

1957 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE
1st Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY

SUMMARY OF THE FIRST BATTALION DIARY 1957

January 1st—Orderly Room Quartermaster Serjeant G. W. Bayliss was awarded the M.B.E. in the New Year's Honours List.

Operation 'Cordon Bleu', consisting of a cordon and search of the village of Pakhna, took place under the command of Major M. N. Harbottle. A wanted terrorist, Haralambous Andronikou, was caught by Pte Grant and Pte King, of Support Company, as he tried to escape through the cordon.

January 7th—A fire destroyed the tent, and all the furniture and kit inside it, belonging to Company Serjeant-Major Gater of Letter 'A' Company.
Support Company left camp to take part in an operation in the Troodos Mountains.

January 9th—Support Company returned from their operation, having been based at the village of Sykopetra.

January 10th—A fire destroyed a tent in Headquarter Company lines.

January 11th —National Service Group 5503 left Limassol on board H.M.T. *Empire Ken*.

January 12th—The Regiment was visited by the Secretary of State for War, the Right Honourable John Hare, O.B.E., M.P. He was accompanied by the Commander-in-Chief M.E.L.F. and the G.O.C. Cyprus District.

Captain M. G. Hay-Will rejoined the Regiment and was posted to Letter 'B' Company.

January 15th —Captain M. R. Pennell assumed command of Letter 'B' Company.

January 18th —Letter 'C' Company left to take part in an operation in the Kannavia area of the Troodos Mountains.

2nd Lieut. C. J. Edwards was promoted to Lieutenant with effect from 28th December 1956.
The Christmas Leave Party of 3 Officers and 22 Other Ranks arrived back by plane from England.

January 22nd—A cordon and search of Zoopiya was carried out by Letter 'A' Company, with platoons from Letter 'B' Company and Support Company, under the command of Major H. J. Sweeney, M.C. Two hides were found in the village.

January 23rd—Lieut.-Colonel J. A. J. Read, D.S.O., M.C., re-assumed command of the Regiment.

January 25th —Platoons from Letter 'A' Company and Support Company carried out an operation on Silikan. The cordon party was put in place by helicopter.

January 26th —Letter 'C' Company carried out a cordon and search of Kellaki.
6 Platoon discovered 2 shot-guns in a cave near Khalassa.

January 27th —Cordon and search of Ypsonas by Letter 'C' Company. A good deal of damage was done to the dry stone walls, since these were found to be favourite hiding-places for bombs and explosives.

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January 28th —Pte Brooks, of Letter 'A' Company, reported that he had seen a bomb attached to a door of a Service Family in Limassol. A second bomb was found outside the door of another house in the same street.

An electrically detonated bomb was exploded near to two vehicles carrying members of Support Company. There were no casualties.

January 29th —2nd Lieut. K. J. Smith, of Letter 'C' Company, had a bomb thrown at his vehicle in Limassol. Two Greek girls were injured.

January 30th —Cordon and search of Ayia Phyla by Letter 'C' Company.

January 31st —2nd Lieut. C. E. W. Jones joined the Regiment and was posted to Letter 'A' Company.

February 2nd—Letter 'C' Company and 1 Platoon from Letter 'A' Company left camp for a three day operation at Kellaki, on information that Grivas was hiding in the village.

February 7th—An electrically detonated bomb exploded about five yards away from a foot patrol led by Cpl Telford, of Headquarter Company. No casualties.

February 10th—H.M.T. *Asturias* arrived with the families of many members of the Regiment.

2nd Lieut. M. Bawtree was among the arrivals and was posted to Letter 'A' Company. MILPOL was taken over by the Regiment from 1 AGRA. The Commanding Officer took over as Area Commander, Captain M. R. Pennell as Staff Officer, and Captain R. A. Pascoe as Intelligence Officer.

February 12th —Captain W. S. C. Chevis assumed the appointment of Adjutant, .

February 16th —An electrically detonated bomb was exploded at a Landrover containing 2nd Lieut. Askew, 2nd Lieut. Paul and 2nd Lieut. Strang. 2nd Lieut. Paul was slightly injured and the Landrover damaged.

Lance-Corporal Neill, of Headquarter Company, was killed in a traffic accident.

February 20th—Letter 'A' Company left for operations in the Yerasa area with 3 Indep. Inf. Bde.

February 22nd—Major A. C. Mason assumed the appointment of Second-in-Command, vice Major M. N. Harbottle, who left for the United Kingdom.

February 26th—A large cache of explosives found at Ayia Phyla Village.

March 2nd—Major D. J. Wood joined the Regiment and was posted to Support Company.

March 3rd—Captain E. W. Leask rejoined the Regiment, and was posted to Letter 'D' Company.

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March 11th—The Regiment was visited by His Excellency, The Governor, who inspected Letter 'A' Company and Headquarter Company, and then visited the Serjeants' Mess. He lunched in the Officers' Mess.

March 15th—An operation at Ayios Athanasios was carried out by Letter 'B' Company.

March 20th—One of a series of many operations was carried out to look for Demos Hadji Miltis, the EOKA Area Leader.

2nd Lieut. A. H. Thornton joined the Regiment and was posted to Letter 'B' Company.

March 21st—Shirt-Sleeve Order came into effect after only three months in battledress.

March 23rd—Letter 'B' Company searched the houses of relatives of Demos Hadji Miltis. Headquarter Company beat 40 Field Squadron R.E. at hockey, thereby winning the Sub-District Minor Units League.

March 28th—On the release of Archbishop Makarios from the Seychelles, there were general rejoicings in the town, in which members of the Regiment found themselves more popular than ever before.

April 2nd—Various Emergency Restrictions were lifted, including the night curfew on Greek youths.

April 7th—The Colonel of the Regiment, Major-General Sir John Winterton, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., C.B.E., arrived in Cyprus. He was met at the airport by the Commanding Officer and his A.D.C., 2nd Lieut. M. Bawtree.

April 8th—The Colonel of the Regiment inspected the camp and began his visits to some of the soldiers on guards and detachments.

April 10th—For the first time since the Regiment arrived in Cyprus, members of the Services off duty could go out unarmed.

The Colonel of the Regiment visited the guards found by Letter 'A' Company.

April 11th—A cocktail party was held in the Officers' Mess.

April 12th—Major-General Sir John Winterton, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., C.B.E., visited the Officers' Mess for the last time in order to say good-bye to the officers.

April 13th—The Colonel of the Regiment left Cyprus.

April 25th—The results of the A.R.A. Machine Gun Fire Control Cup for 1956 at Putlos came through. The Regiment was placed second.

April 27th—The Corporals' Club was officially opened.

May 1st—Major H. P. Patterson rejoined the Regiment.

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May 3rd—Support Company, commanded by Major D. J. Wood, searched Ayia Phyla and found three pistols and quantities of explosives in the stone-walls outside the village,

May 8th—Major-General D. A. Kendrew, C.B.E., D.S.O., visited the Regiment, and inspected a Quarter Guard found by the M.T. Platoon.

May 10th—An operation was carried out in the Paramytha-Palodhia area.

May 12th—A Regimental Individual Athletics meeting was held on the Sports Track.

May 13th—2nd Lieuts M. J. R. Miller, N. Pullen, M. A. F. Stanford and a draft of 38 Other Ranks joined the Regiment.

May 14th—Company Serjeant-Major Shepherd A., was prompted to Regimental Serjeant-Major and Colour Serjeant Young K. to Acting Company Serjeant-Major. Battle Honours were awarded to the Regiment for the Second World War.

May 15th—Letter 'A' Company carried out an operation at Ypsonas.

May 16th—Three police station guards were handed over to 16 L.A.A. Regt, R.A.

May 24th—The C.-in-C. M.E.L.F., Lieut.-General Sir Geoffrey Bourne' visited the Regiment.

Letter 'A' Company, while out on a training exercise were switched to carry out an operation on Dhierona.

May 27th—Anti-leafletting bicycle patrols were started in Limassol.

The first of the Rural Q Patrols was carried out by the Intelligence Section with a donkey.

June 2nd—Following a shooting incident in Prastio, a cordon and search was carried out by Letter 'B' Company, who were later relieved by Letter 'C' Company.

June 3rd—Pte Wesson (Mortar Platoon) found two pistols in a buried jar in a house in Episkopi.

June 10th—An operation was carried out at Pano Kividhes by Letter 'B' Company and Letter 'C' Company under the overall command of Major A. C. Mason.

June 13th—Letter 'B' Company and Letter 'C' Company took part in the Queen's Birthday Parade on the Polemidhia Sports Ground. The detachment was led by Major D. B. Fox and doubled past the Saluting Base.

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1st Battalion—The Regimental Detachment doubling past on the Queen's Birthday Parade at Polemidhia

June 15th—2nd Lieut. R. W. S. Ball was promoted to Lieut.

June 18th—Waterloo Day. This was celebrated by a holiday and a fair.

June 20th—Captain C. St C. Simmons assumed command of Letter 'B' Company, in the temporary absence of Major P. R. Hayter, M.B.E., M.C.

June 23rd—A draft of 23 Other Ranks joined the Regiment.

June 27th—Lieut. J. C. Gardner assumed the appointment of Education Officer vice Captain C. St C. Simmons.

June 29th—Captain E. W. Leask departed for a posting to the Malay Regiment.

July 2nd—Letter 'A' Company, operating in the Lophos area, found two hides.

July 4th—2nd Lieut. B. E. A. Pascoe and 2nd Lieut. J. P. Watts joined the Regiment and were posted to Letter 'A' Company and Letter 'B' Company respectively.

July 13th—Major A. C. Mason assumed command of the Regiment during the absence of Lieut-Colonel J. A. J. Read, D.S.O., M.C.

The new dining-hall was taken into use, in place of tents, which had been used up till now.

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July 15th—Letter 'B' Company started on a march across the island to Xeros. They arrived there on the morning of 17th July.

July 17th—2nd Lieut. I. O. Welch joined the Regiment and was posted to Support Company.

July 22nd—Captain G. C. Stacey rejoined the Regiment and assumed command of Letter 'D' Company.

2nd Lieut. R. M. Formby and 2nd Lieut. W. G. Wright arrived and were posted to Letter 'B' Company and Letter 'C' Company respectively.

July 23rd—In the Special List of Queen's Birthday Honours and Awards, Major S. A. G. Cox was awarded the M.B.E., Major A. C. Mason and Company Serjeant-Major Abbott were Mentioned in Despatches, and Private Brookes, of Letter 'A' Company, was awarded the C-in-C's Certificate.

July 25th—The Regiment learned of its future after the Reorganisation of the Army; it is to become part of the Green Jackets Brigade.

August 6th—A letter was received from the Colonel of the Regiment on the future transfer of the Regiment to the Green Jackets.

August 9th—2nd Lieut. R. H. James, 2nd Lieut. H. J. Sutherland, Colour Serjeant Neill, Sjt Morgan and 39 Ranks and File joined the Regiment.

August 12th—Lieut.-Colonel J. A. J. Read, D.S.O., M.C., reassumed command of the Regiment.

August 16th—*The* first round of the inter platoon drill competition took place.

August 17th—Provisional authority was granted for those with over 120 days service on the island to wear the General Service Medal.

August 26th—A second donkey was bought for operational purposes.

August 27th—The Regimental 'Millington Drake' Competition ended, This was won by Letter 'B' Company.

August 28th—2nd Lieut. C. K. Patey joined the Regiment.

August 31st—2nd Lieut. O. A. E. J. Makower and 2nd Lieut. J. W. S. Macdonald and 6 Other Ranks departed for a trip to Tel Aviv on board H.M.S. *St Kitts*.

September 2nd—Major-General D. A. Kendrew, C.B.E., D.S.O., visited the Regiment. The last platoons were judged in the inter platoon drill competition, which was won by the M.T. No. 2 Platoon commanded by Captain A. S. Payne.

September 4th—Letter 'B' Company started a three-day operation to keep an area near Lania under surveillance.

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September 11th—2nd Lieut. J. P. M. Denny and 2nd Lieut. M. A. When arrived and were posted to Headquarter Company.

September 14th—On the anniversary of the Storming of the Cashmere Gate, a Tattoo, organized by Captain W. S. C. Chevis, was held on the Sports Track. There was a special luncheon with free beer and the day was a holiday.

September 17th—Captain A. S. Payne assumed command of Headquarter Company in the temporary absence of Major D. B. Fox.

Lieut. (Q.M.) A. J. Howland joined the Regiment and took over the M.T. Platoon.

September 18th—Major A. B. Gillespie-Hill assumed command of the Regiment in the absence of Lieut.-Colonel J. A. J. Read, D.S.O. M.C.

September 20th—The Under Secretary of State for War, Captain Julian Amery, M.P., visited the Regiment.

September 25th—2nd Lieut. K. J. Smith and 2nd Lieut. C. E. W. Jones took part as umpires in Exercise Kestrel, a beach-landing exercise carried out by the Royal Berkshire Regiment.

October 4th—Lieut.-Colonel J. A. J. Read, D.S.O., M.C., re-assumed command of the Regiment.

October 5th—The Commanding Officer spoke to all officers, warrant officers, and regular N.C.O.s on the possible future of the Regiment, and gave details of the new proposals for dress.

A church fete was held on the Sports Field, at which the sideshows were mainly run by members of the Regiment.

October 6th—The Director of Infantry, Major-General C. L. Firbank, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., paid the Regiment an informal visit.

October 7th—The Regiment took part in the Cyprus District Rifle Meeting at Dhekelia over the previous week. The team came eighth out of twenty-seven major unit teams with the No. 4 rifle, eighth with the self-loading rifle, and tenth in the L.M.G. pairs.

A draft of 38 Other Ranks arrived and was posted to Letter 'D' Company. The O.C. Troops of the troopship congratulated the Commanding Officer on the excellence of this draft.

October 8th —Major D. B. Fox re-assumed command of Headquarter Company.

October 10th—A Regimental Athletics Meeting was held on the Sports- Field. The winning team was Letter 'C' Company with Letter 'B' Company runner-up. Prizes were presented by Mrs J. A. J. Read.

October 18th—Sabotage occurred at Nicosia, with the result that all security measures tightened in the camp.

October 19th —The Chaplain General to the Forces visited the Regiment.

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October 21st—Regimental Serjeant-Major E. G. Field, B.E.M., rejoined the Regiment. Winter hours began.

October 23rd—The first of two TEWTS was held for officers. The TEWT was run by Major P. R. Hayter, M.B.E., M.C., and Major D. B. Fox.

October 28th—'Oxi' Day, the anniversary of the day in 1940 when the Greeks refused an Italian surrender ultimatum. Various precautions were taken, but quiet prevailed in Limassol.

October 29th—A farewell visit was made by the Governor, who inspected a Guard of Honour commanded by Captain B. W. Balls. Pte French G. of Letter 'A' Company, was buried in Nicosia Military Cemetery with Full Military Honours.

October 30th—The second Regimental TEWT took place.

November 1st—Lieut.-Colonel R. A. St G. Martin, M.B.E., arrived at Limassol. 2nd Lieut. T. M. Hartley and Lieut. I. G. Elliott rejoined the Regiment after attending Support Weapons Courses at Netheravon. 2nd Lieut. K. J. Smith was promoted to Lieut.

November 5th—The Regimental Tug-o'-War Team won the Sub-District Competition.

November 8th—The Tug-o'-War Team were defeated in the Finals of the Cyprus District Competition.

November 9th—Captain C. A. S. Hinton joined the Regiment.

November 11th—Nonne Boschen Day. There was a holiday and a Farewell Parade for Lieut.-Colonel J. A. J. Read, D.S.O., M.C., on which the Colours were carried. Lieut.-Colonel R. A. St G. Martin, M.B.E., assumed command of the Regiment.

November 14th—Private Barnard S., of Headquarter Company, came third in the Three Mile event at the Cyprus District Athletics Meeting.

November 16th—Captain A. S. Payne assumed command of Headquarter Company.

November 18th—Major P. R. Hayter, M.B.E., M.C., was promoted Brevet Lieut.-Colonel with effect from 1st July 1957.

November 19th—In an operation in Limassol by Letter 'A' Company, a wanted terrorist was arrested.

November 21st—An operation started in the area Yerasa-Palodhia which resulted in the capture of two members of a terrorist mountain gang and the finding of their hides. One of the hides was completely furnished and contained all their personal kit.

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November 24th—Letter 'B' Company cordoned and searched Phasoula.

November 27th—Captain M. R. Pennell appointed Adjutant.

November 28th —A patrol of Buglers found a hide under construction.
Following various terrorist outrages, restrictions were again imposed on Servicemen. These included an armed escort per vehicle, and Other Ranks to move in fours when off duty.

December 2nd—After violent rain, the electrical system within the camp became faulty, and 2nd Lieut. A. J. Bellaire, Royal Fusiliers, was electrocuted.
A draft of 43 Other Ranks arrived and was posted to Letter 'D' Company.

December 4th—The Regiment adopted full Battle Dress. Letter 'C' Company beat Letter 'B' Company in the first round of the Inter-Company Boxing Competition.

December 9th—The UNO debate on Cyprus started.
Headquarter Company 'A' Team won the Inter-Company Cross Country Race.

December 10th—An examination for the Army 3rd Class Certificate of Education was held.

December 11th—H.M.S. *Diana*, a Daring class destroyer, was affiliated to the Regiment during her stay off Cyprus.
A patrol from Support Company found a terrorist hide under construction.

December 12th—Letter 'A' Company beat Headquarter Company in the Inter-Company Novices Boxing Competition.

December 13th—Support Company beat Letter 'C' Company in the Inter-Company Novices Boxing Competition.

December 16th—Support Company beat Letter 'A' Company in the final of the Inter-Company Novices Boxing Competition.

December 23rd—First performance of Letter 'A' Company's Pantomime was given in the dining-hall.

December 25th—Christmas Dinner for Letter 'A' and Letter 'D' Companies, Support Company, and half of Headquarter Company.

December 27th—Christmas Dinner for Letter 'B' and Letter 'C' Companies, and the remainder of Headquarter Company.

December 28th—A draft of 28 Other Ranks arrived by air from England and was posted to Letter 'D' Company.
Second performance of Letter 'A' Company's Pantomime.

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FIRST BATTALION LETTER

Dear Editor,

We are still in Limassol, despite troubles in Aden, unrest in the Persian Gulf Protectorates, subversion in Syria, and a general state of fuss and palaver throughout the Middle East. And on the whole I think the majority of the Regiment is enjoying it.

Our camp is the same that we took over from the Royal Norfolk Regiment when we first came down here from Nicosia in November 1956. Although we all still sleep in tents, many improvements have been made, thanks to the efforts of the Quartermaster with the local D.C.R.E., and whereas there were only two buildings when we first came here, we now have hutted messes, canteen, M.I. room, lecture room and Battalion Headquarters offices. The camp is well situated, for we are on rock, so that when the winter rains come we are not completely bogged down, as most of the water goes down the hill to Limassol. We have the most glorious view of the town and bay. The nostalgics have every opportunity of seeing the ships come and go.

Earlier in the year, as soon as we had heard that we were going to remain in the Middle East for a full three-year tour, the families began to arrive, and they have been arriving ever since. Near our camp there is a 'families' village' called Berengaria. It was built a few years ago, and looks, from the outside, rather like a D.P. camp, being well surrounded with barbed wire because of the terrorists. But the houses are very reasonable inside. Only those with sufficient points to qualify for a quarter, however, are fortunate enough to live in Berengaria. The majority of those who are married live in little Cypriot bungalows in the town, for which we pay enormous rents. But the Local Overseas Allowance is generous, and nobody can claim genuinely to be hard-up.

Until March we were entirely occupied with operations against the terrorists, but in March, when Archbishop Makarios was released from the Seychelles, active terrorism stopped, and since then we have been able to get down to a little training and a little relaxation. But the machinery, to deal with EOKA, the terrorist organization, has been kept fully geared and we have had our minor operations and various alarms and excursions throughout the year. These have been dealt with very fully elsewhere in this Chronicle, and I will not go into them in detail here.

The Commanding Officer still 'wears two hats'. In other words, he commands the Regiment and is also the Internal Security Area Commander of Limassol Area. Limassol area includes the town and port of Limassol and also an interesting area measuring about 32 miles long by 14 wide, and all the units in it, for internal security purposes. The units are legion, and include G.H.Q. M.E.L.F. at Episkopi and also the important R.A.F. Station at Akrotiri.

The Headquarters of the Internal Security Area is in a large house (hired to the War Department by its Cypriot owner for £200 a month. He has already been paid the price of the whole house in this way.) Here the Commissioner, the Army and the Police control and co-ordinate the operations against the terrorists. On the Military side the staff consists of Mark Pennell, the Staff Officer (Operations), and Charles Simmons, the Intelligence Officer. The latter succeeded Bob Pascoe, who went home to be Adjutant of the 4th Battalion in September. Also there is a subaltern on the staff, who seems to spend a large amount of his time answering stupid questions on the telephone—anything from 'Is the town in bounds to-day?' to 'Can you provide me with a baby-sitter to-night?'

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Throughout the year, 'A', 'B', 'C' and Support Companies (Support Company is such in name alone; it is in effect a rifle company) have had to take it in turn to carry out various duties. One Company is completely taken up with providing guards at police stations in the town and surrounding villages. A second supplies a platoon at the Internal Security Headquarters at 'Milpol' and an immediate readiness platoon in, usually known as the Stand-by Platoon, has its transport and wireless with it all the time, and sleeps fully dressed. Its role is to be in Limassol town (four miles away) within 15 minutes from when the bugler sounds the alarm. A third company is called the Reserve Company, and in addition to finding three guards at police stations, it searches all ships that come into Limassol port (for arms, wanted persons, etc.) and provides all Regimental Duties, working parties, and fatigues. The fourth Company is the Operations Company. It is not taken for any guards or duties at all (even its Officers are not made Orderly Officer) and is available to the Area Commander for all cordons, searches, and similar operations. The four companies change over every fortnight, so that they take it in turns to carry out each role. I should mention here that the M.M.G. Platoon of Support Company (David Wood's Company) is now a Ferret platoon. It has four Ferrets (small armoured cars mounting a Browning machine gun) and also four Landrovers. It spends most of its life patrolling the area and carrying out road blocks and snap searches.

When we first came to our camp it was called 'Thorny Camp'. We disliked this name, and could see no reason for it. Thorny is not the name of a place as far as we know, and there are no thorns in the camp, only carab trees. It certainly has no connection with the Regiment. After much arguing with H.Q. Cyprus District and H.Q. Polemidhia Sub District we finally managed to get the name changed, and it is now called Buckingham Camp. The camp we had occupied in Nicosia in 1956 was called Oxford Camp, so the new name seemed appropriate.

Fred Payne, who used to be Transport Officer but now commands Headquarter Company, got very keen about the gate during August, and converted our rather shabby and narrow entrance into a swell affair called the Buckingham Gate. He and members of the M.T. Platoon, two of whom are stonemasons by trade, managed to 'acquire' some good stone of Cotswold-like appearance, and built it in their spare time.

Through this gateway we have been able to send, during the summer months, lorry-loads of soldiers each afternoon to swim. There are many attractive little bays and coves along this coast, and of course the Mediterranean is warm and inviting. Many soldiers, who could not swim before, are now swimming well, and all are very sunburnt.

We were delighted to be visited by the Colonel of the Regiment in April. He stayed a week with us, living in the Commanding Officer's house. During his stay he spent two days visiting our guards and detachments, another at G.H.Q. and also the R.A.F. Station at Akrotiri, and he visited Nicosia, staying at Government House. He had dinner in the Mess and in the Sergeants' Mess, and a large cocktail party was given for him by Colonel and Mrs Read. I think he enjoyed his visit, which was certainly a great joy to the Regiment.

We have had a number of visitors during the year. The Secretary of State for War, Mr Hare, came in January, accompanied by a large retinue, and looked round the camp, talking to soldiers as he came across them. He and his party stayed about an hour.

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The Adjutant-General, Sir Charles Loewen, came in April. He had a very tight programme, and was only able to stay for three quarters of an hour, which was a pity, for we enjoyed his sense of humour and direct speaking. The Commander-in-Chief, Middle East, General Sir Geoffrey Bourne, paid us a visit in May and stayed to lunch, and has been more recently to say good-bye. We have frequently seen Major-General Kendrew, the Director of Operations and General Officer Commanding Cyprus District. Major-General Firbank, the Director of Infantry, came and visited us one Sunday in September. It was a pleasure to entertain him as a Light Infantry General, and he stayed to lunch with us in the Mess. His visit was of particular interest, for he gave us quite a lot of the inside story of the reorganization of the Army, especially as far as the Infantry is concerned.

Another welcome visitor was Major-General Jones. In early December he came to visit Cyprus as Vice-Adjutant General, but he came to have dinner with us as a previous Brigade Commander in Salonika, and as Edward's father.

We have twice had the honour of a visit by His Excellency the Governor, Field Marshal Sir John Harding. He came once in March, and again at the end of October, to say good-bye before leaving for England on his retirement in November. On the latter occasion we mounted a full Guard of Honour for him, with 96 men and the Queen's Colour on parade. Luckily we still have the Band with us, so we were able to have the music for the Royal Salutes and the inspection. This was his farewell visit to all the Security Forces in this part of the island, so we had many varied officers, soldiers, sailors, and airmen in camp, who heard his farewell talk. When he left camp in his helicopter the Band played 'Light Infantry' and the Somerset Light Infantry's Regimental March for him, and the Buglers finally sounded him off with the 'Light Division Assembly'.

On 13th June we celebrated the Queen's Birthday Parade with a large combined parade on the nearby sports fields. Detachments on the parade were found from the Royal Navy, Sappers, R.A.S.C., R.E.M.E., R.A.F. Regiment, Cyprus Police, and ourselves in the centre, with Colour Party, and Band and Bugles. We stood some distance in rear of the main parade, so that our Light Infantry Drill should not interfere with anybody else. After the first Royal Salute, the Regimental detachment (90 strong) fired a *feu de joie*, and after everybody else had marched past the Commissioner we rounded off the parade by going past at the double, in column of route.

We decided that we could not allow the Centenary of the Storming of the Cashmere Gate to go by without making some sort of show in its honour. In the camp next door to us is 37 Field Engineer Regiment, and we managed to persuade them to produce some Sappers to take part, and also to produce some floodlights, with which they lit up the sports ground. A replica of the Cashmere Gate had been built by the Regimental Pioneers, out of wood and hessian. The ceremonial sounding of Retreat was combined with a short representation of what had happened one hundred years ago that day. All the thousand spectators thought it a great success.

As is usual we have had many departures and many new arrivals. Mike Harbottle went off in March to become G.S.O. 1 of the 43rd Wessex Division (T.A.) at Taunton. We hope he has a good season's cricket. Charles Mason took over from him as Second in Command.

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Riley Workman also left in March, to go to the War Office, and David Wood arrived to take over Support Company from him. Julian Taylor left us shortly afterwards, to go to Cowley and train recruits, and John Leach went a little later, having finished his Short Service engagement; we were sorry he did not decide to prolong this.

Gerald Stacey came back from the Navy in July, where he had been an air liaison officer. He has taken over Letter 'D' Company from Eric Leask, who went off to the Malay Regiment. Letter 'D' Company is the cadre company, which runs all the N.C.O's Cadres and continuation training for the drafts. Gerald hit the highlights on 2nd November by marrying Patricia Chilton. The wedding reception in the Mess was a wonderful Regimental party.

Jack Howland arrived in September, having previously been Regimental Serjeant-Major of the 4th Battalion, and been granted a Quartermaster's Commission. We now have two Quartermasters in the Regiment; Jack Howland is the second one, and is in charge of the transport.

It is a great pleasure to have Pat Patterson back in the Regiment after an absence of five years. He has become the Regimental Paymaster, and as such has had to transfer to the Royal Army Pay Corps, but from his uniform you would not believe it. Christopher Hinton arrived back in November. He took charge at Milpol, the Internal Security Headquarters, and Mark Pennell became Adjutant instead of Bill Chevis, who goes to the next Staff College Course with Ian Greenlees. They both left at the end of the year.

We also have a new Regimental Serjeant-Major. R.S.M. Gilbey retired in September after twenty-five years service, and we now have R.S.M. E. G. Field, B.E.M. He is well known in the Regiment, having been Orderly Room Serjeant from March 1946 until 1951. He was then O.R.Q.M.S. at Cowley Barracks until 1955 when he rejoined the Regiment in Germany as Regimental Quartermaster Serjeant. He went home in April for a short spell as Regimental Serjeant-Major at Cowley, but was back here again in October.

We were all sorry to say farewell to Colonel Tony Read and Sheila in November, but happily he has been promoted Brigadier, and now commands 3 Independent Infantry Brigade in Nicosia. Happily also for us he was relieved by Colonel Andy Martin, who arrived by air with wife and son on 1st November.

The training that we have managed to do has naturally been very closely tied up with our Internal Security role. Charles Mason borrowed a house down by the docks, that was due for demolition, and ran a course on house-searching. Together with Charles Simmons and the Intelligence Section, he organized a series of treasure hunts, the 'prizes' being men, weapons, and ammunition, and secret trap doors, which the Intelligence Section constructed with real ingenuity. A competition between company teams was won by Headquarter Company, with Letter 'B' Company second. A team of U.K. police Serjeants produced results which were surprisingly similar to those of the soldiers.

Helicopter training is always popular. As many of the Regiment as we can accommodate do this, if possible at least twice before going on an actual helicopter operation. At the moment this is considered Regimentally as one of the qualifications for extra 'stars'—and more pay. Some rather more orthodox training is necessary because we have been re-equipped with Sterling sub-machine guns instead of Sten guns.

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The Transport Platoon surprised most people (perhaps even themselves) by coming first and third in the Regimental Drill Competition, with the Buglers second, and the Signal Platoon fourth. It was some while before Serjeant-Major Clarke descended to talking to mere rifle Company Serjeant-Majors again.

Amongst other peculiar happenings, Oliver Makower's walk to Nicosia stands out, and was duly recorded in the local newspapers. This he did in fifteen hours and twenty minutes, covering a distance of fifty-four miles. It would be nice to record that he was inspired by the noble example of the Light Division, but the truth is that he did it for a bet of a month's pay.

Unhappily we must record the deaths of Bandsman Neill in a motor accident, and of Private French of Letter 'A' Company, who died after an attack of peritonitis. Both were buried in the Military Cemetery at Nicosia. Their families have the sympathy of the Regiment.

Just before the new Governor arrived in the island, Dennis Fox went to Nicosia to become his M.A., thus doubling the Regimental strength at Government House. He has paid two flying visits to Limassol recently, but has not had time to report any more about his job than that it involves indecently long hours of work.

Our liaison with the Royal Navy has been improved by having ships affiliated to us while they have been based on Limassol. Our soldiers have been to sea, and the local population has been more than surprised to see sailors taking part in our road blocks and other operations. In less martial vein we have had all forms of games and some very late parties with the Navy, who seemed to enjoy the change as much as we did.

The biggest change in the Infantry since 1881 has been more kind to us than to many other regiments. Far from being upset by any major upheaval, we rejoin associates of Peninsular days, though not without regret at leaving the Light Infantry Brigade. Several messages occasioned by this change are reproduced elsewhere in this Chronicle. Many points still remain to be settled, and it would be premature to make any comment on what changes are likely to affect the title, dress, or custom of the Regiment. However, we shall retain our Colours, and are in the process of arranging to get the ten new Battle Honours placed on the Queen's Colour.

I can think of no better way of finishing this letter than by mentioning the honours that the Regiment received in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for services on operations against the terrorists in 1956. Private Brookes of Letter 'A' Company was awarded the Commander-in-Chief's Commendation for excellent service. Charles Mason was mentioned in despatches, as was Serjeant-Major Abbott, of Letter 'B' Company. And Steve Cox, the Quartermaster, was awarded a very well deserved M.B.E,

That has, I hope, covered the main points for 1957. Readers will already have had enough of this letter, and will want to get on with the rest of the Chronicle.

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OPERATIONS IN CYPRUS 1956-57
BY BRIGADIER J. A. J. READ, D.S.O., O.B.E., M. C.

I FEEL that some account of the Regiment's activities against EOKA terrorists is necessary for the historical record. I therefore make no apologies for the dry militarism of the following article.

The Regiment came home from B.A.O.R. in July 1956, under orders to sail for Hong Kong on 30th August. On 1st August I received a signal to the effect that we would sail for Cyprus on 10th August, which we did. We were very under-strength. We had run down in Germany, and on arrival in Hong Kong we were due to work on what the War Office likes to call under-implemented Lower Establishment, which, being interpreted, meant that we were going to be very short of men. We had a big draft at Oxford which was due to sail with us on 30th August. They were not ready to sail on 10th August. Battalions in Cyprus on Internal Security duties worked on a special over-implemented establishment. On our arrival in the island we were over 200 short, but of course no allowance was made for that in the duties that were thrust upon us. It took six months for the Regiment to reach its proper strength; for the Commanding Officer and all Company Commanders, those six months were a terrible headache, with everyone wracking their brains for some new method to economize on manpower.

Much has been written of the pros and cons of the political situation in Cyprus; I am in no position to digress on that, but it is necessary to describe what we found on our arrival.

EOKA, the terrorist organization, was running well, headed by the redoubtable Colonel Grivas, He controlled affairs from the hills, working through his subordinate leaders in each district. He had well-organized mountain groups, who specialized in ambushes and attacks on police stations, and very occasionally, military camps. Each town had its murder group, its bomb group, its surveillance group and its pamphlet group. The aim of terrorism at this time was twofold; firstly to commit such murders of soldiers and British civilians that would keep the name of EOKA fairly prominent in the headlines of the world press; secondly to terrorize the local populace to such an extent that the civilian population would not inform against the terrorists, and would give them such help as they required in the way of food and shelter. Many unfortunate Cypriots died at the hands of EOKA in their 'death to traitors' campaign.

Prior to the emergency, a good deal of Cypriotization had taken place in all government departments. Police, Customs, airport, Secretariat, Forestry, Ports and Telegraphs, etc. were all largely manned by Cypriots, and Greek Cypriots at that. When the 'Emergency' started it was found that a very large proportion of these were well and truly infected by EOKA, and those that were not EOKA were too frightened to be against it. The unreliability of Greek Cypriots in the Police Force was, of course, a major obstacle to the regaining of control by the Security Forces. There was, before the Emergency, no Special Branch in the Cyprus Police. Since the Emergency, a good number of British police, sergeants and officers, had been seconded to the island; but they, good policemen though they were, had no knowledge of local languages, customs, or way of life.

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The Regiment had the good fortune to arrive during a truce that had been declared by EOKA. Sufficient has been written elsewhere about the many administrative difficulties we encountered on arrival; but we should have found life most unusually difficult if we had been plunged into hostilities at once. We were more than grateful for the two weeks peace we were granted, which gave us an opportunity to find our way about.

The rules of life were strict. On duty, everybody went about armed and escorted. Every vehicle had an escort. Officers were allowed out in plain clothes in pairs, armed. Soldiers were allowed out in uniform, in fours, of which two had to be armed. All roads were two vehicle roads at night; only the main roads were single roads by day. All camps were wired in, and tightly guarded. Security restrictions on allowing sanitary men, N.A.A.F.I. employees, contractors into camps were strict. The placing of time bombs in canteens by terrorists had proved unpleasantly successful.

As can be imagined, every British civilian department in Nicosia expected the Army to provide them with a guard. Very good cases were made out proving that their particular installation was of vital importance to the security forces effort. We very soon found ourselves tied down to a staggering number of static guards, all very necessary, but all using up our very depleted manpower at an appalling rate. Owing to the non-reliability of the Cyprus Police, all Police Stations that contained arms had to be underpinned by military guards. This was a very necessary duty, as the terrorists had several times improved their arms and ammunition situation by successful coups against country stations, usually aided by non-resistance from the Police. These were popular guards with the soldiers. A corporal, lance-corporal and three or four men would retire to a country police station for a week. We bought them Primus stoves, gave them compo rations, which they augmented themselves by buying eggs and local fruit and vegetables, and let them get on with it. These guards were a considerable strain on the nerves of the Commanding Officer. Our junior non-commissioned officers were very young and inexperienced, and their strengths and weaknesses were quickly exposed. We guarded many such police stations around Nicosia.

Nicosia Central Prison was another vulnerable point. In addition to the normal non-political crooks, of which Cyprus has its fair proportion, all those convicted of security offences were housed there. The Cypriot warder service was no more trustworthy than the police, and so the prison had to be guarded, to prevent any mass break-outs or any attempts at rescue by EOKA. As a guard this virtually took up a company, requiring two officers, two Serjeants, four corporals and over thirty men. The soldiers lived in appalling squalor, worse than the convicted prisoners. It was not a very popular guard.

About five miles outside Nicosia, the Government Isolation Hospital had been hurriedly turned into a Detention Camp, for political offenders detained under the Emergency Regulations. Once again the loyalty of the local warder service was not above suspicion, and the camp had to be guarded by the long-suffering military. In size, it was similar to the guard on the Central Prison, and took the best part of a company. Conditions for the soldiers were not too bad; at any rate they had shower baths, which we did not possess in our own camp.

Other guards which fell to our lot included the Cyprus Broadcasting Station, the Judges' Lodgings, the Government Secretariat, and GHQ, M.E.L.F.; this latter caused many bitter comments, as GHQ alleged that their clerks were too hard worked to stand guard at nights.

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When it was pointed out that my soldiers, including clerks and drivers, were averaging one night in three in bed, the guard was abandoned.

In addition to these wearisome guard duties, we did a good deal of active patrolling. The town was divided into sectors, of which we had one, for which we were responsible for constantly patrolling. This was done by means of 'Whirlwinds', which were patrols of any size, from a section to a company, descending on a bit of our sector, and 'doing' it thoroughly. To 'do' an area (a common Internal Security and police term) means that you check all vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, moving in that area, making them prove their identity and, if Greek Cypriots, searching them and their vehicles thoroughly for illegal arms, explosives and or correspondence. You also search ditches, waste land, and empty houses for bombs and arms caches.

Nicosia had two battalions as its permanent garrison, ourselves and the South Staffords. One battalion did the worst of the guard duties, including the Central Prison and the Detention Camp, whilst the other battalion carried out the duties of 'Internal Security' battalion, which involved it in having a Stand By Company at 15 minutes' notice to deal with any emergency, a second company at 30 minutes' notice, and one company out in the country areas, dominating the neighbouring area by patrols, checks, road blocks, and small cordons and searches. Battalions changed roles monthly.

We had our successes and our failures. Nothing spectacular either way, and I do not propose to enumerate them here. I think the description of the many chores that fell to our lot gives an indication of the life we led, and the very severe strain that was placed on manpower. It must be remembered that our own camp had to be guarded against surprise attack, and that took two full-rank non-commissioned officers and sixteen men every night. Every vehicle that went out of camp by day had to have an escort, and that takes a lot of men in a day. Every vehicle that went out at night, such as orderly officers visiting guards, needed not only its own escort, but another vehicle to escort it, also with an armed escort. In addition to all this, we lived in a very rough and ill-equipped camp which needed large working parties to keep it even moderately inhabitable. The Regimental Serjeant-Major had a hellish time producing enough men to peel potatoes daily.

To organize ourselves for this life certain decisions had to be taken. Support Company had to function as a rifle company, and its transport had to go into a common pool. No exemptions from guards were permitted; everyone, drivers, clerks, officers' mess staff, Quartermaster's staff, signallers and band took their turn. Officers, of whom we had plenty, found themselves commanding guards in the most unlikely places. And in the midst of all this, a certain amount of training had to go on, as drafts arrived from Oxford, and as we had the eternal pressing need to produce junior non-commissioned officers. This we did by forming 'D' Company as a training company, whose posted strength consisted of a Company Commander, a Company Serjeant-Major and a storeman. As and when instruction was going on in 'D' Company, other companies produced officer and serjeant instructors on loan. This worked well, as it gave the hard-pressed Serjeants in rifle companies a break from their round of IS duties, and reminded them of their military knowledge. 'D' Company was, in fact, very fully employed, either giving post-depot training to squads of recruits, or running classes for junior non commissioned officers.

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In spite of the heavy call on manpower, when things were really desperate the men appeared. One hot and sleepy afternoon, fifteen detainees smuggled themselves out of the Detention Camp. As soon as their escape was discovered, the hunt was on. I told my Brigadier that I was completely committed, and did not think that I could produce much more than a platoon, at the same time wirelessing back to Mike in camp to produce all he could. In an hour's time he arrived with a company, very ad hoc, cooks, R.E.M.E. fitters, Orderly Room staff, pay clerks, etc.— but a company. We did not catch the escapers.

On another occasions, the police wanted simultaneous raids on all the brothels in Nicosia, of which there are plenty. The bill was for over a hundred men. All rifle companies were committed, and so once again the job fell to 'HQ' Company. The Quartermaster, returning to his lair after lunch, met his staff, to a man, dressed up to the nines, saying 'can't check clothing this afternoon, sir, we've got to do the brothels'.

Any major operation that was mounted in Nicosia was always a strange mixture. No complete battalion could ever be produced, as each battalion inevitably had at least two companies tied up on guards. I commanded three large operations there. My army consisted of:

(a) First Operation

'HQ' Coy and 'C' Coy 1 Oxf. Bucks
2 Coys 1 S. Stafford

(b) Second Operation

'B' and 'C' Coys 1 Oxf. Bucks
(and 'D' Coy, which consisted of 60 recruits who had been on the island a week)
1 Coy 1 K.O.Y.L.I.
1 Coy S. Stafford
2 troops the Blues

(c) Third Operation

'HQ' Coy, 'C' & 'Sp' Coy 1 Oxf. Bucks.
2 Coys 1 Som. L.I.

It all made one very flexible, and was very good training.

In December we moved to Limassol. There we have had a smaller town to contend with but with the added complication that it has a port, through which arms can be, and have been smuggled. We took over from 1 Royal Norfolks, who had allowed themselves to be imposed upon for a staggering number of static guards, and the bill appeared to be two and a half companies on static guards, one company on town stand-by, and one platoon to patrol an area of four hundred square miles, an area which ran up into the hills and was fairly full of EOKA. This we got adjusted, and for the last six months have had one company only doing guards, with the rest of the battalion fairly mobile, out in the country.

When we first went to Limassol, we came under command of 1 A.G.R.A., who were the Brigade Headquarters running the area. They were soon moved, and we took over control of the area. This has been fun, but meant running virtually a brigade headquarters out of regimental resources. However, Mark Pennell, Bob Pascoe and Serjeant Swain took over from the full staff of 1 A.G.R.A. and have been running it quite happily since.

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We had under command 'B' Squadron of the Blues, with whom we formed a most happy association, and who impressed us all with their efficiency, and sensible practical approach to all problems, and also with their very high standard of roadworthiness of vehicles.

We have done many operations of all sorts. Our liaison with the local police has been excellent. I think everyone will join me in paying tribute to our Assistant Chief Constable, Ronnie Rowbottom, of the Southport police. He was a ball of fire, and gave us the greatest help, and we have had a good deal of success. I could write a long paper on the subject of police/military co-operation on Internal Security duties. It is of paramount importance, and it is not always easy to achieve. It is surprising, to the uninitiated, how often police and army can get slightly out of step on an operation, due to different training, a different approach, and very often, a slightly different aim. However, it is sufficient to say that Ronnie Rowbottom was a very thorough co-operator, and he and I made sure that our respective forces worked and planned, at all levels, in the closest possible harmony.

The Limassol operations have been written up by Mark Pennell in another article in this CHRONICLE, so I will not mention them in detail here.

Life is very varied and full of interest. After a year in Cyprus, there is no doubt that we are very fit and very flexible. We are used to doing things at very short notice, and the whole machine is geared to that. We have lost some military skills—we have not dug a slit trench or camouflaged a vehicle. But we have learned other skills, mostly police ones, but useful for all that, and we are very independent. Sections, platoons, companies, are used to being sent off on their own and getting on with the job. Soldiers are alert and used to fending for themselves.

We have not caught Grivas yet, but we are still trying.

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THE VIEW FROM LIMASSOL 1956-57
BY CAPTAIN M. R. PENNELL

WHEN the Regiment moved to Limassol at the end of 1956, 'A' Company, as was fitting, led the way, and took up residence as stand-by company for the town, living in Milpol. This horrible contraction is used to denote the joint military and police headquarters in each of the eight Districts of the island, and Milpol is the centre for all Internal Security business. At the time we didn't realize how largely Milpol was to enter into our Limassol existence.

Very shortly after the main body of the Regiment arrived in Polemidhia, what became known as the 'December arrests' took place. Nightly, small parties of the Regiment, chiefly from Support Company, reinforced the police snatch parties and helped to arrest some forty-two local EOKA members. Towards midnight the various elements assembled—a Land Rover full of soldiers to guard the exits of the building where an arrest was to be made, and then to watch over the house until morning, and search it in daylight for documents and weapons; uniformed policemen to make the arrests; members of the Special Branch who had obtained the information; and an informer—'Charlie Boy' to the police—who had seen the light and was prepared to point out where his fellow EOKA members lived.

In turn each little party dashed off into the night, the Land Rover trying hard to keep up with the police car, which was invariably driven with a fervour which displayed complete disregard for the laws of the land, and not much for those of chance. When the informer, from behind a scarf which covered his face, pointed out a house, everything screamed to a stop. The soldiers surrounded the building. The police hammered on the door, shouting 'Open in the name of the Queen'. And as often as not, a man would come to the door and say 'Wrong house. Terrorists live three doors farther on.' Eventually the arrest would be made, but it is always the wrong house first, in Cyprus.

'Charlie Boy' was accommodated by 'A' Company in Milpol, so that he would be safe from the attentions of his former friends while he was giving information. During the night he did his stuff, and during the day he was happily employed in assembling 'Wanted Men' booklets in the Company Office. His only real disappointment was that he was not rated sufficiently highly for his own photograph to be included.

Over the turn of the year, major efforts in the town died down, and companies took part in operations directed against the mountain villages.

Sometimes we helped in the bigger jobs, generally mounted by 3 Independent Infantry Brigade, and these might last a fortnight. Sometimes a smaller affair would be laid on by 1 A.G.R.A., our immediate masters, who ruled from the top floor of Milpol. The normal form was to cordon the village before first light, impose a house curfew, collect and screen all the male inhabitants, and make a house search of the village.

New Year's Day was the occasion of one of these operations, at Pakhna, some twenty miles away in the mountains. The distance involved and the quality of the roads made it necessary for the cordoning party to leave soon after midnight, if it was to be in position before dawn. There are other ways of welcoming in the New Year. However, on this occasion, hardly had the cordon parties got into position when someone tried to break through from inside, and without much difficulty the Regiment claimed its first victim from the 'Picture List' of wanted men.

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On occasion the cordon parties could be dropped into position by helicopter. Apart from its military value, this always has a great effect on the villagers concerned, who seem to prize highly this spectacular form of attention. Equally useful, and almost as versatile, were the armoured cars of The Blues, who had both speed and skill on their side, and who never failed to be in the right place, at the right time, and with the right number of bottles and openers.

If the information seemed to warrant it, the search of a village might take several days, and was carried out with a fine tooth comb. Every stick of furniture would be removed from a house, floors prodded, flagstones lifted, tiles removed from the roof. Mike Harbottle went to endless trouble to dismantle Kellaki, and was only enticed away from the village by an urgent message over the wireless from the police, asking him to supper with the Assistant Chief Constable. But without direct and exact information it is all too easy to miss a 'hide', even during an intensive search.

Only when some of the captured terrorists were persuaded to give information did the searches of villages in the hills produce much in the way of hides. These were well concealed, examples being an occupied hidden room underneath a lighted fire in a fireplace; and an entrance to a hide covered by a workable bidet in the bathroom. This latter was a town hide, of course. Let no one run away with the idea that they have heard of a bathroom in a Cypriot village.

In February the Headquarters of 1 A.G.R.A. departed to Paphos, and the Commanding Officer became IS Area Commander in Limassol. To cope with some three hundred and eighty square miles of real estate, the total forces available to him were the Regiment with its numerous guard commitments, and a squadron of The Blues, The running of Milpol devolved *on* the Regiment, and we moved upstairs, with the result that the Colonel was soon furiously sending letters to himself.

One of the new responsibilities of the Regiment became the safety of nine hundred families living in Limassol. The husbands were organized to do Home Guard patrols each night, because no troops could be spared. Headquarter Company and the Band spent almost as much time patrolling the town by day as they did doing their own jobs. Somehow, the machine never quite broke down.

As the Regiment was now so closely involved in the running of the Internal Security Area, it may not be out of place to say a word about the organization. The island is divided into eight IS Areas, corresponding with the Administrative Districts. The original number of Districts had to be increased to make the terrorist-haunted mountain areas into an operational and administrative unity, rather than a junction point of several Districts. For IS purposes, the District Security Committee is omnipotent, and answerable to the Governor. It consists of the Commissioner, the Area Commander, and the Assistant Chief Constable. Everyone in Limassol District is under command for Internal Security purposes, and this includes HQ Polemidhia Sub-District, which in turn commands us for administrative purposes, and General Headquarters at Episkopi, with its multitudes of red hats. It is a situation calculated to confuse anyone not mentally adjusted to Cyprus.

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In Limassol the D.S.C. has regular meetings at Milpol each Friday, and irregular ones when and where necessary, generally in the Colonel's bedroom during cocktail parties. The A.C.C. would propose a curfew on the Town, the Area Commander would suggest another drink, and the Commissioner would agree with the ideas of both.

Every morning at nine o'clock the Colonel and the Assistant Chief Constable met, with representatives from any units under command, and Intelligence and Special Branch officers. The situation report, sent out to the whole island from the Operations Room at Nicosia, is discussed, and plans are made. In the early part of the year Limassol was frequently 'top of the league' on the situation report, but during the summer there was often little to report.

As spring advanced the pattern of searches changed. Too many weapons had been found in houses for it to be a habit-forming vice to hide an armoury indoors. (For a time such an offence carried the death penalty.) At the end of a hot Sunday spent in an unrewarding search of Ypsonas, one fed-up seeker gave a low stone wall some distance from any building a hearty push of frustration. Within twenty minutes half a dozen bombs, a shotgun, and a considerable quantity of ammunition had been found. A later and even more successful search of the walls of Ayia Phyla confirmed the pattern, and fired the imagination of the Commanding Officer and the Assistant Chief Constable. Subsequent visits to both villages soon resulted in Ypsonas and Ayia Phyla taking on a strong resemblance to Hiroshima, but the recoveries in ammunition and weapons more than excused the long string of claims that later came in from querulous owners. As it happened, we had unearthed the main bomb stores for Limassol, kept in these villages, which were a convenient distance out of town on the main approaches. After a visit to Ayia Phyla in early March, we were able to report for the first time this year that no bombs had been thrown in Limassol for a week.

At Ayia Phyla the mine dogs had one of their rare positive successes. We have four dogs, two for tracking, and two for locating mines and arms recovery. Although the dogs are impressive in set-piece demonstrations of their work, there is a practical disadvantage in not being able to cross-question the animal about what it is doing. A human cannot tell whether the dog is following a wanted man or an interesting bitch. A mine dog is trained to sit down when it has located something. Without any training at all it sits down when it is tired. Amongst the many written instructions for the handling of dogs is one which says that transport should be provided so that the dog arrives as fresh as possible at the scene of action, and that before starting work it should be offered a drink. There seems to be something to be said for a dog's life after all.

The declaration of a truce by EOKA on 14th March, and the release of Archbishop Makarios on the 28th, meant a relaxing of numerous restrictions, and a reduction of many commitments. The wild excitement and continuous series of processions which marked the Ethnarch's departure from the Seychelles produced their own problems, and necessitated some measure of repression to maintain law and order, but there was nothing vicious in the spontaneous displays of enthusiasm. Processions in the town were easily diverted from the Turkish quarter, and the only request for assistance from the villages was a plaintive cry from a guard commander at an outlying police station, who wanted to know what to do to stop all the women in the village kissing his sentries. The general lessening of tension indicated that the local population was wholeheartedly glad to see the end of violence.

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Besides conducting operations on land, and occasionally coming down from the air, we found ourselves at sea, literally as well as in the usual fashion. After a report that six people, including a wanted man, were in Limassol trying to hire a boat to leave the island, an intensive coastal watch was kept for about four days. Anthony Askew, with an enormous revolver of his own and a wireless set sat in the middle of a small bush on the shore in the suspected area. The help of a nearby destroyer was enlisted, until Maritime Headquarters objected to mere 'Pongoes' moving Her Majesty's vessels around. After that we used an air-sea rescue launch, through the good offices of the R.A.F., and Brian Balls and a would-be boarding party lurked off the coast, playing with the radar. The only real result was a column in the *Daily Telegraph*, complete with map, describing the precautions taken 'to stop Grivas escaping'.

Soon after this we were deprived of our squadron of The Blues, which reverted to Nicosia. In exchange a battery of 16 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment (in an infantry role) at Episkopi came under command, and we were given four 'Ferret' armoured cars, with which the machine-gun platoon undertook the country patrols which had previously been the responsibility of the cavalry.

With the absence of acts of violence, PEKA, the political wing of EOKA, concentrated on propaganda. Leaflets and banners appeared all too frequently in the town, but little spectacular happened until the beginning of June.

It is now time to introduce Demos Hadji Miltis, who is to us as the proverbial red rag is to the bull, only more so. Demos was amongst those who were due to be brought in, in the December arrests, as probably being connected with EOKA. But he disappeared three days before the police visited his home. Later interrogation of others illuminated him as the leading member of EOKA in Limassol town. Every subsequent reference to him increased his apparent importance, and the Grivas Diaries and other documents made it clear that he was definitely of the elite of EOKA, closely in touch with Grivas, and capable of running the whole organization. He was now numbered amongst those with a price on their heads. Efforts to discover him were intensified. 'Demos for Easter' became the cry, modified in time to 'Demos for Whitusn'. In April there was an unconfirmed report that he had ordered a hide to be made in Prastio. Typically, there are no fewer than five villages called Prastio in Cyprus, three of them within reasonable distance of Limassol. We waited. In the middle of May a night patrol from 16 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment had its suspicions aroused about a house in one of the nearby Prastios, where the light was on at two o'clock in the morning. Investigating this the patrol fired on two men running from the house, but scored no hits and were unable to follow up. Three days later, a police source reported that some wanted men were living with the priest in the same Prastio. All the indications were that that village needed a little attention.

The professional 'cloak and dagger' boys were brought in, and on the night of 1st June they went into the village, pretending to be EOKA members trying to contact the village group. Bob Pascoe went along too. Things didn't turn out quite as planned, and a gun battle ensued, during which the officer in charge of the 'cloak and dagger' experts was severely wounded. Two men were arrested a little later, and subsequently produced information of a helpful nature. One of them turned out to be the village group leader.

'B' and 'C' Companies cordoned Prastio, and began a search. It became obvious from the screening of the inhabitants that certain persons had left Prastio in between the gun battle and the imposition of the cordon. Later information indicated that one of these was Demos.

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There were further arrests.

Reports of places where Demos might be hiding led to our being lent the 1st Battalion The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, and 'B' Squadron of The Blues, to search the villages in the north-west of the District, while the Regiment did some searching nearer Limassol. The results of further interrogation of those arrested in Prastio showed that there was a close connection between that village and Pakhna, to the north. 45 Commando, Royal Marines, was brought in from the Troodos area to do that search, where eleven arrests were made. (For variety, the marines produced a naval lieutenant as liaison officer.) 21 Medium Regiment, R.A., came from Paphos to continue the search round Prastio. The gunners struck oil, and discovered the village group's weapons in well concealed hides. In fairness to our own companies, who had already been searching in that area, let it be said that informers led the gunners to all the places where they found anything. In one case a serjeant and two signallers had been maintaining an observation post on top of a deeply buried cache of arms for two days. Twenty-three pistols, a Tommy-gun, a rifle, six shotguns, and a wide variety of bombs, explosives and ammunition were struck off charge to EOKA during that week, in Prastio and elsewhere. Borrowing the 1st Battalion, The Lancashire Fusiliers to search another possible hide-out of Demos, brought the number of units under command to six, The stand-by platoon, under Michael Stanford, acting on the most sketchy information, searched a deep valley, and recovered a complete "production unit" for EOKA leaflets. Though we haven't much use for a typewriter with Greek characters, the brand new duplicator and several reams of paper have helped to sustain the flow of correspondence from Milpol for some time.

The excitement died down and we had another quiet period, silent except for the sounds of two local gangs trying to reduce each other.

Two neighbouring villages have been continuing a feud since 1925, and while they are perfectly welcome to continue the old Cypriot pastime of murdering each other as far as we are concerned, from the point of view of the public, a series of shootings described as 'non-political' sounds very suspicious.

As no information seemed to be coming in, we had to go out and get it. The Commanding Officer and the A.C.C. had already ruined their digestions earlier in the year, being feasted in Turkish villages at odd hours, and conducting suggestive conversations. Now Charles Simmons exercised his well-known propinquity to Cypriot appearance, and with one of his intelligence section two local police interpreters, set out in disguise into the countryside with a couple of donkeys. While the results were not startling, they were useful, and the true identity of the party remained unchallenged. Indeed, on one occasion they were tipped off by locals, that they should not stay around for long, as the Security Forces frequently came that way. Remarkably, the cost of hiring the donkeys could be recovered from the imprest account, but Charles became so attached to them that they were purchased outright.

The paper war continued. A small twelve-year-old, arrested for distributing leaflets, said he did it in order to appear a hero. He was sent home with a note to father, telling him to feed the boy up a bit, so that he made a more convincing hero.

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For a short while there was an epidemic of painting up seditious slogans during the night. So the buglers were mounted on bicycles to ride quietly round the streets, without lights, and swoop on the perpetrators, with the aim of putting the paint and brushes to a better use. In fact we had no captures, but the slogans stopped appearing. Dennis Fox discovered that his figure was not really suited to four hours on a push-bike.

Once or twice anxious families living in the town would telephone to Milpol, asking if violence had re-started, because they had heard a car back-fire, but in the middle of August the calm of the night was shattered by what was unmistakably automatic fire, and plenty of it. Immediate investigation found the Assistant Chief Constable trying to make a 'silent snatch'. Information had been brought to him during the evening that a fugitive was being sheltered in a house on the Limassol by-pass. As the police set out to get the man, the A.C.C. asked about the source that had produced the information. The news that he was both deaf and dumb almost ended the sally there and then, but in fact this strange character was able to lead the police to the room where the suspect was hiding. The latter fled through the window, which was too much for the armed Turkish constables surrounding the house. Not only is it remarkable that when the man was arrested he was unwounded; it must have been a particularly competent guardian angel that kept the skin of the A.C.C. whole. The catch was a good one, being an EOKA prisoner who had escaped from Limassol gaol earlier in the year.

As soon as he had spent the reward, the deaf mute came again and indicated that he knew where Demos was hiding. The wheels were put in motion, and we watched the dawn break several times, but with no result, except a complaint from a small-holder that 'in the early hours of the day many soldiers with green hats came and ate my grapes'. The informer was sentenced shortly afterwards for an indecent assault on a four-year-old girl.

The issue by Security Forces of leaflets purporting to come from EOKA, but with suitably confusing wording, has done much to put the whole business of leafleteering into its proper perspective. A noticeable number of locals now don't bother to read any leaflets, but just kick them into the gutter where they belong.

In September a fresh form of EOKA propaganda appeared, when announcements were made from the audience at cinemas. This meant another commitment for the Regiment, to exercise surveillance, but so far no soldier has complained at being given a free ticket and detailed to go to the cinema, even if he has to see a film in Greek.

All the while routine smaller operations have been in progress. The medium machine-gun platoon in its armoured cars, when not required for major operations, has patrolled the rural areas, with the aim of showing the outlying villages that they are not being neglected, so that they don't get left undisturbed to set up rest and recreation centres for tired terrorists. A spate of intimidation of mukhtars and left-wing personalities occurred in other Districts, so evening patrols have been instituted over the whole area to discourage these local Teddy-boy activities.

Whenever a passenger ship arrives in the port, we have to meet a call for assistance in searching passengers, baggage, and cargo. Ammunition ships need a guard while they are in port, and their cargoes require a special escort when they are landed.

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Beaches where English people go bathing and picnicking require discreet patrolling to discourage any terrorist outrage, without discouraging the picnickers. Likely courier routes have to be controlled by road blocks. Hotels and houses of ill-repute in the town are periodically visited—all strictly in the line of duty.

The beginning of November saw the final changes in the District Security Committee, when Brigadier Tony Read handed over his mantle as Area Commander to the new Commanding Officer. The former Commissioner had left in August, and been replaced from Larnaca. Ronnie Rowbottom, the Assistant Chief Constable, went home soon afterwards, and was relieved by a temporary, and then later by a permanent, Colonial Policeman. Christopher Hinton, fresh from Cowley, took up residence in Milpol.

This coincided with a marked increase in activity. The numbers of cases of intimidation had been rising for some time. There were several murders throughout the island, though none in Limassol District, which could only be attributed to EOKA. Explosions in the Royal Air Force Station at Nicosia, and at the Cyprus Broadcasting Station called for increased vigilance. Then for a change the pendulum swung a bit locally. Early one morning (just as the sun was rising) Letter 'A' Company carried out a search of some of the lodging houses in the town. Edward Jones insists that the fact that one landlady fainted on opening the door to him was due to the well-kept secrecy of the operation. However, in another house a wanted man was identified and arrested.

The following day the Police Mobile Reserve chased and caught another wanted man out in the countryside. He later asked if he could go back under escort and collect his small kit. He was more surprised than the Police to run into the rest of his hill group in broad daylight. After an exchange of shots, described in the newspapers as 'a two hour gun battle near Limassol', a further terrorist was caught. Follow-up operations led to naught, though we were led to some interesting and well-equipped hides, which brought the press photographers buzzing round in no time at all.

Then we were shown the reverse of the medal. A bang and a pall of smoke over Akrotiri showed where two R.A.F. Canberra bombers were destroyed and three other aircraft damaged. The Superintendent of the Special Branch was shot as he drove through Limassol to work at Milpol. Movement in fours and armed escorts became the order of the day. Plans of action were hurriedly unlocked and brought up to date. It seemed unlikely that the new Governor was to be greeted with the era of goodwill for which everyone had hoped.

Just at the moment, Cyprus is making the headlines again. Much of course will depend on the new regime, and the results of the United Nations discussions. But this may be left for the Chronicle of next year. Meanwhile it looks as if the cry will be raised—'Demos for Christmas'.

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**ADDRESS GIVEN TO THE REGIMENT BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL
J. A. J. READ, D.S.O., M.C. ON PARADE AT POLEMIDHIA ON
11th NOVEMBER 1957**

Today, I hand over command of the Regiment, after holding that appointment for nearly three years. I have very mixed feelings. I would not be human if I did not admit that there was a slight feeling of relief—relief at shedding the enormous responsibility that I have carried—the accidental discharge of weapons, the strange disappearance of attractive stores, the traffic accidents, the strange disease you suffer from time to time, of telling the Military Police their fortune—none of these are my worries any more—and the fact that they are not my worries any more makes me very sad—I am going to miss those worries very much—and even more, my wife and I are going to miss that wonderful comradeship which is our heritage in this Regiment—that powerful sense of belonging to a strong, proud, and happy family.

In the last three years we have done many differing things—hard training in Germany, flogging the fields of Sennelager and Soltau at all hours and in all weathers. Many will remember Woodland Camp at Sennelager in February when it never stopped snowing—the ceremonial of the 52nd Bicentenary—Administrative Inspections on the B.A.O.R. style—trooping to Cyprus on a crowded troopship—two charming camps at Strovolos perpetuated by the names of Mason and Sweeney—and an even more charming camp at Kermia where we lived, breathed, ate, drank, swallowed DUST. Guards and more guards all over the island—every sort of IS operation, at every sort of hour, in every sort of weather—the list is endless. But in all these widely divergent military duties, the Regiment has done well—and it has done well because you, every one of you, has always given me the most magnificent support. I have made severe demands on you—often, but you responded as this Regiment has always responded to the call of duty throughout history—quickly, cheerfully, wholeheartedly, and efficiently.

I would like to tell you three stories which have come to my ears. In London last August, I met a certain cavalry general. It was strangely enough in a bar. The general in question was undoubtedly one of the foremost thinkers on armoured warfare. He said to me, quite voluntarily, that this Regiment was the only one that he had ever met that could really do the job required of infantry in an armoured formation, that could do the solid dogged infantry work supremely well, and yet also produce, when required, the dash and initiative required for working with cavalry. That pleased me a lot.

The second is this—a senior Government official from Cyprus, on leave in England, was asked by someone about the army in Cyprus. His reply was that there were lots of soldiers but the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry were head and shoulders above everyone else.

And the third was a feminine matter overheard in Limassol. Some wives (not of this Regiment) were discussing soldiery in general. They all said that the Oxfords were quite outstanding, they always had their hats on properly, and were always smiling.

There is no doubt that our name stands very high—but don't let us be smug about it. Remember what General Paget said to us “We must be constantly striving to maintain and enhance our reputation—it's like riding a bicycle—you either keep moving on or you fall off”.

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And so today, I hand you over to my good friend and comrade, Colonel Martin—I am confident that I am handing over to him an efficient, smooth-running Regiment, with a strong heart, and tremendous spirit and disciplined reserves—you have made it that, every man Jack of you, by the wonderful support you have always given me—and here I must include my thanks to the Regimental wives, who make homes for the more elderly of us, round the world, in difficult circumstances. Their support, and their contribution to the family spirit has been quite invaluable. I know that in the future, and especially in the Green Jackets, you are going to make the name of the Regiment even more renowned.

To every one of you, from the bottom of my heart, I say Thank you, and the very best of luck in the future”.

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Lieut.-Colonel J. A. J. Read, D.S.O., M.C.