

Highlights of 1962

Extract from the Junior Mercury – Jan 62

OUR NEW COMMANDING OFFICER

Three weeks ago I had the honour of taking over command of the Junior Leaders Regiment, Royal Signals, from Lt.-Col. GREGORY. The Regiment's fine reputation throughout Royal Signals and throughout the Army bears testimony to Col. GREGORY'S leadership and to the loyal support he has been given by the staff and Junior Leaders at Denbury. On behalf of all our readers I would like to thank Col. GREGORY for his devoted work for the Regiment, and to wish him every success and happiness in the future.

I have similar views to Col. GREGORY on all the important issues which concern the Regiment. As a consequence of this I do not wish, initially, to make any major changes in the organization and training of the Regiment, and I intend to give my full support to the many excellent ideas which Col. GREGORY has introduced over the past two years. I shall give every encouragement to the Band, the Choir, the Highland Dancing Team, and the Social Club. As much Adventure Training and Sport as possible will continue to be included in the training programme.

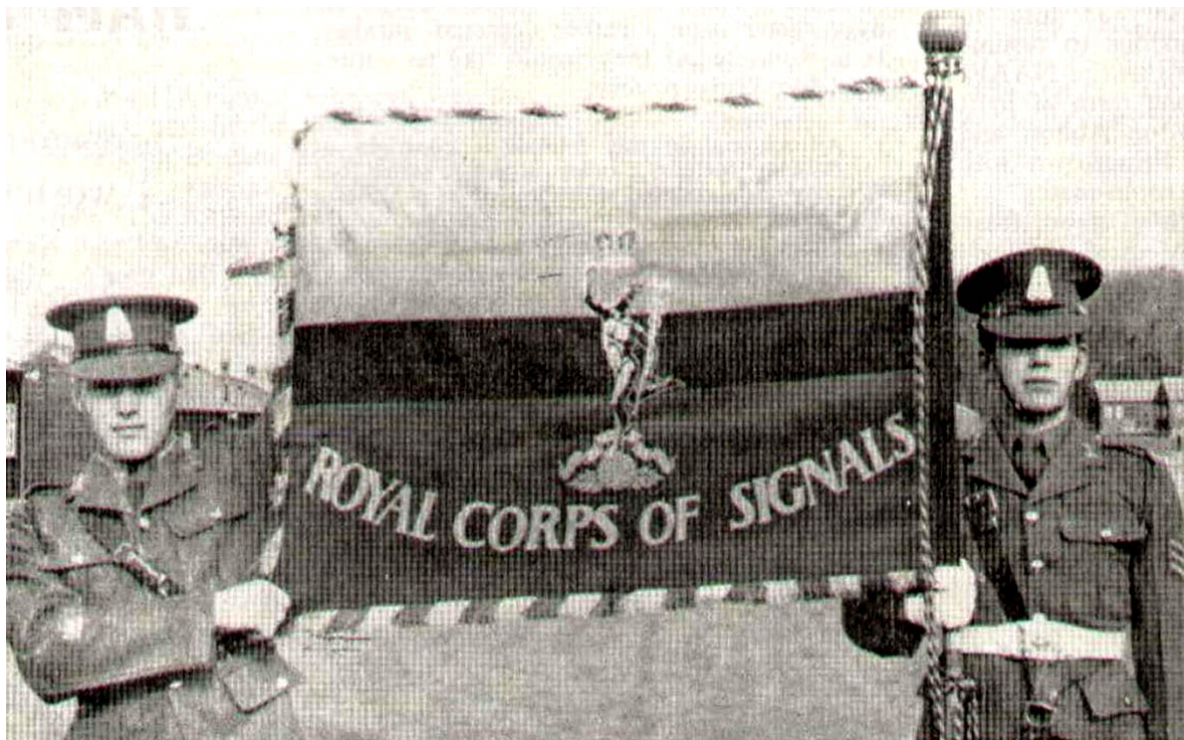
In the short time I have spent at Denbury I have been most impressed by the enthusiasm and team spirit within the Regiment. The high standards of leadership, training, and education achieved by our Junior Leaders passing out into man service are a credit to the young men themselves and to the officers and NCOs who have taught, guided, and led them. I have also been heartened by the support given to the Regiment by parents and by our friends in South Devon. Your help and interest, so generously given, makes our work so much easier. Thank you also for supporting the 'Junior Mercury.' I know that I can count on your continued support, and I look forward to meeting many of you in the next few months.

As befits a new Commanding Officer at Denbury, I have had an early initiation into the charms and pitfalls of Dartmoor. Soon after starting on the course of the Commonwealth Trophy, I received an accidental baptism in the River Tavy. In the darkness of the next four hours I appear to have discovered – the hard way – a high proportion of the bogs and water-courses on the Moor! However, I have little doubt that Dartmoor has its charms, and I look forward to seeing and appreciating them when the better weather comes round.

I come to the Regiment at a most interesting time. Only a few weeks ago the Army Council decided that Denbury is to be our permanent home. We can now look forward, in a few years time, to the construction of a permanent camp on the present site, complete with modern single and married accommodation, lecture rooms, science laboratories, dining halls, clubs, etc. In the meantime work on several temporary projects, including a new educational block and a new cookhouse, will start early in 1962.

I will do my best to ensure that provision of permanent married quarters is given a high priority. It is hoped to complete the issue of the new-pattern uniforms to both the Junior Leaders and the military staff early in 1962.

We all welcome the prospect of these material benefits to the Regiment, and I am sure that they will help to make our work in Denbury easier and more pleasant. However, let us never forget that the spirit of a Regiment counts for far more than the conditions under which it lives and works. I shall do all I can to ensure that the spirit of enthusiasm, adventure, and service continues to flourish in Denbury, and I am sure that I can count on the support of you all. Our Regiment has a fine record of which we can all be proud. Let us now go forward together, building on the past to an even greater future.



The Regimental Standard borne by **JSgt Joe Smith** and displayed by **JRSM Jackie Wraith**



Kukri Troop Colour Party

1 - **JSgt Joe Smith** - 3
JRSM Jackie Wraith is behind

Anvil Films Production – Follow My Lead



From: - Lt Col A. HOLIFIELD, MC, R Signals.



Tel. Appleton 364

Junior Leaders Regiment,

Royal Signals,

Denbury Camp,

Newton Abbot,

Devon.

Dear Mr Kelly,

29th January, 1962.

I would like to take this opportunity of introducing myself to you as the new Commanding Officer at DENBURY. I took over the Regiment from Lieutenant Colonel GREGORY shortly before Christmas.

We have been greatly honoured to have the recently appointed Chief of Imperial General Staff, General Sir RICHARD HULL accept an invitation to be Inspecting Officer at our end of term Graduation Parade. The parade will be held on the morning of Saturday 7th April and will commence at 11 o'clock. I propose to hold an Open Day for parents on the day of the parade and I am therefore writing to you to extend a cordial invitation to attend. I would particularly welcome those of you whose boys will be graduating to Colour Service on the parade. I would like to make it clear, however, that this parade will not take the place of our customary Summer Parents' Day, which will be held as usual at the end of the summer term.

I will be pleased to provide accommodation and meals in the Regiment, for the nights of Friday 6th April and Saturday 7th April, for all parents and guardians who would like to attend the parade. To do this it may be necessary to bring a certain amount of extra stores into the Regiment and to help us in carrying out this task in good time I would be grateful if those wishing to be accommodated would kindly complete and return the attached proforma. If you are able to come would you please send back the completed proforma as soon as possible and in any case by not later than 1st March 1962.

My Staff and I look forward to seeing you at DENBURY and would be glad to discuss with you your boy's career in the Army and to answer any problems or worries you may have concerning him.

My best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Alan Holifield

26 March to 14 April 1962

Capt Swindells took party Junior Leaders to the Norwegian School of Signals at Lillehammer

Extract from Junior Mercury – May 62

On Monday, March 19, a group of seven boys were selected to go to Norway on an exchange visit. They were J/L/Cpl. Parkinson, J/L/Cpl. Waugh, J/L/Cpl. Wathen, J/L/Cpl. Stephens, J/Sigs. Thompson, Hadrick and Cooper. Preparations for the visit which, it was understood, would consist mainly of ski-ing, began at once. It is essential that if one is going for a ski-ing holiday, some preliminary muscle-strengthening is done. Under the supervision of the PT staff some circuit training was held twice a day.

On Monday, March 26, we left Denbury Camp and travelled to London by train. As on the previous occasion, we were kindly accommodated at the barracks of 41 Signal Regiment, TA.

An early start was made, and we eventually left King's Cross at nine o'clock and travelled straight through to Newcastle. We were to travel by the Fred Olson Norwegian Line, and after embarking we were soon at sea. Nor was this fact lost on most of us and, owing to the heavy sea running, most of the party fell some effects. We were looked after extremely well by the crew of the ship, named "M.S. Blenheim." The party at this stage first met the Norwegian food. The diet of Norwegians differs from ours considerably. They drink more coffee than tea, and a lot of milk. They usually have only one hot meal daily, and meat is considerably more scarce there than in England. However, there is always sufficient to eat, and there are a delicious selection of cheeses to be had in Norway.

However, to continue the diary. The crossing is almost 30 hours, and we first sighted the coast of Norway at 1800 hours on Wednesday. We disembarked at 0700 hours on Thursday and were met by Capt. Magna Spilde. Capt. Spilde has had previous experience of Junior Leaders, having been the course officer for the last two courses, and having been the conducting officer of a party of Norwegian boys when they visited Denbury in 1959.

The final part of our journey consisted of a three-hour train journey to Lillehammer, and then by car to Joerstadmoen, which is the Catterick of the Norwegian Army. At Joerstadmoen we were taken under the wing of the "Haeren Yrkesskolc for Sam-band" which is the Apprentices Signals Training School.

After being issued with a complete outfit of Norwegian Army kit, which included everything you could wish for, we wer left to start fitting skis to the boots and to settle into our quarters. The school had been most thoughtful, and two or three corporals attached themselves to the party and were really most helpful in showing us how to put the equipment together.

What we had really come to Norway to do started in earnest the following morning, Friday, March 30. The first thing learnt was to walk and move about on skis without falling over. With this a modicum of success was achieved. Capt. Spilde, determined that we should learn correct balance, forbade the use of ski-sticks. However, by the end of the day we had achieved a certain degree of proficiency, even if the clothing worn was rather wet.

The following day we started to learn how to go downhill, and quickly learned that there are various ways, most ably demonstrated by J/Sig. Hadrick, but a fundamental law was learned in that whatever goes down also has to come up, and this was the taxing part of the instruction. We learned to "herring-bone," "sidestep," "tack"; but none of them made a hill any shorter! Of course, we all found out that, before "coming up," one usually had to "get up." Though J/Sig. Cooper took quickly to the art of "snowplough" and the " snowplough turn," hardly less proficient was J/L/Cpl. Parkinson, who coloured his falls with spectacular displays of how skis, sticks, and body can be contorted.

Saturday afternoon we all went into Lillehammer to have a look at the shops and other attractions. Most of us went to a restaurant, and a dance which was as difficult as the Twist had not apparently reached Norway yet.

However, Sunday was to be no day of rest, and we took a coach trip to a local ski resort, Skeikampen. This was our first day of really hot sun, and in this single aspect we were very fortunate, as for the rest of our visit we had the most terrific weather. Indeed, there was more danger from sunburn and snow-blindness than from frostbite, a lecture about which we had been given by Capt. Nausdal, of the Norwegian Army.

Under the excellent tuition of Capt. Spilde, and by our own perseverance, by the time the following Thursday had arrived we were fairly competent at standing up and going up and down hill on skis. This, indeed, was just as well, as we now set out to join the rest of the apprentices school at their annual winter camp at Kittlbu, which is up in the mountains.

The weather here was even more hot, though the nights were correspondingly colder, and minus 20 degrees Centigrade was the order some nights. Of course, we were living under canvas!

However, perhaps one should be honest and admit that there was a fire in the tents. The Swedish M39 tent has as its tent-pole a metal tube, which serves as the chimney for the fire, which is made in a metal container hung on to the chimney. Fuel is provided by wood, and the fire is kept lit all night by one man, who is relieved hourly.

We split up among the Norwegians, and quickly learned the tent drill, once again receiving that tremendous co-operation from the Norwegians, who are only too anxious to help whenever possible, and who constantly seek to improve their English. It is even rumoured that we learned a few useful phrases in Norwegian.

One of the most enjoyable training sessions while in the mountains was towing behind a "Weasel." The "Weasel" is a light snow tractor with a track by which, like a tank, it steers. It is capable of pulling quite heavy loads at a speed at times of 30 m.p.h. (unladen). One of the ways of moving large quantities of troops across the snow is by "Weasel" not, one must add, inside but by towing. Two ropes are passed out at the back, and up to 34 soldiers simply hang on, and this exhilarating method of travel soon became quite a sport. As J/Sig. Thompson found, when the "Weasel" turns sharp left, you have to do something about it! And, as J/L/Cpl. Stephens and Wathen found going downhill is the most difficult. It was much to Capt. Spilde's credit that he saw the funny side of the numerous falls and piles-up which resulted from various members "Hunting for snow-snakes," euphemistically called a fall.

Other activities were pursued in the mountains. Some long treks over 12 and 14 kilometres were done, carrying a rucksack, snow shelters were built, and the small "inn" visited at night, where Coca-Cola and music were to be had.

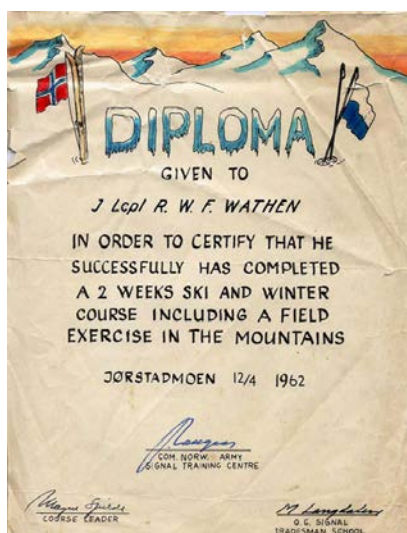
We spent a week in the mountains, and by the end of it we were all well and truly sunburnt. In fact, sunburnt so badly that it was with mischievous delight that washing was kept to a strict minimum and shaving with an ordinary razor absolutely out. Dare we admit the camp had electricity?

We returned to Joerstadmoen on Wednesday. April 11, by which time we had missed the Budget and the results of certain football matches. However, undaunted, our conducting officer. Capt. J. W. Swindell managed to extract them from Norwegian newspapers, and so our links with civilization were gathered up, and most of the party went into town that night. The next day, Thursday, was our last day of ski-ing, and for it we went up to another ski resort called Nordsetter. From here we did a 12-kilometre march across to Joerstamon and back. It was a measure of our skill that, in the whole 12 kilometres, there was only one fall (seen by our correspondent at the back!), and he fell down a slope backwards!

However, all things come to an end, and on Friday we handed in all our kit. and attended a farewell coffee party in the morning. At this the officer commanding the Apprentices School. Major Langdalen. spoke kind words about our ability, and the commandant of the Signal Training Centre, Col. Langaas, presented each boy with a diploma to mark his achievement, and to bear witness to the fact that he had undergone a fortnight's ski course, in addition, we each received a small souvenir made by the apprentices at the school, which depicted a figure ski-ing in the way we had all started.

In a few words, Col. Langaas said he had been pleased to see us there, and it was always a pleasure to have the British Army there. He hoped it would be possible to send a party to Denbury again in the not-too-distant future. He assured us that a welcome would always await any of us who returned to Norway.

On Saturday the return journey began, and it ended at Newcastle, where we dispersed to our own trains.



Commonwealth Trophy – March 1962



White Spear Troop Patrol

Graduation Day – Saturday 7th April 1962 – 1st time No 2 Dress



White Swan Troop



White Spear Troop



Kohima Troop



Javelin Troop



Kukri Troop



1. The C.I.G.S. with the S.-O.-in-C. and the Commanding Officer.
2. The C.I.G.S. inspects Quadrant Troop.
3. The C.I.G.S. hands J/R.S.M. Wraith his plaque.
4. The C.I.G.S. being interviewed for 'Junior Mercury' by J/Sig. Smith.
The R.S.M. sees fair play.

5. The C.I.G.S. inspects the Corps of Drums.
6. The S.-O.-in-C. talks with Mr. and Mrs. Barker.
7. Mrs. Whistler hands the Troop Hockey Cup to J/L/Cpl. Heard.
8. Mrs. Whistler receiving a bouquet of flowers from J/Sig. Dawson.
9. Mrs. Whistler presents the Squadron Rugby Cup to J/S.S.M. Brister.

Alexander Squadron Output



Rear row: Alan Bryant - Harry Beresford - 3 - JSgt Joe Smith - Ken Black - Ray Short - JLCpl Mal Toye - JLCpl Pete Stanger
 Centre row: 9 - 10 - JCpl Terry McCormack - Brian Gable - Ray Gourley - 14 - Alan Heard - D Stephenson - 17 - 18 - 19 Martin 'Jack' Cavanagh
 Front row: JSgt John Sharman - JSSM J 'Chick Brister - 23 - Major WJ Clapp - 25 - JSgt Andy Locke

Lt Col LHM Gregory MBE starts his Commonwealth Far East Tour – Friday 15th June 1962



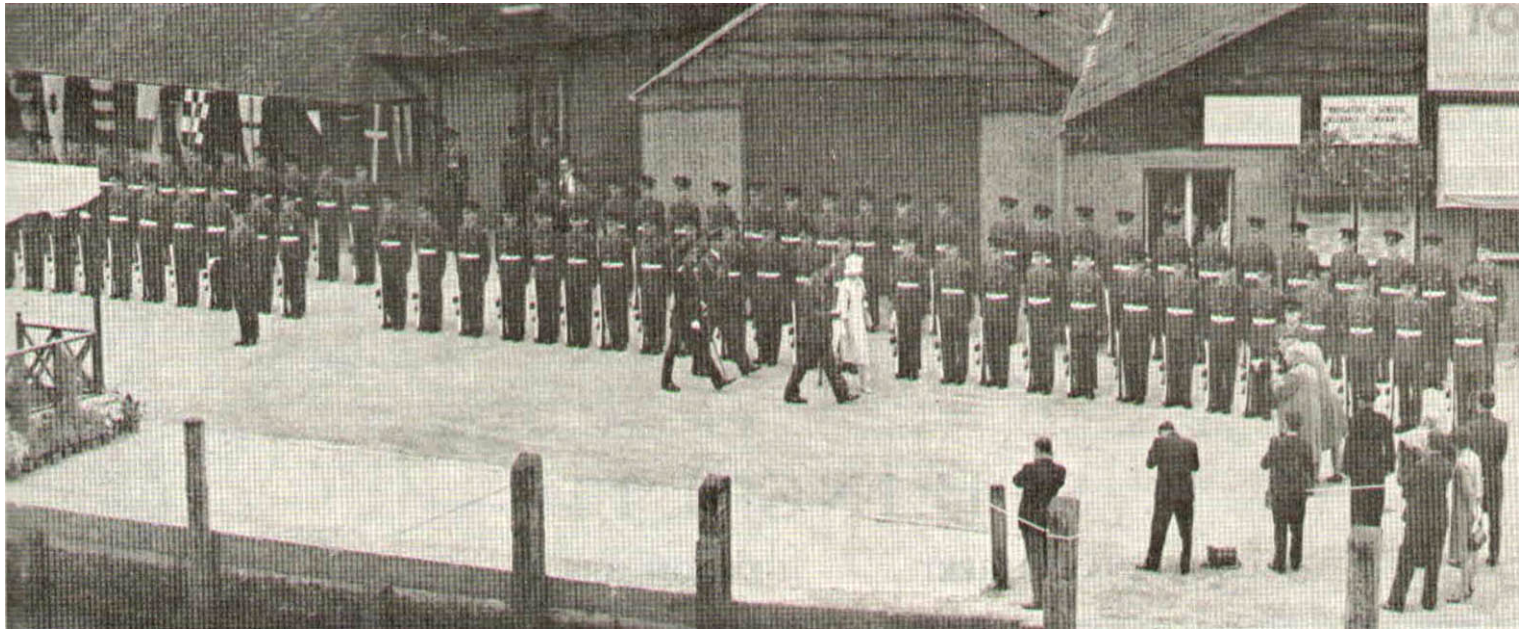
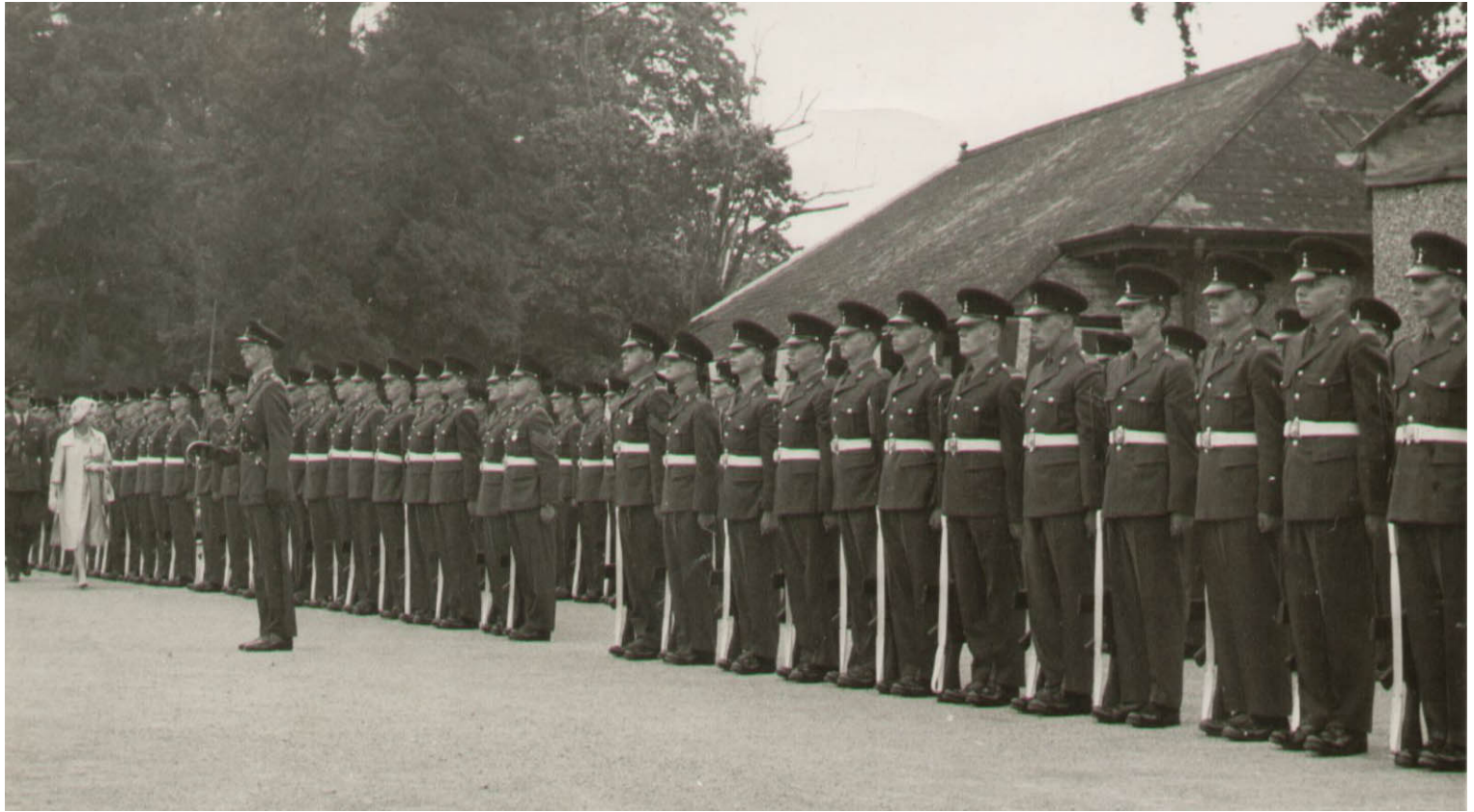
Royal Tournament – July 1962



Awarded to **Bill Winder** who took part in a Gymnastics Display at the Royal Tournament

A Royal Occasion – Friday 27th July 1962





Extract from Junior Mercury – Sep 62

“As far as we know Friday July 27 1962 was the first time a Guard of Honour had ever been supplied by a Junior Leaders Regiment for a reigning monarch. The occasion in question was connected with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II’s visit to the West Country. At Totnes lined up on Steamer Quay awaiting Her Majesty’s arrival were her Guard of Honour as supplied by Junior Leaders Regiment. Royal Signals. Commanding the Guard was the Regiment’s Second-in-Command, Major Malcolm Scott. The Guard of Honour, consisting of 96 Junior Leaders, was further staffed by Capt Haw, Lt Pickup, WOII Womball, S/Sgt Hammond, Sgt Livermore and Sgt Webster. Despite the unexpected approach of the Royal party, who finally arrived by road, due to the inclement weather, the Queen spent over three minutes inspecting Her Guard. She questioned the Guard Commander as to the Regiment’s location, commented on the youthful appearance of the Guard, and asked us average age. She also showed an interest in the Troop Flashes worn on their epaulettes, and was greatly intrigued by J/SSM Wilson, who was wearing the five Troop Flashes of Slim Squadron.”



Graduation Day – Tuesday 31st July 1962



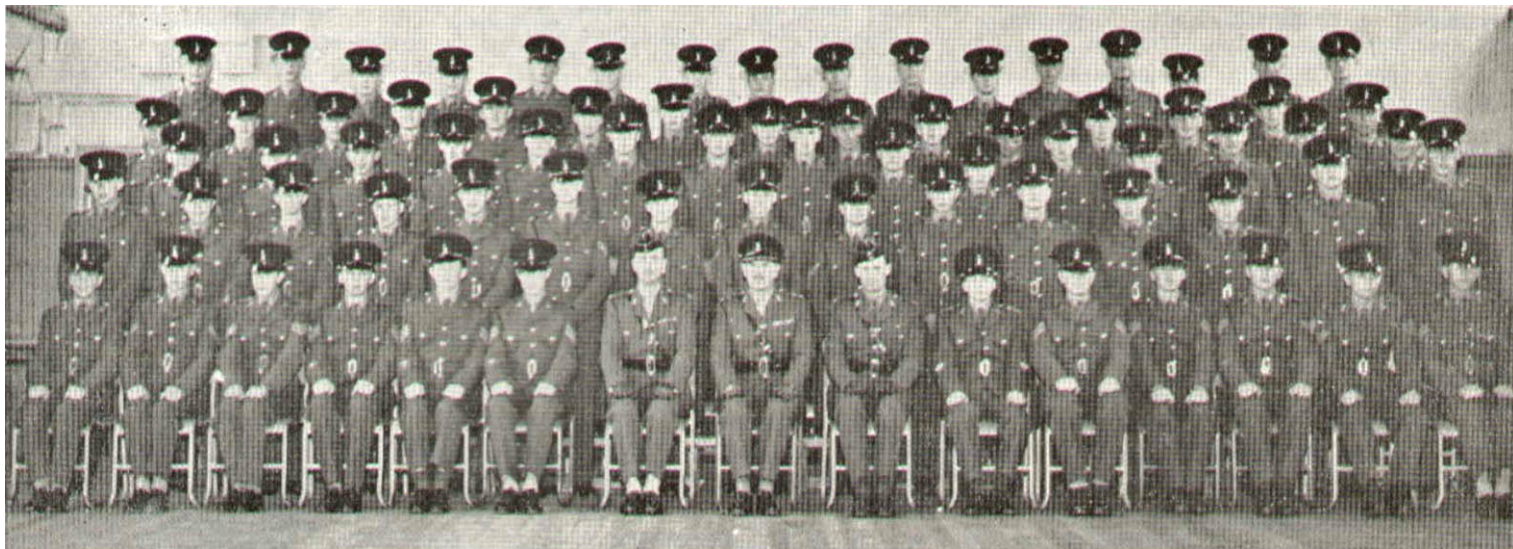
CO Lt Col A Holifield MC - SO in C Major General AMW Whistler CBE - RSM WOI SG Pavey - 2IC Maj MD Scott



Javelin Troop



SO in C Major General AMW Whistler CBE addresses the Regiment - JSgt Ralph Porter - 2nd from left front row



Summer Term Output 1962
(does anybody have a better quality photo?)

Extract from Junior Mercury – Oct 62

SEVEN YEARS OF JUNIOR SIGNALMEN



“Brummy” born Lieut Pete Wheatley was educated at Wrekin College and Birmingham University, graduating in 1949, Bachelor of Law. Later that year he joined the Welch Regiment, but after a very few weeks was transferred to the RAEC.

From 1952-55 he was in the Far East, either in Japan or Korea, and it was there that he made his name as a military journalist, working for six hectic months as sports editor of the Korean Base Gazette in Pusan. In 1955 he returned to the UK to tackle a new job – the education of Junior Leaders. His enthusiasm for this work and increasing success of his methods and approach has kept him with this regiment until two or three weeks ago, and he is not lost to the cause. The new Army Apprentice School for the RAPC at Winchester is benefiting now from his talents as teacher and journalist.

“THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH, YIELD PLACE TO THE NEW” – THE OLDEST INHABITANT

To the younger readers, seven and a half years service with one Regiment must seem like a lifetime. Older soldiers will dismiss the matter with a casual: “Must have been a cushy number,” or even, “He’s had some racket.” However, looking back from the time when I reported to this unit in May 1955, it doesn’t really seem like any of these things.

I had just returned from the Far East when I received instructions to report to 6 (Boys) Training Regiment, Royal Signals, at Beverley, in Yorkshire. It was with some trepidation that I faced up to this prospect. Visions of young hooligans wielding rifles instead of bicycle-chains flitted through my mind in an Army-fied version of “The Blackboard Jungle,” intermingled with the angelic faces of a cathedral choir who all belonged to the Boy Scout movement. However, Army Boys were neither!

The only other members of the camp who were at Beverley with me – arriving after me, anyway – were WO II Leighton, returned after service in the Far East, and Cpl Taylor (M.T.), who tried civilian life for a while.

During this time I have managed to get through four Commanding Officers (Cols. Connor, Baker, Gregory and Holifield) and four Regimental Sergeants-Major (WOs I Thompson, Pavey F., Latimer and Pavey S.).

Yet these seven and a half years didn't seem so very long until a couple of months ago, when a new Signals Sergeant was posted in. I am referring to Sgt Worrall (Junior Wing), whom I remember as a Boy with this Regiment. This made me feel that I was a very old man; a veritable "Has-Been," in fact. Fortunately for my own peace of mind. War Office must have simultaneously come to the same conclusion, for I now find myself posted from this unit.

So inventories can now be revised, as the Regiment's "oldest inhabitant" finally bows himself out to fresh pastures, handing over this somewhat dubious title to Drum-Major Alan Yates, BEM.

High standards

So personnel have arrived and departed, both Staff and Junior Leaders; the location has changed, and so has the Regiment's title. What of the Unit itself? The atmosphere and feeling below the surface?

There is now a far higher standard of Junior Leaders in present day Denbury than was the old Beverley Boy. Crime statistics are well down, such unhealthy practices as bullying and sheer destructiveness are now practically non-existent. Old records reveal class distribution in 1955 to boast ten classes studying for the Junior Certificate of Education (which included too preliminary education for semi-illiterates), ten classes studying for Intermediate, and four classes studying for Senior. Now we boast 16 Intermediate classes, 12 Senior classes, and two Post-Senior Classes doing work for G.C.E., etc.

More Compact

Another major change has been the inclusion of Junior Wing within the Regiment. In the Beverley days. Recruit Troop (as Junior Wing was known then) was at Selby but, on transfer down to Denbury, the two units were combined. This has made for a far greater sense of continuation for any Signals Junior Leader.

Always Prominent in Sport

Sporting achievements of the unit have always been high, and I can recall: two successive years with the Boxing Cup for Junior Leaders at Denbury; two successive years when we have held the Army (Junior) Rugby Cup; three times when our basketball teams have won their way to the Army final pool; our recent success as Junior Leaders athletic team runners-up; an exciting football final when the Engineers beat us so narrowly, etc.

Every year has brought with it its own triumphs and its stars. The Staff, too, despite their small numbers, have always had successful sporting teams. The Beverley rugby XV. was very strong. We have won South-Western District Major and Minor Unit hockey, basketball, water polo and football cups, and competed strongly on each occasion for Southern Command honours.

The name of Denbury lives high in the District sporting records.

Never a dull moment

However, my final feelings with regard to the Junior Leaders Regiment, Royal Signals, are with regard to the fullness of the life. To any Boy or member of the staff, or anybody else connected with Denbury Camp, I can offer but a few words: "Throw your heart and soul into all the activities." You will get your own reward, for the essential of the camp lies in its very happy atmosphere.

PETE WHEATLEY

Graduation Day – Saturday 8th December 1962



Alexander Sqn - Maj J Clapp



Slim Sqn - Maj JK Heyes



Field-Marshal The Viscount Slim of Yarralumla and Bishopston KG GCB GCMG GCVO GBE DSO MC

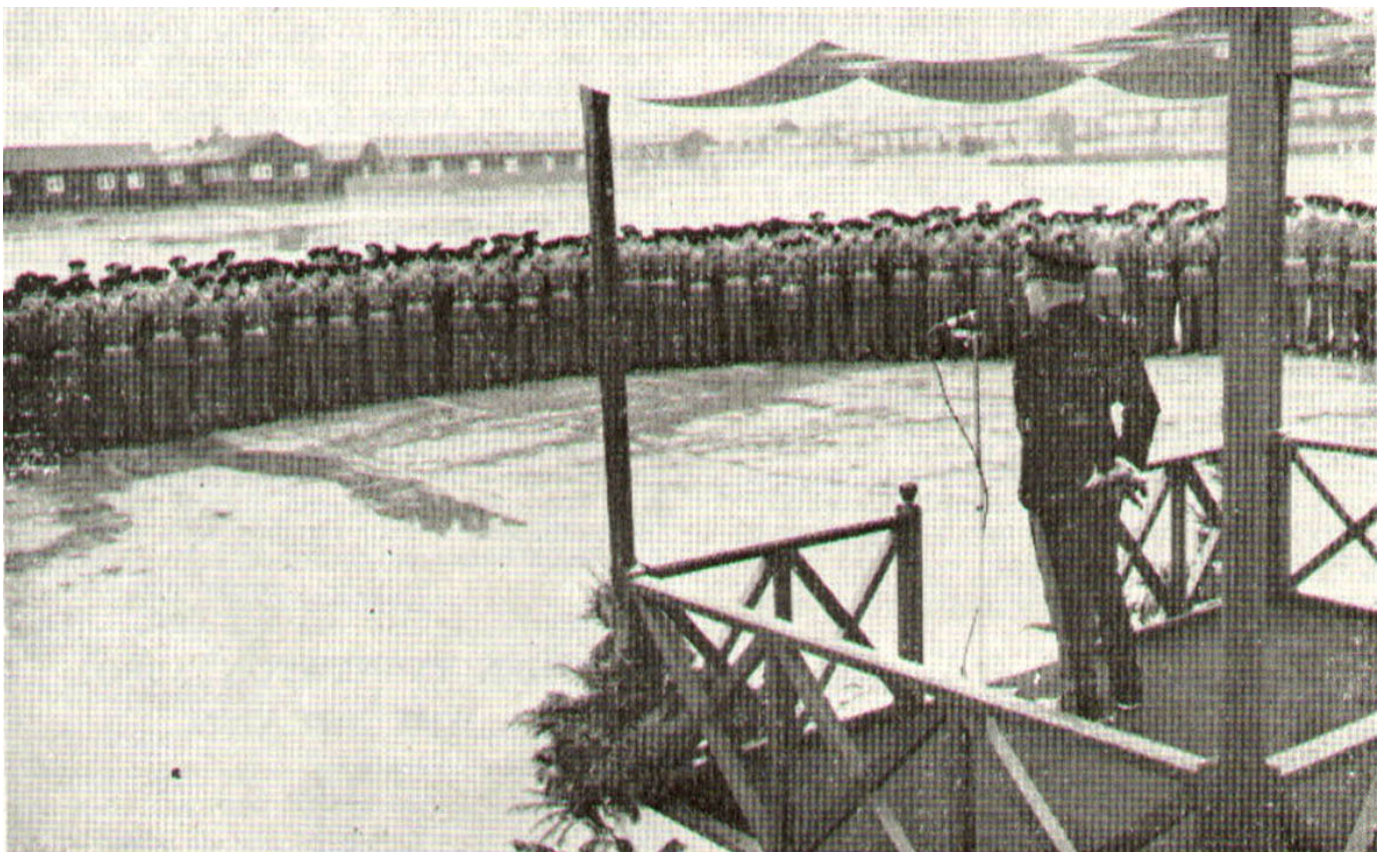


JRSM Fred Wilson presented with the CO's Trophy



JSgt Roger Greenwood receives the Signal-Officer-in-Chief's Junior Trophy on behalf of Romulus Troop

PAY UP – OWN UP – SHUT UP



Extract from Junior Mercury – Jan 63

"These were the three main principles that Viscount Slim urged us to observe when we gathered around the rostrum for his address on Graduation Day, December 8. Elaborating on the second principle, the Field-Marshal urged us never to be afraid of practising Christianity. "If you want to say your prayers in the barrack room, say 'em," he said. "If somebody throws a boot at you, finish your prayers, and an extra one for him; then get up, go over and punch his head."

He went on to remind us of our obligation to the taxpayers of this country who had made our training possible, and reminded us how lucky we were to have such a golden opportunity to develop mind and body.

This visit was a great honour for our Regiment, and made an unforgettable day for us all. Not one of us dreamed that we would meet this great leader of men until the day, official notice of his pending visit was published early in November. Excitement winged over the camp: the legendary wartime commander of the famous 14th Army was coming to Denbury. We had met him in his books; studied, with our Staff, that masterpiece of campaign writing, "Defeat Into Victory"; read many of the incisive, illuminating talks he gave as Governor-General of Australia; enjoyed the wit and zest for life of "Unofficial History." Veterans of Burma had swung the lamp and told us jungle tales; now we were to meet their great leader in person.

For three mornings before the awaited day the weather was crisp and cold, with white hoar-frost on the fields and Haytor gaunt against a steel-grey sky. But the wind changed and the storm broke almost to the very moment of our inspection. Then, with our uniforms soaked black with the torrential rain and standing rigid against the buffeting winds, Viscount Slim, marching vigorously, talking crisply, was amongst us. In a joking aside to our Padre, the Field-Marshal accused him of not praying hard enough for good weather; but the skies cleared for the address and final march-past."

Can you help with more photos?