

**1927 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE**  
**1st Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY**

**SUMMARY OF FIRST BATTALION DIARY**

*January 8.* — Draft of 33 Other Ranks arrived from the Depot.

*January 9.* — Lieut. D. S. Newton-King attached to the Regiment pending posting, to either battalion, Authority : W.O.L.P./6318/6 (A. G.2(0) ) dated 28/12/27.

*January 15.* — Captain H. T. Birch-Reynardson retired on retired pay through ill-health caused by wounds.

*January 25.* — Lieut. D. S. Newton-King reported for duty, and posted to Battalion. W.O.L.P/6318/6 dated 25/1/27.

Information received that Lieut. R. H. Cooke would be cross-posted to 52nd. Authority: W.O.L. P/30828/3 (A.G.2(0)) dated 25/1/27. Posted as from date of embarkation on or about February 20.

*February 15.* — Major A. E. Sanderson, D.S.O., relinquished command of the Depot, and handed over to Major J. J. Powell. Major A. E. Sanderson posted to the Battalion.

*March 3.* — 2nd Lieut. G. W. Lathbury to England on two months' sick leave which expires May 3.

*March 4.* — Lieut. R. H. Cooke proceeded from Birkenhead in Freightship *Circassia* to join 2nd Battalion. Authority: W.O.L.B/C/771 QMG2a dated 11/2/27.

*February 20.* — Draft of 25 Other Ranks arrived from Depot.

*April 11.*—Captain H. E. F. Smyth, M.C., to Depot for a tour of Duty.

*April 20.*—2nd Lieut. G. W. Lathbury returned from sick leave.

*April 27.*—A Draft of 27 Recruits arrived from the Depot.

*May 3rd.*—M.G. Platoon to Bitche for three weeks.

*May 5th.*—Captain H. E. F. Smyth, M.C, posted to the Depot for a tour of duty in relief of Captain J. W. Meade; to 1st Battalion. Authority: C.R.B. A.R.33429/A, dated February 4.

*May 13.*—Information received that Lieut. D. S. Newton-King qualified at short course at R.A.F. School of Army Co-operation.

*May 16.*—Information received that 2nd Lieut, M. M. Alston-Roberts-West passed a Qualifying Course at the School of Signals, Catterick.

*June 3.*—Three Buglers proceeded to Ypres for unveiling of 20th Light Division Memorial.

*June 16th.*—Major H. F. Whinney, D.S.O., O.B.E., retired on retired pay. Captain G. F. Plowden, M.C., to be Major. Authority: "London Gazette."

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*August 9.*—Lieut. A. B. Hamilton promoted Captain: July 16.

*September 3.*—2nd Lieuts. M. M. Alston-Roberts-West and C. Clifton promoted Lieutenants.

*September 16.*—Half 1st Indian Draft, commanded by Lieut. Graham proceeded to Parkhurst.

*September 18.*—Second half 1st Indian Draft, commanded by Captain J. W. Meade, proceeded to Parkhurst.

*September 30.*—Information received that Lieut. A. B. Slessor qualified (Q.I.) at No. 2 Qualifying Course.

*October 8.*—Information received that Captains E. L. O. Baddeley and A. B. Hamilton will be posted to 52nd.

*October 18.*—Regiment left Bad-Schwalbach, B.A.O.R., for Parkhurst, I. of W., on change of Station.

*October 20.*—Regiment arrived at Parkhurst about 1 a.m.

*November 9.*—Draft of 19 Recruits arrived from the Regimental Depot.

*November 19.*—Information received that Lieut.-Colonel M. F. Day, M.C., had been posted to command the Battalion vice Colonel A. G. Bayley, C.B.E., D.S.O., appointed G.S.O. 1 Peshawar Division.

*November 23.*—Lieut. A. B. Slessor seconded for service under the Colonial Office to date 12/10/27.

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**FIRST BATTALION LETTER, 1927**

DEAR EDITOR,

The Regiment has completed another year in the Army of Occupation, this time on detached duty. Climatic conditions made outdoor training almost impossible from December to March. Though unutterably dull from the point of view of the officer, the men seemed to enjoy a respite from the multifarious guards, duties, and working parties which are inseparable from life in garrison towns like Cologne and Wiesbaden. Moreover, the married quarters were excellent, and it is not too much to conjecture that there were many families who were genuinely sorry to leave the palaces which were put at their disposal. The Regiment made its own amusements in the winter, such as tobogganing, skiing and skating, though the latter were not too often obtainable. The lack of all local facilities for games was much felt, and our one football ground made of clay, sand, and boulders became a morass after rain, and a cement-like agglomeration of hard rock during frost. In order to carry out our fixtures with other Regiments, we had to travel some ten miles in a Ford van over the Taunus Mountains, with little or no prospect of the team concerned arriving intact at the other end. Training during the summer consisted chiefly of hard foot-slogging. A notable example of this was the 2nd Rhine Brigade Test March in September, when the Regiment covered 40 miles in 18 1/2 hours, only a fraction under the rate of march at Talavera. The Regiment was composed chiefly of recruits, who three weeks before were at the Depot. The march was completed without a single casualty, a fine achievement by these young soldiers, and one of which they may be justifiably proud. The rest of the training was not of a very high order, owing chiefly to the fact that there was no ground the absolute property of the Government, and the training of formations higher than a Company could not be proceeded with until the crops were cut in late August or September. Nevertheless, the Higher Command was satisfied with the standard of efficiency of the Regiment, which, in spite of unfavourable conditions, marched, shot, manoeuvred, and generally compared favourably with the traditions established by our one-time commander, which we are always endeavouring to live up to, and if possible surpass.

After completing three years in the British Army of the Rhine, the Regiment returned to Parkhurst, Isle of Wight, in October, thirty-nine years after its previous visit to that pleasant part of the world. Before leaving Germany the men were congratulated on their behaviour, and the tact and forbearance which they had shown towards the civilian population. Difficult situations arose from time to time, as foreign policy changed and as financial restrictions became more and more irksome. It must be remembered that Germany as a nation has never acknowledged herself beaten. This, coupled with a doubtful atmosphere of enforced goodwill insisted upon by the Locarno conference and exacted by the Rhineland High Commission, caused the Germans in some cases to suspect weakness on the part of the Authorities and the Army of Occupation. The role of the soldier, therefore, became increasingly difficult. He was in the Rhineland to enforce the Peace Treaty and maintain order; but when difficulties arose, which needed settlement by the civilian High Commission, it was the soldier who was usually pronounced to be in the wrong, and the case more often than not was awarded to the German civilian. Bearing in mind these disadvantages, it has become more than ever evident that the British soldier, be he cockney or plough-boy, is probably " the best ambassador in the world." Even training was made more difficult by the certain knowledge that the Germans would prefer enormous and quite unjustifiable claims for damage wherever the soldier placed his feet. It is sincerely to be hoped that all this will not be interpreted to mean a series of adverse criticisms of the powers that be.

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It is realized perfectly that foreign policy must change, and, in order to put this policy into effect, sweeping and radical alterations in procedure and methods have to be considered. These remarks, therefore, are intended merely to place on record the fact that the Regiment can still be relied upon to carry out its role, even though at times under great provocation.

Perhaps the outstanding feature of the year has been the failure in recruiting, not only for the Regiment but for the whole of the Army. When drafts are completed and the annual wastage in man-power deducted the Regiment will have an effective strength of not much more than 400 men. Deducting from this total those men who are required to fill the Machine Gun platoon, signallers, transport, and other employments, companies will be reduced to cadre proportions, and it will be possible for all practical purposes to train the leaders theoretically only, without their troops. This is a truly serious situation, which it is earnestly hoped may show improvement next year.

For the rest we are happy, contented in our new home, and looking forward to the next four years here. We have been almost overwhelmed with hospitality from the Islanders, and invitations to shoot, dine, and dance pour in with the utmost regularity. In fact, they seem to be all out to make us feel at home. The men, too, have given a series of dances and whist-drives which have been patronized to repletion by the people of Newport and district. The hunting cannot compete with the Shires, but if one adopts the motto that all hunting is good, only some kinds are better than others, we can all get two good days' air and exercise a week with a few fences a lot of wire, and innumerable rabbit-holes.

Yours ever,  
43RD.