded. I wonder if we shall ever come back.
- 11.11.43 On boat today. Overcrowded and below decks one is liable to suffocate. Have to go up every now again for air. Conditions and food terrible.
- 17.11.43 Have had just over 8 days on boat. Conditions below decks still horrible. A contrast of the officers who have cabins with 2 or 3 in them. Food leaves a lot to be desired. Have not been sick at all although I have diarrhoea this morning. Gave a talk to troops on India and they enjoyed it. Gambling the whole boat seems a Montecarlo. Dora has been in thoughts a great deal. What a wonderful girl. And how much I love her. God bless her.
- 18.11.43 Air raid practice this morning lots of rumours of enemy plane. But nothing happened. Lost 10/- @ housy. Won 7/- @ solo. Had a shower before bed feel a lot fresher. Weather much warmer.
- 19.11.43 Up at 5am had a good wash. Washroom all to myself. Tea @ 6 with biscuits. Weather getting warmer. P.T on deck. Very little to do & bored stiff. Read a book & bed. Trip still uneventful.
- 20.11.43 Inspection @ boat stations wrote two letters home.
- 21.11.43 Nothing to do all day. Dinner was terrible. Potatoes with mud on them and meat stank. Church service. Game of brag in evening quit even.
- 22.11.43 A good nights rest. Sun shining lovely all day. Fatigues for a while. Potatoes with dirt & skins. Dished up for dinner. Won 9/- this afternoon for 6d
- 23.11.43 Below decks at night beginning to smell. Had 2nd lesson on Urdu posted letters home. 8th day at sea and so far have enjoyed trip so far.
- 24.11.43 Beautiful day had a few minutes sunbathing. Escort dropped depth charge. Caused bit of excitement for a time. Picked up one of our subs sighted land 5pm. A strange sight going through straits to see the lights on tangiers & spain. shining brightly. A touch of home sickness to some when somebody started When the Lights of London Gleam Again. My thought shall I see them coming back. Gib also light up.

25.11.43 Hugging the shores going thro' med weather 1/2 a gale. Convoy crossing the bow's of ours Caused skipper a few heart burns. By the way he blew signal. About a 1/- out on days gambling. Uniteresting lecture on politics.

26.11.43 Close inshore to Algiers changed escort a wonderful view in the early morning sun. afternoon awakened from its monotomy by air attack. Troops lined deck cheering and shouting as planes came down a wonderful time for an hour 5pm. 6pm another attach 1 ship hit. Last I saw of it was standing towards shore belching smoke. Much speculation as to where our's were. And we will be for it tomorrow morning. I hope to see ours here and all.

27.11.43 Everyone was scanning the sky's anxiously. There has been none today except our own. Passed Cap Bon where gerry made his attempt to evacuate. Quite cloudy occasional squalls.

28.14.43 Mess orderly today, Meals early for a change. Quite day on the whole.

29.11.43 Up early. Got breakfast and cleaned up early action stations 9am. All clear in 10 minutes. Making good speed.

30.11.43 The day has been the day. we had several alarms and at 4.50 the alarm went I saw 15 bombers in formation. I said a little prayer. One bomb entered the deck and went out of the side exploding in the water. Judging from the whole it was about 500lbs. Our sister ship had about a dozen round her. A couple of injuries to the crew. We got off lightly my prayer was answered.

30.11.43 I slept on deck last night and enjoyed it although I woke fairly frequent. Hindi lesson this morning. Concert in afternoon where I heard our casualty has died. He was buried at 4. o'clock. I saw him go overboard a white shrouded figure mummy like a splash and the wave lapped over him, while the boats around flew their flags at half mast and overhead a single airoplane flies around. My thoughts are of Dora and how many will live to return. We expect gerry to have another go tonight. As evening came along everyone lined the port rails and anxiously scanned the skies. It was uneventful. Brought my bed on deck and settled down for a good nights sleep. Woken by ship hitting something.

01.12.43 Awoke 5.30 got up and felt grand. Ship leaving convoy impressive sight to see convoy sail on. Put into port a for repairs. Bought 3 beautiful oranges and enjoyed them. Stopping here for a few days says rumour. This time it was correct. Enjoyed 4 oranges for 1/-. Had a sing song on deck. Slept out and woke up several times.

02.12.43 Up early and got a comfortable wash bought 4 more oranges what a treat wish I could have walked indoors with them. Easy day nothing to do P.T parade that did not take place. Slept on deck and enjoyed a good nights rest. Seeing the shore lights gleaming makes me wish I could get ashore I wonder if we shall get any mail.

03.12.43 A very fine day. Bought 10 oranges for 1/-. Had a gamble lost 10/- still winning on the whole. Slept on deck. Good nights sleep.

04.12.43 Up early washed and enjoyed walk round deck. Boat race day and on guard not to bad. Bought 10 oranges 1/-. R.M.C. won race saw it from starboard gun. Guard very easy had tea at 4pm. Below deck for couple hours kip.

05.12.43 Life on board in port getting very boring. Destroyor came in port with bows shot away. Slept on deck.

06.12.43 Feel like the very devil nothing to do. Every one boared stiff. Bought 1/2 doz oranges one of ships crew turned hose on Bum boat selling oranges. Outcry by troops would have thrown him overboard. the reason ships canteen has bought oranges to sell in canteen at 2 for 3-1/2/-d. Reason giving in orders. The dirty conditions they are brought to us. And that is the democracy we are fighting for. Two games of chess in evening won 1 and lost 1.

07.12.43 A very boring morning. Two boat stations. Still no sign of leaving port. Some say that we are to have another ship. inter troop deck sports relived the monotomy a little enjoyed a sing song this afternoon and again tonight.

08.12.43 A little P.T a twice repeated lecture the whole day one of immense boredom.

09.12.43 Still in port. Went for a row in cutter this afternoon. No swimming not quite such a boring day.

10.12.43 Have now been a month on board. Unluckily at cards today also lost pocket knife and about 12/- rumours we are about to sail. I hope so.

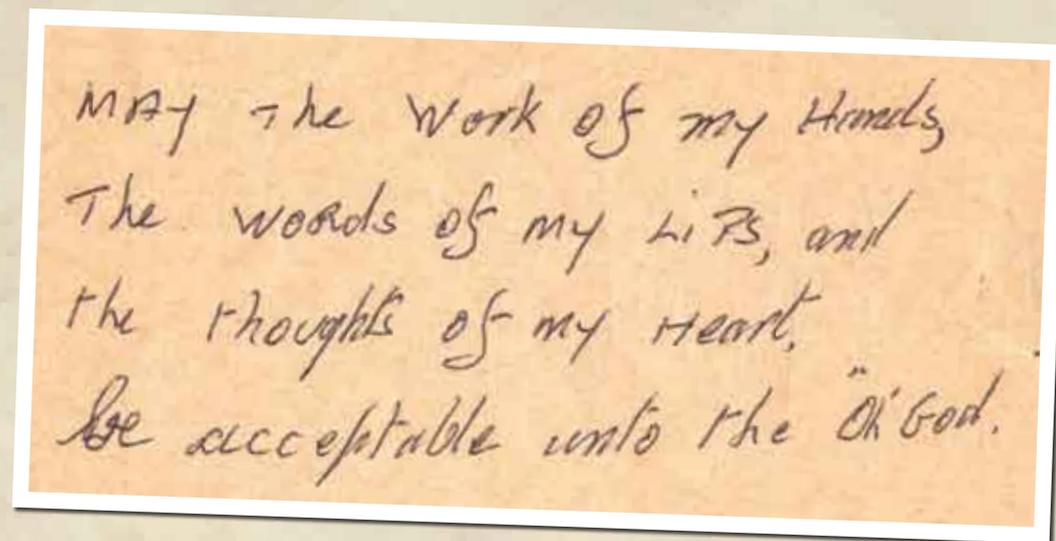
11.12.43 Rumour wrong again. We are leaving boat until it is repaired, we 2 trp are rear party. Changing our money. My last 30/- with a few odd shillings I lost promptly at cards. Never had such a bad run of luck.

12.12.43 Part of ships company leaving today at 8 o'clock. I expect it will be 10 before they start. I am mess orderly today. and will do my washing this last week or so has been incredibly boring. I have missed the letters from home. It is a wonder that the army has not realized what morale building a letter from home means to us. I miss also my loved one. 1/2 of the troops have gone.

13.12.43 Finished mess orderly today. All troops left ship we are left for cleaning up ship. I have not done much today.

14.12.43 Busy cleaning up all the ship. Some job. Some decks are thick with filth. finished at. Took a boat and had a beautiful swim in the sea.

- 15.12.43 Had a lie in on the deck till 7 this morning. Worked in the hold till 12noon. Made a small deal to my advantage. Afternoon all free. Heard that all the mail written since we were on board has not gone yet.
- 16.12.43 Still on boat doing nothing all day no mail. missing Dora at night. Existence bare and empty. Wish that I could feel God in my heart now. Somehow I just can't get there. Wondering how all are at home.
17. 12.43 Cleaning up the boat nothing much doing. Lazy day. Had hair cut short.
- 18.12.43 At last left the boat at 11.30. Landed 12.15 had a snack in the NAAFI Learnt that Edwin left last week. Arrived at camp in desert. Wrote 4 letters. Remainder of day cleaning up. Sleeping under canvas. Alex tomorrow.
- 19.12.43 Up at 6am. Breakfast 2 eggs. Left camp at 9 for Alex in lorries. Nearly everyone talking of visiting the brothel which is opened specially for the troops and run by M.P'S. Every thing is terribly dear had lunch in Menorah cafe. Egg omelete etc.. cost 2/2. Had a stroll round bazzars. The same as always. Bought bananas for 10d. Pictures saw Teran Conference where Stalin had the most applause.
- 20.12.43 Up early R.S.M.s parade nothing much to do. Foot inspection. Had my first game of hockey for ages. Thouroughley enjoyed it. Hit on knee for the first time. On carpet for infringement of conditions aboard the transport. Shower nice and hot. slight headache set in this evening. Supper in NAAFFI. now sleeping on my own tonight.
- 21.12.43 Layed in bed. Very cold with only three blankets. Will have to rearrange them tonight. Had an hours driving a heavy lorry. Went to cinema it was terrible. Walked out after 20 minutes of it. 3 eggs and chips for supper.



- 22.12.43 Started raining last night and has rained all day. Nothing to do thing morning. Went for a run this afternoon for two - 3 miles. In the rain. whole camp one mass of mud. Took washing to Dolie this evening. Feeling very stiff from hockey and marching.
- 23.12.43 Route march this morning. A beautiful day.
- 24.12.43 A quiet day. Nothing much to do. Knock about at hockey and twisted a thigh muscle. Saw pork turkey being prepared for tomorrow. Wiped a kidney for breakfast tomorrow.
- 25.12.43 An uncomfortable night. Cooked kidney and bacon and enjoyed it. Some of the lads had no breakfast. Turkey roast pork and Christmas pudding for dinner. Sports in the afternoon. Have twisted a muscle in my thigh. Painful but I hope it will pass soon. Wrote 4 letters home. Thinking all day of dearest Dora and home.
- 26.12.43 Played hockey and made leg worse. Had massage. Applied mosquito cream before going to bed. It kept some off.
- 27.12.43 Late in getting up. Leg still very stiff on RSMs parade. Excused the march with R.M.C. band troop last hockey match this afternoon. Scrubbed equipment dug up hard earth under bed to lessen hardness. Troop lectured on their lack of espirts de-core.
- 28.12.43 An enjoyable day. Hockey match in morning lost 2.0. Alex in the afternoon. Enjoyed a good meal of steak and green peas. Watched the commission girls in cafes work. Got three lifts back to camp arrived back 10.20.
- 29.12.43 Parade R.G.Ms & gun drill this morning till 10.50. Cleaning up for guard. Mounted 5pm easy guard had a good sleep to. Supper bread jam cheese & sardines. Lavatory caught fire. Spent 2 hours guarding and putting it out.
- 30.12.43 Quite an easy guard. But Plenty of Bull. Dismounted at 5 went to cinema and saw Bud Abbott & Costello in Ride em Cowboy stopped ambulance back to camp. Had supper and a couple of houses. No luck. so off to bed! New years eve. I wonder how Dora is.
- 31.12.43 An interesting day. Have been on lorry driving of all shapes and sizes in repair park. Till 4pm. Wash dinner and a nice game of chess in YMCA which I won. Route march tomorrow of 15mls. Wonder how they are at home. Must see Sgt about allotment.

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CHAPTER THREE

1944

01.01.44 Route march this morning and finished up in dust storm. Blister on right heel size of 2/6 - this time last year had arrived in Invergordon for leave.

02.01.44 Nothing to do today so decided to go into Alex. Spent the morning and part of the afternoon mooching around. Had lunch in Jewish club. While waiting for hitch hike to AMRIYA saw prisoners in handcuffs marched off from court. Back at camp by 4.30. Blister had swollen so cut it with scissors. Much easier.

03.01.44 Detailed for driving lorries. Lorry a Chev with no footbrake to tow another in convoy to Cairo. Made a hash of first effort. Will have to do better. Most of them broke down and we had to go back 26mls. Finished up over halfway in Naffi. At 6 o'clock had remainder of sandwiches. Stripped cover off wagon and 3 of us slept in back of another. Very cold wished I had got in middle.

04.01.44 Woke up early after a cold night. Had tea over petrol and sandfire and heard that relief drivers were coming and we were to go back. Guessed right we were duty troop. Arrive back in dust storm. Cookhouse for a meal tea cold and food uninviting after 24hrs no food except what we bought. Breakfast 2 eggs and chips. Start signal course tomorrow. Wrote letter to Dora. Heard news of Russian break through. Heel sore.

05.01.44 We are moving at last. Kit packed and spent rest of day mooching around. Saw part of picture in evening. Easy day.

06.01.44 An easy day scrounging

07.01.44 Drew £1.00. Leaving transit camp. Train for Natives. Crossword puzzle and a contortionist act to sleep. Stood up in night to get circulation working.

08.01.44 Arrived at Port 10.30 after 15 hours no food. Got mug of tea and 2 buns. Out to boat in drifter. Ship cyn. as bad as rest. Working in galley had chops tomatoes and onions for supper. Two oranges a meal enjoyed.

09.01.44 At work in Galley. Permanent. 3 good meals a day takes some beating. Had a chops chips onions and gravy. Work fairly easy. Feet ache in S.V. Boots. Not a bad job though. Sailed at 3 o'clock. Practice. Boat stations.

10.01.44 Took over cook for galley crew slept on deck getting a bit warmer.

11.01.44 Hot work in galley. Evening meal 1" steaks and marmalade roll. Had to come out every few minutes for breather. Sleeping on deck.

12.01.44 Passed hospital ship in early hours of morning. Had orange at Revielle made jam tarts for galley crew. Still an adventure how it come out. Slept out lovely.

13.01.44 Up early slept on deck called in at Aden cooler in galley.

14.01.44 A very busy time and hot in the galley. Left Aden midday. Boys all interested in the kite hawks.

15.01.44 Ship making full speed. Uncomfortable night on deck. Every inch crowded on rails rafts and anywhere they could lay or tie a hammock. Seeing the nurses walking round with officers makes me think of Dora. The home that might have been if no war. God bless her. Recipe for dinner not a success.

16.01.44 Sunday will soon be there now. Home and Dora still in my mind and letters from home soon. Food in the Galley OK but shortage for the troops.

17.01.44 Up early this morning clocks gone on 4 hrs 45 minutes altogether. Very easy day in The Galley. Off early.

18.01.44 All rumours of when we are reaching destination. Few details given out. Tried to write letter to Dora pen gave out.

19.01.44 Had a bad night very restless mental telepathy to friends at home will try again tonight. But first I must pray for faith. It would be grand if it succeeds. ? will it. Gun practice today by crew. Vibration from heavy gun cistern strained several water pipes. Saw my first shark a long grey and white shape in the ocean. May dock tonight.

20.01.44 Still moving when I woke up this morning. Docked 10.30am. Rumours flying about galore. Strongest we go to transit camp 100mls out. Remainder of day messing about in Galley. R.E. getting mail. Wonder if we will get any.

21.01.44 Landed this morning. traveled until 7.30. Camp under canvas no lights candles of any sort. Prices 260% more. Wonder if I shall see fortune teller in three days as I dreamt. arrived at camp about 20miles from Poona.

22.01.44 Revielle at 7.30 quite a change. Nothing much to do. Food fair though all water tastes of chloride of lime. Eight letters from home.

23.01.44 Visit by Lord Loui Mountbatten. Gave us all the dope. He said latest German communiqué. RAF over Germany last night. One of our cities is missing. Met fortune teller and had fortune told. Good luck attendance from 1 month 13 days from now. Strange. Bought a few articles. Have no money left. Arranged to buy the best tea and send it home. Im to live to the age of 73 and die of heart trouble.

24.01.44 Paraded this morning cleaning up lines all day. Line guard all day. Nothing much to do. Must see pay Sgt tomorrow.

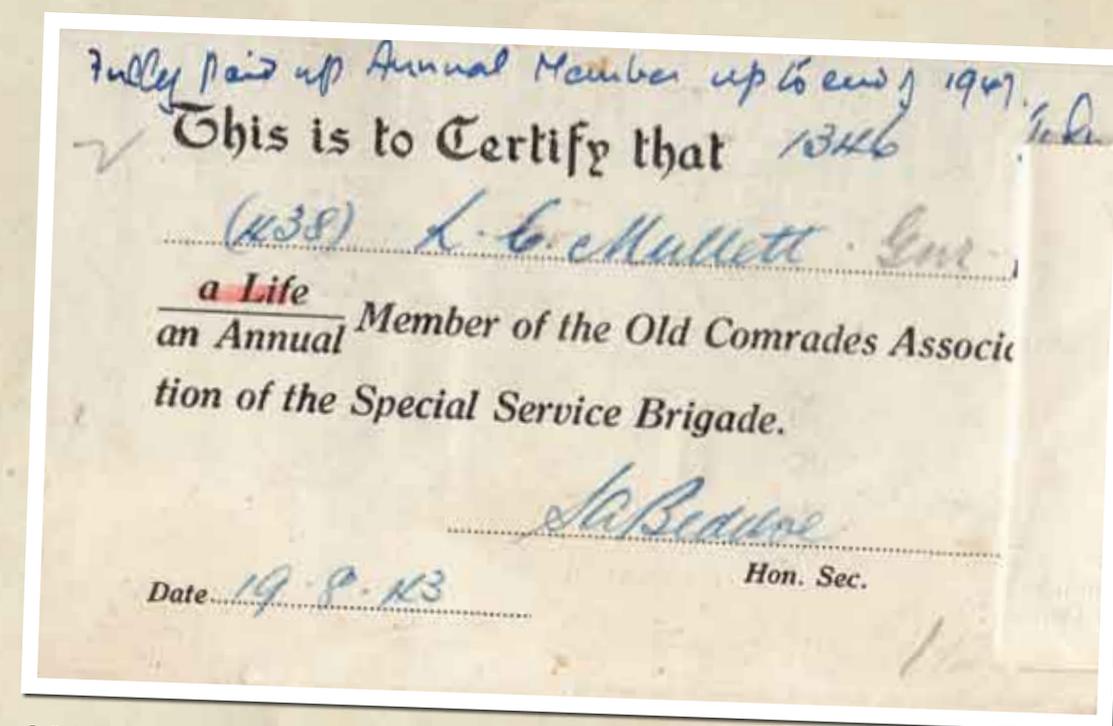
25.01.44 Line orderly nothing much to do. Saw pay Sgt. Unlucky for pay. Quite day borrowed 3Rs.

26.01.44 Lazy day all day. Letter from Dora and F.Monk. Letter took 10 weeks to arrive original posted on the 8th August. Went to pictures which broke down at least 4 times. Humphrey Bogart all through the night. Down to my last 4AS. Must get a lot of airmail cards in.

27.01.44 Lectures all day by officers back from fighting japs. Absolutely broke. No mail today. Have not left the camp area yet. Have put in for driving if lucky will move about a bit. But do not think I will get it. Pay books up to date 24.9.43 cred. £2-16-2.

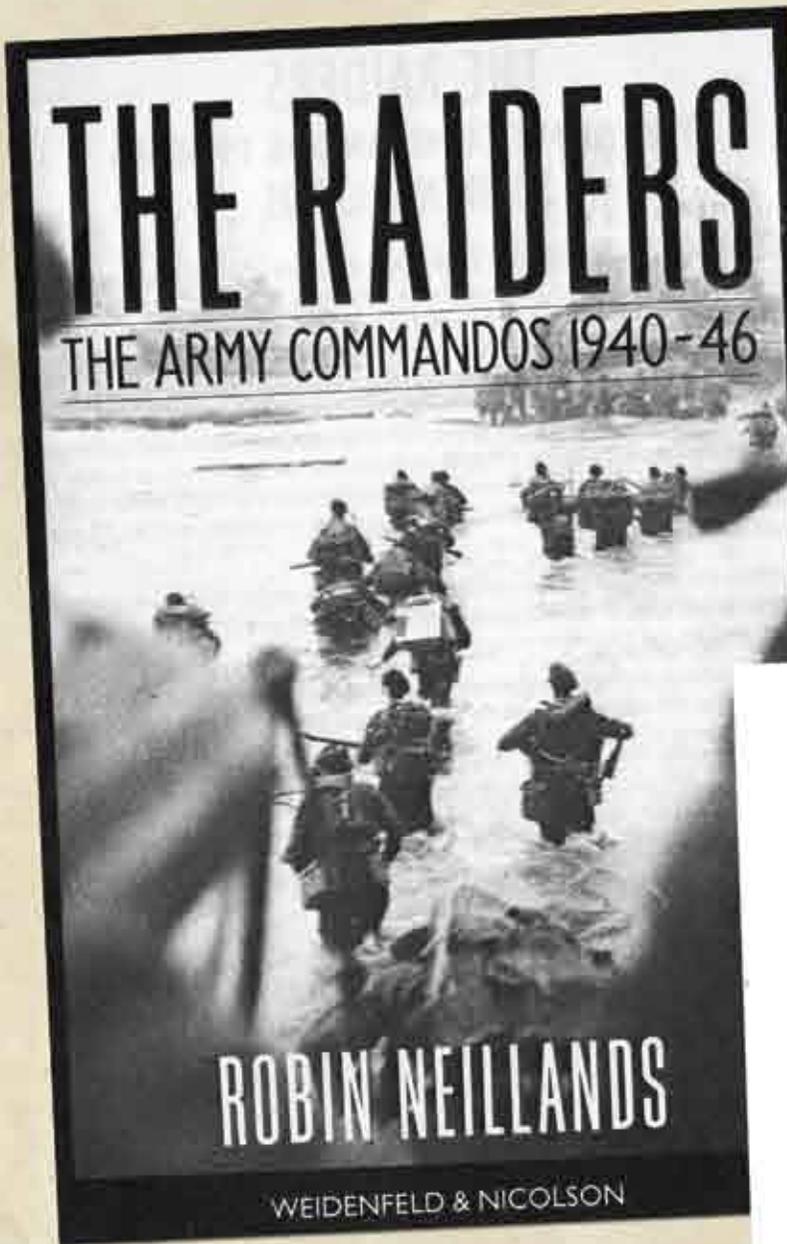
28.01.44 Drew 50rs today. Paid all my debts and have 43 left. Poona this afternoon but everything is far to dear. Bazaar this evening. Arranged for tea to be sent home had a chat with a Brahman post master. who seems a nice fellow. Visited Mulws in hospital. Poona again tomorrow.

29.01.44 Two traps to P. Had a look around and found everything very dear. Enjoyed a shampoo and haircut returned 6pm. Drove back part way not so good.



L.C. Mullett membership to the Old Comrades Association.

MEMORABILIA



Above left: The Raiders magazine cover.

THE COMMANDO ASSOCIATION
THE 43rd ANNUAL RE-UNION
 will be held at
The Porchester Hall,
Bayswater, London, W.2
on Saturday, 22nd April, 1989
 at 7.00 p.m.

Your President, Colonel A. D. Lewis, DSO., MBE., and members of the General Committee, express the sincere hope that you will be with us at the Porchester Hall on April the 22nd, thereby helping us to achieve another creditable attendance. We feel sure you agree that at this stage in our lives each Annual Re-union becomes more important, and that we should all endeavour to be present if possible.

If you reside in the London and Home Counties area we cannot stress too much the importance of your presence to help welcome the comrades who travel in to London from afar. We hope too that you will not hesitate to let us know if you have a bed to offer to a comrade unable to return home on re-union night. Once more we stress the importance of obtaining your ticket beforehand—we don't want to have to sell tickets at the door as this doesn't help to ensure adequate catering arrangements. Help by sending for your ticket soon.

AS ALWAYS THE EVENT IS FOR ASSOCIATION MEMBERS ONLY

TICKET ORDER FORM

To: The General Secretary, The Commando Association,
 122, Brompton Road, London, SW3 1JE.

Please forward _____ ticket/s at £5.00 each for the Forty Third Annual Re-union on Saturday, the 22nd April, 1989, and I enclose a stamped addressed envelope for the return of this, together with my cheque/postal order made out to 'The Commando Association' for _____

Full Name _____ Commando _____
 Address _____

ps. The other ticket is for _____ who is also a member of the Association. (BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE)

Above right: Annual reunion form, April 1989

THE COMMANDO ASSOCIATION
 FULL TITLE "THE COMMANDO ASSOCIATION OF THE ARMY COMMANDOS"
 President:
 Colonel A. D. LEWIS, DSO., MBE.

SIXTEEN PAGE EDITION
NEWS LETTER No. 88 **MARCH, 1989**

The following communication was received at Head Office from Clarence House, just prior to the Christmas Holiday, addressed to the President, Col. A. D. Lewis, DSO., MBE. — 16th December, 1988.

Dear Colonel Lewis,
 Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, was very pleased to receive your Christmas greetings and was touched by your kind message. I am asked by Queen Elizabeth to convey to you and to the members of the Commando Association, Her Majesty's thanks and an expression of her sincere good wishes for Christmas and the year ahead.

Yours sincerely,
 (Signed) MARTIN GULLAY,
 Private Secretary to Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother.

Once again, a card was received from the National Director of the Portuguese Association of Commandos, expressing sincere greetings to all comrades and their families for Christmas and the New Year.

Looking back over 1988, it must be stated that the year proved to be a sad one for the Association. Members will recall the sad loss of Col. Robert Dawson, CBE., DSO., early in the year. A second Vice-President, Brigadier Peter Young, DSO., MC., MA., FSA., passed away in September, leaving a void in the complement of Vice-Presidents. A tribute to this fine soldier by our President is given on a later page.

One feature of the many letters received at Head Office (and phone calls) appertaining to this great loss is that almost all the correspondents have intimated that they had an ongoing and frequent correspondence with him over a good many years. It has never ceased to amaze everyone how he managed to find time to do anything else, apart from write letters.

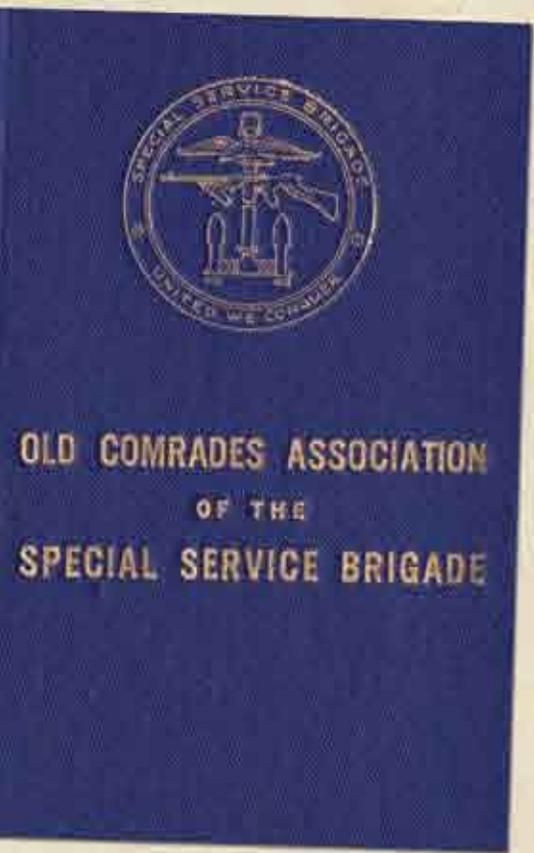
A further blow to the Association was the passing away of Reg. Barnes (SS Bde. 1 Bde), towards the end of last year. Although primarily a stalwart of the London Branch (not for nothing was he known as Mr. London Branch), it would be true to say that there was hardly anyone better known than Reg. on a national scale and it is a measure of his popularity that there were over seventy Commando friends at Guildford for his cremation. Both the Association and the Benevolent Fund are the poorer for his passing. A fitting tribute to this staunch warrior by Henry Brown follows later.

Despite the grim news above, the Association must move forward. The time is rapidly moving towards the 43rd Annual Re-union (details below). All concerned are looking forward to another splendid attendance. It is no mean achievement that over the past ten years the attendance has only marginally decreased—notwithstanding the 'Obituary List'. Looking through some back numbers of the Newsletter, it was noticed that for the 1979 Re-union an attendance of 592 was achieved—by 1988 this had fallen only to 558. Not bad for an Association primarily representing Army Units disbanded in 1946.

Right: The Commando Association newsletter, March 1989

Extract from the speech delivered by the Rt. Hon. Sir Winston L. S. Churchill, K.G., P.C., C.H., at the unveiling of the Commando, Airborne and Submarine Forces Memorial in Westminster Abbey on the 21st May, 1948.

WE MAY FEEL SURE THAT NOTHING OF WHICH WE HAVE ANY KNOWLEDGE OR RECORD HAS EVER BEEN DONE BY MORTAL MEN WHICH SURPASSES THE SPLENDOUR AND DARING OF THEIR FEATS OF ARMS. TRULY WE MAY SAY OF THEM, 'WHEN SHALL THEIR GLORY FADE.'



Above right: Old Comrades Association membership book

Left: Image of The Commando Association Battle Honours Flag, St George's Chapel, Westminster Abbey.

30.1.44 Duty drivers today. Bit of maintenance and messing about with rations all morning hear I have to start signal course tomorrow. Could not get down to village.

31.01.44 Nothing much to do all day to day except Bulls! in lines. Got tea to send home 2/12 postage. Can't find sealing wax will try orderly room. Course starts tomorrow. Another month here and dear Dora and I see nothing for us but long months of

01.02.44 Waiting until we can get married. How long before our love is fulfilled. Parcel of tea has to have export license as it is over a £1. Signal course today only W.T procedure.

02.02.44 Nothing much to do in signal course today. wrote to Dora and Margaret this evening. Easy day. How I love dear Dora. I miss her terribly.

03.02.44 Signalling all day . it is suprising how quickly it comes back to ones memory. No letters from home. Air mail cards for 6 placed in tent and were stolen.

04.02.44 Signal course ok. This morning with a new set. Payed 25Rs. Letter from Dora it took 20 days by air mail. But it was wonderfull how glorious it was to read it. Marriage.

05.02.44 Dodged R.S.M.S Parade this morning by going to sig. class. Lost Rs 5 at nap. will have to stop gambling. Went out for a walk saw hindu temple. And had a chat with shepherd by road. Lift back in lorry. Lost more money at Housy. Will not gamble anymore.

06.02.44 No parades today. few games of rummy. Slept in afternoon. Lenna Miss. Soc. This evening American lady 1/C. Seeing if we can arrange anything for the boys. Library piano etc.

07.02.44 Still on signal course. Easy day. Letters from Margaret and Sybs aunt. Evening in the canteen writing to D. S & her aunt. Windy day with clouds of dust dining arrangements bad all food covered with dust.

08.02.44 Reading morse etc all day. Very quite. Here that selected are for signals. I do not want to be one. Wrote letters home.

09.02.44 Have improved a little at morse. Easy day wireless all afternoon. Saw Sgt York at cinema nearly finished a doggend to my friends at home.

10.02.44 Quite day two letters from home. 7th & 19th Dec. Had my first drink of beer in India as Rs 1-15 per bottle. Bored stiff. Put paper in to start allotment do not know whether it will go through or not.

11.02.44 A very quite day. Drew 25Rs will have to make some arrangement about saving some more money. Letter from mother.

12.02.44 A quite day and a shock am being transferred to 6 troop tomorrow. Where according to stack I should be promoted. I wonder if his word can be trusted. Any way I shall see.

13.02.44 My first day in the new troop uneventful. Getting lo down on troop. Sgt Major a bit of a martinet. Visit by padre tonight. Promised to show him Indian temple. Tea is very bad. Must write letter home, promised to see MJR Pollit tomorrow re canteen.

14.02.44 Started day by working in cookhouse for breakfast. Inter with Major Pollit re canteen. Leave for 48 hrs TPR camp. Enjoyed good supper and lost 2/4 playing Housey. I must be the unluckiest one this side of Aden

15.02.44 Had quite an enjoyable day in P. Looking in shops without buying anything. Food quite good in camp. Would have loved Pr to have been with me.

16.02.44 Arrived back midday. 2 letters from home posted in Dec. rest of lads gone out on 48hr scheme. SBS. Lads arrived. Met Sam H in canteen. Pictures this evening.

17.02.44 Reported for signal training this morning. Very easy day. wrote two letters but could not get stamps. Slept in afternoon. Out for walk this evening. Had a short stay at a Shistah's. Promised to take tea over tomorrow as it is no good to me now I cannot send it home. All the troop out on a scheme. More recruits out today.

18.02.44 Quiet day. Drew 25Rs. Inoculation at hospital and lecture my T.S.M. He was told that he was spoiling the troop. Won lamp from canteen. Lost couple of chips at housey. Have never had such rotten luck. Here we are out from 4 days next week.

19.02.44 C.Os Parade in morning. Reading rule for hockey. Drew battle dress for jungle warfare. Umpired hockey match. Quite night.

20.02.44 Church parade enjoyed it. Then preparing for stunt.

21.02.44 Started out 9am with W.T.Ser. First good break 7.30pm. Enjoyed day though tired 4 hrs sleep only.

- 22.02.44 Started off on Bully Stew and 4 biscuits no tea no water. Midday feeling effects. Had swim in a well in a break for 1/2 hour. Had tea at dinner time. Enemy attacked rear so we had to clear out brought us to an orange grove. What oranges. covered about 20 miles altogether. Settled near village. Bathed in their water tank. Shoulders sore through W.T. enjoyed supper and tea. Marvellous.
- 23.02.44 Slept well in dried up river bed. Now making our way back 9 miles across country. Dumped W.T. set in lorry. Set off 10am. Saw plenty of deer etc. ? shooting leave. Left Rot 6am. 7.30am slightly off course struck road. Picked up a ride, stopped outside camp and made last lot of tea. Enjoyed scheme.
- 24.02.44 A day of recuperation in which I lazed and tidied up. Wrote two letters home and visited the farmer. A hot day to. Bothered with ants quite a lot.
- 25.02.44 Digging rain trenches hopeless minds. Drew 25Rs. Nothing else. Umpired at hockey match. Line guard tonight. Someone had pinched the lamp.
- 26.02.44 Line guard this morning . P. to see boxing some good fights. Best had a grand meal at Chinese rest. Returned after much waiting in lorries at 9:10 am. Glad to get to bed.
- 27.02.44 Church parade. Inoculation then slept all afternoon. Wrote two letters Received none from home. Pictures no good. Thoughtful evening discovered Birds nest with two eggs. Pictures no good. Spent Rs4 Co's runner today. Birds nest eggs gone. Wonder if Man or Beast took them.
- 28.02.44 Auckinleck here this afternoon. Nothing much to do. Co's runner. Posted off 2lb of Tea. Not much doing. Pictures in evening. No letters from home I wonder what has happened?
- 29.02.44 Range this morning. Not very good shooting. Poona this afternoon. Enjoyed good swim tea and cakes at TBC.4. Bought ink the first I had discovered below Co. Enjoyed cinema show. And 2 suppers of egg and chips. Hope there are some letters for me when I get back.
- 01.03.44 No letters from home today. Out about 9 miles tea and bully then a long glorious swim in the river. Back 5pm. Wrote 3 letters home. Worried about no mail. Tired on range tomorrow. If my nerves are as they are now shall not do much good.
- 02.03.44 On range today not much doing shooting erratic.
- 03.03.44 All morning changing clothes cleaning up for guard tonight. Got sick and so another night in bed. Lost 3Rp's playing house. Will have to find out why we are being stopped 6rs for barrack damages.
- 04.03.44 Cos runner today. Heavy going. Pictures this evening saw Bombardier.
- 05.03.44 Church parade this morning. Padre talked of reincarnation. Slept this afternoon. No letters from home. Allotment to Dora has been rejected.
- 06.03.44 Commenced a signal test this morning. On it all day, saw how green was my valley. Somehow I am sure that in the future I shall help my fellow men.
- 07.03.44 Had signal test past OK this morning. P for swim enjoyed it immensely. Reported for not saluting an officer.
- 08.03.44 Out all day field firing. A rotten day. Had Btle of beer first in India enjoyed same. Tired and very sleepy 9pm. No letters from home.
- 09.03.44 Nothing to do in morning. Warned for guard. Had rest of day cleaning up. Blanchoed equip. with jungle blanch. Filthy stuff. No mail in afternoon. Wondering if all is well at home. Mounted guard and got stick. canteen for supper. 14 chips for 3d.
- 10.03.44 C.os runner quite an easy guard. Drew Rs 35 2 weeks pay. Will have to go easy on it. Game of hockey we won 4.2. Believe C.O. mentioned promotion to TRP Capt.
- 11.03.44 An easy day preparing camp for monsoons. Worked all day in sun. Back uncomfortable. Cable to Doras for birthday. Mail from England non for me. Except Cis. She wants silk and handbag. Will if I can. Wonder whats wrong at home.
- 12.03.44 A day of rest no parades. Saw R.S.M about running canteen. Letters small word but a lot of comfort if you have one. 2 from Dora 1 from mum & 1 from Gwen with only name and number on it. Luck turned won 11.8 at cards and housey.
- 13.04.44 Parades very easy. Map 6 compass all day. Have been told I may be promoted in the near future. Storm this evening tent down. Got off with a soaking. letters from sybil. Guard tonight can answer all letters and write quite a few.
- 14.04.44 A quite day on line guard. Umpired hockey match. Pictures this evening letter from Dora bless her 10.1.44 just arrived.
- 15.03.44 Line piquet today. Getting ready for convoy.
- 16.04.44 Left early morning. Camped at Satra. not a comfortable journey. Slept well appointed teaman tomorrow.

17.03.44 Up 5am. Tea OK rations chiefly bully. Long days travel. Reached Bel. Tea & cakes.

18.03.44 The last day of traveling and the worst. Im sore all over. My first taste of the jungle. Made my bed of boughs and skeeter net. Heard big ben. What a cheer goes up.

19.03.44 All morning making bed. Collapsed first time on testing. Afternoon bed a success. Swimming this evening. sewing buttons on B.D. manufacturers useless. Laughing over antics of fellows with insects on them.

20.03.44 Swim in river just after 7am. Wonderfull. Digging trenches all day. No time to get poles for waterproofing bed. Dysentery & heatstroke in camp. No pipe tobacco.

21.03.44 Digging all day. Sweating hard. 10mins Work 20 mins rest. Night scheme on all night.

22.03.44 Had tea at 1am made over cookhouse fire. Stand down came at 7.30. 9am fatigues enjoyed swinging an axe all morning. Finnished cutting poles for my shake down. Put them up and had swim and bath in river.

23.03.44 Duty troop fatigues chopping wood in the jungle. Scrounge in the afternoon. Paid 15rs.

24.03.44 Out all day on compass march terribly hard going. Halt midday tea porridge and swim. Bought two coconuts off a native. Enjoyed them. Letters from home.

25.03.44 Lectures this morning on jungle all the things we done yesterday came out wrong. Have to improve.

26.03.44 Out at 8am into jungle for shooting. Saw nothing but 2 jungle cats. Back 12 noon swimming in the relay race. We lost. Out shooting till 9pm. Nearly got lost. But for help of natives arrived back 9.30pm. Tired drank to much water and brought it all up.

27.03.44 A hard days training. Thought of early bed. But was on piquet tonight.

28.03.44 Brewed tea in jungle at 3am with stores pilched from cookhouse as I had to keep fires going. Out training building rafts. 1/2 day holiday. Spent in jungle. Shooting or tracking impossible to many parties out. Shooting at nothing. Letters from Dora bless her. 16th March and Feb.

29.03.44 A days pleasant training laying ambushs. Afternoon clearing new bivy area. Night compass march. I was point 2 hrs pleasant dreaming in moonlight.

30.03.44 Up 2.45am ground sheet over bed. Heavy dew falling. 12.30 noon writing this in a dry watercourse. Beside a fire of twigs and enjoying a Dixie of tea.

31.03.44 Out early what a day for 48hrs scheme. Hills almost precipices. In fact parts of it were 500-1000' drops loose earth and creepers. Made foot hills precarious. 2 mules over shot one. Magnificent waterfalls wild & rugged country. Waterfall over 800' Up ravines and hardest days traveling I've ever had.

01.04.44 Slept on top of mountain. Dinner of bully raw onions biscuit and carrots home 4.30. Sleep well tonight I bet. Found a tick on me when I bathed in river.

02.04.44 Today spent in moving to fresh Bivy area finished 7pm. Won house tonight 48Rs. Will make up for what I have lost lately. Letter from Dora.

03.04.44 All today on wireless set acting as traffic control for field firing. Slept most of the day.

04.04.44 Sick this morning with foot infected by swimming in river. Att.B. Morning finishing table.

05.04.44 Sick parade this morning. Rest of day doing odd jobs around camp.

06.04.44 Got off going sick. Picnic day down by river. Dynamited about a cwt of fish tried to write letters but pen dried on me.

07.04.44 Out all day on scheme tiring day. Cooked evening meal of Bully Stew. Slept hard and very cold in the night. Scouting today a success.

08.04.44 Made to much porridge with raisins for breakfast easy scheme. Back in camp by 2.30pm. Bath in river. Pictures in evening. Bed never woke up once.

09.04.44 Lazy day. Darning socks and other small repairs. Castle Rock for batteries in afternoon. Hunting coming back. Wrote 3 letters home.

10.04.44 Building rafts. Cannot understand army. Came 30mls to a poorer river than where we were to build rafts. By lorry arrived 4pm swim and getting bamboo not energetically. Hard sleeping in middle of thorn thicket.

11.04.44 Woke up several times during night and crawled under a lorry in the early hours. Building raft all morning quite good. Scout for trp. Feeling desperately tired and inability to do anything. Hurting this evening laid up for a while nothing doing.

12.04.44 Out early making rafts 2.30 test compt. Seeing fastest troop across river ours 5minte & 3 men wet. 4th. Laid up in jungle for 2hrs by water hole for game. Heard plenty but couldn't get a shot.

- 13.04.44 Packing up ready to move. Swimming test 10.30 on way back at 2pm. Nothing else to do. Looking forward to a days shoot tomorrow. Pay 15Rs. Left camp 10am left for shooting down river 7pm.
- 14.04.44 Very interesting paddling down river fortunate struck no snags. Heard deer and pig could not get a shot though. Laid up and brewed tea 3 or 4 times moon rose 12 midnight no luck laying up at waterhole. Nearly got caught in waterfall. Goatley boat not the best of river craft. Dynamited fish on way back. Body getting browner. Arrived back tired at 1pm. Slept all afternoon. 2 letters from home. Warned for advance party.
- 17.04.44 Hurried preparations for return to KED. Left 1am. Train 5am. Never saw such indecent train journeys. Packed beyond capacity scandalous.
- 18.04.44 Spent day lazing and writing letters.
- 19.04.44 On guard all night as usual with no orderly officer spent on the bed. Received 1/2lb of tobacco from Bombay.
- 20.04.44 These two days spent pulling down tents and generally lazing about. Letter from beloved. sent home bank book will have to send home money now. Moving on Tuesday to Madras. Fire in 42 lines. Fellows kit in jungle burnt bad spirit in that commando. No one turned out of cinema when called bad show.
- 21.04.44 Mess orderly and general scrounge cinema this evening.
- 22.04.44 Today spent in pulling down tents scrounging in the afternoon letter from mum.
- 23.04.44 – 24.04.44
A general scrounge and getting ready for convoy.
- 25.04.44 Left Kedgaon for destination otherside of India. 8 in 3 ton lorry. 100mls first day.
- 26.04.44 Food consists of Bully cheese and biscuits. Had good wash in well at Shalapur with mugs of tea from hotel while lorries filled up with petrol.
- 27.04.44 Arrived Secunderbad 3.30 stopping 36 hrs. Out in evening and had 2 suppers food very good but dear. General goods very cheap. & dance in evening.
- 28.04.44 Spent day looking around. Goods all very cheap enjoying very good meals.
- 29.04.44 Off again. Rations bully, biscuits and tea getting bored with them.
- 30.04.44 Had interesting talk with village doctor. 1 doctor for 5-6m of population saw lil indians film.
- 01.05.44 Lorry breaking down continually spent day in river bought several beautiful mangoes.
- 02.05.44 Helping in cookhouse. Hot. Every one soaked in perspiration have forgotten my prayers lately. Impression of trip rough and food awfull relieved some what by swims. In wells and scrounging fruit. Huts very nice after tents. Placed in a mango grove looked in at temple and found priest who talked English and will have to visit it again. Walked over a rice factory. Pay woman Rs 8 men 12Rs – 1 rupee.
- 03.05.44 Working hard all day extremely hot had shower under A.F.S. pump. Had chat with local ARP controller. Had a look at town. Lay in bed at night thinking that I am drifting away from God. Thought of Dora and a home.
- 04.05.44 – 07.05.44
Busy get camp ready continually bathed in perspiration. Trying to find God again. Letters from Sybil and home.
- 08.05.44 Learnt today promoted to full Bdr straight away. and transferred to 3 Trp busy transferring to new troop.
- 09.05.44 Nothing much to do except rifle inspection and make out roll of troop it is funny how fortune tellers predictions have come true within a few days of his predictions.
- 12.05.44 Settling down in new troop. OK. Many congratulations. Received many letters from home. Lecture today on VD and hygiene after pay. Received air mail paper from Mr Mitchell. Thoughts of Dora and home how much I love her. wish we were married will have to buy a bible.
- 13.05.44 Canteen apt today. Hot and wrote two letters.
- 14.05.44 A day of rest. went to the pictures. Laid in bed and thought of home.
- 15.05.44 Amphibious training. What a shower. Swim in river and sea frightfully hot. Went down in rail wagons. All day on 2 slices of jam and one of cheese. Lime and mango at naval canteen. Returned whacked. Had salt and a good dinner also about 8 pints of tea lime juice and water & so to bed.

16.05.44 Burning hot on the beaches. Wet with sweat from morn to night. Letter from Sybil. My thoughts with Dora.

17.05.44 Made acquaintance of a mangrove swamp sheer unadulterated hell if you had to be in it all day. Vile smelling and unsavoury. Stretcher bearer got stuck. Had a good swim. Section officer by his actions not much good.

18.05.44 Fairly easy day. Bathing and boating in a delightfull cool sea. Night scheme chaos although man worked hard we're dog tired. Letter from Dora. Out all night. Scheme a failure. Davies cannot handle men.

19.05.44 Quiet day in camp. Out in swing ordered box. R.6 and watch repaired. Saw missionary and his family who were going home shortly.

20.05.44 1/2 day spent in practicing defense and A.R.P. Out in evening and gave a lecture to A.R.P. Wardens about London raids for 1 1/2 hrs. Cinema after promised to go to meeting tomorrow night. But confined to camp duty troop which I forgot about. All cancelled.

21.05.44 Went down town, watch to be cleaned. Box for letter to be made and lecture to A.R.P warden success. Meeting at missionaries house met his wife, daughter & son. Lovely to be in home again. Informal discussion on how God speaks to you.

22.05.44 Out for a little training. Guard commander tonight. Mounted guard and congratulated on turn out.

23.05.44 Went round and found sentry asleep. Uneventfull til dissmounting when arms drill not so good. Slept soundly all night.

24.05.44 Easy day. Swimming this eveing letters from Dora. How I love her. God spoke to Dora and I tonight. I wonder if she will write.

25.05.44 P.T 7.15. Not much use. No one puts anything in it. Food improving. On beach swimming and surf board riding night scheme tonight. This is what I dreamt we would be married by June next year. Out all night on beachhead only exciting thing bitten by crabs.

26.05.44 Breakfast at 9.30. Rifle inspection 12. MK4 rifles useless in sand. Drew 225 bazzar for watch & box. Got neither. Had chat with missioner.

27.05.44 C.Os lines inspection. Ours good. Field P.O for 10-0-0. 8 to D and 2 to nun walk round bazzar and got watch and box. Evening writing letters prickly heat terrible. Itch and scratch all over.

29.05.44 Commenced. Orderley Sgt. Hotwork. 1pm warned I was being attached to sigs for dicipline and admin. Will do my best. Sent off money home & to D. Hope I make a good job of this.

30.05.44 A busy day conference expect meeting with slight opposition.

31.05.44 R.S.Ms parade. Admin morning afternoon swimming and cricket on beach. Conceat by 4 tonight: Have to render a report on training.

01.06.44 Still organizing and getting BKS ready for signal sect. Would rather be with duty troop had chat with MJR pollitt on sports and entertainerment. Letters from home, none for me. Paybooks being retained looks like fighting ahead.

02.06.44 Busy morning on BKS etc. Drew Rs15-00. Letter from mother. None from Dora. Saw lousy picture at cinema. Cut into small pieces so film was disjointed. Talbot & lacey out here over 9 yrs home for 6 months 17 days. Application turned down about service over seas. Shame.

03.06.44 Frightfully busy getting things organized. Called on padre at mission. Fixed hockey match with ARP promised to go to tea.

04.06.44 Busy day and could not go to tea

05.06.44 Getting things organized and running smoothly. A little friction. Covered with prickly heat. Cannot sleep well. Wake up in morning washed out.

06.06.44 Heard 2nd front has started. Godspeed. Further details eagerly awaited going to pictures so will hear kings speech. Had talk with local merchant. Govt blackmail going on. Heard kings speech disappointing. Moonlight bamboo huts and a storm.

07.06.44 Everyone busy talking about 2 front and nothing else. Down to beach for swim. Game of hockey and won 1-0 against Indian Navy.

08.06.44 A quiet day generally

09.06.44 A busy day organizing everything for cadre class. Details of second front eagerly awaited.

10.06.44 Sat a lazy day with a busy afternoon. Hot and very hard to sleep.

11.06.44 A good nights sleep though you wake heavy headed. prickly heat terrible. Parcel of books from Sybil. Went to bed very early.

12.06.44 A fairly easy day. Organised parties to R.A.F station. Raining all day and how thankfull we are. Lecture by Lt.col Fellough on second front could say more but would not. Playing chess this evening.

13.06.44 Heavy day arranging sports etc. Weather oppressive and occasional rain heat very oppressive. Brigadier gave us a talk. Leave in future and a move to "C". saw 49th parralell. Good picture. Arranged hockey match with local A.R.P no letters from home. Pray God for a good heart. I seek what is at hand yet not seeing O Lord may I be given the honour of finding it.

14.06.44 Down to R.A.F station. Bought limes and pineapples @ Rs.2 and Rs 8 each. Busy day played local A.R.P drew 0-0. Slept fairly well but prickly heat terrible.

15.06.44 A hard day temp 118°. Prickly heat terribly bad spreading over whole of my body.

16.06.44 Not much doing. But a very hot day. Not much sleep.

17.06.44 Busy morning hot and dry. Bought coconut oil and it has eased somewhat. Had a good night sleep first for months.

18.06.44 A stormy morning with ALGY. But a very quite evening. Think I will go down the mess and have an iced drink. Not much to do.

19.06.44 A easier night sleep. The oil is having some effect. Sgt taking over administrations of HQ. I carry on. A fair nights sleep.

20.06.44 Weather HOT ones skin in afternoon is just as if you stand in front of a furnace. Mosquito got in net last night and had a feast. I feel as if I am getting nearer to Jesus he now guides me.

21.06.44 Getting hotter. Every body looking washed out. Lge percentage of the commando unfit to rigorous training at the wrong time.

22.06.44 Up till 12 last night working out the books.

23.06.44 Hot as hell cool storm in evening letters from home. No energy to do much though.

24.06.44 A very busy morning with a blessed cooling shower of rain. Down to mess in evening and had a couple of Iced drink and a rotten game of crib.

25.06.44 A quiet day went down to market and bought a couple of pineapples for 8d. Written two letters.

26.06.44 Weather now cool and my prickly heat now seems to be departing.

28.06.44 At last we are away on leave. Drew 210 Rs and we are off tonight, moved off in the rain at 10.30.

29.06.44 1am. Saw the difference in our rations and the R.M.C. they had everything we had biscuits and dried fruit that was uneatable except after boiling everyone very bitter about it though I managed to scrounge 10 loafs of bread. Train consisted of all native carriages.

30.06.44 Had 1 good meal by telephoning for it in advance. Boys flinging their rations to the natives.

01.07.44 Arrived Bangalore and found Wellington party came 100mls out of the way so had to go back over same route with no warrants etc.

02.07.44 Spent all night playing cards on platform. Arrived 11 o'clock at camp. Nobody knew anything about us.

03.07.44 Spent day at Conoor. Weather just like England food good. Bought nothing

04.07.44 Scrounged lift to Ooty. Looked all through bazaar and bought a few bargains. Have not said prayers will have to say them tonight!

05.07.44 Quite day spent morning in bed. Parcel sewn up and ready for posting. Walked to Coonoor ordered 4lbs of tea to be sent home. Will have to buy some more silk. Think I will go to pictures this evening.

06.07.44 Two of our fellows in the nick. G.M.P on the warpath.

07.07.44 Saw. The fellows inside saw SSO about getting one out. GMPs entered false charge.

08.07.44 Up to S.S.O about prisoners nothing doing. Learnt more about charge.

09.07.44 Raining all day played solo till 11.30

10.07.44 Boys up this morning two sent back 1 dismissed.

11.07.44 Raining all day. Stayed in.

- 12.07.44 Walked to Conoor! Had lunch at W.V.S tried for nannies could not go
- 13.07.44 Tried to go to Coimbatore had lorry down. Could not get there so will have to return will have a look round first not much to see.
- 14.07.44 I have visited several shops today nothing much in the way of bargains.
- 15.07.44 Started off on way back. Metyfidyaum found no arrangements had been made for us. Caught train 5.45. Coimbatore 10 o'clock, had a look around Joe found a dump nothing to eat though. Caught train Rajapet arrived 12am
- 19.07.44 Left 3.45. Madras night 10.30 Rest camp for day had a good meal. Looked around plenty of stuff. Left next night on horrible journey at 6.30. 17th all night and all day in carriage that stunk. All night pestered by skeeters. All day by flies nothing to eat train arrived 28 1/2 hours late.
- 20.07.44 Down to it sorting ourselves out and getting books ship shape.
- 21.07.44 Caught in rain at 3am water poured through roof like a waterfall. Shifted bed into tent. Bit hot but slept better. Plenty of mail from home. Drew 15Rs. Had letter from Eddy.
- 02.08.44 Not much to enter. Just that I wish this war was over. so that I could set up house with Dora. Over a week of Dysentery. Then orderly Sgt.
- 07.08.44 Still orderly sgt. Weather hot and sticky. Have written to all at home. Last few days have been thinking more and more about Dora.
- 09.08.44 Realised it was my birthday today at teatime. Letters up but none for me. Disappointed. I hope nothing has happened to them. Range and threw 136 grenade. Wonder if I shall hear tomorrow.
- 11.08.44 On guard at C.C.S prisoner Anglo Indian 2 hrs late from leave. Punishment 28 days detention. What a democracy. Food lousy. Worse than ours and these men pay 1Rs a week.
- 16.08.44 Very queer. Bed all day feeling rotten. muscles ache all over temp 100° to 102°. No food for 48 hours
- 17.08.44 Still feeling pretty groggy. Excused all duties and bed down. Three days in bed and nothing to eat felt a bit better this evening. Doc said hospital tomorrow if temp was not down.
- 18.08.44 Temp down but back ache worse feeling dispirited weak and awful.

Write the address in large BLOCK letters in the panel below.
The address must NOT be typewritten.

621234

TO:-
1641438 BDR. L. MULLETT
No. 3. TROOP
No. 1. COMMANDO
of INDIA COMMAND.

DATE STAMP

Write the message very plainly below this line.

Sender's Address 50th Philbeach Gardens, London S.W. 5.
P.S. Hope all is well at home. 2.

14th July 1944.

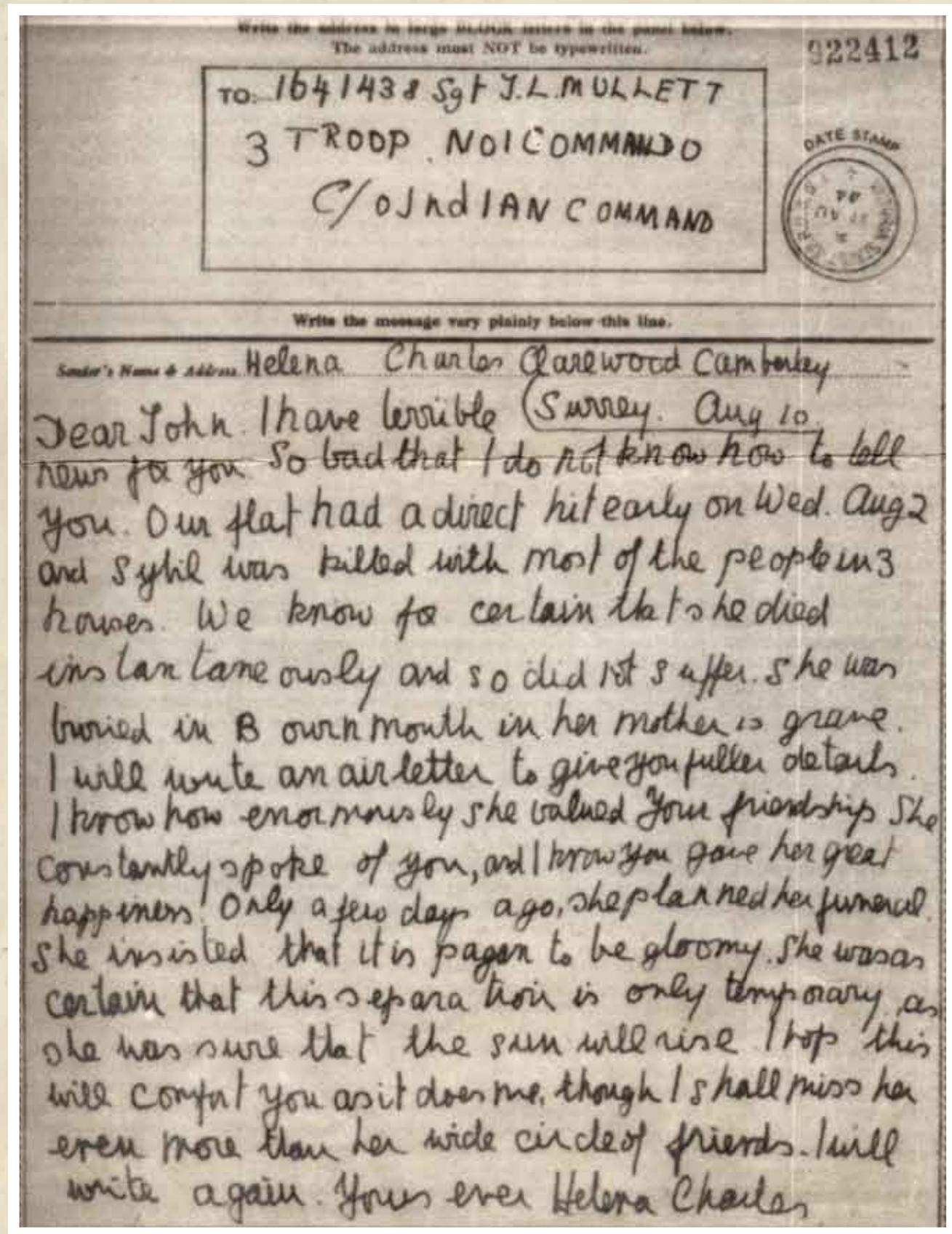
Dear John -

Thank you so much for your nice long letter of 23rd June. I read the bit about the shopping expedition aloud to Helena, until she begged me to stop, because she couldn't bear to hear about the lots of silk & the bananas! We are very busy at the moment getting hold of as many cherries as we can for bottling. Helena has bottled a lot of gooseberries with great success.

By now you will have got the letter I wrote a fortnight ago at Spring Cottage. I was spending a weekend there & thought it advisable in the circumstances to give that address. You will be glad to hear that things here are very much more comfortable now than when I wrote. We have had some nice peaceful nights & in our basement we feel quite safe. Brian & Margaret have had a window broken, but are well & cheerful. We are asking M. to stay for a week later, when B. is away. I am working quite hard for the Y.M.C.A. (like old times!) - sometimes on weekdays as well as Sundays. I have been asked to become temporary Organist at an East End Church while the Organist is away! I have almost forgotten how to play, & shall have to practice. Today I am going home for the weekend. Helena & I wish you could fly back to London for your 14 days' leave! She sends love & is posting you some books. Best of luck. Yours ever Sybil.

This space should not be used

- 19.08.44 Feeling just the same as yesterday
- 23.08.44 Feeling much better. But back trouble still very bad. Dr says Lumbago bought tin box for kit 9Rs. Borrowed 30 and will draw 80 at end of week. Weather very hot and humid. A sore trial for all.
- 25.08.44 Dysentery all day today gone to lav at least 12 times. Nothing to eat since last night and that was only meal yesterday. Feel washed out and as weak as a kitten. Sick tomorrow. Drew 80Rs today.
- 26.08.44 Felt rotten this morning but improved in afternoon. Had first meal for long time.
- 27.08.44 Still improving a little and eating well. Letters from Dora Helena and one from Sybil posted in June.
- 30.08.44 Gradual improvement letters from home by sea papers ect. bought two incense bowls. will be able to make use of them as sugar bowls for 26/-.
- 31.08.44 Drew 2 weeks pay. Busy packing up for move to Ceylon. Cancelled at last moment and then renewed again.
- 01.09.44 Moved all stuff down to station heard it was cancelled again. Hot and full of prickly heat again.
- 02.09.44 Moved down to station in all our kit. When train drew in to platform heard it was again cancelled. Moved back to camp and unpacked. Got a very good bed this time. Went out first time for month to cinema.
- 03.09.44 Laid in bed no breakfast had two letters Dora received her parcel and it's all ok. Letter from Sybil's aunt a grand old lady and sadly lost without Sybil, letter also from Mr Mitchell wounded by flying bomb. Rumours flying round that Japan will soon be out of the war. I pray God that it is true.
- 04.09.44 At last on the train the pityfull sights one sees on railway stations is frightful.
- 05.08.44 Playing solo all day and far into night. Won a few rupees.
- 06.09.44 Played solo again all day have won about 10Rs. Had roast chicken fried fish in restaurant. Pulled a fast one there.



Letter received from Helena Charles (Sybil's Aunt). Sad news about Sybil.

07.09.44 Trichinopoly at 2am. On guard tea & cakes excellent from W.V.S lunch the best I have ever had. About 30 W.V.S toiled all day and late into night to prepare it. They are the finest W.V.S in India Trichinopoly. Lesson Mark 4v20 answer

“And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.”

Mark 4: v20

08.09.44 Left train for boat. Packed in worse than pigs. Officers have lounge food and drinks TRPs nil arrived at Ceylon. Slept on beaches for few hours. Train arrived 1 full length seat for officers for troops and kit a compartment seating 4. Full capacity.

14.09.44 Frightfully busy this last few days getting the Cpls mess ship shape and ready for opening tomorrow night. so busy have not been able to write or the smalls.

18.09.44 Mess running nicely but extremely busy. Handing over today.

19.09.44 Sprint march fell out. Sick and dysentery attack about 15 times. On special feeling queer. Hospital tomorrow for rest.

20.09.44 Saw two M.Os and sent to hospital. 3 times in night feeling washed out

21.09.44 Feeling as weak as a kitten. Thank goodness dysentery is lessening have not been since last night. Ward nearly full of commando's.

22.09.44 On light diet today back aches terrible.

23.09.44 My first meals since Monday. Laundry sent down today worse than when I sent it. No mail from camp.

25.09.44 Being discharged tomorrow. Feeling lots better.

26.09.44 Leaving hospital this morning. Heard that one of our fellows was killed yesterday. Hard luck he had only just arrived. I wonder what his mother thinks killed by his own pals.

30.09.44 All hurry & scurry preparations for action in the near future a feeling of exhilaration upon us all. Goodbye to all training and the real thing. I pray and give my wellbeing into the hands of God. Which gives a feeling of confidence and God has told me I shall come through alright.

02.10.44 Arrived on troop ship today. Much speculation to where we are going.

05.10.44 Settling down to routine on board. Food fair, deck space limited. Officers 1 whole deck (about 40) Sgts W.Os 1/2 deck 100) Privates and Cpts etc.. 1/2 a deck and a well deck full of machinery about 1000 men again then old class privileges come in and this is a war for democracy what hopes.

06.10.44 Inoculation today. Below decks with no portholes open the air is thick and you start to perspire as soon as you go below. to have a meal is an ordeal. A few lectures of no importance.

07.10.44 A disasterous day. Lost PR. Puttees and emergency ration stolen found 1 rupee and ten cents in morning. also lost Rs 4 at solo. A very bad day on the whole. Had a dream that I and another were the only two fellows going home on a trooper. And what a warm welcome from my beloved.

08.10.44 Searched all the deck for puttees but could not see a trace of them.

09.10.44 A day of rest. Church service about a dozen attended. Stopped all night and a fitfull night. Dreamt I was marrying Dora.

10.10.44 Got off boat onto train after a rest and a shower at transit camp. Then train journey after chaos.

11.10.44 1 slice of crushed bread for breakfast and dinner with tea. What a vast difference to Raf car with steak and kidney potatoes and peaches and custard. Car train 24 carriages. Received two letters. Loading ferry boat.

12.10.44 Spent night on boat overcrowded and impossible to move even for wants of nature. All night till 12 loading impossible to sleep. Laid near latrine stench awfull.

13.10.44 Off loaded ferry onto train and left if possible in worse state than boat carriage for 10 had 15. Arrived at camp 12 midnight. A meal of bully beef stew after a week of it. Then back to railway unloading finished at 3am. 3 hrs sleep then remainder of today cleaning and scrubbing. Not far off chit; out tonight on pass. Had a look round everything expensive and stamps given as change.

14.10.44 Out today firing with sect. Hit a flung tin 12 times out of 20. Back 12. Afternoon off drew pay and had a game of chess then left my mug in the canteen.



Essex Regiment India 1930. Dad front left.

- 15.10.44 A hard hot day on ranges. This training should have started in the jungle. Afternoon off. Game of chess in YMCA 1 each and a draw.
- 16.10.44 Another hot day on the ranges but had afternoon scrounge.
- 17.10.44 Ord Sgt trotting up and down for Ord Sgts. Hell to play someone had stolen a kukri and lamp. Packed up all kit ready to move to advanced base.
- 18.10.44 Left camp at 11.30 and marched to Jetty. In broiling sun 4 men conked out on board Yankee L.C. each man has a bunk. The finest boat we have been. Comfortable night.
- 19.10.44 Sailing down Burma Coast put in shore about 8.30, marched to the best baskas we have seen. 1 meal of composite stew. Can here the guns firing on the tiddim front.

- 20.10.44 Remainder of troop arrived. Camp washing facilities lousy. Food as bad. R.M. roast lamb veg etc. We bully stew. Everybody full of disgust and all only want a spark to explode.
- 21.10.44 Had a lazy day. Tried fishing in the afternoon. Not much luck
- 22.10.44 Busy dashing round for SGT MJR. Ron Smithson he was punished with 7 days pay. Last day today orderly Sgt. Stream to wash in like mud. Food has improved.
- 23.10.44 A day of rest. Done nothing all day. Received letter from Gwen.
- 24.10.44 Easy morning. Cutting firewood in afternoon. took opportunity to explore deserted village. Nothing in it found a bitch with two pups. Friendly and starved for the humans she has lost.
- 25.10.44 Out training in combat team. Mine will take a lot of work to lick into shape.
- 26.10.44 Compass march. First leg I had about 300x out. Had tea and bought eggs at village.
- 27.10.44 Light days training. Pay & inoculation. Out tonight. Training a farce and aimless. Returned 10.30pm. No tea laid on. Rotten administration.
- 28.10.44 Fairly easy day in camp on light training inoculation and played cards.
- 29.10.44 Rest all day cleaned up. Done washing darning & sewing.
- 30.10.44 Day spent on sorting out a village in mock combat. Afternoon garons and scheme for three days explained.
- 31.10.44 Started raining in the night and at reveille. Looks like raining all day. A pleasant way of starting a scheme in the rain. Marched out in rain to RENDE by map reading. Arrived there by questioning natives than by reading map. Scrounged two eggs. Then marched on and laid up in box. To tired to dig trench.
- 01.11.44 Out today as a patrol. Caught several of 6 troop including O.C back at 1. Stopping all day brew up and bath in Chaung. Ice cold. Drunk water from muddy stream no ill effects yet.
- 02.11.44 Stand to 5.30am. Breakfast of porridge biscuits and bully. Moved off early and passed 6 troop having breakfast. Got back midday 1 letter and on commando guard. Lesson learnt don't trust maps without compass and read ground features.

03.11.44 No rest today digging trenches all day hands sore and blistered. Could not do any washing. 3 btles of beer each at Rs 1-8 a btle. Enjoyed quite drink.

04.11.44 Practicing for demonstration bored stiff.

05.11.44 A day off done my washing early though had to scrounge the soap. Wrote 3 letters home. Played 3 games of chess and won all of them.

06.11.44 Put in for 300Rs advance pay and will receive 230. this pay day. which I will send home. Thinking a great deal of Dora and it is strange that in our letters we are both thinking of the same thing.

07.11.44 Easy day preparing for move up the line. Received letter and more cigs from home. Played solo borrowed 10/-Rs and won about 4Rs. Quite a change of luck.

08.11.44 Left early morning for ferry, marched in full M. Order off ferry had a rotten meal. Marched in afternoon had a bit of luck and put packs in lorry arrived command post. meal was awfull. Arrived front line 9pm. Slept rough. Sorting out in morning. Going up to front line in a lucky position.

09.11.44 Had rotten meals. Cooked some from natives in preference to my own. Calamity lost my pipe.

10.11.44 No pay up today food still bad. Water worse even natives will not drink it. ORGANISATION of admin & staff.

11.11.44 Digging after a night of alarms jap scouted our wire during night discovered tracks and reported same. Must have been a good man. Shot at and left his rifle behind. Started us tightning at wire defences. No sounds during night except a dog that set the cans going. 4 troop out and ran into trouble. Have heard only 1 casualty.

12.11.44 Pipe found by native and returned to me. Quite morning. Jap patrol of about 70 spotted. No action taken. Still on biscuits. Fixed up a better alarm system. Night off from duty. Had cigarette under blanket.

13.11.44 Started off well bought 6 eggs for 2Rs. Had bacon eggs and mash for lunch best meal so far.

14.11.44 Moved out of box for HQ this morning. Going out on patrol tonight. Drew K rations. Had last check of arms & amn. Marched during night over rough ground. Troop moving excellent.

15.11.44 Laid up til dawn. Cold sore and stiff. Up at sunrise. Off scouring country for Japs. Contact at midday. ARILLERY opened up. Few shots fired saw one at 900x. Hopeless shot. Back at even time to excellent meal. Tea enjoyed best of all. Slept like a log.

16.11.44 A quiete day of rest. ENSA party of girls came round one came from Sutton. Drew 230Rs and sent off £12 to Dora. Spent remainder of day playing cards.

17.11.44 Nothing to do but play cards all the time. Lost 4Rs.

18.11.44 Playing cards. Shocked because I made a complaint to the GENERAL about food. MJR told me I was the ringleader of all the complaints in three troop. How false. I think I will see the C.O when we go back. It means my finish as an N.C.O in this unit. Will have to watch my step.

19.11.44 Playing cards all day. No work.

20.11.44 Mobile canteen arrived while digging well for water. Had tin of pears cigarettes. Fresh supply of clean water assured now. All camp using it now. Had a long chat with Padre.

21.11.44 Another quite day but many rumours floating around. But I believe we are in for another fairly big show.

22.11.44 Spent quite day getting ready to go out tonight. Out at 5pm. Successful crossing chaung.

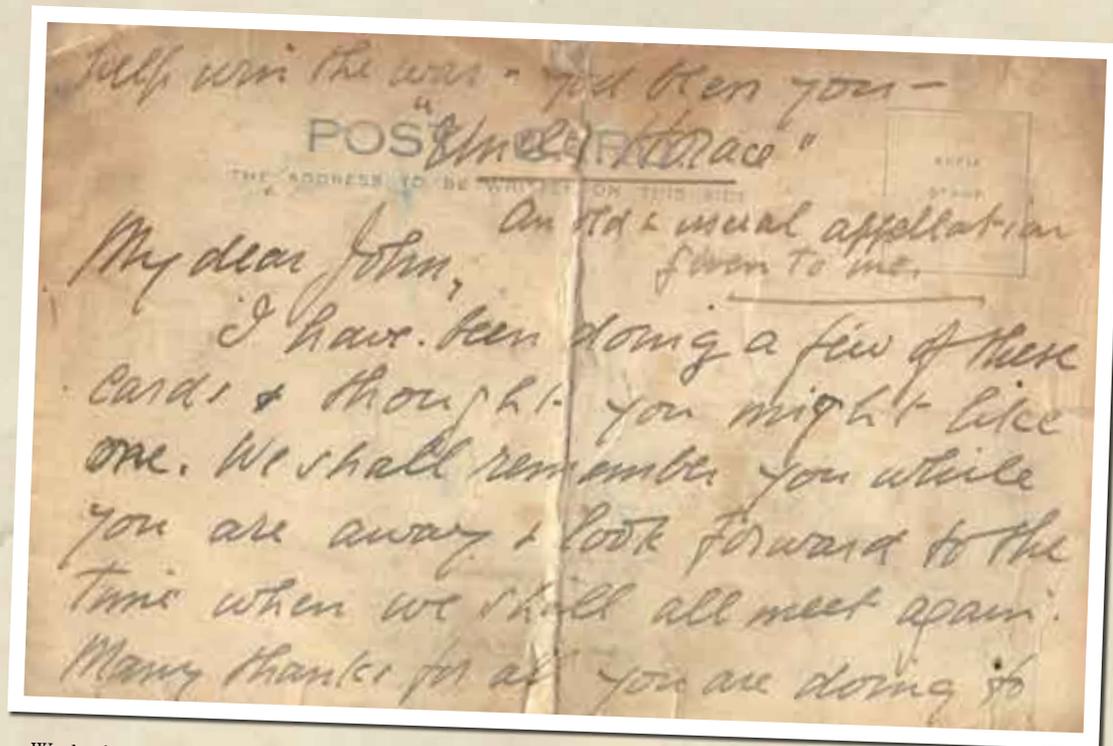
23.11.44 Cold & wet after crossing chaung laid up for several hours. Cold the rum came in handy. Moved into position at first light. Artillery opened up and we had splinters showered around us. Moved into attack. Heard them open up. down paddy fields caught six japs got one possibly two attacked from flanks. Advanced but pinned down by L.A Quited one with Bren. Withdrew. We took one prisoner. First for eight months. Everyone pleased. Poor villagers I wonder how many got hurt.

24.11.44 Moved out to old box. Remainder of Com to Lampagona we have easy end of stick this time. Poor devils moved out in F.S.MO at 11am in Blazing son. Was able to read new testament without interruption.

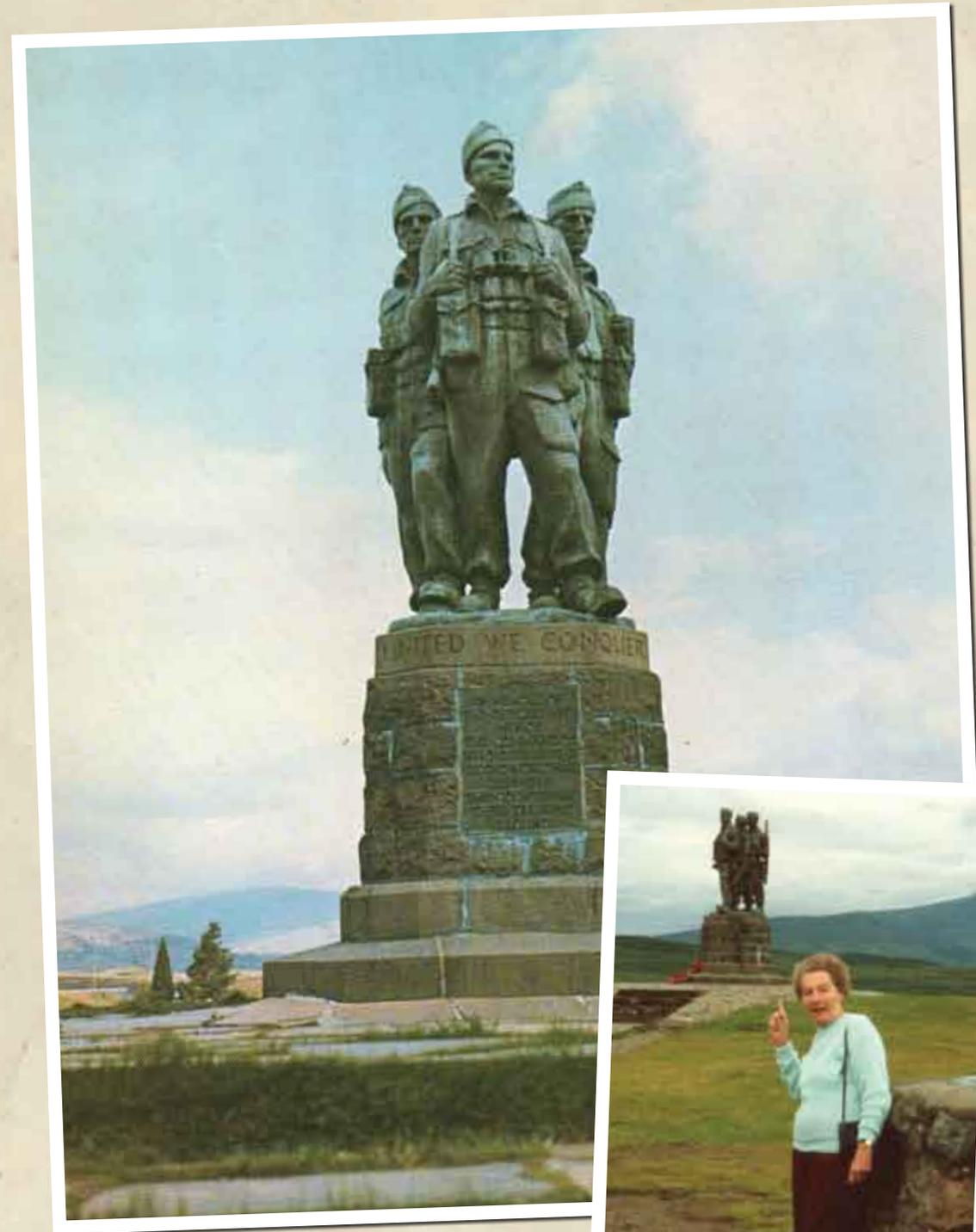
25.11.44 Another quite day. Played solo and won Rs6. An hour on guard at 2am. Spent in brewing up tea. Just finished when the orderly officer came round. Everything quite and restfull read a chapter from New Test. How beautiful.

26.11.44 Spent another quite day nothing to do only 1 hour stag.

- 27.11.44 As yesterday brightened by a letter from Dora.
- 28.11.44 Just the same routine except solo won 7Rs.
- 29.11.44 Arms inspection then had a beautiful swim and bought 6 eggs then played solo and won Rs2.
- 30.11.44 On the move back to Teknaf. Feeling the effects of muscular rheumatism.
- 01.12.44 Back at camp at 3pm drew Rs30 and slept in sheets for the first time for weeks what joy. Wrote a letter to Miss Pichy.
- 02.12.44 Plenty of cleaning up to do. Won Rs11/- playing solo. Have to report sick in the morning.
- 03.12.44 Saw the Dr this morning about my back. Have to see the dentist tomorrow.
- 04.12.44 Saw dentist at the C.C.S. what a shock, suffering from chronic pharyngitis of the gums and will have to have all my teeth out. I may as well have them done will try to get back to a base hosp. Do not fancy having them done here.



Words of encouragement received by dad from "Uncle Horace"



The Commando Memorial, Spean Bridge, Inverness-shire



Mum at The Commando Memorial

THE COMMANDO ASSOCIATION

FULL TITLE: "OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION OF THE ARMY COMMANDOS"

"Vaagso," "Norway, 1941," "St. Nazaire," "Dieppe," "Normandy Landing," "Dives Crossing," "Flushing," "Westkapelle," "Rhine,"
"Leese," "Aller," "North-West Europe, 1942-44-45," "Litani," "Syria, 1941," "Steamroller Farm," "Sedjenane I," "Djebel Choucha,"
"North Africa, 1941-43," "Landing in Sicily," "Pursuit to Messina," "Sicily, 1943," "Landing at Porto San Venere," "Termoli,"
"Salerno," "Monte Ornito," "Anzio," "Valli di Comacchio," "Argenta Gap," "Italy, 1943-45," "Greece, 1944-45," "Crete,"
"Madagascar," "Adriatic," "Middle East, 1941, '42, '44," "Alethangyaw," "Myebon," "Kangaw," "Burma, 1943-45."

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HON. GENERAL SECRETARY
RONALD YOUNGMAN, ESQ.

HON. TREASURER
HENRY BROWN, ESQ., M.B.E.



14th October, 1988

Dear Mrs Mullett,

It was with very deep regret that I learned from your letter of the death on 3rd October last of your dear husband and our comrade Leslie Charles Mullett.

There is no doubt that his death will be very strongly felt by all former wartime commandos, but particularly by those who had the privilege of serving with him in the Nos. 12 and 1 Commando units. In due course I shall be advising his many friends of the sad news in our Association Newsletter and will ensure that a copy of this is sent to you.

May I, on behalf of all members of this Association, express to you and your family our deepest sympathy in your great loss, with the hope that if there is ever anything that we, as an Association, can do for you, that you will not hesitate to let us know.

I hope that it may prove of some small comfort to you to know that you are much in our thoughts and prayers at this time.

Yours most sincerely,

R. Youngman
Hon. General Secretary

COMMANDO SERVICE CERTIFICATE

Italy Crete Burma Greece
Norway France Sicily Albania
Holland Belgium Germany Madagascar
North Africa Yugoslavia Western Desert Channel Islands



This Certificate is an Appreciation,
of Loyal Service given to Commandos by

1641438 Bdr. L. MULLETT (RA. S/L.)

18th Oct 1945

R. Farwick

Chief of Combined Operations

Served with Commandos from March 1941 until

18th October 1945

18th Oct 1945

Alfreda Lt Col RM.

Official Testimonial/Summation

Military conduct: Exemplary
Steady and Reliable. A hard working man who has given good service during his Army career.

Occupation on enlistment: Storekeeper

Height: 5ft 8 inches

Weight: 155lbs

Colour of hair: Auburn/Brown

Colour of eyes: Hazel

Complexion: Fresh

Girth when fully expanded: 39 inches

Range of expansion: 3 inches

Fathers name: Mr C.H. Mullett of 33 Appleton Road Eltham Kent

Brothers: Arthur older & Edwin younger

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