



The Military Survey (Geo) Branch

Winter Newsletter 2017 – issue 66



Christmas Number December 16, 1944 (S Claus Esq - Respectfully Presents His Post War Plan)

(From the Short Report on the Working of the Middle East Survey Service for the month of November 1944 – During the month 60,000 copies of the cover were printed for the Christmas number of “Parade” the local Weekly Illustrated Paper.)

(Pin-up June Lang (Winifred June Vlassek) – born on 5th May 1917 in Minneapolis Minnesota USA. Made a number of films in Hollywood most notably ‘Bonnie Scotland’ with Laurel and Hardy (1935) and The Road to Glory with Frederick March (1936))

Christmas Forty Years Ago: The Firemen's Strike

Throughout the Seventies industrial relations especially in the public sector had been very poor often with the government compromising at the last minute to avoid strike action. However, when the Fire Brigades Union called a national strike the government's response was *Operation Burberry*, the mobilisation of the Armed Forces to man a large fleet of Second World War vintage 'Green Goddess' fire engines. So it was that on the 7th of November the Regiment was put on standby and ordered to provide twenty 6-man crews for fire fighting duties in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight together with command and administrative support.

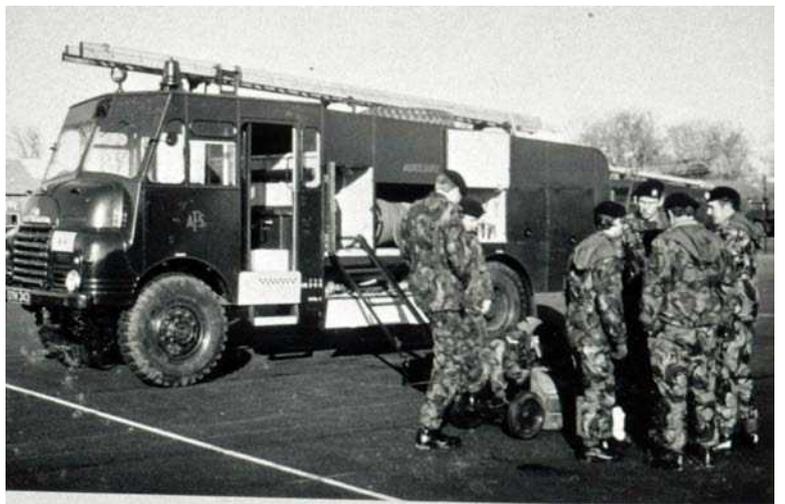


Green Goddesses on Barton Stacey square before deployment.

Events moved quickly and 18 Green Goddess fire engines were collected and tested and most soldiers received a four hour concentrated course in fire fighting at Portsmouth. A mountain of equipment was also collected from various depots all over Southern England, an operations room was set up and teams formed and put on one hour's notice to move. The deployment order came on Sunday 13th November and by dusk all the crews had reported that they were established in their fire bases at Aldershot, Basingstoke, Winchester, Eastleigh, Southampton, Gosport and Portsmouth. A two shift system resulted in crews spending four days on duty at their location followed by four days off.

However, the Royal Navy and the Green Jackets soon took over some of the towns leaving the Regiment manning only Basingstoke, Eastleigh and Southampton. The manpower released by these changes allowed the formation of a 'Mobile Column' of six Green Goddesses with ten crews at fifteen minutes notice based in camp at Barton Stacey but ready to move to anywhere within South East District.

Generally speaking there were long periods of inactivity at the fire bases with few fires to attend to and meal times tending to be the daily highlights. The public were very generous often handing in books, magazines and board games and each person had their own way of passing the time. Lofty Branson, crew leader of Victor Charlie 10 based in the Blighmont TA Centre in Southampton would sit and knit but one young sapper who was silly enough to comment that it was 'poofy' thing to do soon witnessed the terrible sight of an annoyed Lofty!



19 Squadron personnel including Lofty Loake and Chris Martin familiarising themselves with their fire engine.



The Sun Page Three girl proved to be a popular visitor!

As Christmas approached sweets, biscuits and bottles, although opening the latter was forbidden, flooded into the fire bases which were duly decorated for the festive season. Each fire base had a local police motorcyclist attached whose task was to lead the Green Goddess to the fire – it was quite a thrill rushing (but that was a fairly slow ‘rush’ in a fully laden Goddess) up Shirley High Street during the teatime rush hour with the police siren wailing and Corporal John Livingstone ringing the bell just like they did in the blitz and then ‘crashing’ the red lights across the A27 and up past the OS building. As John Livingstone said at the time; “that’s one boyhood dream achieved, I just need to drive a steam train now!”

The Basingstoke crews were based in a disused school where well-wishing visitors included a pensioner who offered to give his pension to the soldier firefighters. It was here that Noel

Grimmett serving as the liaison officer received a telephone call warning him that Fred Mulley the Secretary of State for Defence was planning to a visit with his wife to wish the crews a Happy Christmas. A swift call to RHQ ensured that the CO, Peter Andrews, was on site to welcome the VIP visitor. However, the Mobile Column at Barton Stacey received a much more interesting visitor when a Sun newspaper Page Three girl turned up for a publicity shoot.

In order to test the stand-by crews of the Mobile Column an officer (who shall be nameless) lit a fire in C Camp but the crews were all at their tea meal and by the time they reached C Camp the fire had been extinguished by the part-time firemen from Whitchurch who were not on strike. It turned out that a passing motorist on the A303 had seen the blaze and reported it immediately.



The Regiment even produced a commemorative Christmas Card.

Christmas leave and the various unit parties were cancelled and the strike dragged on. In early January the unit handed over its responsibilities in Hampshire to the Royal Navy and then took responsibility for Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire.

The strike ended on the 17th of January and the withdrawal from fire bases was complete by the 19th. After a week spent on cleaning and returning stores the unit went on a week’s leave. During the ten weeks on deployment the unit fire crews attended sixty four incidents, half of which occurred during the week in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire.

One aspect of the unit’s involvement in Operation Burberry which was not widely known was the production of United Kingdom town plans by 13 Map Production Squadron for use by the firefighting crews. In all some 120 sheets were produced in quantities ranging from 6 to 200 copies of each, with a final total of 5,500 plans.

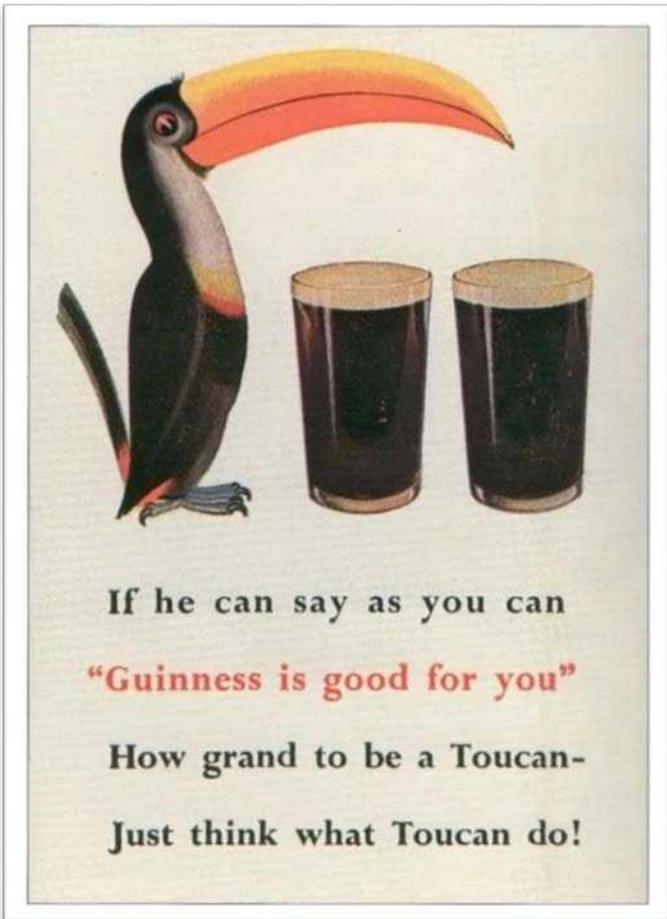
An unexpected bonus from the strike was a huge boost in the profits of the unit club – the ‘Bumpers Club’ – due to the ‘captive’ audience of the camp-bound Mobile Column. The club had only recently been formed as it was considered that the NAAFI did not provide an acceptable level of service. It was managed by a warrant officer and manned as a Regimental duty; it was an instant success and continued to thrive throughout the unit’s remaining time at Barton Stacey



The Mobile Column leaving camp on a training run.

Alan Gordon

(Photographs by WO1 RSM Terry Evans)



P.S. From the Editor

I ended up at the TA Centre at Aylesbury. The only fall out from that was a kind invitation to visit the Guinness Brewery at Park Royal North West London (now long gone). One of the TA members worked there and apparently the company allowed them to organize 3 trips a year for family and friends. So with the offer of a tour, I managed to persuade the Regimental Rugby team they ought to pay a visit so we set off by coach one Wednesday afternoon.

We had a very interesting tour of the brewery and then retired to the *Toucan Pub*, for some refreshments. We were unfortunately restricted to half pint glasses – so we had to find out what “*Toucan do*”

On the way back we got caught in traffic on Richmond Bridge and everybody was feeling the need to *go*? The coach driver fortunately had a bucket underneath which he nipped out and retrieved. It was then passed round. We all found out that it was difficult to *go* sitting down. So some of us stood in the doorway and did it!! He then had to stop at some point and empty the bucket. Needless to say we all got back safely, after an excellent afternoon’s training!!

So my claim to fame is that I had successfully organised a p***-up in a brewery??

A Miraculous Escape by Ken Anderson

46 Survey Company South African Engineer Corps (S.A.E.C)

(Taken from the book 'Nine Flames' by Ken Anderson and published by Purnell & Sons Cape Town in 1964. Ken Anderson was educated at Wellington College, and after time in Spain and the Argentine was appointed Reuter's Chief Foreign Correspondent in the Middle East. He became involved with drug smugglers, the Greek revolution and was closely associated with the discoverers of the tomb of Tutankamen and the tombs of other Pharaohs. During the Munich crisis in 1938 he was Reuter's special correspondent on the Czech-German frontier and after being arrested as a British Spy, was attached to Hitler's personal entourage. He operated in the Western Desert, Crete and with the Royal Navy. After the war he became the political correspondent for ten years with the Rand Daily Mail and an assistant editor.)

Maps are vitally essential in modern warfare. Without maps an army cannot operate. The Map Printing and Survey Companies of the South African Engineer Corps (S.A.E.C) produced millions of them, and prior to its arrival in Tripoli, 46 Survey Company was solely responsible for the production of battle maps for the Eighth Army, including enemy defences, and also the provision of basic maps from air photographs to Division for distribution among field sections for navigation purposes and artillery surveys.

It was only at Tripoli that 517 Field Survey Company Royal Engineers caught up with the Company and was able to ease the burden by taking over a share of the work. At this point the following special message was received from General Montgomery, the Army Commander: *'Please convey to survey units thanks for all the excellent work they have produced at top pressure during the past three weeks.'*

The Survey Company served a year in East Africa and a year in Egypt and then split into 45 and 46 companies in April 1942. Authority was obtained for the formation of two types of field survey companies, the establishment for a type 'A' company being somewhat larger than for a type 'B' company. Owing to the deterioration of the situation in the Far East, it was considered necessary to employ type 'A' company on defence mapping in the Union, leaving a smaller company to continue operations in the Middle East. In April 1942, the designation of the South Africa Company S.A.E.C. was changed to 46 Survey Company with the establishment of a type 'B' company.

The set-up of the type 'B' company had no exact parallel in either the British or American armies. It was capable of undertaking the full responsibility of an army survey company under the command of a major with a captain as second-in-command. Two survey groups were trained to perform any type of field or air survey work and a map production group undertook all fair drawing. The checking and records section was responsible at every stage of production for the filing of all map material and undertook geodetic computations. Attached to this unit was the Mobile Map Printing and Printing Company which was virtually a fully equipped printing works.

Briefly, the function of the Survey unit was to see that the guns were accurately sighted on the map grid, to ensure that the targets were accurately located on the grid and to prepare and print all maps, plans and mosaics required by the Army. The latter function very often involved air survey work by a survey group, fair drawing by the map reproduction group, checking by the records section and finally printing by the litho section.

Prior to the 'Gazala Gallop', the survey requirements of the Eighth Army were catered for in the main by 514 Field Survey Company Royal Engineers, the activities of 46 Survey Company S.A.E.C., commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Walter Short, were spread over a wide field in the Middle East. Survey work and mapping were undertaken in Palestine, Syria and thanks to the foresight of the Commander-in-Chief Middle East, the El Alamein line. In addition, the Company provided the personnel for navigational sections attached to various brigades in the forward areas, and also undertook mobile map distribution in these areas.

The navigation section attached to 3 Brigade was captured at Sidi Rezegh. **Cpl Karl Borgen, one of the members of the section, managed to escape from the pen in Benghazi and walked back to our lines at Gazala – a distance of some 300 miles. He was subsequently awarded the Military Medal (see citation below).**

COPY

Ref. 1/4/8-516

H.Q., S.A. Survey Coy., S.A.E.C.,
12 Jan 42.

Comd.,
S.A. Base,
Helwan

NO. 74294 SGT. E.K. BORGEN, S.A. SURVEY COY, S.A.E.C.

The following is a record of the abovementioned N C O's accomplishment during the recent operations in the Western Desert-

Sgt. Borgen formed one of a navigating party of one officer and two N C O's attached from this Coy. to H.Qs. 5 S A Inf Bde. On his return to this Coy. H.Q. on 28 Dec. 41 he was able to report that the remainder of his party when last seen were unhurt and P.O.W.

23 Nov 41. Captured by German troops in late afternoon at SIDI REZEGH.

29 Nov 41. Reached BENGHAZI P.O.W. CAMP as P.O.W.

20 Dec 41. Marched from P.O.W. Camp, BENGHAZI, to docks for embarkation as P.O.W. Embarkation of all P.O.Ws. could not be completed during that day, and Sgt Borgen was one of those to be marched back to P.O.W. Camp. On the way to P.O.W. Camp, Sgt Borgen slipped into an air-raid shelter, and thereafter worked his way out of BENGHAZI through enemy lines.

21 Dec - 24 Dec 41. Reached escarpment and, hiding by day and going by night, kept along BENGHAZI-BARCE Railway and road. Rations during this period consisted of one tin beef. On morning of 24 Dec 41 stopped 15-cwt vehicle manned by King's Dragoon Guards approximately 40 miles from BENGHAZI, and accompanied them into BENGHAZI, reporting to 8 Army H.Q. on 27 Dec 41.

It is submitted that the action taken by Sgt. Borgen resulting in his escape is worthy of recognition by Higher Authority, and I would therefore beg to request that Sgt. Borgen be considered for an immediate award of the Military Medal.

(signed) A.G. Bain Major

Actg. O.C., S.A. SURVEY COY., S.A.E.C.

Schedule No. (To be left blank)	Unit.	Regimental No.	Rank and Name (Christian Names must be stated)	Action for which commended (Date and place of action must be stated)	Recommended by	Honour or Reward	(To be left blank)
	S.A. Survey Coy, S A E C.	74294	Sergeant E K Borgen Einer Karl.	Sergeant Borgen formed one of a Navigating Party of one officer and two N C O's attached from S A Survey Coy to H Q, 5 S A Inf Bde. On the 23 Nov 41 he was captured by German troops at SIDI REZEGH and was moved to BENGHAZI reaching there on the 29 Nov 41. On the 20 Dec 41 he with other P O W was marched down to the docks for embarkation. This could not be completed on the day in question and Sergeant Borgen was among those who were marched back to P O W Camp. En route thereto this N C O broke away from his guards, took refuge in an air-raid shelter and thereafter worked his way out of BENGHAZI through the enemy lines. On the 24 Dec 41 Sergeant Borgen reached the escarpment and hiding by day and travelling by night made his way along the BENGHAZI-BARCE Railway and road. During the period 21-24 Dec this N C O's rations consisted of one tin of beef. On the morning of the 24 Dec Sergeant Borgen contacted a vehicle manned by King's Dragoon Guards approximately 40 miles from BENGHAZI and accompanied them into BENGHAZI, reporting to 8 Army H Q on the 27 Dec 41. It is submitted that the action taken by Sergt Borgen in effecting his escape is worthy of recognition and I would therefore request that this N C O be considered for the immediate award of a Distinguished Conduct Medal.	Major A.G. Bain	General, Commander-in-Chief, Middle East Forces	

5 S A Inf Brigade. 1 S A Div. 30 Corps.

Date recommendation passed forward: Received _____ Passed: _____ Army Form W.3121

Brigade 57th Div.
 Division 57th Div.
 Corps 8th Div.
 Army 10th Army

Recommended for MM
 MM for life
 13 days
 2860

After operating for about six months with all formation the navigation sections were withdrawn, the intention being they should provide the forward troops, especially the armoured groups, with reliable fixes. It was felt at Army Headquarters that such information was vital in the featureless desert in order to achieve full co-ordination between the fighting units.

In the past on many occasions faulty positional reports from formations had enabled the enemy to sneak away overnight through a gap which did not exist in the encircling forces according to the operations board at Army Headquarters.

Unfortunately, although the survey sections were capable of providing accurate information, the Intelligence officers of the formations to which they were attached were inclined to ignore this, preferring to rely rather on their own 'by guess or by God' reckoning which, more often than not, was miles out. While the Gazala line was being held, instructions were given for the mapping of the Wadi Mra, and this was undertaken by a section under the command of Lieutenant Mendez de Gouvea, who had until recently been doing navigational duties with 7th Armoured Division.

The Wadi Mra was some 10 miles west of Bir Hakeim, at that time held by the French Foreign Legion, and was in a most exposed position, virtually behind the enemy's flank. The section was warned of reports of Rommel's impending attack and told to keep their eyes open. In due course they found themselves swept up in the enemy's outflanking manoeuvre around Bir Hakeim.

They woke at night to the sound of tanks and tracked vehicles and, hurriedly packing their gear, they set off eastwards. As dawn appeared they found themselves travelling over the open desert in convoy with the German armour! Without waiting to bid *auf wiedersehen*, they headed south at top speed, hotly pursued by an enemy armoured car. Incredible as it may seem, they made good their escape and finally pitched up at the frontier wire at Capuzzo, where General Pienaar found them and sent them on their way to El Alamein non-stop.

However, when the enemy advance was halted and things settled down again, the South Africans were detailed to take over all the survey and printing work and, since their own equipment was insufficient for such a large-scale undertaking they were instructed to retrieve the British Lorries from Palestine.

In August 1942, camp was established at Borg el Arab near the landing-ground, the printing vehicles being driven into excavations in the sides of natural mounds. The detachment was mainly employed in reprinting existing sheets in the Daba-Alexandria series and producing new sheets surveyed by the field group. A successive of enemy defence overprints was made on these sheets from aerial surveys. Some of the existing sheets in this series had been produced from field-work carried out by 46 Survey Company a year before, and the enemy's high opinion of them was reflected in the captured German document dated 18th September 1942 which stated: *'The shaded parts of the enclosed sketch show which sheets of the English set of maps are so far known. They have been distributed to the troops with trigonometrical points plotted, partly as prints and partly reprints. As the maps of this set are very accurate, the sheets not yet known must be searched for. Any found are to be forwarded as quickly as possible, if necessary direct to GHQ Survey Battery, so that they may be reproduced and put at the disposal of all troops.'*

It was fortunate that those responsible were far-seeing enough to provide adequate maps of this area at a time when it was far behind the front line, but which subsequently played such a vital part in the battle of Egypt. It is no misstatement to say that the high quality of the maps issued to the fighting troops played no small part in the victory of El Alamein. Immediately prior to the offensive, when the Eighth Army laid down the artillery barrage of the war, the detachment was engaged on a block set from air photos of the enemy defence line. As a result, many enemy guns were positioned with such accuracy that our artillery counter-battery work was particularly successful and when the attack opened on 23rd October, many of the enemy guns were silenced during the opening barrage.

One of the Company's tasks was to provide navigation parties for the subsequent advance. It fell to Group 'B' to supply these parties and at times they were very much in the thick of things, acting between our barrage and the enemy lines; it was amazingly good fortune that only two casualties were sustained.

The navigators guided the British sappers to predetermined positions in the minefields which had been previously mapped from aerial photographs, so they could make gaps for the advancing troops. It was tricky and hazardous job, but they were aided by an ingenious system of searchlights directed straight up into the sky which had been positioned by the Company. From these searchlights the navigators were able to determine very accurately their positions in the minefields, which was vital in view of the thousands of troops milling around as the battle got started.

The printing men at El Alamein were kept hard at it working twenty-four hours a day on three eight hour shifts. The Lorries were air-conditioned and equipped with electric lighting which was very necessary, especially where fine litho work was concerned. There was a certain veteran litho artist with 46 Company very highly skilled in his trade, who had only one eye and who was very accident-prone. When it got dark, he would take up the steps leading into his litho truck, shut himself in, switch on the lights and work far into the night on his plates. If anybody came and opened the door there was hell to pay, for it let out a stream of brilliant light that could be seen for miles across the desert, and it was after this had happened several times that he adopted the routine of taking the steps inside with him every night.

But he was constantly forgetting when he switched off the light to go outside for a 'breather' that the steps were not there, and it was a miracle he broke no bones each time he fell flat on his face after stepping into thin air. In East Africa when the litho section was travelling by train from Mombasa to Nairobi, this same individual got up one night to go to the toilet, opened the wrong door and landed in the bush which, incidentally, abounded in wild game. It was some time before his companions realized he was missing. The locomotive was detached at the next station and a party went back to search for him. They found him the following morning – sitting up a tree. He told them he had had a sleepless night with lions roaring all around him.

His landing in Egypt had also been by way of an accident. As the unit disembarked at Suez one night, the men lined up with their kit on the quayside. His one eye let him down when he stepped on to what he thought was a plank, and found himself in the Suez Canal! But when it came to litho work, he made no mistakes.

On 11th November 1942 an advance detachment of 46 Survey Company moved up to Mersa Matruh to join the Army Air Photo Interpretation Unit attached to 285 Wing of the Royal Air Force.

The success of the counter-battery work at El Alamein had made the Army realize the value to the artillery of this part of the company's work and the necessity of keeping a portion of the Company in close contact with 285 Wing to which the photographic squadron and interpretation units were attached. On 12th November, the remainder of the Company moved up to El Daba to join the advance detachment. Lack of transport rendered the Company's movements difficult at the time and a portion of a new draft had to be kept at Maadi, outside Cairo, because the unit had no transport available to bring them out to the Company in the desert, which had to remain fully mobile.

During November, the Company moved some 700 miles, constantly maintaining the closest contact with 285 Wing's moves, and it was provided with all relevant sets of aerial photos from which they produced maps of the area ahead of the advance. During November, in spite of extensive enemy moves, the Company produced some seventy maps, involving 133,000 impressions. At Benghazi, one of the tightest mapping programmes ever undertaken by the Company was completed. This was the production within one week of seven sheets of the Mersa Brega area, both basic maps and defence overprints.

The printing programme alone was considerable, involving 150,000 impressions and a subsequent reprint of an equal number of copies. A careful schedule was worked out at the beginning of the task to co-ordinate work with the various sections of the Company employed, and to remove bottlenecks, such as camera work.

During March the fixing of hostile guns from photographs involved even more work than did the El Alamein battle. Over 400 positions were located during the month, and counter-battery shoots on these maps were very successful. At the beginning of April 1943, the company was engaged in preparing maps for the battle of the Gabes Gap and the ensuing operations northwards to Enfidaville. A special survey by Group 'A' of a strip of topography over the Mareth line was particularly hazardous as the area was heavily mined. No casualties in the group were incurred, but several Arabs and other people lost their lives within sight of the field parties. On at least one occasion, mines were detected within a few feet of the party's vehicles.

The main function of the Survey men was to make maps which they tried to prepare, if possible, ahead of positions of our forward troops. This was not an easy task when access to the site was denied them by the enemy. In order to prepare maps, the Survey requires the fixing of control points. That is to say, fixed points must be established which are plotted on the map and then the other features are plotted in relation to these controls.

After the Eighth Army break-through at El Agheila at the end of 1942, there was a temporary hold-up at Marble Arch and Headquarters of the Eighth Army Survey decided it was necessary to fix control behind the German lines for aerial survey. The only way to do this was to send a party around behind the enemy positions to take observations.

The idea was not new; in fact it had been done on several occasions prior to this, not only by the legendary '*Phantom Major*' Stirling, but by South African Sappers with the assistance of the Long Range Desert Group. But the game had been overplayed. The Germans were on the look-out for desert patrols – Stirling in particular – and they had aircraft specially deputed for scouring the back areas. On sighting any suspicious movement they radioed their armoured cars to investigate. Notwithstanding this, Lt-Colonel G. E. Marriott, commanding 46 Survey Company, was instructed to send out a party to fix control, and Captain Frank le Roux and Lieutenant Stan Morgan left with a Long Range Desert Group patrol. They were flown with the L.R.D.G. way down south in the desert, from whence they proceeded by jeep.

This party met with tragedy. On approaching an isolated bir, or water cistern, the truck driven by Captain le Roux ran over and detonated a teller-mine, and he was killed. The rest of the party returned to base. This was another indication of the precautions being taken by the enemy to combat desert patrols. The fact that they had mined a lonely bir proved they were aware of the Sappers' activities.

However, the Army Staff insisted that the information to be gleaned from such expedition warranted the risk involved, and Lt-Colonel Marriott was instructed to dispatch a second party. With much reluctance he did so, and this venture led to one of the most remarkable prisoner-of-war escapes of the Second World War. At 10 a.m. on 24th December 1942, Lance Corporal H. S. Norton received orders from Lt-Colonel Marriott to drive Captain W. G. Alexander on a trip with the New Zealand patrol of the L.R.D.G. behind the German lines to fix control. Immediately after Christmas Dinner with the patrol at Nufilia, they left, moving west and south.

They spent the night near 7th Armoured Division, then pushed on into enemy territory and at night fixed a prominent feature by astronomical observations. Wireless orders were to contact the British armoured cars, and so the next day they returned east and north, but found the armoured cars had by then advanced.

The patrol followed the cars westward, and in the afternoon when they stopped in diamond formation on a rise to look around, they were approached by two German armoured cars. One of these advanced to the rear truck of the formation and disarmed the crew without the rest of the formation realizing what had happened. The other armoured car then drove up in front and captured the truck with Captain Alexander and Lance-Corporal Norton. The remaining two trucks, suddenly alive to the situation, managed to escape in a stream of machine-gun bullets and 20 mm canon shells.

With the two captured vehicles and Captain Alexander as a hostage on the bonnet of one of them, the armoured cars escorted them to enemy headquarters where they were searched and put under guard. The next morning, Captain Alexander, Lance-Corporal Norton and the wireless operator were taken to Rommel's head-quarters where they were interrogated by an Intelligence officer who spoke fluent Afrikaans. The Germans had recognized the engineers' badges and thought they were concerned with mine-laying behind their lines, but they did not connect them with survey.

During the proceedings a staff car passed and after much heel clicking and saluting, the German turned to Captain Alexander and said: 'That was Rommel.' 'Who', replied Captain Alexander 'is Rommel? I've never heard of him!' The German was not amused.

The following day the prisoners were sent to Misurata where they were handed over to the Italians who, while they were being interrogated, stole most of their personal possessions and bedding which they had dumped in the passage outside. An enemy spy, posing as an Allied prisoner, was put in their cell with them to obtain information.

On 16th January, Lance-Corporal Norton and six others were embarked on a submarine in Tripoli harbour and were taken on an uneventful voyage, mainly underwater, to Taranto, and from there sent to Bari where Lance-Corporal Norton spent seven months before being moved to the prison camp at Latrina, where there were 6,000 prisoners. Soon after the Italian armistice was signed, the camp guards at the camp deserted, as mentioned earlier. Lance-Corporal Norton and two friends thereupon left the camp and – after walking 300 miles towards the front line – were captured only half a mile from the Allied troops. However, two days later he made a successful escape by jumping through the small window of a railway cattle-truck as the train pulled up at a mountain pass.

Two days before Lance-Corporal Norton was shipped from Tripoli Captain Alexander and ten other prisoners – English, Canadian, New Zealand, American and Indian officers – were embarked on an Italian submarine in Tripoli harbour, and placed in the forward torpedo compartment.

They travelled on the surface during the night and submerged the following day. It appears that the Italian captain, impatient with the slower progress underwater, decided then to make the rest of the voyage on the surface.

But he was spotted by a Sunderland reconnaissance aircraft, which straddled the submarine with three bombs, damaging it so it could not submerge. After dealing this crippling blow, the Sunderland got in touch with British destroyers escorting a convoy, and one of these soon appeared on the scene and proceeded to shell the submarine.

The prisoners in the torpedo compartment realized the vessel had been damaged by the bombs, and later they knew they were being shelled. Not relishing a watery grave at the hands of the Royal Navy, they overpowered their guards and made their way on deck where the Italian captain explained the position, told them he could not supply lifebelts, and that they had better swim for it.

Captain Alexander, stripped to his underwear, was taking off his second boot when he was thrown over the side by the splash of a shell that fell perilously close by. The Italian captain made no attempt to save himself, and went down with his ship.

The men in the water thought they had little hope of being rescued, since it was unlikely the destroyer would stop to pick up survivors in hostile waters for fear of a torpedo attack. But to their joy, the destroyer hove to and took them aboard. But the skipper, when he saw the motley crew who staggered over the side of his ship gasping their thanks in English, thought for one awful moment he had sunk one of his own submarines! The prisoners were taken to Malta in the destroyer, where they were given fresh uniforms and clothes and entertained by the Governor himself. The following day they were put aboard an aircraft and flown back to Marble Arch.

Meanwhile, back in the desert, Lt-Colonel Marriott was bemoaning the loss of two of his senior men – a heavy blow. After waiting the prescribed seventy-two hours, he sat down and wrote to Captain Alexander's father telling him the sad news. This unpleasant job completed, he wandered across to the mess tent for dinner. The first person he saw in the mess tucking into his food was Captain Alexander, just arrived back from Malta!

Captain Alexander, lucky fellow, was given thirty days' prisoner-of-war leave in the Union., and while enjoying himself on Durban beach was accosted by a patriotic old lady who remarked acidly: 'A great big fellow like you! Why aren't you in the Army?'

In the meantime, Group 'B' under the command of Captain Mendez de Gouvea, who seemed to specialize in 'sticky' jobs, was left in what had now become a 'back area' at El Agheila. It was at this spot that the enemy had attempted to stand and, had it not been for their depleted strength after El Alamein, they might have succeeded; for it was here they had halted General Wavell in 1941 and General Ritchie in 1942 and on both occasions had succeeded in driving them back.

History shows that all major conflicts along the North African coast have been won or lost on this desolate spot at the bottom of the Gulf of Sirte. The reason is that the terrain is studded with salt marshes which form a natural defensive line for an army. When, on the third allied attempt, the enemy was finally driven off, the High Command decided this strip of country was of such high strategic importance that it should be mapped in detail while it had the chance.

Unfortunately, the enemy, prior to their withdrawal, had strewn the area indiscriminately with mines. The mined areas were not marked with the customary strands of wire and they followed no set pattern and, to add to the difficulties of the Survey Group, no mine detectors were available.

The weeks that followed were a nightmare. Even if detectors had been available it is doubtful whether those engaged on the survey could have located and lifted the thousands of mines planted by the Germans. It was not a case of surveying one or two minefields. The area to be mapped covered many square miles. It says something for the courage of all concerned that they carried on and successfully completed their job by turning out a first-class set of maps.

The procedure was to heavily sand-bag the floors of all vehicles so as to absorb the explosions of the mines. This proved fairly effective in the majority of cases, although hardly a day passed without a vehicle having its front end blown off. Most of the occupants got off with a stunning shock and temporary deafness. But quite early on, Lieutenant H. Whittingdale lost his life and, although mine detectors were finally provided there were further fatalities with the loss of Lieutenant Taylor, Corporal T. Scott and two Natives.

The tense atmosphere in camp of an evening when a truck was late or failed to return might be compared with that of an Air Force squadron awaiting the return of their men from a raid.

The work of the unit in the Wadi Zem Zem area was particularly hazardous, operating as it did with the forward troops. The section was often in front of the armoured cars, fixing points on which the armour and troops were to advance. One of these points, a bend in the road, was fixed by tachy shots. The staff holder did not know the German defence lines were actually behind him, and it was only when he subsequently saw the position on the defence overprint that he realized he had had a very lucky escape from capture, or worse.

On conclusion of the North African campaign, 46 Company which had participated in the 1,600-mile advance from El Alamein to Tunis was withdrawn to Cairo where it looked as though it would perform a static job for the rest of the war. The story of how they finally got over to Italy and re-joined the chase is worth telling.

Back in Cairo all transport was requisitioned, and daily requests by the O.C. of the Survey Company for equipment and transport were curtly dismissed by the A and Q staff who were busy equipping 6th South African Armoured Division which had recently arrived in the Middle East. In desperation a plot was hatched with Brigadier Brown of Allied Force Headquarters in Algiers. During the now completed campaign in North Africa, Brigadier Brown had been in charge of all survey operations in the Middle East. On conclusion of the campaign he joined General Eisenhower's staff at Algiers, from where the invasions of Sicily and Italy were planned. The only way a unit could get in on these operations was to be listed on an order of battle by A.F.H.Q. This, Brigadier Brown kindly agreed to attend to.

In due course a signal arrived in Cairo from A.F.H.Q. stating that 46 Survey Company S.A.E.C. was listed for operation 'Baboon', the code name for Salerno. The signal was signed 'Eisenhower', and it looked most imposing. Within three days 46 Company was en route to Tripoli!

What the Cairo A. and Q. fellows did not know was that all signals from A.F.H.Q. were signed 'Eisenhower', no matter who dictated the contents. This difference between our own and the American staff practice worked the oracle and it is doubtful whether A. and C. Cairo ever realized the trick was played on them.

The functions of 46 Company in Italy were virtually the same as in previous campaigns. But whereas the unit had hitherto been accustomed to working in sweltering hot deserts, they now found themselves operating from the tops of high mountains which in winter were feet deep in snow.

New techniques had to be learned, such as how to take observations from a mountain-top without being spotted by the ever-vigilant enemy who had a habit of throwing shells at any unfortunate surveyor seen on the skyline. Their task was made easier, however, because they were operating in a country that was mapped in the fullest detail, so their job was one of revising existing maps instead of having to make new ones.

A very useful device, the tiltometer, was invented by a member of the unit, Captain A.R. Simpson, and was constructed in the unit's workshops from drawings produced by Company Commander, Lt-Colonel G.E. Marriott. With the tiltometer it was possible to determine the plumb point of a tilted photograph which, as air survey in Italy had shown, was essential in order to obtain good results in block plotting. The normal assumption in mapping from air photographs is that the pictures are vertical or, at least, not tilted by more than one or two degrees. But photos taken under wartime conditions from single-seater aircraft primarily designed as fighters were subject to random deviations from a straight and level course and often to be tilted by as much as 15 degrees and more.

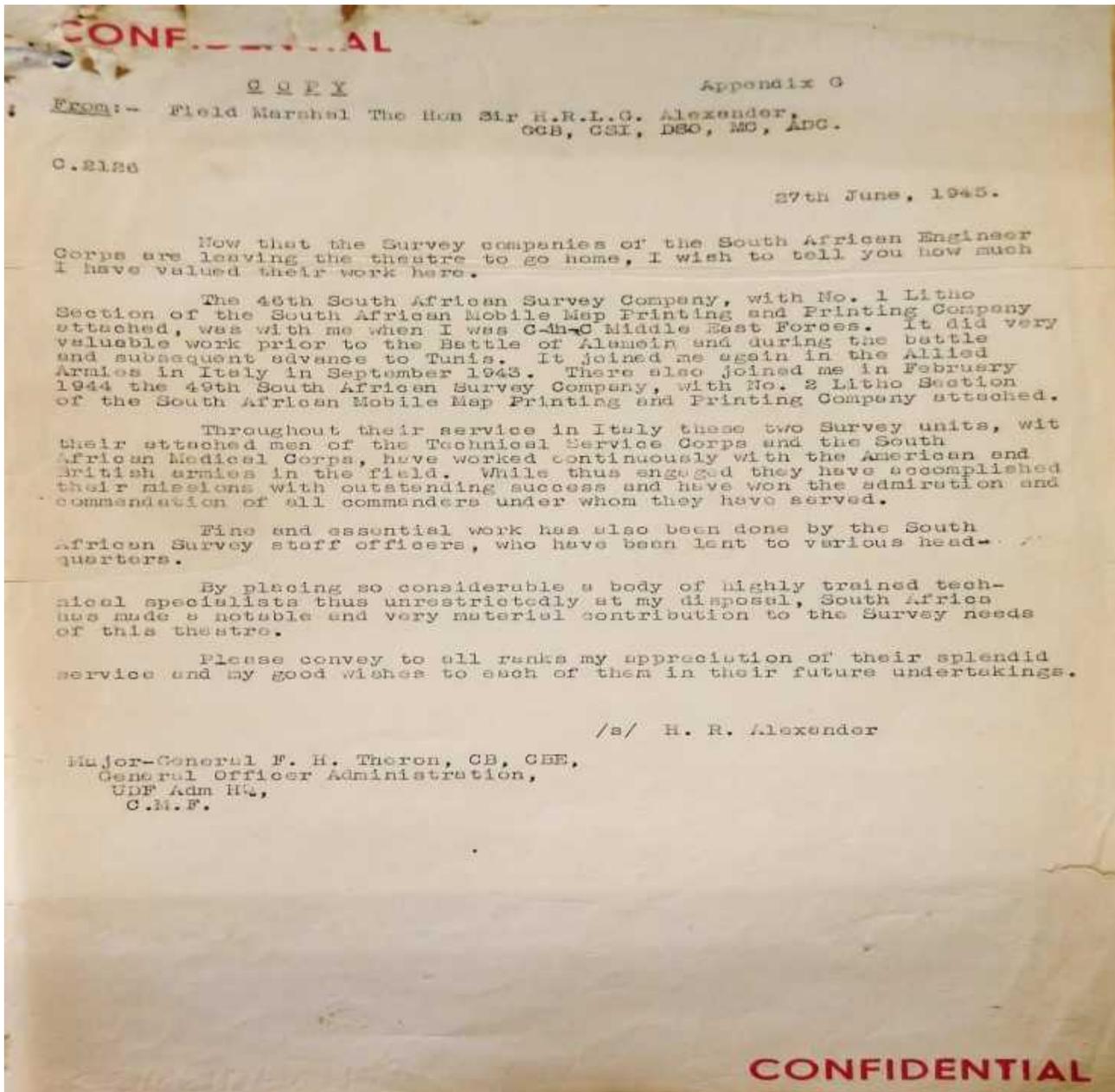
45 Survey Company did not go to Italy, but returned to the Union where it split up into groups to do an emergency job of mapping the coast from Portuguese East Africa right through to Angola to produce a series of small-scale maps complete with military grid. The only complete map of the Union at that time was the Irrigation Department map a very small-scale one with no military grid.

The preparation of a military map had become a matter of urgency in view of the possibility that the Germans might invade Portugal with dangerous consequences to the Union's Portuguese neighbours. The most difficult survey work was on the border of Angola where the flat bush country was densely covered with monpani bush and the mapping had to be done entirely by astro fixes at night and by compass traverses through the bush to pick up information in detail.

When this task was completed after several months, some of the personnel of 45 Company remained in the Union and a new unit, 49 Survey Company, was formed and went to Italy to join the Eighth Army. Between them 46 and 49 Companies operating in Italy produced millions of maps. One unit alone printed approximately half a million maps a month at the rate of over 20,000 impressions a day.

(Transcribed by Noel Grimmett on the recommendation of Mike Nolan)

N.B: Below is a copy a letter from Field Marshall Sir Harold Alexander thanking the South African Engineer Corp for their valued work on leaving the theatre to return home. He mentions in particular the 46th South African Survey Company and the fact that the No 1 Litho Section had been with him throughout his time as C-in-C Middle East Forces.



Source: Allied Forces Headquarters Engineer Section Survey Directorate Algiers – Monthly Report for June 1945 (Appendix G)
TNA File WO 402/100

Channel Guns – 1940 Marines – Gunners – Sappers

BRITAIN AT WAR

The Daily Telegraph

LONDON, NOVEMBER 1941

WATCH ON HIDDEN GERMAN CHANNEL GUNS SOLDIER-SCIENTISTS AT WORK

FROM L. MARSLAND GANDER, DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
WITH A SURVEY REGIMENT, SUNDAY.

SOLDIER-SCIENTISTS of the Army are keeping a special watch on the German guns across the Channel, descendants of the last war's Big Bertha. Many of these hidden monsters, emplaced opposite the south-east corner of England, are capable of hurling shells 100 miles or more.

Gun experts consider that the guns have only slight nuisance value, because the gun barrels wear out rapidly and the bursting charge in the long-range shells is small. Nevertheless they are kept under observation constantly by members of a little-known regiment. The watchers are "flash spotters" of the Survey Regiment.

Though the Nazis may conceal their guns in railway tunnels and under ingenious camouflage, they cannot hide the flash or the sounds, tell-tale clues to their position.

Many Survey Regiment officers served in the special section of Cambridge University OTC, which deals with survey and geographical problems. NCOs and men are nearly all qualified surveyors in civil life.

The soldier-detectives use two methods – "sound ranging" and "flash spotting". Sound rangers have three duties, namely, to locate enemy guns, to range our own guns, and to determine what objectives are being shelled by particular enemy guns.

I stood in a barrack room, filled with intricate apparatus that cost at least £12,000, watching a sound-ranging troop at their complicated work. Somewhere outside five microphones had been buried.

"Shot!" called a radio operator listening on headphones, as a warning to the team of eight men. Within a few seconds the recording machine, connected to each microphone, was delivering a developed strip of film carrying a photographic record of the time at which each microphone had received the sound.

Then the reader, booker and plotter got busy and in five minutes the "enemy gun" had been placed with metre accuracy.

The information was 'phoned to a British battery, which replied. Presently the whole process was repeated to discover where the British shells had burst.

"Flash spotting" is a purely visual method of locating enemy guns and ranging our own. From two or more posts the spotters observe through special binocular instruments, then obtain the position by the triangle method. Complete concealment of their posts has been developed to a fine art.

The Survey Regiment is training intensively for mobile warfare. All the apparatus for sound ranging and the men to work it can be packed if necessary into one lorry, which could get into action in two hours. Radio, introduced since Dunkirk, has greatly speeded up the process of preparation.

Having withdrawn in the Dunkirk evacuation and winning the Battle of Britain, the British did not have an immediate answer to the German Channel guns threat. So the high ground to either side of the Port of Dover was fortified on the personal order of Prime Minister Winston Churchill (who had visited to see the situation in person) and large calibre guns dug in there.

The only British Cross-Channel guns already in place were *Winnie* (named after Churchill) and – later in 1940 – *Pooh* (named after the story book character Winnie the Pooh who in turn was named after "Winnipeg" the bear at the London Zoo). These were two BL 14 inch Mk VII (35.6 cm) guns positioned behind St Margaret's. They were spares taken from the stock of guns of the battleship HMS *King George V*. One used a mounting from HMS *Furious* and the other a mounting from a test range; neither was turret-mounted. They were operated from a separate firing-control room and were manned by 25 men of the Royal Marine Siege Regiment, which was formed in July 1940

Winnie fired Britain's first shell onto continental Europe in August 1940 – but they were slow and ineffectual compared to the German guns. They conducted extreme range counter-battery operations against the German guns (though they were too inaccurate and slow to fire on ships) and were protected from German aerial attack by anti-aircraft emplacements. Their separate and well-camouflaged cordite and shell magazines were buried under deep layers of earth and connected to the guns by railway lines.

Three 13.5-inch railway guns, *Piece-maker*, *Sceneshifter* and *Gladiator*, were added to the regiment's armament; and these five remained in action until November 1943 when the railway guns were turned over to the Royal Artillery, the marines continuing to man *Winnie* and *Pooh*. *Winnie* and *Pooh* carried out their last shoot on 19th September 1944 when they engaged enemy batteries in support of the Canadian Army attack on Boulogne. Of the last forty rounds fired, six scored direct hits.

The first German guns began to be installed around the end of July 1940. First came the *Siegfried Battery* at Audinghen, south of Cap Gris Nez, with one 38 cm SK C/34 naval gun (15-inch) gun (later increased to 4 and renamed *Todt Battery*), shortly followed by: -

- Three – 30.5 cm (12.0 in) guns at *Friedrich August Battery*, to the north of Boulogne-sur-Mer.
- Four – 28 cm (11 in) guns at *Grosser Kurfürst Battery* at Cap Gris Nez.

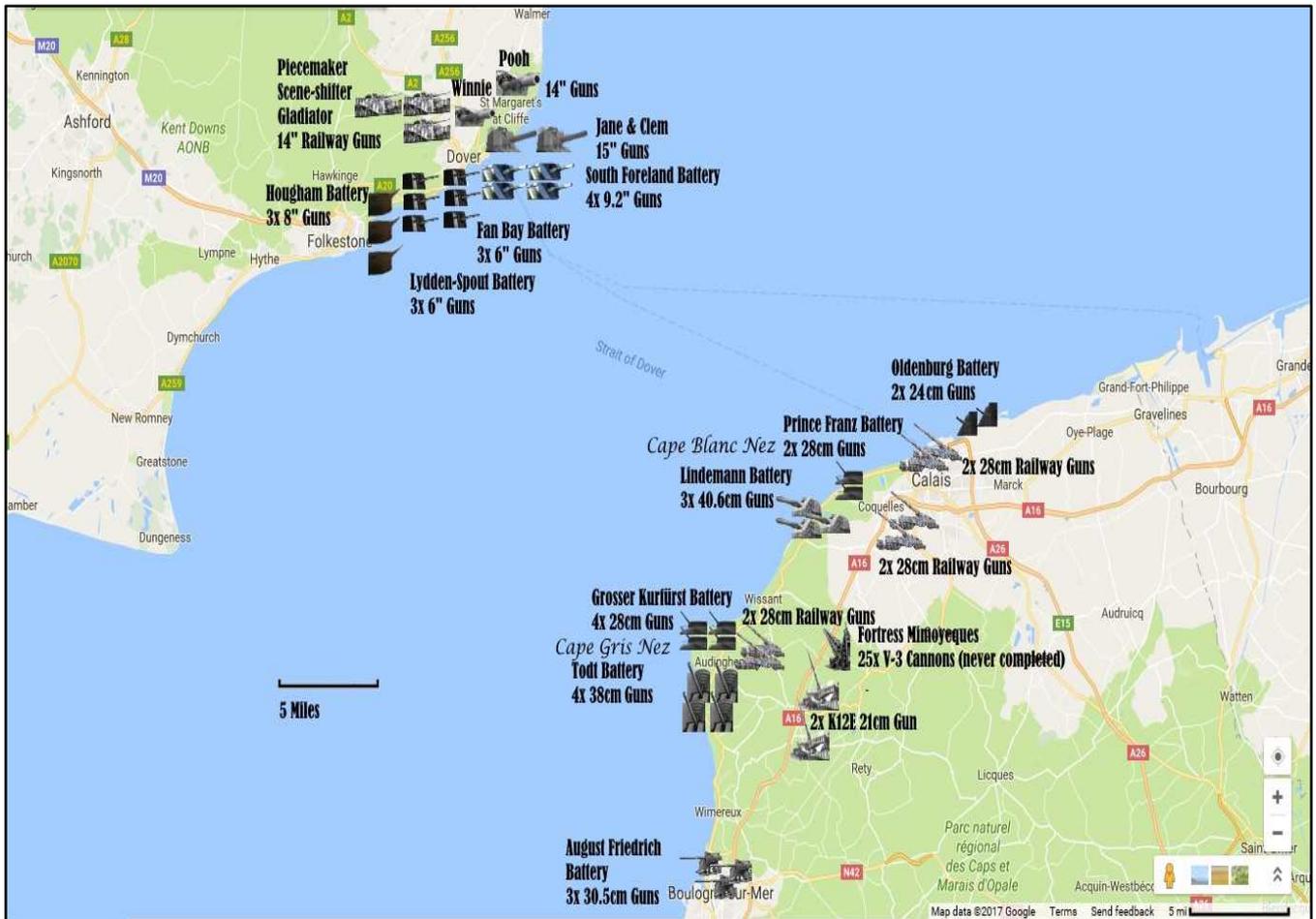
- Two – 21 cm (8.3 in) guns at *Prinz Heinrich Battery* just outside Calais.
- Two – 21 cm (8.3 in) guns at *Oldenburg Battery* in Calais.
- Three – 40.6 cm SK C/34 (16-inch) guns (from among the so-called Adolf Guns) at *Lindemann Battery* between Calais and Cap Blanc Nez. The battery was named after the fallen commander of the battleship Bismarck.



Winnie' The Big Gun in Action. Shot in Dover Kent in 1941. Winnie is the British army's answer to the German big guns on the French coast that had been shelling British ships in the Channel for the last year.

View the shoot on – British Pathe Gazette – www.youtube.com/watch?v=gi7lp55Ex7U





Depiction of major gun positions around Dover and Calais - 1943–1944. Note that individual gun positions are not exact, and that there are additional smaller batteries not depicted on this map.

By early August, *Siegfried Battery* and *Grosser Kurfürst Battery* were fully operational as were all of the Army's railway guns. Seven of the railway guns, six 28 cm (11 in) K5 guns and a single 21 cm (8.3 in) K12 gun with a range of 115 km (71 mi), could only be used against land targets. The remainder, thirteen 28 cm (11 in) guns and five 24 cm (9.4 in) guns, plus additional motorised batteries comprising twelve 24 cm (9.4 in) guns and ten 21 cm (8.3 in) guns, could be fired at shipping but were of limited effectiveness due to their slow traverse speed, long loading time and ammunition types. Land-based guns have always been feared by navies because they are on a stationary platform and are thus more accurate (and can be larger, with more ammunition stowage) than those on board ship. Super-heavy railway guns can only be traversed by moving the entire gun and its carriage along a curved track, or by building a special cross track or turntable. This, combined with their slow rate of fire (measured in rounds per hour or even rounds per day), makes it difficult for them to hit moving targets. Another problem with super-heavy guns is that their barrels (which are difficult to make and expensive to replace) wear out relatively quickly, so they could not be fired often.

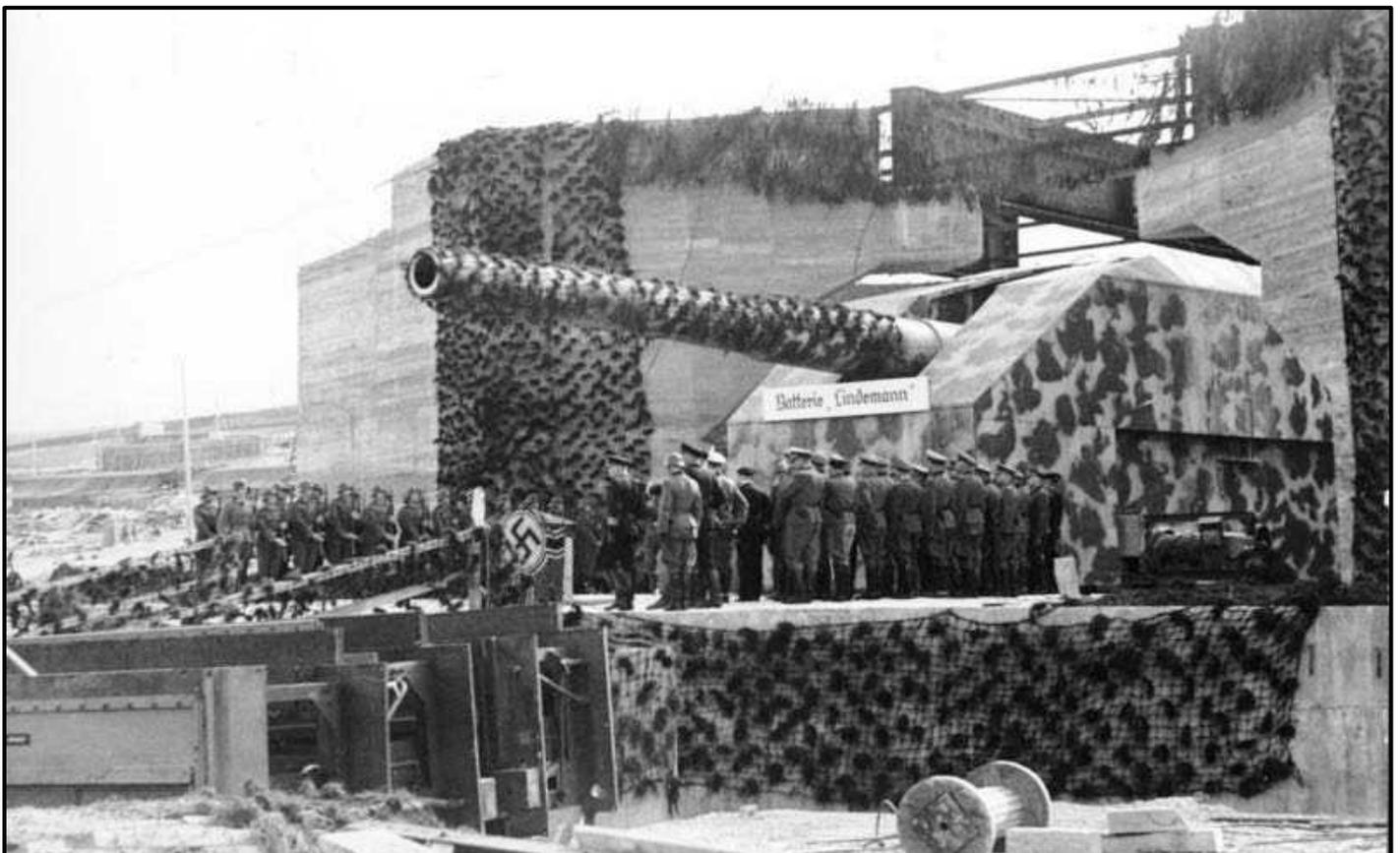
Better suited for use against naval targets were the four heavy naval batteries installed by mid-September: *Friedrich August*, *Prinz Heinrich*, *Oldenburg* and *Siegfried* (later renamed *Todt*) – a total of eleven guns, with the firepower of a battlecruiser. Fire control for these guns was provided by both spotter aircraft and by DeTeGerät radar sets installed at Blanc Nez and Cap d'Alprech. These units were capable of detecting targets out to a range of 40 km (25 mi); including small British patrol craft near the English coast. Two additional radar sites were added by mid-September: a DeTeGerät at Cap de la Hague and a Fern De Te Gerät long-range radar at Cap d'Antifer near Le Havre.

Perhaps the most remarkable gun was the 21 cm (8.3 in) Kanone 12 in Eisenbahnlafette, which had an effective range of 45 km (28 mi). Designed as a successor to the World War I Paris gun, it is claimed to have had a maximum range of 115 km (71 mi). Shell fragments from the gun were found near Chatham, Kent, 88 km (55 mi) from the nearest point on the French coast. There were two of these guns, operated by Artillerie-Batterie 701 (E) and they remained on the Channel Coast for the rest of the war.

The guns started shelling the Dover area during the second week of August 1940 and continued firing until 1944. Over a thousand rounds were fired but the German coast batteries only sank:

- *Sambut*, 7,219 BRT, 6 June 1944
- *Empire Lough*, 2,824 BRT, 24 June 1944

Empire Lough was one of 21 coastal vessels in the convoy ETC-17, escorted by the frigate HMS *Dakins* and corvette HMS *Sunflower*. On 24th June 1944, the convoy left Southend en route to the Seine Bay when the ships were engaged by German long-range coastal artillery guns off Dover. *Empire Lough* was set on fire and declared a total loss after she was beached near Folkestone. The master Robert Robinson and one crew member were lost. The freighter *Gurden Gates* (1,791 grt, built 1943) was damaged in the same action.



A 40.6 cm 'Adolf' coastal defence gun of the Batterie Lindemann, France

Noel Grimmett

(Source – Wikipedia etc)

News from the Geographic Community



On the 10th November 2017 Major Dave Campey R.E. attended an investiture at Buckingham palace to receive an M.B.E from the Duke of Cambridge.

Below is the citation for Major Campey's M.B.E. from the Director of Information Major General Semple C.B.E:

“Maj David Campey was responsible for Army Geographic Intelligence activity; a critical area across Defence that provides soldiers on operations with mission critical geographic information. In doing so it not only enables success on operations, but also saves lives by providing soldiers situational awareness of the highest order. In his spare time he is Secretary to Army Judo.

In his tenure, Campey invigorated the Geo Intelligence portfolio, driving complex requirements across Defence. This work was crucial in an era of increased interoperability. Such was Campey's fervent belief in what was required, the American, British, Australian, Canadian and New Zealand (ABCA) Armies program had no hesitation in making him the ABCA lead for coordinating all Geo Intelligence cooperation and capability delivery - including engagement with civilian intelligence agencies. It was a responsibility others baulked at undertaking; yet Campey grasped the opportunity with a determination to do what was right for all. This involved delicate negotiations around the world;

with partners that may have had neither the risk appetite, nor resources, to be bold. Campey took them with him in his vision for Geo Intelligence as the foundation layer for all subsequent Army intelligence activity. The ABCA Armies program grew all the more stronger and the UK's reputation for professional excellence and as a reliable allied partner was exemplified through Campey's efforts.

Major Campey did not limit his energy to contributing to operational success. In the sport of Army Judo he showed a passion that many others would do well to emulate - not least his modesty and humility. The Sapper, British Army and Armed Forces Judo communities benefited greatly from his commitment, noting that much of his involvement was in his free time and whilst recovering from the physical impact of being diagnosed with neck cancer in 2013. It is a measure of the man that when another member of Army HQ was diagnosed with cancer, Campey immediately made himself available to speak to them – in his words, 'I know what is coming'. He became highly respected and an inspirational coach of younger students. Known to them as 'Uncle Dave' and regarded with true affection and respect, he fostered links with Sapper Rugby in order to share training ideas, a novel approach that paid dividends. He further organised tours to Cyprus, Russia and Japan in 2015 and 2016.

Not content with running both the Sapper and Army Judo Championships, he designed a dedicated Martial Arts Centre for military personnel, travelling at weekends to support players competing across the UK. That alone was a considerable commitment, but Maj Campey then acted as Secretary to the Army Judo Association, whilst also managing 19 elite-standard Army Judo players. This was in addition to the 10 RAF and 6 Royal Navy elite players he managed as part of Armed Forces Judo. Seeking representative opportunities for such talent, Campey further established links between the Army and British Judo Associations, a considerable feat in an Olympic Year. He also engaged with the Nepalese Judo Association in order to manage the training of Gurkha soldiers seeking to represent Nepal at national level. Army and Armed Forces Judo went from strength to strength and in no small part due to Campey's efforts, a fact acknowledged by the Director of the Army Sports Control Board.

For his contribution to success on operations in the field of Geospatial Intelligence and to the sport of Judo, Major Campey is worthy of the highest formal recognition”.

Major Dave Campey MBE MSc RE – was commissioned into the Royal Engineers in 2005 having served 23 years in the ranks. On completion of his trade training he served in Cameroon, Kenya, Norway and Australia, and on Operations in Bosnia and Kosovo. More recently he deployed as SO3 Geo on Op HERRICK 6 attached to 26 Engineer Regiment HQ Task Force Helmand. He has served as RSM of the City of Edinburgh Universities Officer Training Corps, a Troop Commander at 1 RSME Regiment, and 2 i/c 14 Geographic Squadron. He completed the MSc in GEOINT in 2010 at the RSMS and then served with HQ 3rd (UK) division as the SO3 GEOINT. Posted on promotion to Major, he spent three years as an integral member of the Command and Control Development Centre (C2DC) and capability Development Information Branch in Warminster. He is currently employed as SO2 GEOINT in Directorate Information, IX Branch in Army HQ where he also is the UK Armies GEOINT SME within the FVEY ABCA Community. He regularly represents the Army at judo, and is the UK Armed Forces Judo Team Manager.

LCpl Leonora Brajshori, 13 Geo Sqn RE

Leonora was born in Kosovo and joined the British Army on 25th March 2013. She finished her Class 2 Geo training in January 2015, and joined 13 Sqn, where she has been involved in a number of exercises. During basic training she became interested in Power Lifting and has developed into a very competitive athlete.

Leonora's success has been exceptional resulting in the following places in various Power Lifting competitions:

- 1st place Army Championships (full power) 2014 & 2015
- 1st place Tri-service Championships (full power) 2014, 2nd place 2015
- 1st place British Nationals (full power) 2015 (BDFPA)
- 1st place World Championships (full power) 2015 (BDFPA)
- 3rd place Army Sports Woman of the year 2015
- 1st place Corp Sports Personally of the year 2015 (RE)

In 2016 Leonora switched to Weightlifting, with the following success:

- 6th place British Nationals 2017
- Currently hold a National ranking of 7th
- Upcoming big competitions include:
 - English Nationals in January 2018 (where she is currently looking at a podium finish)
 - Has been selected to represent GB at the International Women's Grand Prix in May 2018 Spain
 - British Nationals In July 2018

Following her success at the world championships in 2015 Leonora was invited to meet the Queen on her visit to Chatham. Leonora was also invited to help out at the under-17 European Weightlifting Championships in Kosovo, where she met the British Ambassador Ruairi O'Connell. The Ambassador then invited Leonora to Kosovo for the Remembrance Parade where she met the Kosovan President, and Prime Minister amongst many other important people and hopes to encourage other Kosovan's in the UK to join the British Army.



LCpl Leonora Brajshori meeting Lieutenant General Rrahman Rama in Kosovo.

A great start to her trip in Kosovo when she was honoured with a gift after she presented Lieutenant General Rrahman Rama (Commander of Kosovo Security Force) with a poppy to remember the fallen.



135 Geo Sqn proudly supporting The Lord Mayor's Show 2017 continuing a tradition started decades ago



The Regimental Recruiting Team at the RMAS event held at 33 Engineer Regiment (EOD) on 20 Nov 1017. Briefing Officer Cadets on becoming a Geo Officer.

42 Engineer Regiment (Geo) recently deployed on Ex Bold Alligator



Sappers from 42 Engineer Regiment (Geo) recently deployed on Ex Bold Alligator, which is a large-scale, multinational naval amphibious exercise held in the US state of North Carolina and features troops from the US Marine Corps, Norway, France, Canada, Brazil and Mexico.

Some 650 Royal Marines from 45 Commando also participated; spending six-weeks practicing the combat capabilities which make them some of the most feared and respected troops in the world. 42 Engr Regt (Geo) were attached to 45 Cdo to provide geographic support throughout the exercise.





It is with deep sadness that I have to inform you that (24328408) WO2 Keith Fenton, who served within the Geographic units of the Royal Engineers in both the Regular and Territorial Army and worked as a Civil Servant at the Royal School of Military Survey, passed away peacefully on Thursday the 30th of November 2017.

Keith died surrounded by the family he loved, with joy in his heart and free from the pain that had gripped him for so long. Many of you will know that Keith was diagnosed with Huntingdon's Disease in 2008 and has been battling his illness for the past 9 years. Keith's wife Sara and his children Edward and Charlotte will be arranging a service to celebrate Keith's life and it will be held in January 2018 – details to follow.



Nick Collins

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Will members please inform the Secretary of any changes to their contact details and in particular their e-mail address! Thank you

Visit www.militarysurvey.org.uk

The Branch FaceBook Group membership has now reached 220 but I am sure that there are many ex-survey/geo colleagues out there who need to be reminded that they are most welcome to join!!

MILITARY SURVEY BRANCH REA

IT'S A REUNION

FREE ENTRY AND FREE CURRY SUPPER

NON MEMBERS £10 PER PERSON (NB £5 pp. cash back if you subsequently join)

SUPER BAR @ MESS PRICES

FREE TRANSPORT LATE TO LOCAL HOTELS ONLY - M4 JUNCTION

1830hrs for 1900hrs FRIDAY THE 13th OF APRIL 2018

Location: SGTS MESS - DENISON BARRACKS - HERMITAGE

Plus; do please note we generally only meet once a year and we must vote in officers of the Branch and approve the accounts therefore we are compelled to hold an annual general meeting (AGM). Those interested in attending the AGM should note that this will take place on the same day at the same venue but at an earlier time. It will not interfere with the opportunity for members attending the reunion to chew the cud, enjoy the food and of course the good cheer.

THUS OUR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WILL BE AT 1700 for 1730 ON THE SAME DAY

FRIDAY THE 13th OF APRIL 2018

Please do try to attend both of the above and support your Branch.

The Committee with the kind permission of Commanding Officer and of course the RSM, the President of the WO & Sgts Mess, extend an invitation to members to attend this reunion and if so desired the earlier AGM in the Sgts Mess Hermitage on Friday night the 13th April 2018.

FURTHER DETAILS AND THE ENTRY FORM ARE AT THE LAST PAGE

PLEASE SEND IN YOUR RETURNS NOW

BUT NO LATER THAN THE 1st APRIL 2018

THE MILITARY SURVEY BRANCH OF THE REA

IT'S A REUNION

FREE ENTRY AND FREE CURRY SUPPER

NON MEMBERS £10 PER PERSON (NB £5 pp. cash back if you subsequently join)

1830hrs FOR 1900hrs FRIDAY THE 13th OF APRIL 2018

PRECEDED BY AN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1700hrs FRIDAY THE 13th OF APRIL 2018

Please note that the bar will be open before 1830hrs. Food will be served at about 2000hrs.

Accommodation: A small number of rooms may be available but do note that as the barracks are no longer under the command of RSMS that this may be too difficult. Hotel facilities are available at junction 13 of the M4 motorway and at Chieveley too; we will provide transport free **back** to these locations late evening.

Dress: Smart casual or better if you wish!

WARNING: - Hermitage has become a high security Barracks and ENTRY WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED to those who have returned this entry form with their details; IDENTITY CHECKS WILL BE REQUIRED TO GAIN ACCESS TO THE CAMP.

It is vital to establish firm attendance figures early and so once again we would request that you return this form as soon as you can:

SO PLEASE SEND RETURNS BEFORE THE 1st APRIL 2018 TO:

M. Perry, 101 Craven Road, Newbury, Berks, RG14 5NL

Problems? [Then contact me on] **mandpdperry@sky.com** or Tel; **01635 37510**

.....

From: Forename:.....	Surname:.....	I am a member – YES//NO
		<u>Non-members £10 pp. cheque please</u>
Address: -	Tel No: -	E-mail: -
Type & Make of transport:.....	Registration No	

I *shall/*shall not be attending the Reunion on Friday 13 APRIL 2018.

I *wish to/*will be unable to: - attend the AGM beforehand.

Guests: Wives/partners are welcome 1 2.....

DO PLEASE - REMEMBER THE GEO SOLDIERS SUPPORT FUND

I enclose a cheque to support this for £..... payable to “Military Survey Branch REA”

If you have any special dietary needs or require **disabled access** please detail these below and every attempt will be made to accommodate them.

NB: Military units do not cater for severely disabled conditions (for obvious reasons) and we apologise in advance for any shortcomings that might cause individual inconvenience.