

***BASED ON EXTRACTS FROM THE REGIMENTAL WAR CHRONICLE OF THE
OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY VOL4 1944/1945***

**SIXTH BATTALION
FROM 1st JANUARY TO JULY, 1945**

The New Year found us concentrated at Foul Point, feverishly trying to work out load tables for the various types of craft available. Meanwhile one of our sister brigades had floated down the river on the other side of the range and then was parallel with us. The third brigade, having cleared the range of odd parties of Japanese which we had by-passed, had reached Donbaik and the division was tidy once more. Our original task of advancing the forty-five miles from Maungdaw to the end of the peninsula had been achieved with one fatal casualty.

Tremendous preparation ensued apace. Enormous guns arrived, hards were built for the landing craft, divisional headquarters turned up, and luckily the Honourable Japanese Air Force refused the invitation our preparations offered. A most impressive supporting programme comprising all three elements was prepared, and then came the anti-climax. It transpired that a light aircraft had landed on Akyab Island and picked up one of the inhabitants, who confirmed that again the bird had flown and the island was ours for the taking. So, after all, our first combined operation was to be in the nature of a dress rehearsal for the future.

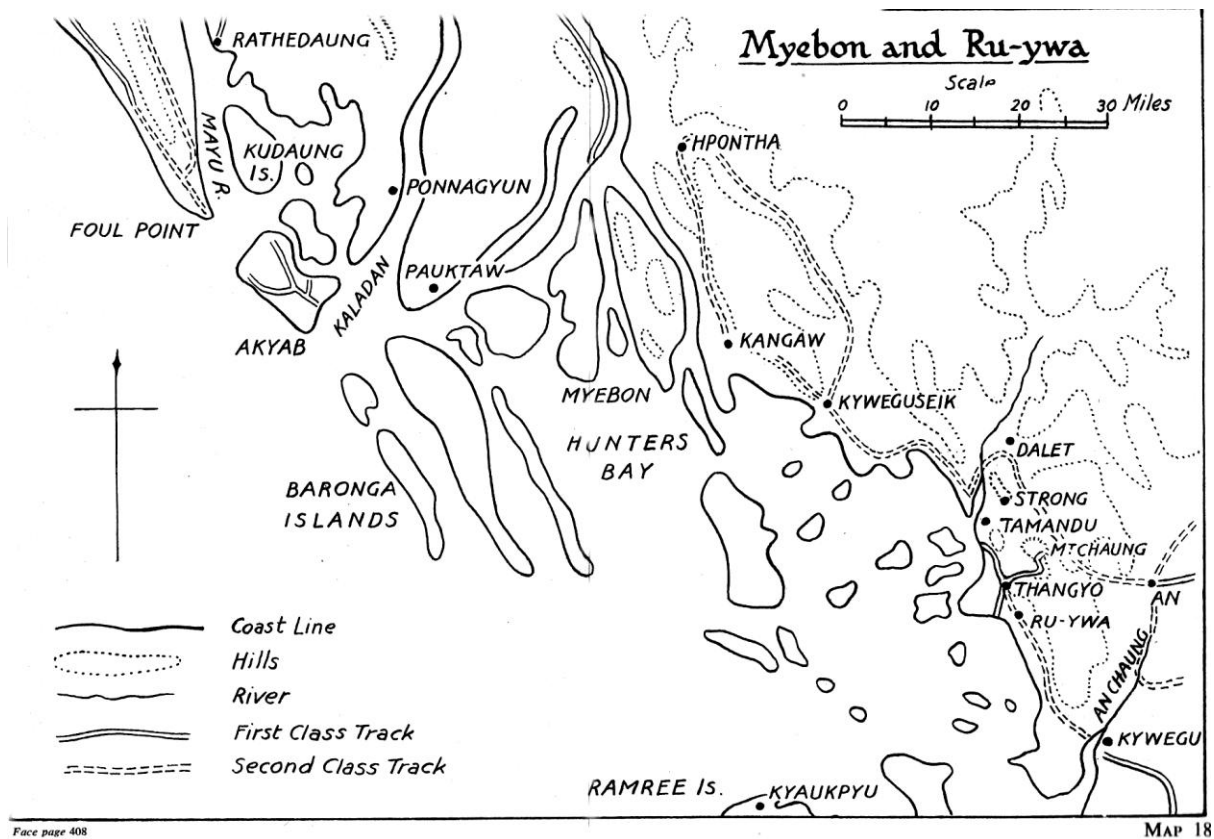
No. 2 D Day was the 8th January. The commando brigade landed about lunch time, full of enthusiasm, as apparently nobody had remembered to tell them of the enemy's flight. We crammed ourselves into L.C.Ms, and had an uneventful but somewhat damp journey of about four miles before being greeted by the corps commander and the gentlemen of the Press on the opposite shore. A hot and dusty march half-way to the town ended our D Day. Maitland Emmet, one of the divisional liaison officers, was seen flying along the road in a jeep, with orders to halt the green-bereted boys before they reached Akyab town, so as to allow our brigade to have the honour of a triumphal entry the next day.

True to form, the anti-climax continued. Again we were met by the Press, who alone seemed to have transport. One of our objectives, Millionaires' Square, consisted of a few bomb-scarred bungalows enshrouded with jungle. The wireless station, where we were supposed to supply a guard, had ceased to exist. B Company were lucky, and billeted themselves in the market on the edge of the sea, and had a more or less waterproof roof over their heads, a good well in the cookhouse, and concrete slabs to live on. Not a single building in the town was intact and not an inhabitant was to be seen: a dead city if ever there was one.

We very soon made ourselves comfortable and scrounged all sorts of furniture, though there was no loot of any value. Frantic efforts were made by some Americans, who blew up every safe they could find, and only got the Akyab football cup for their pains.

Food was our greatest problem to begin with. G had completely outrun Q, and the enormous influx of troops about a month before the planned date must have given the administrative staff an appalling problem. The first ship to be unloaded produced vast quantities of barbed wire and countless tins of water; neither of which was required. We rapidly sent trucks to scour the neighbourhood for ducks, chickens and eggs, and for a short time were most successful. One enormous muscovy duck fed a company officers' mess for two days.

A day or two after our arrival the Japanese Air Force appeared and about six planes bombed the shipping in the harbour. Presumably they were a suicide squadron, as a tremendous barrage went up and the gallant R.A.F., risking the chance of being shot down by our own flak joined in the fray. Soon afterwards, while the anti-aircraft people were feeling very "trigger-happy," a lone Dakota with a cargo of senior officers, drifted over the harbour, and hell was let loose again, but it managed to land with only its tail and the nerves of the passengers impaired.



We spent quite a pleasant ten days in Akyab and managed to clean up ourselves and our equipment and assemble all our mules and vehicles again. Meanwhile plans for future operations were conceived and aborted daily. We all got quite a thrill out of living in a town for the first time since we left Ryde.

Before the next part of our story opens a word of explanation will be necessary to paint the general picture. The Arakan is a country of mountain ranges and tidal rivers that all run from north to south cutting it off from the rest of Burma. Akyab is a sort of half-way house where the Mayu Range ends and most of the rivers find their way into the sea through a network of tidal waterways. South of Akyab the process begins again. The Arakan Yomas run north and south with two roads connecting the coastal area with Central Burma at Minbu and Prome on the Irrawaddy.

The Japanese had built a well-concealed road down the coast as far as Taungup, eighty miles south-east of Akyab, and as the activities of the Air Force had limited their use of water transport, the main line of communication was by road, along the coast, and then over the Yomas to the Irrawaddy. The general policy was to kill Japanese and to contain troops that would otherwise be used against the Fourteenth Army driving down Central Burma. The Regiment at that time was part of XV Corps and not the Fourteenth Army. In this huge and desolate country the capture of territory was unimportant, especially as we had the use of Akyab with its good harbour and all-weather airfield, and were shortly to invade the island of Ramree, which had an even better harbour at Kyaukpyu. This operation was successfully carried out by another division. It was now obvious that the Japanese were righting what they term a "change of direction" action. Their withdrawal was not easy, as owing to their very limited transport, and our complete air superiority, they had the option of fighting or leaving all their heavy equipment and guns behind. Their only line of communication to Burma consisted of one railway from Siam, which was almost always out of action. Consequently their existing equipment was extremely valuable to them.

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The West Africans, meanwhile, were continuing their long walk down the eastern flank and, in the words of the corps commander, they "were to act as a hammer," we being the anvil, which in fact was the ultimate result. The rest of the division was to mop up and then concentrate to extend the above policy.

Time was short if we were to get in position before the Japanese concentrated, but when one side has the initiative in this sort of campaign surprise is usually easy and all you have to do is to choose the right spot for a killing ground.

The 11th January saw us making rapid preparation for an opposed landing. We were introduced to a L.C.A. (Landing craft, assault) and each company was given about fifteen minutes to practise getting into and out of it. This was the sum total of our training in combined operations.

Shortly before midnight on the 12th January we were roused from our beds for an O group conference, the next day being D Day No. 3. The Special Service Brigade had already left and the Regiment was to lead the follow-up. The journey by sea was sixty-five miles and only ships of the Royal Navy and Royal Indian Navy were available to carry us. Each company was allotted a minesweeper and three L.C.As., the latter being towed astern. Our objective was the Myebon Peninsula, which guarded the western flank of the coastal road and covered the mouth of a maze of waterways leading inland. Our embarkation went smoothly, though the more portly members of the Regiment blessed their assault course training while transferring from the L.C.As. to the minesweepers. The Navy was most hospitable and did all in its power to make us comfortable in space that was meant for a crew of twenty, all hands. The galleys worked all night and some excellent meals were produced in mess decks and wardrooms. The only unhappy people were the crews of the L.C.As., who had a very rough passage and frequently went adrift.

At first light the armada lay off-shore, and we began to form up in our L.C.As. to the accompaniment of a good deal of abuse from the loud-hailer aboard the L.C.H. We landed completely dry-shod on a sandy beach and relieved the troops covering the beach-head. An enemy suicide squadron bombed the ship while we were unloading, but the patrol of Lightnings soon had them into the sea. The commandos had landed the day before with a terrific air and sea bombardment, and although many of them got stuck in very deep mud and one of the tanks had to be abandoned, they had had very few casualties except for the beach master, who trod on a mine. These beach mines were smaller editions of sea mines and about three times as large as a football. The Japanese were demoralized by the bombardment; and most of them abandoned the beach defences and several guns, and disappeared inland with the utmost dispatch. The country was fairly open, with dry paddy fields and jungle-covered hills up to 400 feet.

The commandos and the 19th Lancers with their Shermans did magnificent work, and although we kept close up with them they soon cleared the peninsula, which was only eight miles long. Julian Tennyson and the mortars supported them once or twice and our trucks and mules helped them with rations and casualties, and had quite an exciting time. We were shelled mildly once or twice, but spent most of our time examining Japanese positions which had taken two years to build. Their 75-mm. gun positions were amazing pieces of work: dog-leg tunnels cut through the tops of small hills making the guns quite invisible when not firing and very difficult to damage by counter-battery fire. We conscientiously collected piles of documents and found quite a few Japanese bodies to add to the official bag. Our brigade took over towards the end of the operation, as the Special Service people were required elsewhere.

On the 17th January our mortars supported the Gurkhas in what turned out to be a model operation on a very strongly held position. They fired a ton of bombs in about fifteen minutes and silenced a Japanese 75-mm. which had been firing at them over open sights. This operation accounted for two 75-mms., a 4-inch mortar and seventy bodies picked up. The Gurkhas pushed on and we relieved

them as they progressed. The area was quickly cleared up and several big dumps of stores fell into our hands.

As this phase of the operation was over, high-speed planning for the next show was the order of the day. Meanwhile the commandos had landed at Kangaw, only about a mile from the Japanese sole land line of communication and were heavily involved. On the 25th January a patrol of A Company did a night landing to reconnoitre a gun position, and the next night B Company embarked in L.C.As. and landed on the peninsula, about five miles by chaung. Luckily it was unopposed, for, as soon as we had dug ourselves in the tide came up and we were forced to sleep above ground. The next morning the rest of the Regiment followed and we were soon dug in on some low hills which gave us a grandstand view of the Kangaw battle area. A Japanese 75-mm. opened as we were unloading stores and everyone dived into the mud, but most of the shells fell into the chaung and all was well. Our role was to kill Japanese escaping east to the road by land and water. That night we had a jitter party and several hundred light-machine-gun bullets whistled harmlessly over B Company headquarters.

The Japanese now began to turn their attention to the Special Service Brigade and a tremendous battle ensued on a ridge near Kangaw. They tied explosives on their waists and hurled themselves at the tanks as a sort of human "Molotov cocktail." However, the commandos gave as good as they received, held them, and picked up over 400 bodies in what must have been one of the fiercest hand-to-hand battles of the war. Company raids by water now became the fashion and a series of shows to harass the enemy came into operation, all by night. We were unlucky and only A Company had any fun. The whole Regiment, less B Company, went out for twenty-four hours and blew up some supply dumps but saw no Japanese, except bodies floating in the chaungs, which were claimed as a result of a previous raid. The situation had now become a bit complicated, as the Africans were fast approaching from the north, driving Japanese before them, while those who had already reached the road-block made terrific efforts to open it. It was decided to put three companies into the middle of the sandwich to compress the yellow blighters still more. Eddie Cohen had several small battles before the Africans made contact with us and had the aerial of his wireless shot away.

The fog of war was pretty considerable for a time, as shells from Africans, Japanese and our own troops farther south whistled over our heads from every direction, but did no damage except to disorganize a D Company dhobi party. At long last the Japanese reckoned they had had enough of it and abandoned their attacks on the road-block, blew up their guns, which included two 25-pounders, and disappeared into the jungle. The division continued to follow up and the 51st Brigade was landed about fifty miles farther south to repeat the hammer and anvil process. Meanwhile we were withdrawn to the Myebon Peninsula for a rest, with promises of mobile canteens and bread and fresh meat, which we had not seen since leaving Akyab. However, the delights were very short-lived.

During the early hours of our second peaceful night in the rest area the telephone buzzer echoed through the jungle calling O group, who regretfully left their beds of straw for the conference table. Our next operation was to support the brigade which had landed and cut the coastal road about sixty miles south of our previous operational area. The landing had been unopposed. The Japanese were beginning to react from the surprise. In fact, rumour had it that a Japanese lorry had been ambushed while moving along the road completely oblivious of our activities. In its haste to escape one of the passengers was bounced out of his seat, seized by the ambushers and tied up to prevent the customary hari-kari. He turned to his captors with a smile and in perfect English said: "Please untie me. I wish to live, as I am a Christian and not a soldier, but only an artillery officer." We took great pleasure in passing on the story to our gunner friends. Early morning on the 22nd February, B, C and D Companies plus tactical headquarters embarked in an L.C.I.—a new type of craft to us—and steamed off through a maze of chaungs towards Ruywa. Arriving at our harbour, a Japanese 75-mm. opened up at a sloop of the Royal Indian Navy lying off-shore. She weighed anchor and raced towards us. We steamed towards her, as the reverse gear of our L.C.I. was out of action and we could not stop. The interval between us closed rapidly and so did the proximity of the shells, one of which hit the sloop but failed to explode. We circled round just in time and luckily the Japanese ceased fire, though the

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sloop protested loudly with all her armament for some time afterwards. After dusk we boarded L.C.As. and set off towards the beach-head, which was an exceedingly muddy mangrove swamp, and it was all we could do to struggle ashore. Our store boat shot off again before we could unload our stores. But the reason soon became clear when the beachmaster painted a lurid account of the previous day's shelling. As if adding emphasis to his words, a fusillade of small-arms fire opened up on the neighbouring hills. Nothing came our way and we moved off to a concentration area unmolested except for the last platoon, No. 12. They were blown off their feet by several 155-mm. shells, the biggest the Japanese possessed in the Arakan. However, no damage was done, though the rest of the night was pretty noisy.

Two or three idle days were spent while the rest of the brigade concentrated before starting to move north. The plan now was to capture the Japanese beach-head at Tamandu and then repeat the process of linking up with the hard-pressed African forces who were meeting Japanese opposition ten miles due north of us. The second object was to cut the only road running towards Central Burma over the An Pass. Meanwhile the Japanese reaction was increasing daily, but our gallant Gurkhas mopped them up in their usual style, one of them winning the V.C. for a superb piece of kukri work. As usual, the policy was to by-pass any Japanese not actually threatening our line of communication and leave them to rot in the jungle. We made several short moves and finally, on the 1st March, got within striking distance of the Me Chaung, which was the half-way mark to the brigade's ultimate objective. Our final move to a series of features with agricultural names was quite exciting, as a Japanese sniper 75-mm. tried his best to halt our advance up the road, but the only casualty was one man who earned a very cushy wound stripe and was soon back on the job.

As usual, our picks and shovels were very soon working at full pressure. B Company found an empty Japanese gunner bivouac area and salvaged some hog-skin riding boots, complete with spurs. Presumably the owner was now a foot-slogger. That night George Slacker's platoon and No. 8 Platoon from A Company under John Wixcey went out to protect a bulldozer gang working on the chaung to make a crossing for the following morning. The Japanese took exception to them and when a jitter party failed to make an impression they set to work in earnest with three 75-mms. Unfortunately they did not confine their attention only to the bulldozer, which promptly took evasive action, but fired all along the road on our positions. About 150 shells fell in our area in twenty minutes, many being tree-bursts, which are always most unpleasant. Luckily our digging was effective in that we had only one slight casualty and six wounded mules, which, alas, cannot dig, poor devils!

On the 2nd March the Regiment got orders to force the Me Chaung the next day and were kept busy with reconnaissances and the study of tide tables. The final conference was interrupted by some biggish explosions, but the intelligence officer reassured us that the sappers were blowing up trees, though later it was found that a 155-mm. was responsible.

The plan was to cross the Me Chaung at first light and capture a village (Thangyo) on some high ground overlooking the bridge and then to consolidate on various commanding features. An imposing artillery programme was laid on and a troop of tanks provided for close support across the chaung. At first light B Company waded through the chaung about a hundred yards wide with no opposition except from a 75-mm. on the far bank which fired at very short range and wounded the C.S.M. and one man. A 3.7-inch with its crew of four, all dead, was found to have been covering the crossing at point-blank range, but our gunners on the previous day had cooked their goose. The rest of the rifle companies and tactical headquarters crossed just before the tide came up. At H hour a heavy barrage came down and a diversionary attack was carried out on one flank. The Japanese joined in the barrage and unfortunately the two leading platoons had ten casualties on their start line. However, the attack went in as planned and B Company occupied what was left of the objective. No enemy opposition from ground troops was encountered, but there were many Japanese defensive positions in the area.

D Company passed through and occupied a feature above B Company and had a game of hide-and-seek with a Japanese observation party which was too quick for them. A and C Companies pressed through along the axis of the road to the final objective. The administrative problem was pretty acute,

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as the chaung was crossable only at low tide. A Company's cooks and its second-in-command were shot-up in a Japanese rubber boat. They all baled out except for one cook who could not swim and just reached the bank. The stretcher-bearers, under did a splendid job carrying casualties back when up to their necks in water. The transport came over just before dark, one truck getting a bullet in the spare wheel while taking up dinner.

The following morning after a bit of difficulty, a troop of the 19th Lancers crossed over and, with D Company, continued the advance. Its job was to secure objectives half-way to the ultimate one, Tamandu, and then the rest of the brigade was to go on through us. D Company had not gone very far up the road when a "woodpecker" or Japanese medium machine gun opened on it. A short but extremely sharp battle ensued for about half an hour. The tanks got a really good shoot at very short range. This was, in fact, so close that one of the tank commanders threw grenades out of his turret. Serjeant White's platoon waded in and killed all the medium machine-gun crew and captured the weapon intact. Over twenty bodies were picked up and we had six casualties. D Company consolidated and B Company passed through. For this spirited action Eddie Cohen was awarded the M.C., Serjeant White, of No. 16 Platoon, the D.C.M., and Corporal Teuton and Lance-Corporal Bradbury the M.M. Odd Japanese were seen flitting about, but it was not until the leading scouts of the follow-through battalion and our own were side by side that any more opposition was encountered. A short, sharp battle ensued, but the tanks again did the trick.

We were all amazed by the coolness of the F.T.Os. (forward tank officers). They walked about with wirelasses on their backs in the thick of the fray complete with black berets—a perfect target, but not the least concerned. That evening contact was made with the Africans and the road was cleared. The Gurkhas on our flank had an extremely bloody battle for a couple of days, and as usual accomplished a superhuman task, but at quite a high cost. Jitter parties took place as usual, but they did not cause much loss of sleep.

The brigade's task was almost complete except for the capture of a very difficult feature called Strong which completely closed the west-to-east road over the Yomas. The 74th Brigade had to clear it to allow the Africans to continue on their way over the mountains. Again a very stubborn action took place. Our mortars in support deserve special credit for their wonderful work for four days and nights with very little rest and under great difficulties. As direct assault proved too costly, the enemy was surrounded, the water supply cut off, and the position pounded until the Japanese ran away, leaving two guns, twenty bodies and eight flags.

Unfortunately for the Regiment, just before the final phase of this action Julian Tennyson was killed by a Japanese mortar bomb which fell on his observation post. It was a great tragedy and a personal loss to the Regiment to lose such a respected and loyal friend. Tragic indeed that it should have occurred during what proved to be for us the last action of the campaign. The sounds of battle began to recede farther and farther eastward into the jungle and we were left in peace. Water was our great problem, as the jungle was dry and dusty in the extreme, with no wells or streams of fresh water. We dug feverishly in the paddy and sometimes the result was salt and sometimes a muddy, drinkable liquid. Apart from a few routine patrols and the capture of an exhausted Japanese quartermaster's clerk, there was little to do. Bathing and "sapper" fishing helped to pass the time.

The Regiment sailed back to Akyab in a variety of craft— some companies getting beer and bunks, though they had to brave the scrambling-nets to get such luxuries. Peter Lloyd and the rear party had done a magnificent job in preparing our camp about eight miles out of Akyab town and about half a mile from the sea. Cookhouses, ovens, messes, stores, had all been built from salvage. The beer and spirit ration was waiting to be drunk, masses of mail, bread and frozen Australian meat. We got down to an orgy of eating and drinking; the luxury of light and noise at night; and some excellent surf-bathing.

False alarms came and went with more than usual rapidity. Eventually, on the 2nd April, the Regiment, less the mules and transport, set sail in a most luxurious, though dry, troopship, and shook the dust of the Arakan from its feet. Our spirits were somewhat damped on arrival at our new camp—Coimbatore. However, after a day or two we managed to find our way about its immense area and got used to the drains running uphill. Twenty-eight days' leave, including travelling time, was no longer a myth and everyone who had not had leave in 1945 melted away burdened with a year's savings.

**SIXTH BATTALION
APPENDIX V
SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY**

By Lieutenant-General Sir A. F. Philipp Christison K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., M.C.

Commanding XV Indian Corps

To HQ 25 Ind Div.

I congratulate all of you on the very successful conclusion of a whole year's uninterrupted campaign in ARAKAN.

You came at a difficult time and had to take over a wide front S.E. of MAUNGDAW during a period of Japanese offensive. You not only held your ground but turned him off the strongest mountain tops which he had held for 2 years or more. You will always remember the ARAKAN monsoon. I shall always remember that you patrolled and fought aggressively all through it in spite of the appalling conditions and that you came through that ordeal with your morale high.

You have to your credit the clearance from the MAYU PENINSULA of the famous 55th Jap Division and the capture of AKYAB and clearance of the surrounding districts, the MYEBON operations and the surprise landing and resultant decisive battle of the whole campaign—KANGAW.

You finished off your campaign to clear the northern and central ARAKAN of the Japanese 54th Division by the brilliantly executed landing at RUYA leading to your final capture of the enemy's base at TAMANDU. Throughout these operations you have shown magnificent fighting qualities and the highest morale.

You have to your credit the successful accomplishment of probably the most difficult combined operations any British force has ever attempted. You have inflicted 8,300 casualties on the Japanese and taken 37 guns.

You first came under my command on 12 Nov 42. We trained together and we fought together. I could wish for no finer troops to command and I am intensely proud of you all.

I have the utmost confidence that, whatever you are called upon to do to bring this war to a speedy end, you will, under the inspiring leadership of your Divisional Commander, do it with the same cool skill and determination you have always shown.

I deplore with you the loss of those gallant comrades who have laid down their lives in the cause of freedom. I trust that your wounded will soon return to your ranks and I wish you all a very happy period of leave which you have so well earned by the completeness of your victory.

**SIXTH BATTALION
FROM JULY TO DECEMBER, 1945**

Life in Coimbatore west camp continued very pleasantly during August and September. Every company had a fortnight's firing up at Wellington Barracks and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. There appeared to be very little beer rationing, and a series of most successful company dances was held.

During this period the Regiment became a sort of labour exchange. Officers, N.C.Os. and men were dispatched daily all over Southern India to assist in "mounting the operation." We supplied staffs for countless transit camps, trained Indian pioneer corps in musketry, taught railway operating companies about Japanese mines, and, most popular of all, produced drivers for the Kodaikanal leave centre.

It came as a great blow when we got orders to move to Arkonam on the 20th September at about forty-eight hours' notice. We packed up hurriedly, dispatched advanced parties, and then it transpired that there wasn't a camp for us at our new destination. However, the train had been ordered, and so we had to move somewhere. Eventually A and D Companies and Regimental headquarters went to the new area and the rest of us ended up at St. Thomas's Mount, Madras. Our stay in Madras was scheduled to last four days, but we have been here for nearly three weeks, owing to Hindu festivals retarding the erection of cookhouses at Arkonam.

Despite the heat we have managed to enjoy ourselves in Madras. The camp is good and there is unlimited scope for games. Arkonam is a tented camp without any shade and consequently warm by day and very damp by night when it rains. During the past three and a half years we have had plenty of practice at camp-building, so are now fairly comfortable and, for a change, the transport situation has improved, with the result that men go into Madras for forty-eight hours quite frequently.

Since these notes were started the Regiment has assembled again and the Arkonam camp has changed entirely. An enormous amount of hard work has been done—about ninety men work under the pioneer officer and most palatial buildings spring up like mushrooms. We seem to have found a place at last where wood and nails are unlimited. Excellent playing fields have been made, but the opposition for matches is somewhat limited.

Our fate at the moment seems rather undecided. An increasing flow of men go off on release every week.

Since July events have been crowding upon us. Our stay at Coimbatore was one of the most pleasant interludes enjoyed by the Regiment. The camp was roomy and the climate good, the Nilgiris were within easy motoring distance and the populace of Coimbatore, only fifteen miles away, most hospitable.

The end of the Japanese war took us, perhaps, somewhat by surprise, but celebrations were none the less elaborate and prolonged.

Perhaps a few hard things were said by those at Arkonam about the flesh-pots of Madras, but by the 12th October we were all together again—those with a discerning eye full of admiration for the herculean labours that had been necessary to put the camp in order.

On the 18th October those in age and service group 22 left for Deolali on their way home for demobilization. These eighty-one N.C.Os. and men had been with the Regiment since it was first formed in 1940.

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There was still no indication of our future, or for that matter of repatriation, so a larger N.C.Os.' cadre course was begun and a furious drive to encourage hobbies—vocational training by another name. Leatherwork, shoemaking, gardening and poultry-keeping were among some of these occupations, but the most popular was carpentry. Peter Darlington found ample employment for all carpenters with his pioneers, who were busily engaged in building a monumental officers' mess. Alas! by the time it was finished only seventeen officers and none of the old mess staff remained to enjoy it. However, there it stands and will stand for a long time as a solid testimonial to the superiority of British craftsmanship over that of the Tamil.

These activities were curtailed when the big repatriation draft, consisting of all those officers and other ranks who embarked ex Glasgow on the 17th June, 1942, left us on the 27th October. It then became obvious that we had not very long before us.

What was left of the Regiment was reorganized into three companies, A, D and H.Q., We began to strike tents and hand in stores, and to feel a little uneasy about what "they" would do with those of us who were left.

Finally, orders came from G.H.Q. that we were to disband on the 5th December and that all soldiers were to be posted to the 1st Battalion The Royal Warwickshire Regiment. The fate of the officers is still undecided.

"New Delhi.

"November 7th, 1945.

"To : LIEUT.-COLONEL R. M. J. NGALL,
Commanding, 6th Bn. The Oxf. and Bucks Lt. Infy.,
c/o No. 14 Adv. Base Post Office.

"The war has ended with victory for the Allies—our enemies have been completely defeated.

"It is no longer necessary therefore to maintain the Army on a war-time scale. A large number of men must be returned to civil life, where, after their training and experience in the Army, I am confident they will prove a valuable asset.

"I regret that, as a result of reductions, I shall have to order from time to time the disbandment of certain units of the Army in India and I now wish to place on record my appreciation of the most valuable work performed by all ranks.

"I wish you all the very best of luck in the future.

"C. J. Auchinleck,

"General"