



Cavalry of the Line
The 1st Royal Dragoons

The Royal Dragoons (1st Dragoons) was a cavalry regiment of the British Army.

The regiment was formed in 1661, and served until 1969, when it was amalgamated with the Royal Horse Guards to form The Blues and Royals

The regiment was first raised as a single troop of veterans of the Parliamentary Army in 1661, shortly thereafter expanded to four troops as the Tangier Horse, taking the name from their service in Tangier.



They were ranked as the 1st Dragoons, the senior cavalry regiment of the line, in 1674; on their return to England in 1683 the three troops were joined with three newly-raised troops and titled The King's Own Royal Regiment of Dragoons, named for Charles II. In 1690 they were renamed as simply The Royal Regiment of Dragoons, and formally titled in 1751 as the 1st (Royal) Regiment of Dragoons. The title was simplified in 1877 to the 1st (Royal) Dragoons

After service in the First World War, the regiment retitled as the 1st The Royal Dragoons in 1921.

The regiment mechanised shortly after the outbreak of the Second World War and was transferred to the Royal Armoured Corps in 1940.

The Royals were sent to Abassia, Egypt from Palestine to reequip in December 1940. On 2 May 1941 'A' Squadron was sent to the Western Desert to join the 11th Hussars. 'B' Squadron was sent to Syria on 30 May. By 19 June the rest of the regiment was sent to join 'A' Squadron and relieve the 11th Hussars. Instead, by the end of June 1941, 'A' Squadron and RHQ went to join 'B' Squadron in Syria, leaving 'C' Squadron under the 11th Hussars. By 9 July 1941 the regiment, less 'C' Squadron, was in Syria and came under command of Habforce. Meanwhile 'C' Squadron fought with the 11th Hussars from 19 June until 1 August and the 22nd Guards Infantry Brigade until 24 September 1941. It then returned to Alexandria and arrived in Syria on 30 October 1941, when it joined the rest of the regiment.

On 25 November 1941 the Royals left to join the 8th Army stopping at the Delta on 26 November to pick up more armoured cars. By 1 December it was at Bagush where it received the vehicles and then joined 8th Army Rear HQ on 5 December. It took over from the King's Dragoon Guards on 8-10 December and fought in the western desert until 22 April 1942. It was withdrawn to the coast at Marsa Lucchi at that time. The Royals now came under command of 1st Armoured Division from 12 May until 13 September, being in action in the desert from 23 May until 27 July. 'C' Squadron was withdrawn on 27 June to get new armoured cars and on 27 July the regiment returned with the division to refit. 'A' Squadron remained under 23rd Armoured Brigade, 'C' Squadron relieving them for the Alam el Halfa battle.

It then came under command of 10th Armoured Division from 22 September to 31 October 1942, 8th Army until 5 December 1942

After handing over its horses in December 1940, 'A' and 'B' Squadrons were sent to the Royal Armoured Corps School at Abassia, being joined two months later by the rest of the regiment. The Armoured Car Wing of the school was the permanent base for the Royals, 11th Hussars, 12th Lancers, and the King's Dragoon Guards. While there, the regiment trained and equipped with Marmon-Herrington III armoured cars at eighteen per squadron. These, though, were sent to the 11th Hussars in April 1941 and the regiment had to reequip later.

After being in combat for a year the regiment was withdrawn to repair their armoured cars on 22 April 1942. From May to July 1942 it was again in continuous combat and withdrew to refit under 1st Armoured Division on 27 July 1942. It then re-equipped with Humber IIs and Daimler's, having one Daimler and two Humber's per troop. By El Alamein it had 46 armoured cars.



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In July 43, 'A' Squadron left Tunisia to take part in the invasion of Sicily, where they saw hard service during this short campaign, landing as 8th Army troops, attached to 4th Armoured Brigade for this campaign and during the early stages of the Italian campaign. In October the remainder of the Regiment joined 'A' Squadron in Italy; but they saw very little of the Italian campaign, as just before Christmas, 1943, The Royal Dragoons were sent home, to Ashford in Kent, to train for Operation "Overlord", the invasion of France.



Daimler scout car of the 1st Royal Dragoons acting as a radio forward link car near Bari, Italy. late 1943

The main features of this training were the formation of 'D' Squadron, the waterproofing of vehicles, and the arrival of half-tracks mounted with 75mm guns for the heavy Troops. After crossing from East Ham to Normandy at the end of July, 1944 the Squadrons split up, all taking part in the rapid advance north through France into Flanders, where they helped to keep the axis open during the drive to join up with the Airborne forces in Nijmegen and Arnhem.

By 27th September 44, 'D' Squadron was patrolling the German border north of Nijmegen. Then for three months the Regiment saw continuous action, being responsible for watching a long sector of the Maas with a number of other units under command, a task that involved much dismounted work and foot patrols. During this period, the gun troops were pooled to form a single and effective battery. Only in January 1945, did the Regiment have a month in reserve, when they were together for the first time since landing in France.

The final phase of the war saw The Royal Dragoons doing bank control for the Rhine crossing from 23rd to 28th March, and thereafter advancing to the Elbe, where 'B' and 'C' Squadrons controlled the crossing in late April. In the German collapse that followed the Regiment took 10,000 German prisoners and freed 16,000 Allied POWs.

On 2nd May and on 3rd May they pushed north to the Baltic, where they captured General Cuentzler near Lubeck. Immediately, following the German surrender on 5th May 1945, The Royal Dragoons had the good fortune to drive through Denmark and, as representatives of the Second Army, to liberate Copenhagen, where they received a tremendous welcome.



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The regiment survived the immediate post-war reduction in forces, and was retitled as The Royal Dragoons (1st Dragoons) in 1961, but this name was short-lived; it was amalgamated with the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues), to form The Blues and Royals (Royal Horse Guards and 1st Dragoons) in 1969



DSC F329647 1st Royal Dragoons in on there way to Denmark, IWM BU 5676



DSC F47811 of the 1st Royal Dragoons aerodrome at Dedelsdorf . the signs says not to enter the building



DSC F48006 of the 1st Royal Dragoons in Denmark May 1945



DSC F48300 of the 1st Royal Dragoons in Denmark May 1945



DSC F205568 of the 1st Royal Dragoons in Denmark May1945



DSC F206462 of the 1st Royal Dragoons in Horsens Denmark May1945



DSC F206520 of the 1st Royal Dragoons in Denmark May 1945



DSC F206867 of the 1st Royal Dragoons in Denmark May 1945



DSC F329406 of the 1st Royal Dragoons in Denmark May1945



DSC F329418 of the 1st Royal Dragoons in Denmark May1945



DSC



F329746 in Copenhagen 1945



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Image courtesy of the IWM BU 5683

Photographer : Sgt Handford, War Office official photographer

1st Royal Dragoons in on their way to Denmark, the column including Dingo F329514 is passing through Eckernforde
08.05.1945



Image courtesy of the IWM BU 5708

Photographer : Sgt Palmer, War Office official photographer

1st Royal Dragoons Dingo F48312 at the danish Frontier
07.05.1945



Image courtesy of the IWM
IWM BU 5700
NW Europe

Photographer : Sgt Handford, War Office official photographer
1st Royal Dragoons reception through Haderslev
08.05.1945



Image courtesy of the IWM BU 5710

Photographer : Sgt Palmer, War Office official photographer

1st Royal Dragoons in Dingo Scout car **F207220** passing over the danish border, german troops are still on guard.

7th May 1945



Trooper Walter Sandifer



Following is an article obtained from the BBC Peoples War site.....

Contributed by Mr Norman Fewes, on: 21 May 2005, Location of story: Lower Saxony, Germany

The battle of El Alamein was Montgomery's first battle as an army commander, it went well, and then it turned into the usual stalemate.

I was at that time in the 1st Royal Dragoons, who were being held in reserve waiting to exploit the breakout. We were ordered to circumvent the Quarthara Depression which was considered impossible by both sides, and attack Rommel from the rear. This action turned the tide of the battle, and after that, Montgomery always insisted that the Royal Dragoons should always be involved in any other attacks which he led.

The battle for the crossing of the Rhine was the last great land battle of the war, and the attack was to be on two fronts; one by 51st Highland Division in the North, and one by 15th Scottish division further South. To comply with Montgomery's "fetish", the regiment was split in two: A and B squadrons attached to 51st Highland and C and D attached to 15th Scottish.

The battle of the Rhine was a success, and by early April, the regiment was together again, acting as advance "reconnoitre" for the advancing 2nd army.

"A" Squadron; of which I was a member, was doing advanced reconnoitre between Brunswick and Uelzen, C and D squadrons were doing flank protection for the reconnoitre, with B squadron in reserve.

I was in a group of 17, who were holed up in the forest, overlooking the autobahn, between Brunswick and Uelzen, and our job was to identify any German units which were being sent South to bolster the German defences after the Rhine crossing, but it soon became apparent that the German army was in full retreat northwards, and we were ordered to carry out a triangular reconnoitre of some 40 miles in order to try to find where the German army was going to establish their next line of defence, which we guessed would be on the River Elbe.

We began our patrol at first light, and the first part went well. We checked out a small aerodrome at Dedelsdorf, which had been used for training Luftwaffe pilots, but which had hurriedly been abandoned, and we reported that it would be suitable for the RAF to use for their close support ground to air operations.

In the next village of Hankensbüttel, we were held up slightly by a small calibre anti tank gun situated on a railway level crossing, but this was quickly dealt with. When we entered the village to mop up, we found that the 20mm gun had been manned by the equivalent of the Home Guard, or a German's Dad's Army. All of them had been killed, except a young boy — about 14 to 16, who had been severely wounded in both feet and ankles, and was obviously dying. His mother and another woman had managed to get him into a wheel chair, and was trying to take him somewhere for help. Against all the KRR's (Kings Rules and Regulations) we gave him some of our morphine. My wireless operator reminded me it was against KRR's to give morphine the enemy, as it was solely for our own use, but I remember telling him that as far as I cared, he stick the KRR's up his backside, page by page in this case. As a reconnoitre regiment operating for long periods, well in front of your own army, and very often behind enemy lines, we did not have any medical backup, and so each crew was issued with morphine in case of being wounded, and hopefully you would be rescued. When on patrol, you could use all the ammunition you wanted, without question, but every last drop of morphine had to be accounted for in detail.

After Hankensbüttel we carried on to the small village of Wittingen but on the approach to the village (say half to three quarters of a mile away), there appeared to be a demonstration in the road, with 50-60 people milling around. The leading "dingo" scout car was ordered to proceed with caution, but he soon reported back that the demonstrators were British Prisoners of War. They had been prisoners since 1940 but had been housed in a small camp near Wittingen and been used as casual farm labourers on the surrounding farms. They had been kept in quite relaxed conditions during the war and had been treated very well by the local farming community, and they had begged us not to shoot up the place as a number of them had long term relationships with the local girls which they hoped would result in marriage after the war was over.

In the event, there was no need to "shoot up Wittingen" because as we got nearer the village a white flag was flying from the top of the church steeple and almost every house had white sheets draping out of their windows.

At Wittingen, our patrol turned north in the direction of Uelzen, and we passed through the two farming villages of Solden and Langenbrugge without incident, as every house and farm was flying the white flag. So far the reconnoitre had gone well, and we ahead of our ETA, so squadron forward radio link sanctioned



time for a break and a brew-up. From Langenbrugge we could look down on the village of Bodenteich in the distance 5 k away, and could see that no white flags were flying, so we guessed that it was still occupied by the German army, but we did not know at what strength. We were approaching directly from the south, but there was also a road approaching south-east from Salzwedel, which made ideal conditions for an anti tank ambush. Accordingly, it was decided to change our tactics from a snake patrol, to a leap-frog patrol, in order to minimise the risk. Our patrol was made up of two Daimler armoured cars; the main armament of which was a two pounder gun and a Besa heavy machine, two Daimler scout cars, armed with Bren machine guns, and an American made white scout car with various light weapons. Total complement of men was 16, plus a Polish soldier, who we had released from a POW camp, and who had unofficially agreed to join us in order to act as an interpreter. I was a wireless operator/gunner in one of the Daimler armoured cars.

As the two armoured cars "leap-frogged" into Bodenteich, the Jerry's sprung their ambush from the Salzwedel road, and one of the Daimler armoured cars was knocked out. It was engaged first by a detachment of German infantry using rifles and a Spandau machine (the fastest firing machine gun used during the war). Almost immediately two small anti tank guns opened up, and both hit the armoured car. Fortunately, neither shot hit the turret of the patrol tanks, or it would have been "curtains", but both shots hit the rear engine compartment, and shrapnel penetrated the radiator causing vast amounts of steam, and it was obvious that it was only a matter of time before it would catch fire and blow up. The rest of the troop engaged the Jerry's with their two pounder and machine guns, and also laid down smoke to give the crew of the knocked armoured car a chance to bail out. Owing to the impact of the two anti tank shells on the stricken armoured car, the driver (Bram Stoker) had lost control, and was in a ditch at an awkward angle. Two of the crew got out without difficulty, but the third member (Topper Rapkin) was obviously wounded, and could not get out under his own steam. As they were struggling to get him out of the turret, a German girl who had been collecting the family's milk ration from a nearby farm suddenly appeared on the scene riding a bicycle. Much to our surprise, she stopped and helped Bram Stoker and Digweed (Wireless Operator/Gunner) get the wounded soldier out of the armoured car, and carry him the comparative safety of another ditch where she helped stop the bleeding using her own clothes until Sgt Rapkin was carried into Bodenteich by a German stretcher party, and Digweed and Stoker were taken prisoner.

We knew that by now, German medical resources and drugs were in very short supply, and that very often amputation was the easiest option for the treatment of even minor wounds. As we had no idea how seriously Topper Rapkin was wounded, we thought it might be a good idea if we could get him back in return for a German prisoner that other members of our squadron might have in "the bag".

We were both only comparatively small army units out on a limb, so any swap could be quite informal, and unofficial. Accordingly, we sent our Polish interpreter to Bodenteich under the protection of a Red Cross flag, which we improvised from our recognition stripes, which we rarely used anyway because the American Air Force used to use them for target practice — or so it seemed! The local German commander agreed our swap proposal for an SS Officer, but we knew that this was impossible, as the SS never gave themselves up unless they were so badly wounded that they had no other option, and of course, we never took SS prisoners — they were just disposed of.

One of our other troops in the squadron had taken that day the surrender of a German Sgt Major. (an Obbshuführer) who was in their pay corps, and who had given himself up carrying a large quantity of money in the hope he could buy himself a cushy billet. The Jerries accepted this compromise, and it was agreed that the exchange should be made later on that evening on the site of our burnt out armoured car.

Once this agreement was made, we stripped out all of the equipment and weapons from our white scout car, and converted it into a make shift ambulance, where we could slip in a stretcher. Originally I was going to accompany the white scout driver to the rendezvous for the swap, but at the last minute, the Jerries insisted the swap could only be made between officers, so I exchanged duties with Lt. Walter William Watkins Williams Wynn. He went into Bodenteich and I took over operating the previously arranged Verey Light signals. The prisoner swap went smoothly, and very much later we were able to hand over Tapper to the army medical corp. who had sent a proper ambulance under armed escort to Wittingen to pick him up.

Tapper had been wounded in the shoulder, but more severely in the leg. He spent almost two years in hospital and an army convalescence home, but in October 1947 he was well enough to travel back to Bodenteich to thank the lady in question, who was called Ursula Babatz, personally for helping to save his life.



1944, the faded formation sign on the left mudguard looks to be for XII Corps.



December 1944 or January 1945
Vehicle insignia clearly indicates that The Dragoons were part of XII corps and were operating as divisional recce troops (note also the 5 tonne weight sign)



1945



1944

The Royal Dragoons (1st Dragoons)
Photo courtesy of <http://www.flickr.com>



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Image courtesy of the IWM
Photographer : Sgt Handford, War Office official photographer
1st Royal Dragoons



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General Dewey Arrives at Resistance Headquarters



Field Marshal B.L. Montgomery and Lt. Col. A.H. Pepys, CO of 1st the Royal Dragoons.



Somewhere in the Kalkar area of northern Germany , March 1945
Images courtesy of the Trooper Walter Sandifer



British Soldiers and Danish Resistance, Odense 1945



British Army Arrives in Odense, May 1945



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Images courtesy of the Trooper Walter Sandifer
Near Lubeck, Germany- May 1945.



Photographer: norris (sgt) no 5 army film & photographic unit
Title: The british army in north-west europe 1944-45
Collection number: 4700-30
Date: 7 may 1945
Description:

Civilians ride on a daimler armoured car of the 1st royal dragoons as it enters the town of hadersleben in denmark, 7 may 1945.



35 A troop in evening leaguer at Sprakensehl, Germany.

Camp during exercises, car F329389 at Sprakenshl Germany, date: post ww2



Camp during exercises, car F351061 at Tripolitania Sabratha early 1950



Cavalry of the Line

The 2nd (Royal Scot Greys) Dragoons

The regiment's history began in 1678, when three independent troops of Scots Dragoons were raised. In 1681 these troops were regimented to form The Royal Regiment of Scots Dragoons, numbered the 4th Dragoons in 1694.

They were already mounted on grey horses by this stage and were already being referred to as the Grey Dragoons. In 1707 they were renamed The Royal North British Dragoons (North Britain then being the envisaged common name for Scotland), but were already being referred to as the Scots Greys.



In 1713 they were renumbered the 2nd Dragoons, as it was established that only one regiment of English dragoons had existed prior to their creation. In 1877 their nickname was finally made official when they became the 2nd Dragoons (Royal Scots Greys), which was inverted in 1921 to The Royal Scots Greys (2nd Dragoons).

They kept this title until 2nd July 1971, when they amalgamated with the 3rd Carabiniers.

Up until at least the Second World War, The Greys also had a popular, if somewhat derogatory, nickname of "The Bird Catchers" which derived from both their cap badge and the capture of the Eagle at Waterloo.

(The above courtesy of <http://homepage.eircom.net/~scotsgreys>)

The following is an extract from the BBC peoples war web site, telling the experiences of Mr P O'Rourke who served with the RSG'.

Patrick O'Rourke was born in Dundee in 1917 and just two years before he died, we the family asked him to write down some of memories of his experience in World War 2 serving in the Royal Scots Greys, of which he often talked. He was not in the best of health when he wrote this, having suffered a stroke, and our only regret is that we never persuaded him to do it sooner, but the family hope that you will find it interesting as it gives an insight into one of a generation, the like of which we may never see again. A generation whose attitudes were forged by the experiences of service in sometimes horrific conditions, and who rarely complained about their own predicament after the witnessing the sacrifice of their friends and comrades. We know that he thought of them every day, to the day he died.

To this end, please read on, the memoirs of Patrick O'Rourke, a soldier, a husband and a father, in his own words:-

"My name is Patrick O'Rourke and I was born in Dundee in Scotland on the 5th September 1917-the eldest of six. My military life started pre-war when my brother Joseph and I joined the territorial army, the Scottish Horse. As teenagers we looked on this as a lot of fun. We attended Drill nights at a place called Invergowrie near Dundee and went to Perth on Saturday afternoons for riding at "Patrick's Riding School". We usually had fish and chips afterwards (including train fare we could still have change from £2/6d.) Once a year we travelled to Blaire Atholl in Perthshire for two weeks camp. Horses were supplied by the Remount Depot at Weedon in Northants. The uniforms we wore were the usual cavalry type except we wore the Balmoral type of headdress which was picturesque. Our bounty was £5.00 per year.

In 1938 we transferred to The Royal Scots Greys, the Regiment was at the time in Hounslow in Middlesex, England. We were given a railway travel warrant and our instructions were to travel from Dundee to Kings Cross in London and then by underground to Hounslow. Unfortunately the I.R.A. placed a bomb on the railway line. I cannot remember how we reached Hounslow.



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When we reached the Regiment there was quite a lot of confusion. They had just received orders for embarkation to Palestine. They were due to leave in a weeks time. Of course Joe and I could not go just then so we helped with the packing. There were 200 grey horses to be looked after. This was a big job. There were hundreds of boxes, bundles etc. This job took about three months. There were about 60 soldiers left so we moved to Redford Barracks in Edinburgh, a modern barracks compared to the old Cavalry Barracks in Hounslow which were built in 1600 or so. We lived alone above the stables. Redford Barracks at this time were probably the best barracks in the country - good accommodation for both horses and men, a good square and a riding school. It took a few weeks to settle then training started in earnest - education, square bashing and riding school and other parades. After a few months we were off to Palestine to join the Regiment, about 150 altogether with the horses and we left Gorgie siding for Southampton in the south of England. We boarded the "Rehesios" and set off. The Mediterranean was very quiet but we were kept busy with stables as usual. The accommodation was a bit rough - sleeping in hammocks took a bit of getting used to.



After about two weeks we landed in Haifa and were met by a party from the Regiment who helped us load the horses on to a train for Rehovot where the Regiment was stationed. It was decided to reform "C" Squadron and most of us were kept together. I went to 3rd Troop "C" Squadron and my brother went to 2nd troop. The Regiment was very busy so we were thrown into the deep end and were operational right away. Some of the troops had never ridden a horse before but they soon got used to it!

War broke out when we were in Jericho and I shall never forget when we had a parade to tell us of mechanisation. We were not pleased, but it had to be. Soon we had to start attending courses on driving tanks, wireless operating and gunnery, as well as the horses which we still had of course. We rode out in the mornings and trained with the tanks in the afternoons. They were light tanks about 17 tons (General Stuarts).

We moved from Rehovot to various outposts, Artuf and Latrune, so we did a grand tour of Palestine. "C" Squadron did a spell at Ranallam which was a Christian Arab Colony, and then on to Nablus where we held our last mounted parade. The Regiment joined up at Jenine where we did some more training on tanks. Our next move was to Khataba in Egypt on the canal zone. There we received a full complement of tanks, 3 to a troop, 12 tanks to a squadron. The stop at Khataba lasted quite a long time - long enough for a bath and a cup of tea in the NAAFI!. Eventually we moved into the Western Desert, a very different kettle of fish, just acres of sand. We were spread out in squadrons about 1/4 mile apart.

Our first action was against Rommel, he called reconnaissance in force - it was quite a battle. "B" Squadron had light tanks (Stuarts), they had a few casualties, about 6 I think. I was operating a wireless set in a Grant tank in "C" Squadron, we were hit a couple of times, but nothing too serious. We knocked out about 5 "Mark 4" German tanks and the next day we had a look around - the German tanks had burnt out with the crews still in the tanks - we just covered them in petrol, and cremated them.

About this time we were bothered with Stuka dive bombers. The dive started out of the sun - absolutely terrifying. We were having a bite to eat when they attacked. My mess tin was shot out of my hand and I was left with just the handle, very lucky!



Image courtesy of <http://cas.awm.gov.au>

[British 8th Army](#) Western desert, Egypt. 1942-09-16.

Medical officer of the Royal Scots Greys, a cavalry regiment now manning general grant M3 medium tanks in the desert, takes the temperature of one of the regiment.

During a battle, the "doc" runs round in a carrier and visits every tank. The vehicle in the background is a Daimler dingo scout car.

We were now with the 22nd Armoured Brigade. Life in the desert was boring, apart from enemy aircraft which kept us pretty busy, and a few tank battles. We eventually reached Tripoli, although we had a rather hectic time at Nafilia. It started with a charge of the Light Brigade (Honeys) at Nafilia. Our tank was knocked out first, all the crew were in a Wadi. Our track was blown off so we could not move. We received 26 hits. Fortunately darkness was soon upon us and the Germans retreated. We were soon towed out. We had a meal - cold spuds and bully beef. Our next stop was Souarni Ben Adam. This was a nice spot, plenty of trees, it was a relief to get away from the sand. The 7th Armoured division went on to Tunisia and we stayed at Souarni for about 8 months.

We handed over all our tanks to the 4th Armoured Brigade. We were left with only one fit tank "the fighting haggis!" We built a sort of hut and during this period we underwent some trade tests. We came under Major General Sir Brian Robertson and were given jobs at the docks. We were on posts when the bombers came over.

We took a compass bearing of where the bombs dropped and tried to find out the next day where the floating bombs were dropped. The Battleship and a Hospital ship were badly hit and put out of action. The Commanding Officer, Colonel Sir Ranulph Twistleton-Wykeham-Fiennes, had gone home by this time, badly wounded and Tim Readman had taken over as C.O. About this time he sent for me and said he was sending me back to Gaza for an intelligence course. I was supposed to fly from Castel Benito but there were no seats left on the plane so I waited until the next night. This time I got on the plane but just before it took off I was told to give my seat to a V.I.P. I was not very pleased, until the next day when I was told that the plane was shot down over the "Med". I was sent for by the C.O. Tim asked me if I would drive his Dingo. This was a small Daimler Scout Car, and looking back, it was quite a messy time. Colonel Fiennes returned from the U.K. and resumed command.

The time was approaching for us to move on, and we boarded a ship for Italy but first we went to Bizerta in North Africa then to Salerno. This was a very tough job. Italy had capitulated and we were given the news



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about 9pm. the previous night. We heard a sigh of relief at the news. However, when we attempted to land, all hell let loose. The Germans were secure in the rocks and high ground and we suffered many casualties. One ship was sunk. Our main target was Battapaglia. The German tanks arrived in force and quite a battle took place. The battle for Salerno seemed to last forever. After 17 days when we had counted all our injuries we moved on to Maiori.

This war in Italy was so different from the one in the desert. Apart from the weather - a not very pleasant Italian winter - there were many casualties. The worst news was the death of the Commanding Officer. On this particular day in November we went to a place called Fontanella Fredda, when I say "we" there was Colonel Fiennes, Major Peter Borwick and myself in a Scout Car (Dingo). At Fontanella Fredda the Colonel left the car and stepped onto the verge on to some trip wire and set off some mines which threw him up into the air. Major Peter Borwick went over to help him, but he too went up on some mines. I managed to get them back on to the road, this alerted the Germans who let us have a few shots of shellfire. Although I managed to get the car started it would not move. I got out to see what the trouble was and found that an unexploded shell was jamming the back wheel.

The Colonel was shouting at me to get a move on (or words to that effect!). I took the shovel out of the car and prised the shell clear. At last we were able to move and set off for the Regiment. I radioed the Regiment and told them I had 2 wounded officers. On the way I met the Brigadier and told him what had happened. He told me to take them both to the hospital, but the Colonel had different ideas, he told me he wanted to go back to the Regiment as soon as possible. We arrived back and they were both taken to hospital in Naples. We learned later that the Brigadier's Dingo went up on a mine on the same road that I travelled on and his driver lost both of his legs. We heard later that the C.O. died on the 25th November. Indeed a great loss to the Regiment. This more or less was the end of operations with the C.O. out of action. For a short time I was sent to R.H.Q. to operate the rear link to the Brigade. While I was there I actually took the message that the C.O. had died. I was very surprised as I saw him in hospital the previous day. The Colonel was walking about. Peter Borwick was in bed not looking very well.

We left Italy on the 28th January and on the 5th February we saw the coast of Northern Ireland and we soon saw the Mull of Kintyre, Arran and Ailsa Craig and the next morning Greenock Goroach, Port Glasgow and to Dunbarton to Shieldhall Docks. We then entrained for Worthing in the south of England (I had never heard of it before) where we billeted in empty houses. Worthing is a nice place, I liked it very much and still do.

Quite a few of us settled there after Demob. We were there preparing for D-Day 6th June and did a lot of work on the South Downs with tanks etc. I was given a new car, a Humber, and I was driving with the C.O. Colonel Tim Readman, so I saw a lot of the County.

We left for Normandy from Gosport and on the 6th June were on the water. We landed on Sword beach and this was the start of a bloody war. Places like Hill 112, Caen, Falaise, Seine, Antwerp, Avelghen, and Flushing all remain in my memory. Eventually we finished up at Wiesmar on the Baltic where the Recce Troop travelled about 60 miles at full speed and which was the end of the war for us.

When the war finished we were employed for a while, namely collecting abandoned German vehicles and bringing them in. They were large vehicles, very heavy and it was quite a job. I picked up a nice horse called "Paddy". We moved to Rottenburg complete with horses where we fixed up a trick ride - quite an experience after all the years of mechanisation. From Rottenburg we moved to Lintfort where we did a horse show, we got some vaulting pads from Scotland which made vaulting a lot easier.

I left the Regiment at Lintfort. I was demobbed at Guildford in Surrey and moved to Worthing to be married. 48 years later I still live in the south of England. I joined the London Branch of the Regimental Association when I left the army and became Secretary for 27 years. I also served on the Committee of the Combined Cavalry Old Comrades Association for 10 years. They organise a large parade in Hyde Park in London every year.

The Royal Scots Greys became amalgamated with another Regiment and are now The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards. My youngest son (Patrick Joseph O'Rourke) served 5 years in the Regiment, in the Regimental Band, but THAT is another story!"

Patrick O'Rourke 25/3/94



Photo courtesy of <http://www.servicepals.com>
F-20ZS53

Trooper Eeverit Austin in Herford Germany-1958-59.

Description: The regiment is not known other than the photo is marked Dragoons – However there appears to be a roughly painted 2nd Dragoons Royal Scots Greys insignia on the front of the vehicle.(Even though the number, visible on the lower glacis plate is incomplete it can be determined that it is not the number provided by the Daimler factory war department numbering scheme.)



Photo courtesy of Tony Grey
Photographer Unknown

Description: Four unidentified troopers possibly in Herford Germany
1958-59.



Photo courtesy of Bovington Tank Museum reference 5196-B4
Photographer Unknown

Description: DAC **F339276** / **86ZR91** 2nd Dragoons Royal Scot Greys, possibly in Egypt
Circa 1950's



Photo courtesy of Bovington Tank Museum reference 7776-B5
Photographer Unknown
Description: DAC of 2nd Dragoons Royal Scot Greys, possibly in Egypt
Circa 1950's



Cavalry of the Line
22nd Dragoons

The 22nd Dragoons was a cavalry regiment of the British Army from 1940 to 1945.
Motto - Nec Aspera Terrent.

The regiment was raised 1st December 1940 from a cadre of personnel taken from the 4th/7th Royal Dragoon Guards and 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards, and was assigned to 29th Armoured Brigade of 11th Armoured Division.



It was later reassigned to 30th Armoured Brigade of the same division as part of a swap owing to the regimental loyalties of the Brigadiers commanding; this brigade was then transferred to the 42nd Armoured Division in 1942, and to 79th Armoured Division in 1943.

All three regiments of the 30th Armoured Brigade were re-equipped with flail tanks, modified M4 Sherman tanks with a large jib covered in chains attached to the front, intended for clearing a path through minefields at a top speed of one and a half miles per hour whilst flogging a path.

Tanks thus equipped were often split up and used in large troop or squadron formations in support of organised set piece attacks rather than as organised formations.

As such, the regiment came ashore in the first wave of the Operation Overlord landings on the morning of June 6, 1944, with A Squadron, reinforced by 2 troops of C Squadron and supported by two troops of the Westminster Dragoons, landing on Sword Beach and B Squadron landing on Juno Beach.

Later in the day the final two troops of C Squadron landed on Juno where they remained for several days on beach clearance. The regiment continued to see action sporadically once the beaches were cleared, fighting through Belgium and the Netherlands into Germany, where they were at the end of the war; the regiment was disbanded in Germany on 30th November 1945.

The regiment was awarded the 10 maximum battle honours for operations in the North West Europe Theatre

The Regiment was equipped with **Dingo Scout Cars** for reconnaissance use between 1944-1945 1949, this was confirmed by an Lieutenant Ian Hammerton. And also the War department records held at the Bovington tank Museum.



Cavalry of the Line
The 25th Dragoons

The 25th Dragoons was a cavalry regiment of the British Army from 1941 to 1947.

The regiment was raised in June 1941 from a cadre of personnel taken from the 3rd Carabiniers along with volunteers from infantry regiments, and was assigned to 254th Indian Armoured Brigade. It later operated in India and Burma with Indian XV Corps.

It finished the war in Burma, and then was based in Madras and Bangalore before being disbanded in 1947



A photo of a Dingo scout car F9426 exists in the Bovington library with the following inscription:

'Dingo light armoured car manned by the men who served in the middle east before coming to Burma.. This type of vehicle did excellent work clearing the Japanese road block that isolated Yenangyaung from the north'.