



Royal Armoured Corps

British regiment formed 1939, when it consisted of 18 cavalry regiments and all the units of the Royal Tank Corps (later renamed the Royal Tank Regiment).

Most of these cavalry regiments had already been mechanized, and their incorporation in the RAC confirmed the permanent substitution of the internal-combustion engine for the horse.

Conversion of cavalry regiments



The conversion of the 11th Hussars and the 12th Lancers 1928–29 into a 'cavalry armoured car regiment' was the forerunner of wholesale conversion ten years later, when only the Household Cavalry, 1st Royal Dragoons (converted into an armoured car regiment during World War II), and Scots Greys remained horsed cavalry.

The formation of the RAC was announced immediately after the conversion of 1928–29, thus concentrating all the armoured units of the Army into one corps. The ten-year delay was due to constantly changing tank design and tactics, parliamentary refusal to incur heavy military expenditure, and prejudice in favour of the horse.

When the bulk of the cavalry regiments were eventually converted, some were mechanized as light tank regiments and some as 'mechanized divisional cavalry regiments'. The latter performed the role of the old horsed divisional cavalry: primarily that of reconnaissance and holding ground for short periods and, for these duties, they were equipped with light tanks and scout carriers.

After the Dunkirk evacuation 1940 these divisional cavalry regiments were not reformed as such. The fact that no invasion of Britain took place in 1940 enabled the War Office to proceed with mechanization and motorization. The new armoured divisions fought with great success in Libya, Greece, Burma, and Europe. When the RAC was formed the Royal Tank Regiment retained its corps badge.

The badge of the RAC is a mailed fist in a plain circular frame, with a crown at the top and was commonly worn by the recruits during their initial training process consisting of basic drill and small arms training lasted six weeks.

Among other locations in 1954 basic training was given at 67th Training Reg't, Hadrians Camp, Carlisle and all the Cavalry regiments equipped with Daimler A/Cs and Dingos were trained here.

The regiments included the Life Guards, Royal Horse Guards, Kings Dragoon Guards, 1st Royal Dragoons, 11th Hussars, 13/18th Hussars, 15/19th Hussars and 12th Lancers. Other Cavalry regiments equipped with Tanks trained at Catterick.

The staff at the RAC training establishments were drawn from a selection of Regiments, so that each could impart some of its own experience and knowledge.

On completion of basic drill training the badges of their respective regiments were worn, and for the next eight weeks they went on to train either as Drivers, Wireless operators, or Gunners.

Upon successful completion of the training the troopers would be posted out their receiving regiments.



Photo courtesy of Lnc Cpl Anthony Morris.

Photographer: Unknown

Description: Aerial view of the RAC training establishments Hadrian's Camp, Carlisle.

Date: Early 1950's



Photo courtesy of Lnc Cpl Anthony Morris, ex HQ Squadron KDG

Photographer: Anthony Morris

Description: DAC, one of a pair that flanked the main gate to 67th Training Regiment, Hadrians Camp.

Date: 1954



Photo courtesy of Lnc Cpl Anthony Morris, ex HQ Squadron KDG

Photographer: Anthony Morris

Description: 16th Intake, A Morris is at the back row 1st left, The drill instructor is Cpl Mawby of the Royal Horse Guards & The C.O. of Hadrians Camp was Lt Col Turnbull.

Date: August 1954



Photo courtesy of Lnc Cpl Anthony Morris, ex HQ Squadron KDG

Photographer: Anthony Morris

Description: DAC **F207716/80ZR07** and trooper Morris at 67th Training Regiment, Hadrians Camp, having completed basic training and now wearing the cap badge of the KDG. He also wears the two piece denim tank suit and rubber sole boots. Studded ammo boots being unsuitable for those mounting armoured vehicles.

Note the vertical risers on the wings to help inform the driver of where the edges of the car extend.

Date: 1955



Photo courtesy of Lnc Cpl Anthony Morris, ex HQ Squadron KDG

Photographer: Anthony Morris

Description: Further to receiving Advanced Wireless Training at Bovington, A Morris went on to remain at Carlisle as an instructor with the rank of Lance Corporal.

Above, an Austin K9 fwd. Loadstar truck has been converted to simulate the turret of an armoured vehicle to practice radio procedure in the move.

Date Early 1955-56



(Photo sourced from internet – site unknown)

Photographer: Unknown

Description: Daimler Armoured Car of the Royal Armoured Corps, 6th Armoured Division.

Date Unknown but possibly early 1940's



Royal Armoured Corps

1st King's Dragoon Guards

The 1st King's Dragoon Guards was a cavalry regiment in the British Army. The regiment was formed in 1685 as The Queen's Regiment of Horse, named in honour of Queen Mary, consort of King James II. It was renamed The King's Own Regiment of Horse in 1714 in honour of George I.

The regiment attained the title 1st The King's Dragoon Guards in 1751. The regiment served as horse cavalry until 1937 when it was mechanised with light tanks. The regiment became part of the Royal Armoured Corps in 1939



More usually called the KDGs or the "Welsh tankies", In common with most British regular cavalry regiments, men wore side caps and officers wore flat peaked caps rather than RAC black berets.

In November 1939 the KDG were ordered out to the Middle East. On arrival in Egypt they were equipped with South African Marmon Harrington armoured cars (02/41-03/43), with up to 1/3 with captured Italian guns per Troop. and fought subsequently as an armoured car regiment.

They arrived in the desert in time to take part in the last battle of Wavell's campaign at Beda Fomm. The KDG were the first to come into contact with the German Afrika Corps under Rommel, and took part in the siege of Tobruk. They were engaged in all the major Desert battles, including the Relief of Tobruk, Gazala, Bir Hacheim, the defence of the Alamein Line, Alam Halfa, and then the advance to Tripoli, the Tebega Gap, El Hamma, the Wadi Akarit and the final push to Tunis.

From the 06/42 to 03/43 Up to one Daimler armoured car was issued per Troop and from 03/43 to 05/43 2 Humber armoured cars and 1 AEC armoured were issued car per Troop to replace those previously lost in action.

The KDG landed at Salerno in September 1943 and were the first to enter Naples.

They fought on the Volturno, at the battle of Monte Camino, and at the crossing of the Garigliano. During the advance up Italy during 1944, they took part in the capture of Perugia, and Arezzo, were in Florence, and at the Gothic Line. Whilst in the Po Valley in December they were ordered to Greece to combat the Communist attempt to take over that country.

The Bays arrived in Italy in May 1944 and were engaged in the Gothic Line, and at the battle of Coriano Ridge they lost all but three of their tanks and suffered 98 casualties in a matter of minutes when they were sent against a screen of German anti-tank guns, including 88mms.

They fought in the PO Valley at the Crossing of the Lamone, and at Rimini, Coriano Ridge and Cesena.

The Bays helped force the Argenta Gap and found themselves at Ferrara when the Germans Surrendered.

The end of the War found the KDG in the Middle East, during the conflict the regiment was equipped with a mixture of Marmon Herrinton armoured cars, Daimler Armoured Cars and Dingo Scout Cars among others.



(Photo sourced from <http://www.qdg.org.uk>)

Photographer: Unknown

Description: A Staghound and Daimler scout car of the Kings Dragoon Guards in Florence.

Circa 1943



Photo courtesy of the imperial war museum NA 7433

Photographer: Mott (Sgt) of No 2 Army Film & Photographic Unit

Description: Daimler scout car **F48546** of 1st King's Dragoon Guards at the town hall in Naples, 1 October 1943



Following are extracts of the war KDG war diary that specifically mention the use of Daimler Dingo Scout cars

At dawn on 18 November 1941 the advance across the frontier began, and before first light on the 21st 'C' Squadron led the break out of Tobruk through the perimeter under cover of a heavy artillery barrage, the noise and smoke concealing their movement for a time, before 'all hell broke loose'. The Sappers jumped off the Marmon Harringtons and started lifting booby-trapped teller and S mines as well as Italian box mines; 4th Royal Tanks went through the gaps and the Black Watch charged the dug-in enemy. 1,100 German prisoners were captured; the KDG lost thirteen out of fifteen armoured cars, but with only one fatal casualty, Trooper Dean. Lindsay led the squadron in a Dingo, receiving a direct hit on the side where he was sitting and wounding him severely in the ear. Several other KDG were wounded, and QMS Swinburne and his driver, going out to recover some of the damaged cars, were killed by a German Spandau post which suddenly came to life after it had been passed. 'C' Squadron was then withdrawn to the Lysander Aerodrome, where the fitters managed to recover and repair seven of the knocked out and mined armoured cars, so that by the afternoon of the 22nd, when the squadron was called forward again, there were five active troops available.

The Eighth Army was having a difficult time. Auchinleck had taken over personal command and the Tobruk garrison was ordered to make redoubled efforts to capture the El Duda ridge. on 24 November the KDG sent out probing patrols, when Lieutenant Franks, with another car commanded by Corporal Muir, disappeared and were presumed captured. Shortly afterwards Lieutenant Beames was severely wounded and his driver and operator killed. Lieutenant Gardener of the RTR saw what was happening, brought up his tank, dismounted and rescued Beames, who, sadly, died of his wounds before he could be got to medical help. Gardener was awarded the Victoria Cross for his gallantry.



[Reproduced by kind permission of the Imperial War Museum.]

(16). DAIMLER ARMOURD CARS MOVING THROUGH THE 'GAP IN THE MINEFIELD DURING THE BATTLE OF GABES GAP.

Photo courtesy of the publication 'The History of the KDGs' 1938-1945 (& Lnc Cpl Anthony Morris)

Photographer: Unknown

Description: as stated.



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Royal Armoured Corps – Regiments of the Horse, 1st KDG & 1st & 2nd QDG

'C' Squadron and the echelon landed at Salerno on 3 October, joining the regiment on the 5th. Progress was severely hampered by the bad weather and the repeated obstacles of blown bridges and roads, with the American infantry advancing in front of the armoured cars. By the 6th the line of the River Volturno was reached and found to be strongly held by the enemy. Lt. Smith of 'C' Sqn was sent to reconnoitre the mouth of the Volturno as a possible crossing point. Having carried out a successful patrol, Smith while turning in a Dingo scout car, ran over a mine and was killed. Troopers Mason and Murfitt were also wounded, Mason's wound proving fatal. On 8 October the KDG were withdrawn in foul weather to the outskirts of Naples, where the regiment installed itself under cover in the local lunatic asylum. Over the next few days they cleaned up and explored Naples.

On 14 May 1944 The King's Dragoon Guards reached Narni, moving on twenty-seven miles on the 16th to Todi. Throughout the move forward, from the utter destruction around Cassino to the outskirts of Rome and then as they advanced rapidly north, the men had been greatly encouraged to see the vast quantity of German equipment destroyed by the RAF and in the battles of the Liri valley. There were vehicles by the hundred, with Tiger and Panther tanks strewn alongside the roads. On 17 May the regiment was in action again: Lieutenant Bloomfield of 'A' Squadron surprised a party of German engineers about to blow up a bridge, and then had a battle with some tanks at Migliano. 'C' Squadron on the main road to Perugia met a self-propelled gun which hit the leading **Dingo**, killing the driver and wounding the commander. The troop leader then reversed his Daimler armoured car into a ditch, where it had to be abandoned. The Germans later towed the car away and set it on fire.

By the 18th the enemy had stabilized his line and the regiment advanced only two miles. The 19th saw 'D' Squadron in the lead; Lieutenant Mitchell on the left made some progress, but stirred up a hornets' nest of opposition; on the right, Lieutenants Woozley and Thompson advanced along parallel roads to within a mile of Perugia. Thompson, faced with the last two miles along a dead straight road with no cover, had almost reached a T-junction when a machine gun opened up on the leading **Dingo**. This reversed behind Thompsons' armoured car, and as he traversed his turret to engage the gun, the doors of a barn opened and a 75 mm anti-tank gun inside his the Daimler, killing the driver and setting the car on fire. Thompson and his gunner both baled out badly burned. 'D' Squadron on the right continued active patrolling, but was unable to advance further as the enemy held Monte Croce in strength, dominating the area. 'A' Squadron on the left had more success, reaching Agello twelve miles to the west of Perugai and on the 24th



(31). OPERATIONS NORTH OF SANSEPOLCRO.
A dismounted patrol, with mule transport, setting out past a Daimler armoured car.

Photo courtesy of the publication 'The History of the KDGs' 1938-1945 (& Lnc Cpl Anthony Morris)
Photographer: Unknown / Description: as stated.



Photo courtesy of the Bovington Display

Photographer: Unknown

Description: This photo is thought to be of the Kings Dragoon Guards
May 1944.



(26). D SQN'S ENTRY INTO PERUGIA.

Lt A. R. F. Napper's Daimler being greeted by the populace and pelted with flowers.

Photo courtesy of the publication 'The History of the KDGs' 1938-1945. (& Lnc Cpl Anthony Morris)

Photographer: Unknown

Description: This photo is thought to be of the Kings Dragoon Guards
May 1944.



By the middle of July the Germans were conducting an orderly and slow withdrawal in their own time, fighting rearguard actions and making skilled use of the mountains, extensive demolition's and minefields. The King's Dragoon Guards were back in the line at Arezzo on 16 July. Patrolling commenced in an area where the roads were blocked by fallen trees, blown bridges and many mines, and there were constant brushes with the enemy and casualties inflicted.

The German artillery was particularly active, shelling any movement - when Lieutenant Bloomfield ditched his Daimler, 121 shells landed around it with in an hour,

'B' Squadron entered the village of San Polo on the morning of the 18th to find that the day before the Germans withdrew they had taken all the men of the village, except the parish priest, to a nearby olive grove, made them dig three large graves, and had then bayoneted the men into the graves and placed a number of explosive charges among the dead and dying. This was said to be punishment for partisan activity. Sergeant Beale of 'C' Squadron led a patrol as far as Monte Veriano, to find the area held in strength by the Germans, but with no anti-tank guns. He then allotted each vehicle a sector and drove right in amongst the enemy.

Corporal Kay in the leading Dingo leapt out hurling grenades into each trench and firing his Tommy-gun until it was shot out of his hand; he then went back for a Bren and started again. The Germans managed to knock out a supporting M10 with an Ofenrohr, killing the driver.

With only a single casualty Sergeant Beale captured the position, taking two officers and twelve men prisoner and counting thirty dead Germans, twenty of whom had been accounted for by Corporal Kay alone. Both Sergeant Beale and Corporal Kay were given an immediate award of the Distinguished Conduct Medal.

On 20 August the KDG were drawn back into reserve by Lake Trasimene, where 'D' Squadron received its fifth squadron leader, Major Phillips, since it had been formed just five months previously. On the 26th the regiment was back in action, taking over from the 12th Lancers in the area of Sansepolcro. The Allies were now edging up to the Gothic Line. On 27 August a patrol of 'C' Squadron was ambushed, losing a **Dingo** with Lieutenant Hethey and Corporal Price killed and Trooper Burton a prisoner.

The following day 'C' lost two more Dingos on mines, with Corporal Eckersley and Trooper Shakespeare wounded and Trooper Chambers dying of his wounds. Another of their patrols drove off a party of fifteen Germans, killing two of them. The 31st saw Major Hellyer and Captain Batt badly wounded when the White scout car in which they were travelling went over a mine and the armoured engine cover was blown off to land on their heads. Another 'C' Squadron patrol had a brush with the enemy in which one German was killed and Trooper Maynihan was wounded. Often the mines had been laid so deeply that several vehicles could go over them before enough pressure was built up to set them off. This made them impossible to detect.

Many British military installations had been sited around Athens in what had seemed to be the most appropriate places, without any thought that they might find themselves in the midst of a civil war and in hostile territory. On 21 and 22 December 'B' Squadron rescued REME workshops sited in a foundry in the Imittos district of southeast Athens. A blown bridge and roadblocks were dealt with, resulting in three ELAS being killed and three being taken prisoner, but 240 men and 130 vehicles were brought to safety.

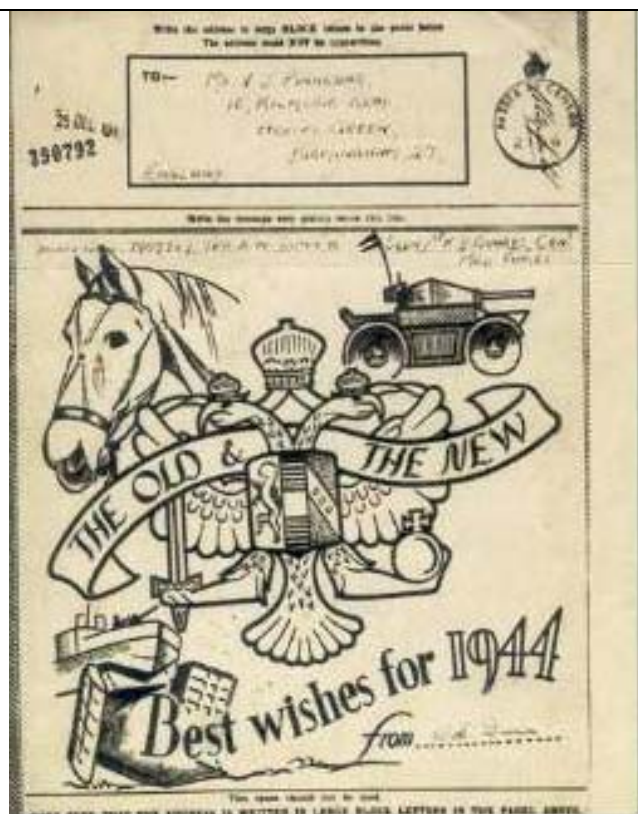
Over the following days a number of patrols were carried out: one by Lieutenant Dorell to Voula resulted in three more guerrillas killed and three captured, as well as one of their headquarters being destroyed; other patrols escorted Mr Churchill, Mr Eden and Field Marshal Alexander to Athens.

On Boxing Day ELAS attacked Kalamaki airfield, slightly wounding two KDG sentries and blowing up an armoured car on prepared charges, which wounded all three crew members. Patrols to the guerrilla strongholds of Vari and Koropi resulted in a Daimler armoured car being blown up on the 26th, and two Daimlers and a **Dingo** on the 29th, all luckily without any casualties.

On 31 December another rescue operation was successfully mounted to bring to safety 120 men of the 50th RTR, stationed ten miles east of Athens at Pallini wireless station, which provided the only direct link between Athens and London. Several roadblocks covered by sniper fire had to be cleared, resulting in fourteen ELAS killed and three prisoners being taken.



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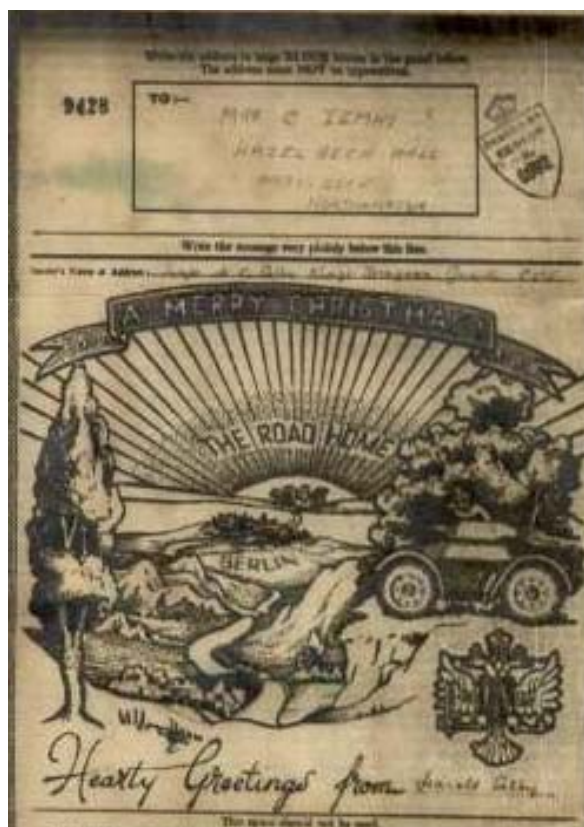
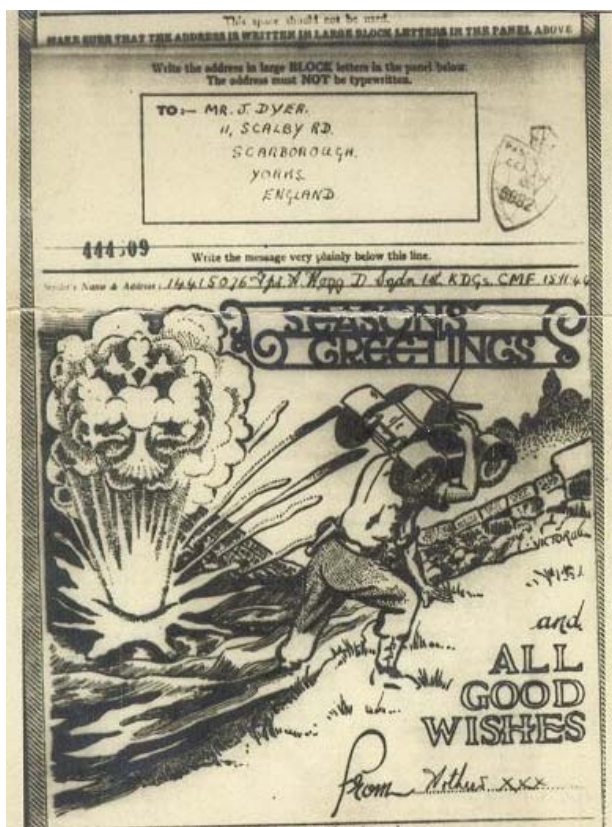


During World War II, the Airgraph was developed to enable soldiers in the field to communicate more quickly and reliably with their family and friends at home. The sender would write their message on the message side of the form and submit it for processing.

The form would be processed and a microfilm image created. A film strip with up to 10,000 airgraphs would then be sent via air to its destination. In the event the strip were lost, another would be copied from the original. Once received, reduced size (about half-size) prints would be made and these sent to their destination in cover envelopes

The Examples shown are all hand drawn and depict the Daimler heavy armoured car in one way or another

Courtesy of <http://www.airgraph.com/>





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Trouble soon broke out in Lebanon and Syria, and the KDG were employed to keep the peace. Then in September 1945 they were moved to Palestine, where they were engaged in aid of the civil power all over Northern Palestine.

They returned to Britain in 1948 but also continued duties as part of the BOAR.



1st.Troop "C" Sqdm. - Hamburg 1951.

(Photo sourced from <http://www.qdg.org.uk>)

Description: DSC F47421/08 ZS 40 of the Kings Dragoon Guards
Hamburg 1952



DAC 84ZR92 of the Kings Dragoon Guards (Photo sourced from <http://www.qdg.org.uk>)

The KDG had been ordered to Malaya in 1956, and served there throughout the emergency. The King's Dragoon Guards, on arrival in Malaya, found that they were one of two armoured car regiments, equipped with Daimler armoured cars and Ferret scout cars, operating in the peninsula. By June 1956 General Templer's policy of fortified villages and curfews was starting to take effect.

Chin Peng's Communist guerrillas were finding it harder to operate, and although they had a plentiful stock of both British and Japanese weapons, supplies were becoming more difficult to obtain as rural villages became more secure. There was, however, plenty of fight left in the guerrillas and they still retained the element of surprise and choice of target.



(Photo sourced from <http://www.qdg.org.uk>)
DSC (26ZS75) of the KDG C Sqn food convoy Cameron highlands

The KDG relieved their old friends the 11th Hussars, taking over operational control on 26 June 1956. Regimental headquarters with 'B' Squadron was stationed at Seremban in Negri Sembilan, with 'C' Squadron forty miles to the north in Kuala Lumpur, while 'A' was 200 miles to the south in Johore Bahru. The Regiment worked in support of the Gurkha Division, with each squadron operating as an independent unit, under its own brigade.

In addition the regiment provided a training squadron on Singapore Island, which also had to be available for internal security duties and was heavily involved in containing serious rioting which broke out in Singapore city on 25 October.



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The KDG were used to keep the main roads open, escorting convoys and VIPs, as well as setting ambushes, patrolling and carrying out village perimeter checks. 'A' squadron had a contact in Johore, and at the notorious village of Kulai made 47 arrests of suspected terrorists out of a total of 174 made during a search operation.

The squadron also went into Singapore city with the training squadron during the rioting, keeping the main roads and the back streets clear.

'C' Squadron at Kuala Lumpur was even more dispersed, with troops detached at Kajang and Nee Soon, but the whole squadron had to pack up suddenly and drive to Singapore during the riots, when it was stationed at Kallang Airport. It made twenty-seven arrests before returning to Kuala Lumpur. During the six months of 1956 that the regiment was in Malaya, its vehicles covered 600,000 miles.



Photo courtesy of Lnc Cpl Anthony Morris, ex HQ Squadron KDG

Photographer: Anthony Morris

Description: Paroi Camp Guard Room, Seremban, Malaya. 1956-1957



Photo courtesy of Lnc Cpl Anthony Morris, ex HQ Squadron KDG

Photographer: Anthony Morris

Description: Various crew members of DAC **F20073 /38ZU67**, Seremban, Malaya.

The dark skinned L/Cpl is L/Cpl D'Orville of 17/21st Lancers who was on attachment to the KDG Escort Troop. L/Cpl Bilner is on both photos with the black swimming trunks.

Date 1956-1957.



Photo courtesy of Lnc Cpl Anthony Morris, ex HQ Squadron KDG

Photographer: Anthony Morris

Description: Views of Cpl A Morris in his Daimler Ferret 86ZA70 at Seremban, Malaya. 1956-1957

Tony reports that he preferred driving in the Dingo to the Ferret.
Never liking the back to front (inverted) steering wheel, even though it seemed OK on the Saracen.



Jungle Patrol

By May 1957 the situation in Malaya had been brought sufficiently under control for the number of armoured car regiments to be reduced, and when the 15th/19th Hussars went home in May. The King's Dragoon Guards took over responsibility for road security for the whole of Malaya, except for Selangor and Negri Sembilan.

These two states were covered by a newly raised Malaya Armoured Car Regiment to which a number of KDG Officers and NCOs were seconded. Regimental Headquarters and Headquarter Squadron moved to Ipoh, where they were joined by 'C' Squadron; 'B' Squadron moved into Kuala Lumpur until 'Merdeka', or self-government, which was granted on 31 August 1957, when it moved to Kluang in North Johore.

Because of manpower problems the training squadron joined RHQ, and in spite of the regiment's dispersal, the General carrying out the yearly administrative inspection commented, 'I was most impressed with all I saw of the KDG'.

Yet another detachment of ten Ferret scout cars was formed later to act as the Gurkha Division Escort Troop, staying at Seremban.

So the KDG were scattered in packets over an area the size of England, which provided a nightmare for the RSM, but a paradise for the troop and squadron leader.

On the night of 6/7 March 1957 a party of 'B' Squadron, while still at Seremban under command of Corporal Derench, opened fire on three Communist terrorists who walked into their position.

The next day the body of Cheong Fatt, a section leader of the so-called 3rd Independent Platoon for the Malayan Republic Liberation Army, was found; it later transpired that a second terrorist, Tak Lan, had been wounded, but had escaped.

'C' Squadron, supporting the Commonwealth Brigade, had a detachment 6,000 feet up in the Cameron Highlands, and was responsible for the security of a particularly hilly and winding road to surrender, and the KDG, by the end of March 1958 had accepted the surrender of a total of forty terrorists along it.

On 27 September 1957 Lieutenant Colonel Selby took over command from Lieutenant Colonel Cairns.

Sergeant Carter was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal, and Captain Lidsey and Lieutenant Gibson were mentioned in despatches.

The Regiment had by the end of 1957 traveled 1,851,094 miles since it arrived in Malaya.



Photo courtesy of Lnc Cpl Anthony Morris, ex HQ Squadron KDG
 Photographer: Unknown
 Description: HQ Squadron at Seremban, Malaya. 1956-1957
 With dingo's **F47898-05ZS39** & **F340422 01ZS55**.



Photo courtesy of Lnc Cpl Anthony Morris, ex HQ Squadron KDG

Photographer: Anthony Morris

Description: Views of Cpl A Morris in his up-armoured Dingo **F329486/01ZS05** at Seremban, Malaya. 1956-1957



Photo courtesy of Lnc Cpl Anthony Morris, ex HQ Squadron KDG

Photographer: Anthony Morris

Description: Arms and equipment layout ready for inspection of Dingo F206373/00ZS66 at Seremban.

The picture of the Dingo kit was taken when Cpl Morris took over this replacement car.

He reports that once a year there was a big inspection of vehicles and they had to be spotless and all equipment clean and in perfect working order. This was referred too, as an 857 inspection Malaya. 1956-1957



DSC F205467(26ZS75) KDG malaya c sqd 1957



DSC F205467 (03ZS21) KDG Malaya



DSC (03ZS21)

KDG malaya 1956

(Photos sourced from <http://www.qdg.org.uk>)



(Photo sourced from <http://www.qdg.org.uk>)
DSC F47488 (26ZS48) of the Kings Dragoon Guards
Kuli Malaya 1956



(Photo sourced from <http://www.qdg.org.uk>)
Kings Dragoon Guards (believed to be Z reserve in training for possible deployment to Korea)
Omagh, Ireland 1951, Major Bullen inspection of troops
It is reputed that Daimler Armoured car **67 ZR 44** was used in Malaya between 1955-1958.



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Photo courtesy of <http://www.mustrad.org.uk/articles/langsbry.htm>

Photographer: Unknown.

Description: Trooper Ken Langsbury's first car in Malaya, Dingo F48700 / 11 ZS 09
 an account of his is below:
 1956.

At eighteen I was called up to do my National Service, and shipped out to Malaya. On the voyage, in a bunk next to mine was an old soldier going out to join his regiment after a spell of home leave; the rest of us were all new recruits. He explained that the Communists (who we were going to fight) used to fight on the same side as us in the war against the Fascists, and were promised free elections after the war - which they did not get.

I was in the Armoured Corps (KDG's), a driver-signaller in an armoured car crew, escorting food convoys up and down the Cameron Highlands, I didn't enjoy any of that.

As a member of an armoured car crew, I did not go on jungle patrol very often, but did on a few occasions. On one occasion I was in front of the patrol (this was taken in turns), and came across a clearing with two or three dustbins, and a Communist guarding them.

I gave him a smile and he just wandered off. I told my troop leader, who was very cross with me for not shooting him, that he ran away, but he didn't, he just wandered off, he knew I wasn't going to shoot him.

The dustbins were full of rice, and as punishment for letting the man go, I was given the job along with two other chaps and a guide, of carrying the bins of rice back to base. The bins were very heavy, and it was a hard, slow job carrying them through the jungle..

The guide went charging on ahead, and we kept shouting at him to slow down. Eventually after several hours we came to a rubber plantation and some deserted buildings which had running water. We stripped off, had a wash, and picked off the leeches we had attracted on our journey.

As I came out of the building there, standing on a bank, was a man with a gun pointing at me! It was an officer I knew from 2 Troop., I saluted and said, "Hello, Sir." He didn't shoot me, although I think he would have liked to

He was so disappointed we weren't what he termed 'The Enemy'; he held in his hand a metal pull-through for a sten gun we had dropped. He said we had walked right through an ambush that he had set up with his troop, and he was about to give the order to open fire, when we started shouting "slow down" in English, so they followed us.

He said, "You'll never know how close you came to death today".

When I used to relate the story in the NAAFI afterwards, I would make up a bit about speaking to the Communist and asking if I could come and fight on his side, and did he have a membership application form I could sign! And did he have a pen?



Photo courtesy of Simon Hamon

Photographer: Unknown.

Description:

Armoured car 84ZR80 of the 1st Kings Dragoon Guards patrolling the road between Sungei Seput and Lasah.

Date: November 1957.



Photo courtesy of Trooper Roger King
 Photographer: Roger King
 Description: Crew of 1st Troop, 'A' Squadron,
 1st King's Dragoon Guards. top left Trooper Jim Copland top middle Trooper Ken Wilkinson,
 top right unidentified Trooper
 Trooper Roger King (Driver)
 Lisanally Camp, Omagh,
 Northern Ireland,
 Date: 1951



Photo courtesy of Trooper Roger King
Photographer: Unknown
Description :Trooper Roger King & Trooper Rick Gilson
1st Troop, 'A' Squadron, 1st King's Dragoon Guards
Hamburg 1952



Photo courtesy of Trooper Roger King
Photographer: Unknown
Trooper John Pimm L/cpl Herbert Hughes
Trooper unknown Trooper Roger King Trooper Jim Copland
1st Troop, 'A' Squadron, 1st King's Dragoon Guards.
Hamburg 1952



Royal Armoured Corps

The 1st & 2nd Queens Dragoons Guards

At the outbreak of World War Two the Queens Bays dragoons regiments were in England.

In May 1940 the Bays were sent as part of the 1st Armoured Division to France, and were heavily engaged on the Somme.

In mid June, with the collapse of the French resistance, they were evacuated back to England through the port of Brest.

The Bays arrived in the Middle East in November 1941, equipped initially with the 2 pounder Crusader Tank. They fought with great bravery at the Cauldron and Knightsbridge during the battle of Gazala, and were continuously in action for 19 days, a record for an armoured regiment in the Western Desert.

They played a major part at the Battle of Alamein, the Tebaga gap, at El Hamma and the Mareth Line, and so on to Tunis.

The Bays arrived in Italy in May 1944 equipped with comet and Sherman kangaroo tanks. At the of Coriano Ridge they lost all but three of their tanks and suffered 98 casualties in a matter of minutes when they were sent against a screen of German anti-tank guns, including 88mms.

They fought in the PO Valley at the Crossing of the Lamone, and at Rimini, Coriano Ridge and Cesena. The Bays helped force the Argenta Gap and found themselves at Ferrara when the Germans Surrendered.

After the war the Bays remained in Northern Italy, and then moved to Egypt before returning to Britain in 1947. On November the 1st 1958 the Queen's Bays paraded for the last time and were reviewed by their Colonel-in Chief, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

The current regiment of 1st Queens Dragoons Guards was formed in 1959 by the amalgamation of 1st King's Dragoon Guards and the Queen's Bays or 2nd Dragoon Guards (

The regiment celebrated their fiftieth anniversary on July 31, 2009 with a ceremony at Cardiff castle and a parade through the streets of Cardiff city both attended by their Colonel-in-Chief The Prince of Wales. The regiment received a great response from the people of Cardiff.



Photo courtesy of Trooper Brian Willoughby
 Photographer: Denis Sparkes
 Description: 4 Trooper Denis Sparkes of the KDG
 Date: 1958



Photo courtesy of Trooper Brian Willoughby
Photographer: Denis Sparkes
Description: Dingo F47423 02ZS14 with the QDG, Germany
Date: late 1950's



Photo courtesy of Trooper Brian Willoughby
Photographer: Dai Thomas
Description: F207935 77ZR75 of 3rd Troop B Squadron KDG, Germany.
Left to right, James Latham - James Marshall - 2nd Lt G.E.A. Barker -
Date: circa 1959.



Photo courtesy of Trooper Brian Willoughby
Photographer: Brian Willoughby
Description: Queens Dragoons Guards, Wolfenbüttel, Germany.
Date: mid 1960's



Photo courtesy of Trooper Brian Willoughby
Photographer: Brian Willoughby
Description: Queens Dragoons Guards, Wolfenbüttel, Germany.
Date: mid 1960's



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Photo courtesy of Trooper Brian Willoughby
 Photographer: Brian Willoughby
 Description: Queens Dragoons Guards, Wolfenbüttel, Germany.
 Date: mid 1960's







Photo courtesy of Trooper Brian Willoughby
Photographer: Ralph Hoskins
Description: Trooper Ralph Hoskins, Exercise Completed, Wolfenbuttel, Germany
Date: 1963



Photo courtesy of Trooper Brian Willoughby
Photographer: Dai Thomas
Description: 4th Troop Wolfenbüttel, Germany.
Date: 1963



Photo courtesy of Trooper Brian Willoughby
Photographer: Brian Willoughby
Description: Queens Dragoons Guards, B -Sqns Vehicle Enroute to Sarawak Northern Ireland
Date 1965
1965



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Photo courtesy of Trooper Brian Willoughby
Photographer: Brian Willoughby
Description: Malaya



Photo courtesy of Trooper Brian Simpson
Photographer: Brian Simpson
Description: Ferrets of the Queen's Bays, 2nd Dragoon Guards, Libya,
Date: 1956-59



Photo courtesy of Trooper Brian Simpson
 Photographer: Brian Simpson
 Description: Ferrets of the Queen's Bays, 2nd Dragoon Guards, Libya,
 Date: 1956-59