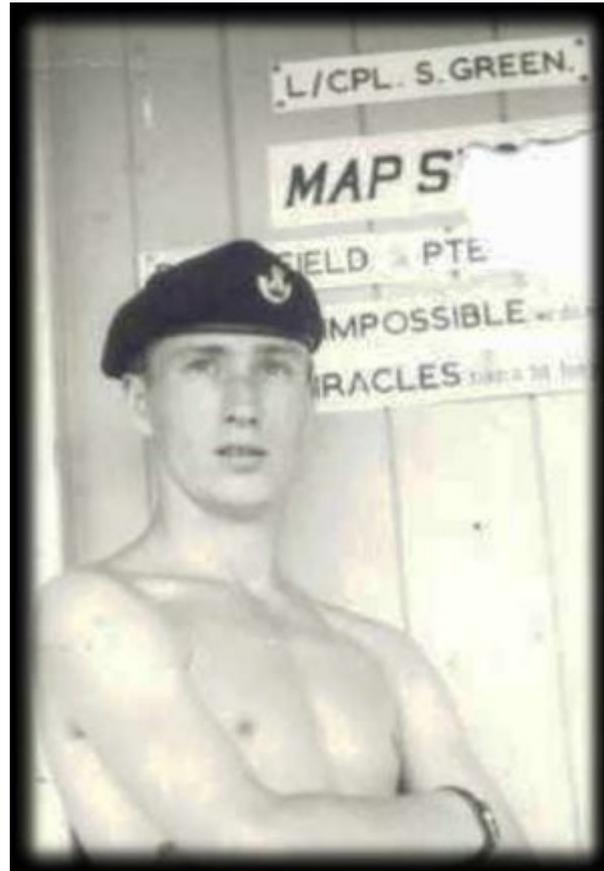


KINGS OWN YORKSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY 1755-1968

Aden Diaries

NINE MONTHS
of
Memories from an old diary
(Stan Green KOYLI)



This diary was the day to day life of an ordinary soldier doing his job in a foreign country.

It was done under extreme conditions, but with fairness to the locals.

We knew that the majority of them were not terrorists, but normal folk who wanted to get on with their lives as best as they could.

CEDE NULLIS
(Yield to none)

8th August 1965

The departure from Gatwick, late at night on the 8th August 1965, was a sombre affair. Other travellers hardly noticed over a hundred men all with short haircuts, sitting in neat rows, moving only when told, and then in small groups of around six to and from refreshments.

Our flight was called around 11 pm. The long walk to the plane was done in almost silence, only the noise of the Regimental footsteps could be heard. Our first sight of the plane, a Britannia in the colours of British United Airways was from the bottom of the stairs leading from the departure lounge. As we walked across the tarmac a cold wind chilled what had been a warm night.



We boarded the plane, sat down and fastened our seat belts, the only discussion seemed to be about who was going to sit where. I was lucky and managed to get a window seat. It seemed an age before the quiet was broken by the whine of the engines, two at first then all four; I felt the plane vibrate slightly from side to side as the engines reached half throttle.

We started to move, very slowly at first, and from my window seat I saw a man dressed in white, holding what appeared to be two brightly coloured table-tennis bats, he was waving these to his left and we moved in the same direction. We travelled about a few hundred yards then stopped; we

were at the end of the runway. We were given sweets to chew.

The noise of the engines changed, the pitch increased sharply, the sound was terrific, the plane shuddered but we were still stationary, the brakes were off and so were we. We were part of "A" Company 1st Battalion The Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry on our way to Aden.

As we climbed into the night sky the engines became quieter, then seemed to blend in with the distant voices, my ears buzzed for a second then cleared. We were above the night clouds I looked at my watch, it had just gone midnight. After about an hour or so into the flight a meal was served, we talked a while and then settled down to rest and sleep.

I woke a few times during the flight, dawn came early, the sky was bright blue and we were over the sea somewhere. A light snack was served for breakfast and a welcome cup of tea. I settled down again and soon fell asleep.

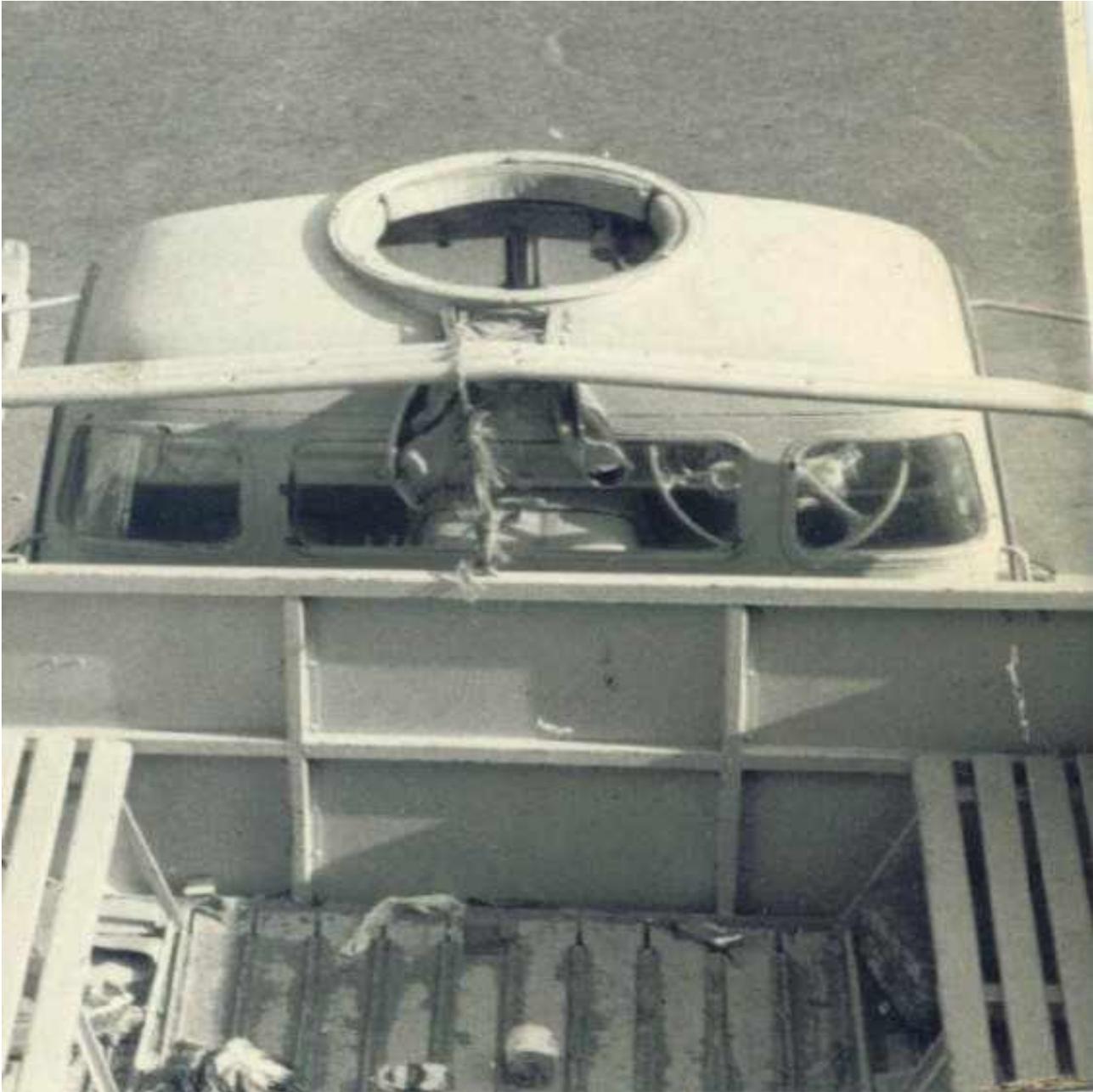
9th August 1965

The next thing I heard was someone informing us that we were nearing our destination. Rubbing the sleep from my eyes I looked out of the window and saw the ground below. It was in bright sun shine the colours were very sharp gold and orange mountains and away towards the horizon and a blue sea. I looked at my watch, it was midday, in fact it was 3 pm local time. We had flown almost twelve hours non-stop.

We circled the coast and then flew in over the sea, just before we landed we crossed a road causeway. The landing was smooth, we taxied around the airfield coming to a halt near a group of tin huts. We were kept seated until the doors were open, I was near one of the doors and as it opened it felt as though someone had opened an oven door, it was so hot.

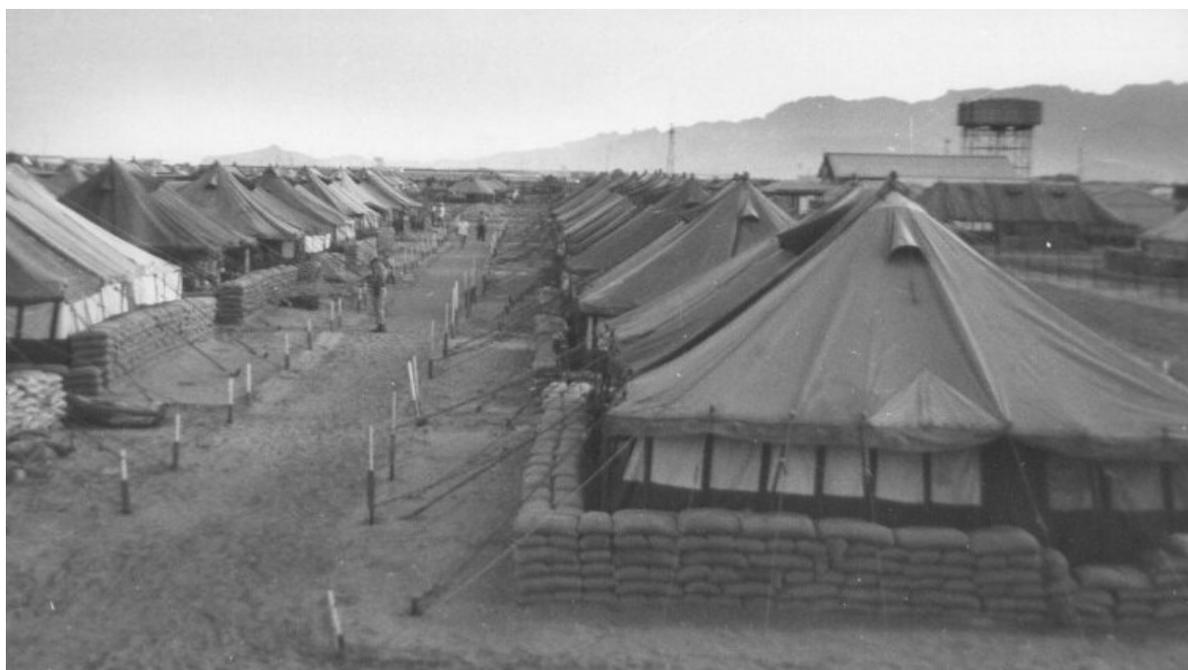
We left the plane and moved into the huts, they had some primitive air conditioning which was welcome. We waited for a few moments then heard the sound of heavy lorries moving towards us, six or seven stopped outside, a team was then detailed to load all the cases and kitbags into the first lorries, as soon as this was done we climbed into the remainder.

Each truck had two armed escorts, one standing in the drivers cab through a turret, the other sat at the back, each armed with an SLR (Self Loading Rifle).



We moved off and out of the airfield, the first Arab we saw was sitting just outside the airfield gates, He was selling something, something that attracted a lot of flies. The first smell of Aden was horrible it was very hot, dry, and with very few drains.

We moved through an area called Khormaksar where the RAF had their base. We turned left onto the Coast road and the sea was on our right. In the distance we could see our new home, a large tented camp. As we drove up the approach road we passed a large sign saying “ Radfan Camp”.



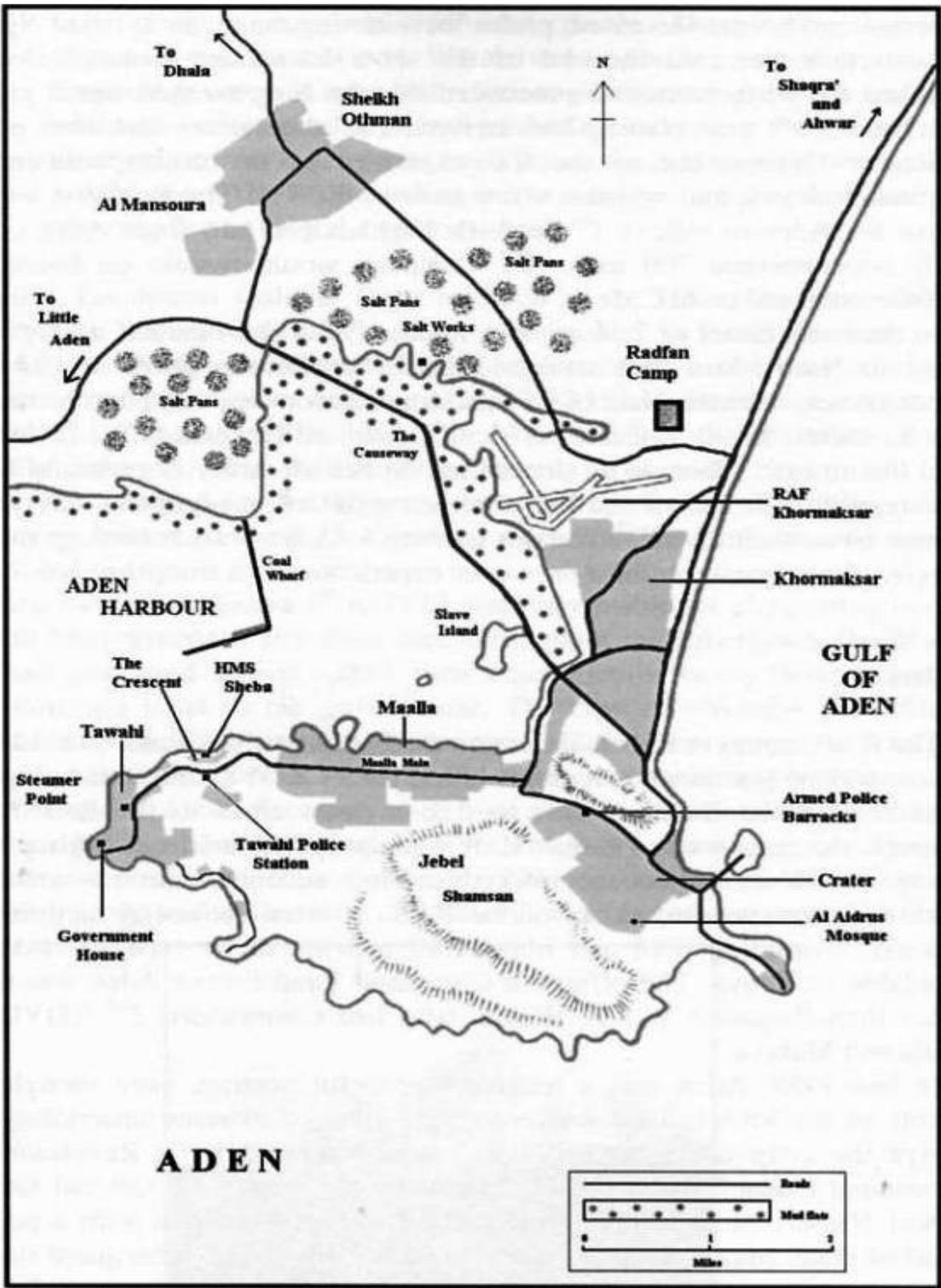
We stopped at the main gate, a sentry approached the leading vehicle, the gates were opened and we drove through. We stopped between the two camp areas, one part was occupied by another Infantry Regiment the “Royal Sussex Regiment” they had been in Aden for several months and most were out on duty.

The cases and kitbags had already been unloaded and left in rows at the side of the road, we found out our own pieces and were then shown to our tents. The tent consisted of a large slab of concrete as foundations with several poles which supported a roof without walls, in the centre of the roof was a large fan which was turning very slowly, someone turned the speed up which caused the whole tent to shake it was quickly turned down

again.

We lay on our beds, the sweat poured from us, the heat made you feel so weak. We were soon called together, our orders were to get an early night, we would rise at 5.30 am for the start of our acclimatization runs, we were then told we would be out patrolling the streets of Aden around mid-morning.

After tea we made up our beds, the mosquito nets were the hardest to put up, but no matter how well it was done the mosquito's still got through.



10th August 1965

We were awake well before reveille, after the heat of yesterday the morning seemed quite cool.

Our Platoon were soon off on our run around the camp perimeter, steady at first then faster sprints, we were all fit, but this was to enable us to get used to the heat quicker. Our first morning jog lasted for an hour or so. After breakfast we had a briefing about the situation in Aden and surrounding districts.

We returned to our tents, finished dressing and just after 9 am we assembled again to draw weapons and ammunition. This was the start of our Internal Security Duties, today we would just fill in and get to know the layout of the town and the feel of locals watching your every move.

As we drove into town, we passed the local Bazaar, blue smoke lifted from the whole area and the smell of early morning cooking filled the air. We entered Maalla district down a dual carriageway with shops on the left and high rise flats on our right, it would be part of our duties to guard these flats as most of them were homes to the many service personnel and their families.

At the end of this road was the Hedjoff roundabout, and then into the area called Tawahi. This was to be the area of our first foot patrol.

The area consisted of Government offices and the local radio station, a prime target I thought. Our first patrol was done with a great feeling of uncertainty. There were seven in our patrol the NCO leading and the rest followed at about five yard intervals our radio operator was in the middle of the patrol, the radios at this time were large and heavy, about 4'x 2', carried on the operators back with a six foot aerial.

We walked the streets of Tawahi for a few hours that first morning, all was quiet, at about 1.30 we called at the rear of the Government offices where packed lunch had been delivered from Radfan Camp. In the afternoon we moved to Maalla, and were located in a factory known as the Aden Supply Depot (ASD) part of which was a bakery and part an ice making plant.

We were the first patrol out in Maalla, we walked to the main street, which was known as the "MURDER MILE".

We walked up one side and down the other checking a few places on the way. On the Arab side the patrol was done in silence, we looked carefully at each face and into every shop we passed, always looking back.



A lot of the shops had wire grills fitted over the windows and doors to prevent Terrorists throwing hand grenades into the shops, many of the local cafes had double doors fitted as added security. Half way up the street was the Mosque, the locals seemed to disappear into it when ever a patrol approached.

We were told not to enter any Mosque, but if an incident happened we were to close all exits and call the local Police who would investigate.

At the top of the street was a set of traffic lights, this was the junction with the Maalla Relief Road, This is where we crossed over and started to patrol down the other side, a few yards down this road on our right was the entrance to the Bazaar area this was also out of bounds.

We looked down towards the stalls and the maze of narrow streets. Just after the Bazaar there was some building work going on. Arab workers were assembling a wooden scaffolding and to pass this the patrol had to walk in the main street, the local Arab drivers took great delight in trying to drive as close as possible to the patrol.

Further down the street, behind the flats was the NAAFI shop, we reached there just before it opened to the families, it was part of our job to search the shop and surrounding area for anything suspicious before the shop was

opened, it was all clear.

We chatted to some of the waiting servicemen and wives for a few moments and then continued to patrol returning to the main street waving to the other patrol as they passed us going up on the other side of the road.

We were advised that two grenades had been thrown in the Relief Road, we made our way to the scene, but were told to continue our patrol in the Main Road.

We finally finished our patrol but stayed at the ASD until 7 pm before returning to Radfan Camp. We were stood down and after supper spent the rest of the night at the local camp pop shop drinking cold orange juice. It had been a long first day with temperatures in the high 90's.

11th August 1965

The day followed the same pattern, an early morning run, in town patrolling. Finding our way around the back streets was hard they all looked alike, almost unreal, most of the lads had never been out of the UK and seeing the way the locals lived was an eye opener. We were young lads, first time away from home in a strange country, we had not realised their homes were no more than huts, with no running water or toilets.

12th August 1965

Foot patrols in Tawahi, an incident when a few 9mm shots were fired at one patrol, we kept a watchful eye on everyone who passed us. We moved into Maalla in the afternoon, and continued foot patrols until the early evening, finishing at the ASD where we had a rest before returning to Radfan Camp.

13th August 1965

Back into Maalla on foot patrols. 2 grenades thrown near the Maalla Relief Road, no injuries, we patrolled all day two on four off until late in the evening. The general feeling at this time in Aden was uneasy.

14th August 1965

We moved from foot patrols to Mobile patrols doing the same route into Maalla, Tawahi through to Steamer Point and a run out to Gold Mohur Valley.

There was some trouble, the odd shot being fired, a skirmish between the locals was left to the Civil Police. We would be called to every incident and search the area for anything that could indicate what type of weapon or grenades were used.

15th August 1965

Our mobile base was HMS Sheba, a naval shore base in Steamer Point. Mobiles consisted of two mainly short wheel base Land Rovers manned by a section of eight men, we covered all the local bolt holes and back streets, The area we covered was from Radfan Camp to Maalla, into Tawahi onto Steamer Point and down to Gold Mohur.

We had lunch and a few hours rest in the Sheba Base before returning to patrol again showing a big presence to reassure the locals who were caught up in the troubles. We were relieved from Mobile duties late afternoon, but before we could return to Radfan Camp we were detailed to do a couple of hours of foot patrol in the Maalla area, there had been a sudden increase in the number of people on the streets and we doubled up patrols to help to prevent trouble starting.

We patrolled up and down the Main Road with the odd trip to the Relief Road, the locals were aware of something, we did not know what, but we kept an eye on the situation until late in the evening.

On our return to Camp we were stood down for the night. A welcome visit to the NAAFI and a drink, this was our first real drink in Aden.

16th August 1965

Back to Maalla on foot patrols, we walked the same route as the day before, some Arabs were having an argument with some off duty soldiers, we moved in and defused the situation. In the afternoon we moved into Tawahi and patrolled the back streets up to Shanty Town, we were picked up from the street and returned back to Radfan Camp just before dark.

17th August 1965

We were on stand by practising Road Block Duties inside Radfan Camp. We used two Bedford 3 Tonners as our Road Block Transport, the whole platoon was involved. Angle-iron pickets welded together into a tripod with a long heavy metal pole are used to block the road with a second set about ten yards further down the road.

We practised this drill until we could stop the trucks and have the road block set up within a minute. One of the best positions on the road block was the wire man. It was the job of two soldiers to run passed the block about 30-50 yards carrying a roll of barbed wire, this would then be anchored to one side of the road, and they would run across the road dragging the wire behind them, to stop any vehicle trying to crash through the road block.

We finished training and had lunch, we then sat around ready for the next call out, and it came just after 2 pm. A few grenades had been thrown down town and a patrol had been shot at. We moved out to Maalla and started to block roads, checking all cars and lorries, another grenade was thrown near the Hedjoff round-about and a section was detailed down there, we kept our position and carried on checking everyone and everything.

We stayed out on patrol until late, when the area settled down we were allowed to return to Camp just before midnight.

18th August 1965

We spent more time doing road blocks than anything else including sleeping. On one occasion the road blocks were set up at both ends of the Mallaa Main Road, standing there watching the taxi drivers as they drove by, if they looked suspicious, we stopped them at random and checked the vehicle.

We moved position for another road block and our wagon was so quick to stop that one of the lads nearly fell out of the back. This was to the amusement of an Arab Taxi driver, who was not too happy when it was decided that he would be the first to be searched. His car took a little longer than usual, the driver's seat had not been removed before.

We are advised to look out for a white Opel car, the driver was wanted for questioning about carrying weapons for the National Liberation Front(NLF). We found him almost immediately, arrested him and handed him over to the local police, only to see him driving past us again within the hour.

More trouble and we were called to assist another incident at the Hedjoff Roundabout. A shot had been fired at a passing patrol, we checked the area but nothing was found. We carried on checking vehicles for another few hours, we returned to Radfan Camp just before midnight.

We were not stood down, but were put on half hour stand by to be ready to move to assist in any incident in our area. We managed to get a few hours rest, a meal and drink, we rested on our beds and waited until dawn.

19th August 1965

All was quiet and we managed to have a good breakfast in the Camp Kitchen without being told to “grab your rifle you’re on your way into town”. After Breakfast we managed to have a shower, change our bedding and do a bit of laundry, a few hours of being able to catch up on your outstanding letters and other things was most welcome. We still had to clean our tent areas, and we re-did the signs around the tent advising people to “Keep off the Grass”. Some of the platoon were detailed as escort on the passion wagon down to the Mermaid Club, the rest of us just lay on our pits and waited to be briefed on our next duty, visited the pop shop for a drink or two before returning to our beds to rest.

20th August 1965

Our next duty was Battalion guard stationed in Radfan Camp, most of the platoon were housed in the Guard room. Part of this duty was the sentry on the main gate, a few lads patrolled the perimeter fence whilst the rest of the platoon were detailed as escorts both in and out of the camp. Every Arab vehicle that came into the camp had to be searched and then escorted whilst in the camp area.

It was inevitable that I would get the job of escorting the rubbish wagon and the many flies that went with it but at least you were given some time off after this duty to shower and change, but the smell still lingered on.

In the evening we had fixed positions where we would watch the perimeter fence and keep in touch with the guard room on any comings and goings.

21st August 1965

The second day on guard duty we were detailed to escort the passion wagon into town, we went to the Mermaid Club in Tarshine, a beach club where the off duty lads could have a drink and swim. We were now well into the swing of things, the 18 hour day 7 days a week was the norm.

Another incident in our area to deal with, groups gathering together posed a problem and dispersing them was not always easy. We moved out of Radfan as extra cover to patrol the Maalla Main road.

22nd August 1965

Our last duty as Battalion guard was at Dolphin Square, this is where the Brass Hats lived and it was our job to guard these homes day and night, from a makeshift guard room in a garage.

We walked around the square all night 2 hours on four hours off with supplemented visits by the Mobile Patrols.

23rd August 1965

We finished at 9 am and returned to base at Radfan Camp, where we were stood down for the rest of the day. We were so tired that after breakfast we just lay on our pits or walked to the pop shop for a cold drink. We had to drink at least eight pints of fluid every day and keep up the salt intake with salt tablets.

We did a bit of training for Road Blocks and were then allowed to stand down, have a shower and a few hours off.

24th August 1965

The day off soon finished and we were back on duty, this time we were to go to Government House. This duty was well liked, but we had to prepare our best kit and polish our brasses and boots, we moved down to the House in Steamer Point and took over the guard room. We operated as usual a two hours on and four off shift system for 24 hours a day, this duty at least gave you time to have a swim and relax at the near-by Mermaid Club.

My first stag was No 3, this was to patrol the servants quarters and down to the perimeter fence to a point overlooking the Mermaid Club. After a couple of hours you got to know every crack in the path and every post along the wired fence. We changed over stags and went up to the Admiralty House post and walked around the gardens for another two hours before supper, another night of two on and four off, the night passed

very quietly and without incident.

25th August 1965

The servants we met appeared friendly enough but never spoke, we had an East African man who used to clean up around the guard room area, he was the only local who would show you any signs of recognition when you saw him in town, others just turned their backs as you walked past.

The rest of the duty at Government House was taken up on various stag positions including No 5, the search light post up at Admiralty House. This position overlooked the old gun emplacements the Officers' Club and the beach, rough ground you had to be careful where you stepped, at night it was difficult and we had to keep a look out for our platoon officer who would do his rounds checking on the stags at all hours usually in the early hours, you could not afford to be caught asleep on duty.

26th August 1965

The main gate duty at Government house was a bit like guarding Buckingham Palace, you had to be smart and keep on your toes for visiting dignitaries, who would expect a salute.

We finished the Government House duty mid morning and handed over the guard, then returned to Radfan Camp to prepare to resume normal foot patrols around Maalla and Tawahi.

There was a bit of an atmosphere in the towns, an incident in the back streets was reported and we were called to the scene, a fight between groups of locals was causing the local Police some concern and we were asked to call and assist. They were soon quiet when we arrived on site. We stayed around the area until the Police took control and then returned to carry on patrolling the main Maalla Main.

27th August 1965

Early morning and out into Maalla on foot patrol, we walked up and down the Main Street for hours. Lunch at the ASD and out again onto the Relief Road until tea time, when we were picked up and returned to Camp, we managed a drink, before settling down.

28th August 1965

Road block duties at both ends of the Maalla Main Road, two shots were fired at our search light Land Rover, we checked plenty of vehicles but found nothing. It was late before we returned back to Radfan Camp.

29th August 1965

Road blocks again in Maalla in the morning, then into Tawahi in the afternoon, we managed to finish early and get back to base before tea.

30th August 1965

A lie in, we were on stand-by all morning, we were allowed to go to the Mermaid Club in the afternoon and had a swim. In the evening we moved out to Maalla and did a few hours of Road Block on the Main Road.

31st August 1965

Back on road blocks, one of the sections found weapons in a car, two old rifles but no ammunition, the car was sent to another base for further inspection. We carried on checking vehicles until late afternoon before being stood down and able to return to Radfan Camp.

1st September 1965

September 1st 1965 was a day that most soldiers in Aden will remember. We were on patrol in Tawahi when we heard that Sir Arthur Charles had been shot dead in Crater, he was the speaker in The Aden Parliament. All rest time was cancelled. The intensity of patrols increased sharply after the shooting, the feeling in the townships was tense, we even started to escort the British School buses, picking it up at the flats in Maalla and then following it on its pick ups and then onto the school on Chapel Hill.

We were doing this escort duty when we received a call over the radio that a car had been acting suspiciously in the Steamer Point area and was heading in our direction. We saw the car just after we crossed the Hedjoff roundabout, we did a quick U turn and managed to catch it before it turned off up towards the Shanty town, we stopped the car and searched the driver, we were about to search the car when the local Police turned up and we let them take over. We carried on patrolling, being stoned and shouted at from behind brick walls.

2nd September 1965

TV Cameras were following us. There was a sudden increase in the number of News reporters in Aden, a TV Crew was always near our base and would often follow us around. Trouble was always near to where they

would set up to film, they seemed to attract attention. We did not talk to them and they were not wanted around.

3rd September 1965

The atmosphere in the streets was very tense with small groups often causing trouble, we had to respond to a number of incidents where local youths were throwing stones at our patrols. On the last day of our Mobile Duty we were called to Khormaksar after reports of a bomb being planted near the airport gates, it blew up just before we arrived, there were no casualties, we checked the area for any information about the type of grenade but nothing was found and it was near the end of our shift. We returned to Radfan Camp cleaned our weapons and then had the rest of the night off.

4th September 1965

We were in Maalla Town early the next morning and it was not long before we had to call for assistance when stones were thrown at us. We moved into the crowd and arrested the ring leaders, and took them to the main Police Station at Steamer Point. In the afternoon we moved into Tawahi to patrol, the idea of moving from area to area kept you alert and made you more aware of the dangers at all times. We patrolled out of the Police Station just off the Crescent, the Arabs were being more openly hostile, but the number of foot patrols on the streets stopped any situation from getting out of hand. It was about this time that the Arabs turned their attentions to their own Police and we heard that one Police Officer had been shot dead in Maalla just off the Murder Mile.

5th September 1965

The situation was deteriorating and it was decided that a search of houses would take place in an area of Maalla, which was known to be a terrorist safe area close to Crater and the relief road. We were up before 4 am, out of camp and in position to start the search at dawn. The whole area was closed completely, no one was allowed in or out, every thing and everyone inside the selected area was searched.

We moved through our section house by house, person by person, lifting small children out of their beds and searching it, we found enough weapons and ammunition to justify the search. The search went on for over five hours and it was mid afternoon before we returned to our base at Radfan Camp.

We had only just settled down to relax when we were called out to do extra foot patrols in the Tawahi area. We moved down to the Police Station at the Crescent and took over the second story of the building, we stayed there and our evening meals were brought to us from Radfan Camp.

6th September 1965

We patrolled around the clock, all was quiet, the locals still gathered in little groups and chanted at patrols, usually after we had passed them. We had no major problems during this stint and returned to our base to practise Riot Squad duties.

7th September 1965

We spent the next day going over and over our riot drill, step by step, the box formation was practised and perfected. We were well trained and confident that this squad could put a stop to any riot situation with the minimum amount of force.

8th September 1965

News reporters were still around, following the patrols and taking photographs of our searches and over dramatising the situation. They would disappear when the real trouble started and then reappear to file their report when it was quiet.

9th September 1965

The general situation was getting worse and we had to deal with many

grenade throwing incidents. We caught one bomber and were told through an interpreter that this youth was given the grenade, with the pin removed and the only thing he could do was to throw it. We carried on dealing with the stone throwers, the area was very tense.

We were on Mobile patrols and were almost immediately called to the airport to another grenade incident and reports of people injured. We were the second mobile to arrive and were detailed to escort the ambulance to the hospital at Steamer point, we rushed through the town blasting our horn and with headlights full on, it took us about 20 minutes to do the six mile trip. Luckily the injuries were not too serious, the blood made them look worse than they were, but we took no chances.

We drove back to HMS Sheba and had a quick drink before continuing our patrol. After being relieved we returned to Radfan Camp, only to be put on standby ready to move in thirty minutes.

10th September 1965

Whilst on standby we were practising Road Blocks, we were called out, we made our way to the ASD just off Maalla main road and started to do foot patrols as usual it was two hours on and two hours off all day.

We had just finished a stint and not yet had a cup of tea when we heard two explosions, we moved out again into town, we were assigned to close the road at the Hedjoff roundabout. An Arab Policeman had been shot and killed in Crater. The Road was reopened, but a close watch was kept on all vehicles coming out of Crater.

11th September 1965

It was early in the morning by the time we returned to Radfan Camp and our beds. We were called early again, after breakfast we were briefed about the arrival of a passenger liner, it was due into port mid morning. Our section was detailed to Mobile Patrols for the day. We would travel in pairs, each land rover would have a crew of four. We toured the whole sector from Maalla down to Tawahi calling at all the known bolt holes. We moved into Steamer Point and waited for the liner to dock.

When the liner arrived we were detailed to park outside the dock entrance

and to advise the passengers to keep together and if any trouble started they should return to the ship straight away.

Most of them thought that the whole situations had been put on for their entertainment, the day passed quietly the passengers returned safely and the Arab shopkeepers made a lot of money.

12th September 1965

Road Blocks in Maalla Main Road, we checked over a hundred cars and their occupants. A few shots were heard in the back streets, one section was sent to check it out, but after inspection nothing was found. We returned to Road Blocks doing snap stop and searches until after the evening rust hour getting back to Radfan late.

13th September 1965

Foot Patrols up the back streets to the Shanty Town, the foot hills of the Sham Shan Mountain, hard work walking amongst the wooden huts. We returned to ASD for a rest and some lunch before doing a couple of hours in the Maalla Main Road.

14th September 1965

Back out to Maalla on foot patrols, at this time Aden was one of the best free ports anywhere in the world but it was not long before the port was closed to visiting liners. The whole of Aden seemed at this time to be under the spell of the NFL and against us. We returned back to Radfan Camp and did a few hours practice on Riot Drill.

15th September 1965

We were Internal Security (IS) platoon and on standby to move at a few moments notice, we moved to the ASD and waited, we did a couple of hours foot patrol on the Maalla Main but nothing happened and we were stood down late afternoon.

16th September 1965

After a good breakfast we moved out to do Road Blocks in Maalla, we had been checking cars for an hour or so when we were stoned by a group of youths. We called for support and the IS Platoon arrived and cleared up the situation very quickly.

17th September 1965

We were IS Platoon, and on stand by, when we were called out, a grenade had been thrown and a few people were injured. Some of the platoon escorted the ambulance, while the rest of us searched the area.

Just before we were about to return to Radfan a couple of airmen were shot at in Maalla, we stayed out on the streets until the early hours.

18th September 1965

Trouble in Crater, an Arab had been shot dead, a curfew was imposed in Maalla, we were out all day making sure that no one was on the streets during the curfew time. We had to arrest a few who were out on the streets, they all had excuses but no papers. They were taken to the nearest Police Station for processing.

19th September 1965

A day down at the Mermaid Club, not swimming, we were patrolling around the area to ensure that those who were having some time off were safe, we had lunch at HMS Sheba, before doing a few hours of foot patrols around the Tawahi area.

20th September 1965

Trouble up in the Mountains of Radfan, we heard that a Major had been shot and injured in Habilayn, The base was attacked by rebels from the Yemen. We carried on patrolling, the curfew was still in place and we were stretched, all available personnel were out in town and on patrol.

21st September 1965

We stayed out all night. Working from the ASD, the curfew was supposed to be lifted today if all was calm. The locals came out and after a few hours there was trouble again, the curfew was re imposed and we were back out on the streets in force to keep the peace. Once the curfew was in place the towns were deserted.

22nd September 1965

The curfew was again relaxed, and the locals went about their business, things were ok for a few hours and then two grenades were thrown in Maalla killing two Arab workers, again we moved out in force to quell the situation. The locals were upset we arrested many before they started to return to their homes. The people arrested were sent to Al Mansoura Prison at Sheikh Othman.

23rd September 1965

With so many locals arrested last night, our platoon was sent to the Prison to stand guard there, whilst the prison authorities could arrange extra cover. We stayed there all day patrolling the perimeter both inside and outside of the prison. There was always a build up of locals around these streets and we kept a high profile with foot and mobile patrols in the area all the time. We did not finish until late.

24th September 1965

A rocket was fired at a passing patrol, possibly an RPG a Russian made launcher, this was a new development in the weapons they used, we hoped it was just a one off and kept an extra watch on all vehicles. It was a big weapon and we had to find it. We were sent to Maalla to do foot patrols, we stayed out until after the 8 pm curfew was in place before returning to Radfan Camp.

25th September 1965

The curfew was to be imposed on the whole Aden District from 8 pm to 6 am, we were patrolling Maalla when we had a report that an Arab land rover had exploded in Steamer Point. It appears it was on its way to plant a bomb but the explosives had gone off prematurely.

When we arrived on the scene, there were bits of debris all over the road covering an area of a hundred yards or so, the only piece of the vehicle left was part of the gear box and the twisted frame of the seat which was still smoking.

We parked away from the incident and were detailed to search the area, we walked down the road in single file looking for pieces from the incident and other bits that could be identified. One section found a few pieces of torn flesh and bone. We also found part of the engine mounting buried into a wall, it was so deep that it had to be removed by putting a rope around it and most of the section pulled it out.

We were later informed that three Arabs were in the vehicle, the amount of explosives being carried was estimated to have been only 25 pounds. The curfew started again and we went out on patrol. We patrolled all areas right up to the back streets in the Shanty town. Any person seen on the street without authorisation was arrested and taken to the nearest police station, but they seemed to be on the streets again the following day.

26th September 1965

The rioting and stoning carried on during the day, we spent our time on patrol mainly in the Maalla and Tawahi districts. With the extended curfew in evening we had plenty of patrols out catching the curfew breakers, there were always a couple of dozen every night.

Although it was hard work, the nights under curfew passed very quickly. The odd shot was fired at us and the occasional hand grenade would be thrown. We were spending most of our time now stopping the build up of groups of Arabs.

Our platoon was then assigned to cover the prison at Al Mansoura again which by this time was quite full and we had to look after about a hundred inmates and the problem of their relations who would gather outside the prison. When the next batch of interns arrived they would surge forward and try to stop the vans from going in, this is when we were called out to the front of the prison to push them back and disperse them, but they soon returned again within an hour or so. We patrolled around the Prison to keep them away.

27th September 1965

The worst trouble now seemed to be centred on the Crater District, which was out of our area, although we did move into Crater to assist in search duties after riots had started there.

During this time we would assist the families in Maalla to guard their homes and do some balcony piquet, where we would arrive and stand guard on the balcony of a service family overlooking the Maalla Main Road. We did this duty until the early hours of the morning, before slipping away with a passing mobile patrol vehicle. Hours were long and time off was short to come by.

28th September 1965

We were soon back in the thick of it, a grenade had gone off in Tawahi, a woman had been killed, hit in the chest by shrapnel, we cordoned off the area. There were a lot of Arabs shouting and crying, one of their own had been hit.

We continued with road blocks at each end of the Maalla Main Road. An accident in the morning when an ammunition truck caught fire, we helped to cordon off the area while some of the platoon unloaded the truck and stacked the ammunition safely.

The fire was soon put out and we helped load another wagon with the ammunition. We continued to check vehicles near the Hedjoff roundabout. As soon as the curfew was on we moved into Maalla to keep a watch in the

Relief Road until late.

29th September 1965

During the troubles the Port of Aden was closed to most ships, and now with the situation in Steamer Point returning to normal, just a grenade every other day, they reopened the port, and we were to expect our first liner, it was full of people who were on their way to Australia, most of them emigrating from the UK.

Once the ship had docked, all available personnel were on the streets around the Steamer Point area. No one was certain what would happen, would the terrorists take advantage, or would they let the shop keepers do it, the winners were the shop keepers even in these troubles there was still a profit to be made.

The ship left port and we continued to patrol, we were called to an unexploded grenade, it was found by some children on waste land behind there flats, we took it to the local police station for disposal and then returned to Radfan Camp to hand over.

30th September 1965

We were not stood down, we were held on reserve and had to be ready to move out at an half hours notice, enough time to get a quick shower, change of clothes, do your laundry, clean your kit and then take some time out for a drink at the NAAFI pop shop. A shot was fired at a Mobile patrol but we were not called out.

1st October 1965

We were out by mid morning and doing foot patrols in the Maalla area, but were unexpectedly relieved after lunch and we were able to rest at the Mermaid Club before returning to Radfan Camp. We had a night off and went to the camp pictures and a pint in the NAAFI club.

2nd October 1965

A State strike was called in support of the depowered Aden Government and a 24 hours curfew was imposed from 8 pm. We were on IS standby and moved into the Aden Supply Depot to wait there on call if anything happened. We stayed out all night and our meals were brought to us.

3rd October 1965

We were still in the ASD, when we were called out. Riots had broken out in Crater and crowds were building up in Maalla, Tawahi and Sheikh Othman areas.

We went onto the streets of Maalla in force. We were called to do our Riot Squad duties and went out to face over a hundred people. We formed up in the box formation and moved to face the crowd. They must have known we meant business as they retreated and dispersed with too much trouble. We returned to the ASD and waited there until the curfew started, we managed to settle down there and have a rest.

4th October 1965

Rioting was still going on in Crater and Sheikh Othman areas, we were stoned in Tawahi, our foot patrol confronted a crowd and we threatened to open fire if they did not disperse. Support arrived and we moved into the crowd and arrested a few ring leaders, the rest seemed to move away and it went quiet for an hour or so.

More crowds appeared late in the afternoon, and we were out in Maalla again, the curfew was to start at 8 pm we were on duty until 10 pm.

5th October 1965

In Crater the Royal Anglian Regiment caught three Arabs who were seen to throw a hand grenade, it did not go off. Later a young Arab lad was shot dead when he was seen to throw a grenade at a patrol. This grenade went

off but there were no injuries to the patrol, just a deafening noise.

Our area in Maalla was under control, most of the Battalion were out on the streets. The hours were long and we did not return to Radfan Camp until just before midnight.

6th October 1965

The BP oil-workers staged a one day strike. It was only partly successful, we were out early to patrol the Tawahi area checking the back streets and the shopping area until mid afternoon before returning to Camp to be stood down.

My 18th Birthday was then celebrated with a drink in the NAAFI. I was now legally able to have a drink and vote..... Not a late night just too tired to do much but chat and then to the tent and rest on the bed.

7th October 1965

We had a lie in and were not on duty until the afternoon, time for a bit of house work, getting things organised, write a few letters and getting a bit of laundry done.

We moved out of Radfan Camp at 4 pm and started to patrol the Maalla district, starting at the Hedjoff Roundabout and walking up to the top and down the other side, a couple of miles.

The curfew was lifted and the locals were out on the streets but all was quiet. We stayed on patrol until 10 pm and returned to Radfan for a late supper.

8th October 1965

Road Blocks Z1 and Z2 in Maalla at the top end, a couple of grenades were thrown in Crater and we were near the Crater pass, we moved up there and set up a Road Block on this road causing a long tail back of vehicles.

A Royal Anglian soldier was injured in an incident, we kept a close watch on the roads and searched many cars, but nothing was found.

9th October 1965

We moved into the Tawahi area to start foot patrols, up into the back streets. The locals were smiling at us, very strange we kept an eye on everyone and everything we passed.

We moved over to Mobiles in the afternoon from Sheba. We started to patrol in Maalla and called in at the Red Sea Hotel, where we were given a cup of coffee by the local workers, we chatted with them as we drank; they just wanted to get on with their lives and were not interested in the NLF (National Liberation Front).

We continued to patrol and made our way back to Sheba, where we had a meal before going out again.

10th October 1965

Out on mobile patrol at the crack of dawn, we chased a wanted car but lost it at the Hedjoff roundabout. After lunch at Sheba we were then taken to the ASD, and started foot patrols up and down the Maalla Main Road doing two on four off until 10 pm, when we returned to Camp and straight to bed.

11th October 1965

After breakfast we moved into Maalla. We were dropped off at the top end of the Main Road, and started foot patrol down the Quarters side. Some Arabs were seen around the NAAFI area and we called there to search the area, everything seemed OK. We were relieved just after lunch and returned to Radfan Camp where we were stood down and could relax, even have a pint or two in the camp club.

12th October 1965

An early start, we were out before 8 am and doing road blocks in Maalla. We started at the top end near the Crater roundabout, after a few hours there we moved down to the Hedjoff roundabout and started searching every other vehicle. Lunch was brought to us and we managed to eat and drink whilst searching the odd car, we found nothing, and were stood down to return to Radfan Camp late afternoon.

13th October 1965

We had a day off...we enjoyed a late breakfast, changed into our civvie clothes and went into Town on the passion wagon. We dropped off in Tawahi and had a look around the shops. We met a few of the lads who were patrolling the streets and chatted a while before going to the Mermaid Club for a swim and a drink. We caught the passion wagon back to Radfan Camp and enjoyed another few drinks in the NAAFI.

14th October 1966

Road Blocks again, we were on the Maalla Main when a wanted car was spotted. We pulled it over and did a search nothing was found, we detained the driver until the Police arrived. We continued to the Hedjoff roundabout and set up our road block there for the rest of the day.

15th October 1965

Trouble in Sheikh Othman and rioting. The Aden Police had shot dead a suspect.

We moved out onto the streets in our area Maalla and Tawahi to ensure that all was calm there. We had lunch at the ASD and continued to patrol up and down the Maalla Main Road for the rest of the day, until being relieved around 8 pm.

We returned to Radfan Camp but were put on Standby ready to move in 30 minutes. We sat around until 10 pm before the call came to stand down.

16th October 1965

Early morning foot patrols in Maalla, we watched the locals going to work, we watched them carefully - mutual respect or mutual dislike, we stopped and searched anyone we thought was carrying something suspicious.

We came across a group of youngsters throwing stones at the Service quarters. We chased them away and advised the mobiles to keep a look out for them, we returned to the area a few times cutting through the back alleys but they did not return whilst we were around.

17th October 1965

After breakfast we moved into Maalla and took over duties on Search Light 4, on the top floor of the flats in the middle of the Maalla Main Road. Just before lunch a grenade went off down the street. The foot patrol in the area caught the youth who threw it and he was handed over to the Military Police.

A young girl and her mother were injured in a stone throwing incident later in the day, the patrols on the ground sorted it out and we watched from our position.

As night fell we switched on the search light and lit up the Shanty Towns, we were not looking for anything we just shone the light on anything we thought was of interest. As we were leaving SL4 we saw an Arab acting strangely, we arrested him and handed him over to the Police.

18th October 1965

A Grenade had been thrown in Tawahi in the morning and a young Arab girl was injured. We moved out to give extra cover and did road blocks in Tawahi and Maalla. Cars were damaged by some youths in the back streets and we covered the main street whilst the IS platoon moved in to quell the situation. All was quiet for the rest of the night, we stayed out at the ASD until the early hours before returning to Radfan Camp.

19th October 1965

A day in Camp, but doing internal duties, we patrolled the camp area and searched any vehicle that entered the Camp, some of the lads got to go out with the passion wagon as escorts. We stayed inside and continued with guard duties until 10 pm when we were relieved and stood down.

20th October 1965

Back on Camp Guard around the Battalion lines, a repeat of the day before. The rubbish truck arrived and a few unlucky lads were detailed to escort this wagon around the camp. We did the perimeter walk and checked on some of the Arab workers who were doing some repair work in the base. All was quiet and we changed over at 6 pm, a night off in the pop shop.

21st October 1965

A morning off, but we were detailed to escort the Mermaid Wagon, and we would remain there as Mermaid guard until the club shut up. We returned to Radfan at about 9 pm, and just in time to catch a late pint, write a few letters and catch up on a bit of laundry.

22nd October 1965

Last day of this internal duty, we escorted wagons and searched all Arabs entering the Camp. A dinner in the cookhouse and a shower, collected mail and a rest on our beds in the afternoon.

Unexploded grenades were found in Sheikh Othman. We were on standby for the evening but were not called out.

23rd October 1965

After Breakfast, we moved out to Dolphin Court and took over the guardroom, we patrolled the area all day, a grenade was thrown in Tawahi at a mobile patrol, no injuries and no one was caught. We stayed at Dolphin Court until breakfast and were relieved to return to Radfan Camp.

24th October 1965

A Royal Signals soldier was killed and another injured in an incident in Maalla, it was found out to be an accidental discharge by another soldier. We went out on foot patrols in the area and stayed out until late in the night. We called into the pop shop for a drink and a meeting.

25th October 1965

When we arrived at the pop shop we were told that we would be going to Perim Island in a few days time to guard the DWS (Diplomatic Wireless Station). It would be a two week tour and after that, in early December we would be going up country to the Radfan Mountains to a place called Habilayn.

We still had a few days to do in Aden before moving to Perim. After a few hours sleep we were patrolling in the Maalla area, we again called at the Red Sea Hotel, near the bazaar and were given a coffee by the local hotel workers, and this became a regular spot for an early morning drink. A long day on patrol without incident.

26th October 1965

We patrolled the early morning streets, with locals rushing to work, either at the docks or the oil refinery, there seemed to be little else in the way of other industry apart from the free port shops in the Steamer Point area and they always seemed to be busy.

We called at the Ice Factory ASD for lunch, but before we could eat we were called out to the Maalla Main Road where a couple of shots had been fired at a passing 3 tonner, we found the empty cases from a 9mm pistol, most likely fired from a passing car, we moved back to the ASD to complete our lunch and then were relieved to return to Radfan and to start making ready for our trip to Perim Island.

We had the rest of the evening off and went to the camp pictures, we watched Haley Mills in the film Polyanna. Part of D Company were called

out to Maalla, a build up of locals on the streets, no rest for the lads they had just arrived in camp and were looking forward to a drink, straight back out for another few hours. We were put on standby and sat around waiting for the call out.

27th October 1965

We continued packing for our trip to Perim Island, every thing we needed for this tour had to be packed and shipped to the RAF Base. We checked and rechecked what was required and when we had finished we were able to have the rest of the day off, ready to move out early the next day.

28th October 1965

We were up very early and moved to Khormaksar Airport for our flight to Perim. The plane was a Beverley. It looked very awkward, like a box with wings. The distance to Perim was about 100 miles and the flight was to take over an hour. The flight was rough, the top speed of the Beverley was around 80mph.



The wind and the hot thermals lifted and dropped the plane as we flew, we were very pleased to arrive at Perim. A few of the lads felt a bit air sick during the flight.

Perim is an island at the junction of the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, a

true desert island about two miles wide and three miles long with a small village, a few police and the Diplomatic Radio Station and the staff who operate the installation, which we were there to guard.

We took over duties as soon as we arrived and we were housed in a complex of huts a few hundred yards from the DWS Station. It was an easy duty and a great relief from the hard slog of foot patrols around the streets of Aden. It was a well earned rest, not that the duties were taken lightly, we were there to do a job of work and it was carried out as though we were in Aden Town. There was a history of trouble in Perim, nothing in the past few years, but we still could be attacked at any time. The pace was easier and we found time to relax and even swim in the sea near our base.

29th October 1965

Our first patrol was to be done around the wireless station, the rest of the platoon were in the guard room, with another section on the hill overlooking the camp and DWS compound. We finished our stag at midnight, all was quiet and we stood down and went straight to bed. not waking until after 9 am, the following morning being the longest lie in for months.

30th October 1965

We had a late breakfast, washed our own dishes and everyone mucked in to do all the routine kitchen work. We had some free time to rest and swim in the afternoon before starting our duty again in the evening.

The sea was just a few yards from our hut, very blue waters and very clean, we could see the fish swimming by and even caught some to supplement our meals, we ate quite a lot of fish during our time in Perim.

The night came and we were detailed to take over the top sanger guard on the hill overlooking the base, the night sky was very clear, in the distance we could see the lights of great oil tankers moving in and out of the Red Sea making their way up to the Suez Canal or out into the Indian Ocean. It was very peaceful here and a million miles away from the troubled streets of Aden, not that we were able to relax totally. If any one approached the

camp they were challenged and if they failed to answer the pass word, they would be arrested or shot.

31st October 1965

We went swimming in the morning, a beautiful blue sea, very clear and calm. We had a bit of time to sun bathe before doing a bit of fishing in the afternoon. A few jobs to do around the cook house and we were ready to take over duties at the DWS Station in the evening.

DWS, a Diplomatic Wireless Station passing messages from the Far East to the Middle East and to London. All very secret, and we were here to guard the base.

1st November 1965

We were allowed to tour the base in the morning to see what we were here to guard. We saw some of the relay equipment in action, we were none the wiser, but it looked good. We patrolled around the Island in the afternoon and in the evening watched a picture.

2nd November 1965

Up early to help make breakfast for the platoon. After breakfast we built a raft from drift wood and bits of string, and launched it into the Red Sea. We then collected our personal weapons and went to a spot over looking the beach, and used the raft as target practise. We cleaned our weapons and then had a swim in the sea before getting ready to stand guard in the top sanger over looking the DWS.

3rd November 1965

An early morning power failure, the generator stalled, we tried everything to restart the machine, but then the cook came out and showed us the trick.

After clearing up the breakfast dishes, we were stood down and were able to have another swim in the beautiful Red Sea. We patrolled around the

Island again and in the evening we went to the Club at the DWS and had a drink.

4th November 1965

The morning after the night before! After a late breakfast we just rested on our pits, until we were called at tea time for duty at the DWS, patrolling around the station until the early hours. We were relieved at breakfast time.

5th November 1965

Bonfire night 5th November and we decided to celebrate with our own little display. We collected wood from around the island and prepared a bonfire, we had a few flares and together with a few thunder flashes and some roasted potatoes in the fire, we created a passable bonfire night.

6th November 1965

The next morning, it was back to cook house duties, washing the pots and pans and peeling a few spuds. Everyone did their bit and it was soon done.

We would often walk around the island, past the DWS station across the airfield via a rough dirt track. The only flat area on the island was the Runway, the only planes were light aircraft or those who could take off in a short space, the Beverley seemed to be the ideal aircraft.

Making our way back around the far side of the island we came across a cemetery, we looked at the headstones, quite a few were German and the dates were during the First and Second world wars.

We passed the local Arab village, the locals seemed to do all their trading with mainland Yemen, they were friendly enough and were not interested in the troubles in Aden. We arranged a fishing trip with them for the next day; they had a couple of Dhows.

7th November 1965

We were hoping to catch a few sharks but caught nothing but a few fish, although we did see a few at close range. Back to base and we were advised that our supplies were on their way, all personnel not on duty were detailed to the airfield to help unload the plane.

Later we did a bit of shooting practise near the camp, firing our GPMG and SLRs at a raft we had launched into the sea.

8th November 1965

Time passed very quickly in this island paradise away from Aden. We caught more fish in the afternoon and had them for tea. We went out to the top sanger at night to stand guard. We watched the huge ships sailing past the Island going on their way up to the Suez and the Mediterranean or down into the Indian Ocean.

9th November 1965

Camp duties in the morning refilling the drinking water tanks and checking the vehicles, oil and water. We walked across the Island to the Light House and back.

10th November 1965

Went swimming in the bay in the morning, the lookout spotted a shark out at sea, we decided then to retighten the shark fence around the bay. In the evening we manned the top sanger, two hours on and four off until dawn.

11th November 1965

A Beverley aircraft arrived in the morning with fuel and supplies. We unloaded the plane and delivered the supplies to the stores. We fired our weapons in the afternoon and after an inspection, prepared to get ready for a night on duty at the DWS base.

12th November 1965

Camp fatigues all morning, tidying up the camp area. An hour of swimming in the afternoon and a night off from duty, a film show and a drink from the pop shop.

13th November 1965

A walk around the Island to the Arab village, they tried to sell us some shells and shark teeth, they had a large jaw of a shark big enough to put your head through, one of the lads tried and it cut his head. More camp cleaning in the afternoon, and up to the top sanger guard all night.

14th November 1965

Remembrance Sunday. We went to the small church at the DWS, an afternoon in the bay swimming. A couple of hours sleep in the afternoon and another night duty at the DWS Base.

15th November 1965

Up late for Brunch (Breakfast/Lunch meal). We walked around the other side of the Island to the Turtle Bay. We saw a few Turtles swimming out a sea, quite big creatures, returned via the Light House in time for tea. An early night after a drink in the pop shop.

16th November 1965

Kit inspection in the morning, more kitchen fatigues and an afternoon swimming in the Red Sea, night guard at the DWS Base.

17th November 1965

It was soon time for us to pack up and return to the real world and the Streets of Maalla and Tawahi. The Beverley was due in at 9 am the next day. We spent all day clearing up our bits and pieces had a last swim in the Red Sea, and did the top sanger guard until 6 am.

18th November 1965

The plane arrived and we were loaded up and off back to Aden and Radfan Camp arriving 1 pm, we were stood down to sort our selves out and be ready to Stand by for road block duty in the evening, luckily nothing happened that night and we were not called out.

19th November 1965

The morning brought the usual duties patrolling the Murder Mile in Maalla, it had lived up to its name. Six people had been killed in this road up to now and the engineers had started to block off the small gaps between the houses which could have been used as escape paths, this was not very successful as the grenade throwers were now throwing the grenades over the wall and it was impossible for us to chase them.

We heard a bang and we knew it was another grenade, it had injured two airmen, but they were not badly hurt. We waited until all the sorting out was done then made our way to the Kingfisher Bar half way down the Maalla Main road and covered some of the escape routes, we waited there until we were relieved late at night and then returned to Radfan Camp.

20th November 1965

We were to have a day off from patrolling to train with the new Carl Gustav 84mm Anti tank weapon. We did all training in the camp getting to know all aspects of the weapon. We were on stand by in the evening, ready to move out at an hours notice.



21st November 1965

More in camp training with the new Carl Gustav Rocket Launcher, stripping and assembling, carrying and generally looking after the weapon. We finished the training and after lunch we were detailed to do a few hours of foot patrols in Maalla in the afternoon, before returning to Radfan Camp for the rest of the night off.

22nd November 1965

A morning off to catch up with our laundry, writing etc. A trip to the pop shop, another shower and we were ready to start more training with the Carl Gustav weapon.

Today we actually saw the rocket, only a dummy, but at least it was the real size and we could practise loading and unloading the weapon. Aden seemed quiet, and we were given another night off.

23rd November 1965

Foot patrols in Maalla in the morning, we called to the NAAFI at the back of the main road, we searched around the area and all was clear, we carried on patrolling down to the Hedjoff roundabout and back up to the ASD. We returned to Radfan Camp and after cleaning our SLRs we did some more training on the 84mm Carl Gustav.

24th November 1965

Back to Carl Gustav training in the morning, the weapon was very accurate but we had little ammunition to use, there was a limited amount and we had to use them very carefully. After finishing training we had the afternoon off, but we were to do the Mermaid escort duty at night starting at 5 pm and working through, finishing at 10 pm.

25th November 1965

Went to Little Aden to test fire a few blank rounds, it was too expensive to fire the real live round. The noise of the weapon was such that even with ear plugs the noise of the gun going off made you quite deaf, the bells were still ringing in the ears a couple of days later. Last day of training, and almost the last blank round firing. One poor lad had a miss fire, the rocket had fired, a whine of the motor then nothing. He had to wait until an Ordnance Officer arrived and disarmed the rocket from the Launcher. We packed up and returned to Radfan Camp.

26th November 1965

The following morning we were put on stand by again, only to be called out within a few minutes, we were off down to the Hedjoff roundabout to do more road blocks until gone 11 pm.

27th November 1965

We were on Mobiles again, mid morning and two shots were fired in the Maalla Main Road. We rushed to the scene, but as usual no one saw anything, we talked to the Arab police and left them to do the paper work. Lunch in HMS Sheba and then a drive up through Shanty Town in the afternoon.

This was the real poor area of the district and the houses here were old and often made of any thing they could get their hands on, cardboard boxes, bit a corrugated iron and string. The children were dressed in rags and were always asking of buckshees, we often gave them a few coppers and if we knew we were to patrol the area we would often carry a few bags of sweets. They would accept the treats with one hand and you could see they were ready to throw a stone or something with the other.

We went into the back streets as far as we could drive, and then had a puncture, not the best place for a flat and the radio reception was poor, we had difficulty in calling for assistance, so we moved down the track until we could speak to control and assistance came within a few minutes.

The Arab children were making it difficult to keep our temper, they were throwing stones over the top of houses, these houses were mostly old bits

of stone and cardboard held together with anything they could get their hands on, string and nails, the better ones had a tin roof, we found in some cases the people living in them were paying rent!

We stayed calm and after changing the wheel we drove away and gave the locals the Winston Churchill salute.

More trouble, we were called to Tawahi where a grenade had been thrown, as we moved towards the Hedjoff Roundabout we spotted a speeding car coming from the Tawahi district, could this be the thrower? we chased it, it was a lot faster than us, but with a few quick calls and a lucky break we managed to catch him in a Road Block. We left the Road Block crew to do the search, he was clean, but the search took some time to complete. It was late in the day when we returned to Radfan Camp.

28th November 1965

Early the next day we were detailed to Search Light 4 on the top of a building in the middle of Maalla Main Road. We watched all day but it was very quiet, we returned to Camp in the early evening to a welcome break, and a few hours in the NAAFI.

29th November 1965

Mobile Patrols from HMS Sheba, we went to Steamer Point and to Gold Muhur Valley and back. We went to assist a foot patrol in Steamer Point, one of the lads had tripped and twisted his ankle, we took him to the ASD to meet up with a medic. We returned the Rover to Sheba and we went on a 3 tonner back to Radfan Camp.

30th November 1965

Back on Mobiles doing all areas. We started in Maalla and toured there, moved into Tawahi and did the local bolt holes, down through Steamer Point, around the Government offices and up to Government House, plenty of Foot Patrols out, we had it easy just sitting in the back of a land rover, watching the streets and keeping an eye on everything and everyone.

1st December 1965

It was now December, and again we started the day on foot patrol in Maalla, we moved to Road Blocks in the afternoon. I was listing the vehicles we searched, 121 cars and found nothing. We carried on with our patrols both in the Main Road and the Relief Road, until late in the evening.

2nd December 1965

Another day and we were in Tawahi on footies, a grenade went off in number 4 street. We called around but no one hurt, just a hole in the ground and a few onlookers.

It was not long before we were called to a suspicious looking box, people standing by watching it, one of the lads just went up to it and gave it a kick, nothing inside. He said he could see it was empty went he took a closer look and kicked it out of the way.

We had a few more days in the Aden Townships before moving up country to Habilayn.

3rd December 1965

Another day spent on Mobile patrols, we heard that two PWO soldiers had been shot in town and we were to keep an extra watch on the back streets and bolt holes. We stayed around Maalla watching the Hedjoff Roundabout and up into the Shanty Towns until late night.

4th December 1965

A Cruise ship had called into Steamer Point, we were out on Foot Patrols first in Tawahi and then down to the Port area. A grenade was thrown up in number 4 Street Tawahi, we kept a watch on the Main Streets and advised the passengers to return to the ship as quickly as they could. It was a quiet night with no further incidents.

5th December 1965

We set up a Check Point at the top end of the Maalla Main Road, we stopped and checked cars at random. The whole platoon were on this job, we changed over duties, some did the search others stood guard on the check Point and watched the flow of vehicles, we tried not to cause too much of a tail back of cars.

We carried on with this duty until mid afternoon, found nothing. We were given the order to pack up and load up, we packed up the Road Block and were on the 3 tonners within a few moments, sat there rifles ready, and we were off back to Radfan Camp for a welcome rest.

6th December 1965

After a good breakfast, we were back into Maalla on foot patrols. We were stationed in the ASD and were doing two hours on and an hour off all day. A few groups of Arabs gathering around the shops but nothing serious. We stayed out until after dark and then returned to base in Radfan Camp.

7th December 1965

We moved out of Radfan Camp after Breakfast to Tawahi and Steamer Point. Patrolled up the backstreets and the Crescent. We had lunch at the Government Offices and continued to walk the Streets until 5 pm. All was quiet.

8th December 1965

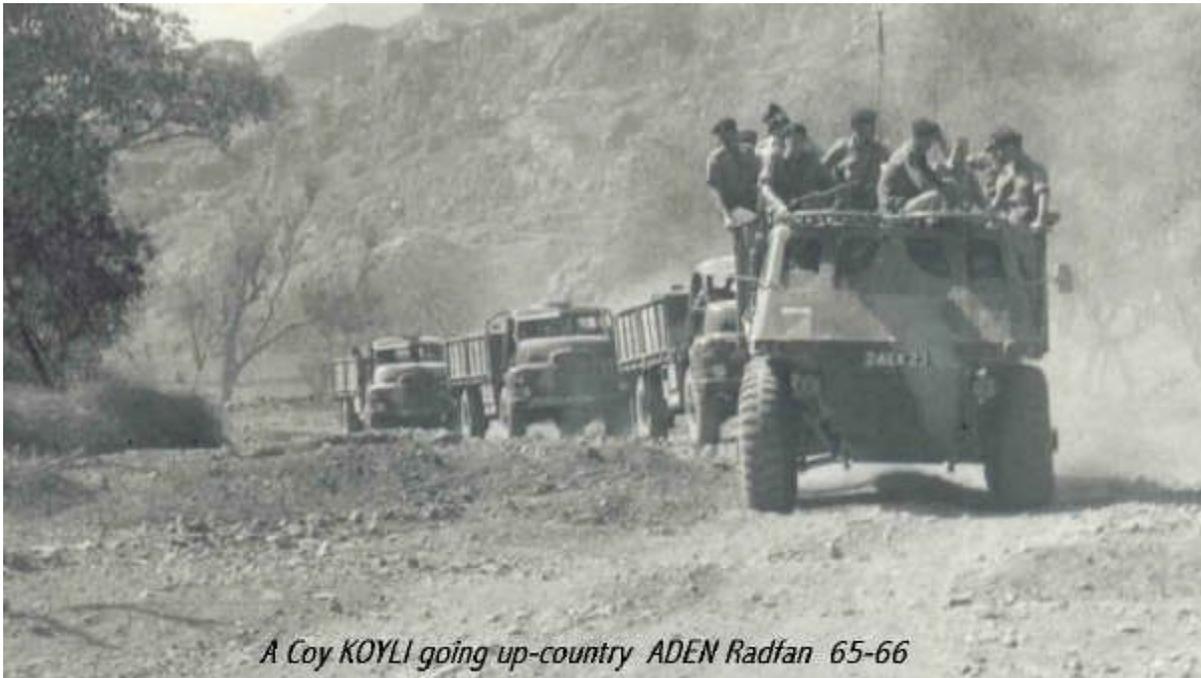
In the morning we prepared some gear ready to move up country. A couple of hours on Mobile Patrol in the afternoon to cover the foot patrols. Shots were fired at the PWO (Prince of Wales Own Regiment) in Crater, we moved to the top of the Maalla Main Road, and waited at the Crater Roundabout for any suspicious cars.

9th December 1965

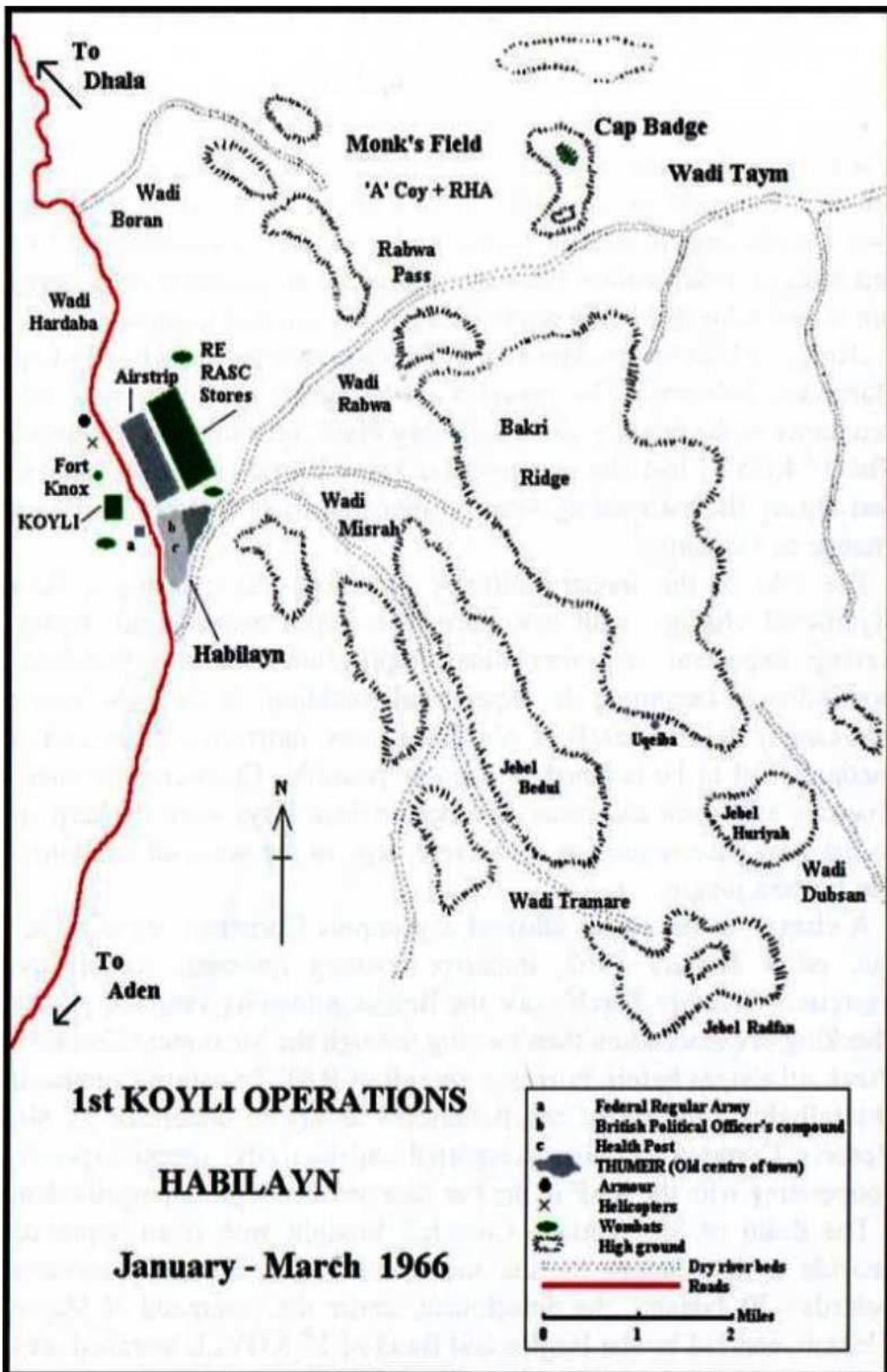
A day off apart from making ready to move to the Radfan Mountains in the morning. We managed a few hours in town. We called into visit a friend in Maalla before returning to Radfan Camp and a drink in the NAAFI and back to the tent to make ready to move up country.

10th December 1965

The journey up country to Habilayn was done in convoy, moving out of Radfan Camp through Sheikh Othman, then off the main tracks onto dirt roads, the journey took over 5 hours.



We stopped a few times on route and at one stop for water in the middle of a wadi (dried up river bed), within a few minutes a couple of Arabs approached the convoy and after being cautioned and searched they started to sell us biscuits and orange juice, they must have been following us for miles.



We were off again into the lower foothills of the Radfan Mountains and into the wadi. Up on the hill side about five hundred feet up we could see the mountain piquet, they had been out early from one of the base camps to ensure that the convoy could pass through the area safely. We passed the mountain piquet and arrived in our base camp just before lunch time.

We unloaded the trucks and located our sleeping accommodation, cleaned up our kit and weapons before being briefed and given our duties for the next day.

11th December 1965

The following morning I was up early to help in the cookhouse with the breakfast, after that we cleaned up and had a walk around the Camp to find the defence positions and familiarise ourselves with the layout.

We played volley ball in the afternoon, there was not much else to do if you were not out on patrol.

The night fell and we were stood to, we were detailed to the mortar sanger.

At dusk the mortars would often fire off a few rounds as was the normal routine, this was to let the locals know we were ready to return fire if necessary, and we hoped it would make them less likely to attack, but they did attack on a regular basis.

That night they hit a base about twenty miles down the road, there were no casualties but the fire fight went on for a couple of hours.

12th December 1965

Our platoon was detailed to take over Foxtrot Piquet on the opposite side of the Airfield from the main camp, and it covered the entrance to the Wadi and the edge of the Habilayn Village. Behind us was the RASC transport camp and beyond that was our Delta Piquet.

We took turns on watch, two hours on duty watching over the Wadi and checking on anything and everything that moved. We were self contained and cooked our own food, kept our area clean and tidy. Even when not on stag duty we were cleaning or cooking, collecting water and supplies, checking the security of the piquet, the trip flares and making notes of the likely ambush spots, these were noted on our maps and DFs (Defensive Fire) points were identified on maps and bearings worked out to them from the Gun positions. This we hoped would enable us to hit these targets even in total darkness and with the heaviest fire power we had.

13th December 1965

The rest of the time was spent on trying to make life on this hill as comfortable as possible, but the rocky hill in the mountains was not that accommodating. We had an anti-tank weapon on the piquet, a 120mm Wombat and during the day the gun crew would run through their drill, and on the odd night they would fire the machine gun attached to the wombat, this gun helped to zero in the main armament onto the target which was always made ready to be used.

As night fell we stood to and we were given orders to test weapons, we did this and fired 5 rounds each at a small sand hill about 300 yards or so from the hill. After this we settled down for the rest of the night it was dark around 5.45 pm and the only entertainment was to watch the dark hills getting darker in front of us, or to get into the sandbagged sleeping quarters and rest until it was your turn on stag.

There were a few baboons around the base and the odd one would often approach the piquet looking for food, they would set off a trip flare and run away but this would cause the platoon to stand to and keep a watch in case anything was amiss, we always assumed we were under attack and stood ready at all times.

14th December 1965

Our first duty of these piquets was un-eventful, we patrolled the area between the piquet and the main Base looking for signs of earth being

disturbed that could indicate that a mine had been laid. This was our daily routine, we went to the main base for supplies and returned to the piquet ready for night fall. Another quiet night watching the stars.

15th December 1965

Back to base for more supplies, a quick patrol to check around our base before we started to make the evening meal, we had some fresh meat tonight, a change from the normal compositions. Tonight we were going to have steak and chips followed by sponge pudding and tinned cream, it went down well. We settled down for another long night watching and waiting but nothing happened.

16th December 1965

Early the next morning it rained quite heavy for about half an hour this was the first rain we had seen since we arrived in Aden. We stood to at dusk and again fired our personal weapons, we were just about to settle down for the night when the guards on duty called for us to stand to, a flare had gone off below the piquet, we watched the flare die out but could see nothing. We waited about fifteen minutes and decided that a small animal had caused the problem. We moved back to our pits, but were almost immediately stood to again, five men were approaching the piquet, they had answered the pass word and were entering the piquet area, they were an SAS patrol, we let them through and they made their way to the main camp at Habilayn.

17th December 1965

Another day on Foxtrot piquet without incident and we were relieved to be going back to base, we did a general tidy up, checked our ammunition and settled down to rest and watch the wadis for another night.

18th December 1965

Handed over the piquet to the new section and returned to base in

Habilayn. We were to patrol up the WADI at night to a preselected point and we would wait there until advised to return to camp.

19th December 1965

A walk up the Wadi to the village and back, crossing the main track and watching the locals working in the fields. Packed lunch taken with us and after lunch we sat and had a cig, before starting the return trip to Base.

20th December 1965

A dull start to the day, a bit of rain but we were still out on patrol, up to the cross roads area and the rubbish dump. Checking for any disturbance in the ground all seemed ok. We returned to base early afternoon, cleaned our weapons and had an ammunition check. Stand to at dusk and then the rest of the night off, one pint only in the NAAFI and then to our pits to rest.

21st December 1965

A late start, and then another patrol up the Wadi to the village, passed it then a mile or so on before returning on the other side of the Wadi. A round trip of about 15 miles, back to Habilayn late afternoon. Stand to at dusk to fire our own weapons, after cleaning them we settled down for another pint in the Club.

22nd December 1965

Another Patrol up to mile stone 18. A lot of locals on the road to keep an eye on, but all was quiet. Back to base late afternoon, time to get a shower before the stand to was called at sun down. We fired our weapons at appointed DF and then settled down to a night of watching the Wadi's.

23rd December 1965

Next morning we were up very early and moved to a piquet on the Dhala road. We covered the high points over the valley and sat there while the

RE removed the wreck of a three tonner that had run over a mine. It was late before we got back to Base.

24th December 1965

Christmas Eve day and we were in the base at Habilayn, watching the Marines being lifted out to the Mountains, in the evening we were out into the Wadi again patrolling and watching until the early hours.

25th December 1965

Christmas day was the same, a long walk up the Wadi to an Arab village, we stayed outside to watch the locals coming and going, then returned to base for tea.

26th December 1965

Boxing Day morning we were up and out before sunrise to a road junction, and stood guard while the Assault Pioneers Platoon did a mine search on the cross roads to Dhala. We waited there until they finished and then made our way back to base.

27th December 1965

No rest over this Christmas, we were up on the ridge over looking the road between Habilayn and Al Malah to cover the movement of a convoy making its way through to the Dhala Road. It was very hot on the tops, very little shade and we just lay there, watching the surrounding landscape for any unusual movement. We finished the job and were back in base just in time for tea.

28th December 1965

Patrolled up the Wadi Rashma passing the villages. We watched the roads for a few hours and then returned to camp via the fields. When we got back we were stood down and had a shower and a change of clothes before

standing to, after stand down we went and had a drink in the club.

All seemed quiet this time of the year, we were warned that this was the time of enemy activity, but all was well.

29th December 1965

Another convoy coming up country, and we were out early to the tops of the valleys to cover their movement. A hot day with little shade on the tops, the convoy was late and we were there until dark, before we could return to base and a meal.

After cleaning our kit and a weapons inspection we went to our beds early, just too tired to do anything.

30th December 1965

Out in the morning up to Charlie Piquet, walked around their position and checked the defences, back to Habilayn for dinner and an afternoon off, playing volley ball.

31st December 1965

The morning off, we played volley ball in the afternoon, before getting ready to go out on patrol.

New Years Eve and into 1966 we patrolled up Wadi Rashma. We stayed out in this position until the New Year came in and we talked quietly whilst drinking cold tea, a long way from the celebrations that would be going on in Trafalgar Square in a few hours time when it was going to be their New Years Day.

1st January 1966

On our return we called at the road works where we met another section who were checking the road for mines using mine detectors.

We spent the rest of the day resting. We had just about finished our first up country tour and we were making ready to return to Radfan Camp, when we heard the mortars open up. We were not being attacked, so we went to see what was happening, it appeared that one of our patrols had bumped into some dissidents about two miles out and they were involved in a fire fight with the terrorists only a few hundred yards from them. Our mortars were lighting up the area to enable our patrol to see them and to move into better positions to section attack. The terrorists fled and there were no reported injuries to the patrol.

This type of incident was a regular thing in the area, we stood to ready to assist if called but they managed to handle the situation without extra help.

This was close to base and an attack may have been intercepted before they had a chance to get into firing positions. We packed ready for the return to the Aden Townships.

2nd January 1966

We left Habilayn after breakfast the next day, in convoy back to Aden. We made good time, the new road section at Leigh was nearly complete and the journey was done in just under 5 hours.

We arrived back in Radfan Camp and we immediately started to wash our clothes and prepare for the next day, every thing that could wait was sent to the laundry. We cleaned our kit and had weapon inspection before being allowed to stand down and have a few drinks in the pop shop.

That night we had our belated Christmas Dinner, all the works, a special meal had been cooked and we had all the trimmings of Christmas, a couple of weeks late but still it was a great night. With the party over it was back to reality and next morning we were out on patrol in Maalla.

3rd January 1966

The families were still guarding their own flats. We talked to a couple of airmen who were stood just outside their front door; they were armed with

the old 303 rifle. They told us they were pleased to see us back on duty, not that the relief Regiment had not done a good job, but we knew the area and the Arabs knew us.

4th January 1966

There had been a few incidents in the time we were up country and the Murder Mile had claimed another two lives. We were checking the NAAFI when we heard an explosion, a grenade had gone off. We made our way to the main street and onto the relief road, we ran over and saw a crowd at the end of a street, moved them back and found an Arab had been hit by the shrapnel. His injuries looked serious and we used some of our field dressing on his wounds, his injuries spouted blood and it took a few minutes to stop the bleeding.

By this time a crowd had developed around us and we had to physically move them away to give us room to control the situation. The Red Crescent ambulance arrived and we tried to rush things along and get him away to hospital, but they had no sense of urgency. They bandaged his wounds, the blood was still pouring out, they carried him to the ambulance and drove off as though they were going on a Sunday Picnic.

We carried on patrolling and every time we passed the blood stained pavement we wondered if the poor Arab had made it.

5th January 1966

Our next duty was to guard Government House. The weather at this time was unusually dull. We settled in and started to patrol around the House area, making sure that nothing was amiss. We would search the odd person entering or leaving the Government House, this was done by two on duty, one searching and the other covering the other person. A long day of routine patrols, all was quiet.

6th January 1966

We were in the Guardroom at the back of the house with all self contained facilities. We did two on and six off which was a great relief from the two on two off foot patrols we had been doing. I was on the main gate, the static sentry position, all was fairly quiet, just a few local visitors to the house to be checked in and out.

7th January 1966

After breakfast we had a walk over to the old gun emplacements to look around. We were soon back on duty and started our stag, we moved up to the back of the house and over to the gun emplacements to do our guard there, two on and six off. In the afternoon we had a few hours down at the Mermaid Club, then back to do a few more duties.

8th January 1966

Finished Government House duty at dinner time. On our return to Radfan Camp we were advised that our tents were to be replaced. We had to take down our old tent and replace it with a new identical one and then to re-sandbag the perimeter of the tent to a height of about four foot. We collected the sand from just outside the camp gates, it took a lot of hard work to fill and stack the sandbags around our tents.

We hardly had time to shower and eat before we were back on the streets doing Road Blocks. A shot had been fired at HMS Sheba, the Naval base where we had our mobile HQ, a grenade in the Relief Road.

It was a busy night, we were on the look out for a White Opel, we stopped and searched every one we saw and we soon realised that every other car in Aden was white and a high percentage were Opels. we found nothing in them but we did find a couple of guns in a Green Mercedes.

9th January 1966

We finished off sandbagging our tent area, and had a few hours off, before moving out after tea to do Road Blocks in Maalla.

We did snap Road blocks at both ends of the main street, a few locals were hanging around and we had to send a section out to move them on. They were not a problem, but if they were left to watch they could have been a bit of a nuisance when we were searching vehicles.

They chanted loudly and seemed to encourage the people being searched to rebel. Once they were moved on, we could get on with our work in hand.

A long night out searching and then back to base at Radfan Camp for a late supper and then to bed.

10th January 1966

Maalla Main Road on Foot patrol, saw a wanted car M6070 and managed to stop the driver moving off, a couple of Mobiles came to assist. We advised control, but after a search of the vehicle nothing was found and we let him go on his way.

Another hard day walking up and down the main street, a shot was fired at HMS Sheba, and a grenade thrown in the Relief Road. We continued our Patrol until being stood down early evening.

11th January 1966

Checked out our Road Block equipment, making sure that everything we needed was in the correct place on the truck. We cleaned our rifles and made ready for kit inspection, we were on standby all day, but were not called out.

12th January 1966

Back onto foot patrols in Maalla until lunch time, we had a rest in the ASD before moving into Tawahi in the afternoon. A grenade was thrown just as we were about to finish our duty and we stayed out in Maalla until 8 pm, then returned to Radfan Camp.

13th January 1966

When running down the section lines I ran into a metal pole and cut my foot. Went to the Medical Station and had it bandaged up, excused boots but not duty. Went down to the Mobile Command Post and helped out there all night.

14th January 1966

On Mobile Patrols in Tawahi, then around Steamer Point until early afternoon, returned to Camp to have my wound looked at; it was ok, back on full duty tomorrow.

15th January 1966

Back to Sheba, a ship was due into port and we did Mobiles in the morning and then foot patrols in the afternoon. That night our section was detailed onto balcony piquet in the Maalla Main Road, we were dressed in civvies and drove into the town, we parked at the back of the flats and walked to our pre-allocated flat. The occupants had agreed to us being there, and they made the evening quite relaxing, supplying us with plenty of tea and biscuits.

We sat on the balcony over looking the Kingfisher Restaurant, our radio was hidden with just the top of the aerial showing out the top of the window. There were a few other balcony piquets out that night and we all kept in touch and with search light 4, the roof top piquet on the Arab side of the road. There was plenty of activity on the street, but no trouble, we covered the foot patrols as they continued their vigilance on the streets below.

There was a loud bang, we all stood to but soon found out that it was just an old wagon that back fired its engine. The rest of the night passed without trouble and as the last Arab disappeared from the street we moved out of the flat and made our way back to Radfan Camp, leaving the streets to the lads on foot patrols.

16th January 1966

Making ready to take over at Government House. Cleaned our webbing and boots, ironed uniform and had inspection, before being given the afternoon off, time spent in the camp pop shop.

17th January 1966

Government House Guard, and the whole platoon were inspected and checked before moving out to take over this duty. Sir Richard Turnbull, who was the governor had just returned from London, the platoon were advised that a lot of visitors would be coming and going over the next few days and we would have to be on the ball.

18th January 1966

Escorts in the House Gardens, walking around with visitors, making sure they only went where they were allowed. Afternoon off at the Mermaid Club for a swim. Post 5 all night doing two on and six off.

19th January 1966

Lots of visitors arriving, we were checking every one and everything that came into the House, some of the Arab visitors took great offence in being stopped and asked to produce Identity Documents, but they all did. This duty was very busy and time went quickly, without any problems.

20th January 1966

On duty up at the gun site, overlooking the officers club. Not as many visitors today and it seemed a slower pace, but no rest, two on six off until the next morning.

21st January 1966

After finishing here, we returned to Radfan Camp to be briefed about our next duty. We were going back up country to Habilayn and Dhala, but taking over some of the top mountain piquet's overlooking the Yemen Border. The rest of the day off and a pint in the NAAFI.

22nd January 1966

A morning at the range with the GPMG, cleaned weapons and then down to Tawahi on foot patrols until after 6 pm, back to Radfan for a late supper and a quick pint.

23rd January 1966

We moved onto Search Light 4, the top position in the Maalla Main Road, we had a large powered search light which could light up the Shanty Towns and the slopes of Sham Shan Mountain. We stayed on this duty all night, we relayed radio messages from the foot patrols below to the main base in Sheba.

24th January 1966

Training with Helicopters in the late morning, weapons training with the GPMG in the afternoon, getting ready to move up county. Night off in the Camp pop shop.

25th January 1966

Very early the following morning we started to do more fitness training, and as part of this we were going to climb Sham Shan, this mountain is the back bone of Aden. We were out of Camp and making our way up the hill side, reaching the top around 7 am. We walked over the tops and came down in the Gold Mure bay area.

We returned to Radfan after lunch and straight onto the ranges again to practice the procedure of the GPMG in the sustained fire roll. It was set up on a tri-pod using the heavy barrel.



Night sights were set up and we used the bearing to bring the gun onto target, once the gun had been zeroed in, these bearings would bring the gun onto the target very accurately even in darkness. The evening was our own and we went to the NAAFI.

26th January 1966

Went down to Gold Mure Valley had did some Infantry Section attacks, very hot and hard work running down the valley in full combat gear. Finished around 1 pm then back to Radfan for a cold shower and weapons inspection.

27th January 1966

We were stood down from Aden duties and prepared to go up country, we watched the Battalion Football team play RAF Khormaksar, we won 2-1. An early night ready for an early morning start.

We heard that there was more trouble in Maalla, the Battalion who had taken over were having a rough time tonight.

28th January 1966

Reveille was 3 am and we left Radfan Camp at 5.30 am moving up to Habilayn and arriving there just before dinner time. Again we found our tents and settled in the best we could, about 9 to a tent. We played volley ball in the afternoon and watched a picture at night.

29th January 1966

Kit inspection in the morning followed by cook house fatigues in the afternoon until tea had been finished and washed up. A drink in the pop shop and back to the pit for an early night.

30th January 1966

Wadi patrols followed the next day, just a few miles this time and we were back for lunch and played volley ball again in the afternoon.

As dusk fell we were stood to and fired our personal weapons, we then had to clean them thoroughly before settling down to rest. Monksfield base was attacked tonight, no reported injuries.

31st January 1966

After breakfast and a tidy up around the camp, we played volley ball, after lunch we checked our ammunition and made ready to stand to at dusk. No patrol tonight, we just watched the others firing at DFs.

1st February 1966

We were out early in the morning, patrolling around the local Arab villages. We kept up these constant foot patrols with the emphasis on the areas where the most likely attacks would come from. We would go up the Wadi for many miles, these were hard dried up river beds in valleys and it was hard to keep in cover, we had to run across the open ground, and when you are carrying a few extra pounds of ammunition and plenty of water it was hard work. We got back to base and settled down for a well earned rest.

2nd February 1966

Just after midnight, and under attack from unknown number, shots were

fired at the Command Post, and a rocket was reported to have been fired at the base, some sort of mortar landed near the camp, our mortars returned fired.

We moved into our DF position and watched and waited. Our area seemed quiet, some of the lads were moved over to the southern section and were fired at. Our GPMGs returned fire, bullets were flying over the base, more exchange of fire and this went on for about 45 minutes. Monksfield were also attacked in the early hours.

We were out early to cover a mountain top piquet. We stayed out until the convoy had passed and it was clear into Habilayn. We returned to base and after tea a night in the camp club after stand down.

3rd February 1966

Patrolling up the Wadi to mile post 12, waited there an hour or so before returning to base on the other side of the valley. Watched the pictures at night.

4th February 1966

Cleaned our kit and had weapons inspection, played Volley Ball in the afternoon. A night patrol out, past Delta piquet into the Wadi, settled down and waited in ambush until 2 am, then returned to base. Checked our weapons and then straight to our pits, just laid there and tried to get some kip, dawn came before we fell asleep.

5th February 1966

A late breakfast followed by some GPMG weapon training in the afternoon. An early night ready for an early start in the morning.

6th February 1966

Most of the company were moving onto the piquets around the base. We

covered the change over and watched the Wadis for any unusual movements. A patrol up to the nearest village and then back to Camp for tea time. A quiet first night for the lads out on piquet duty, we watched them fire their DFs before we settled down for a drink.

7th February 1966

Up for an early tour around the base, calling at Delta and Charlie piquets, we dropped off some mail and medical supplies. Played Volley Ball in the afternoon and then had the rest of the day off.

8th February 1966

A patrol up the Wadi to the villages. Moving across the rough ground Leo Lyons fell and cracked his rib, he had to be airlifted out back to base, we got back late afternoon and had a welcome rest with a pint in the NAAFI, and were advised that we would have to be ready for stand to at dusk.

We stood to and fired our personal weapons. After being stood down we relaxed in our tents trying to get some well earned rest, when just after midnight a blunder side rocket was fired at our command post, from an area between Bravo and Delta piquets.

A mortar bomb landed about 150 yards past the camp and within a few seconds our mortars had returned fire. We had preset DFs and the nearest one to the area where we thought we were being attacked from was blasted. Within a few more moments the whole camp would be awake and in position to return fire.

We crawled into our fox holes and were detailed to take the GMPG to the far perimeter and to watch for any movement, we were to fire at will. The patrols out were contacted and they were to lie low whilst we engaged in return fire.

Someone reported movement at a DF and we fired a quick burst in that area. They returned fire at us, a burst of rounds whined over our heads and another mortar hit the airfield.

Delta piquet were firing at something in the valley and our mortars put up a round of white flares which lit up the whole area. It was then we saw about twenty figures up on the hillside about six hundred yards away. All machine gunners must have seen them at the same time as tracer rounds flew at them from all directions. The flares died out and we stopped firing, we did not move from this position, we stayed and waited for hours, our commanding officer came around checking that we were all ok. We had no casualties and were stood down in rotation, working two hours on two off until dawn.

9th February 1966

After breakfast we cleaned our weapons and collected ammunition. A few hours rest doing nothing, before going out on patrol up to the rubbish dump. We stayed around near the cross roads before returning to camp via the main airstrip, checking the road to make sure that the earth was not disturbed and no mines had been laid.

10th February 1966

We moved over to take control at Charlie Piquet. It was raining in the morning and the tents were quite damp, once the sun came out it was dry very quickly. We settled in and kept watch over the Wadis, a quiet night here in Habilayn.

11th February 1966

Went down to the main base to collect supplies. Back to the piquet in time to do a two hour stag. Helped to cook the evening meal before settling down to fire the DFs at dusk. A Camel was reported to have been hit during firing of the DFs, but we saw nothing of it, by all accounts there was nothing left to see. Two on and four off was the duty for the rest of the night.

12th February 1966

Walked down the Wadi in the morning and met some locals taking their goods to the market, they were all armed with an old version almost antique rifle, they seemed to be well equipped with ammunition. We watched them go on their way and made a note of where they were going. Another quiet night on the piquet.

13th February 1966

Late breakfast and a general tidy up of the piquet area. A trip flare when off and we had to go over the fence to replace and reset it. Fresh goodies were delivered in the afternoon and we had some meat to eat, rather than the compo rations which we were usually fed.

14th February 1966

Last day on this piquet, packed up our equipment and were relieved just after lunch. A march back to Habilayn base, weapon inspection and a shower and a change of clothes before a drink of pop in the club.

We stood to as usual at dusk, we moved to our DF positions and awaited the call to test fire our own personal weapons (SLR).

Trouble again in the Monksfield base, they were attacked and had quite a fire fight. We were sent to our DFs and waited there until the all clear was called.

15th February 1966

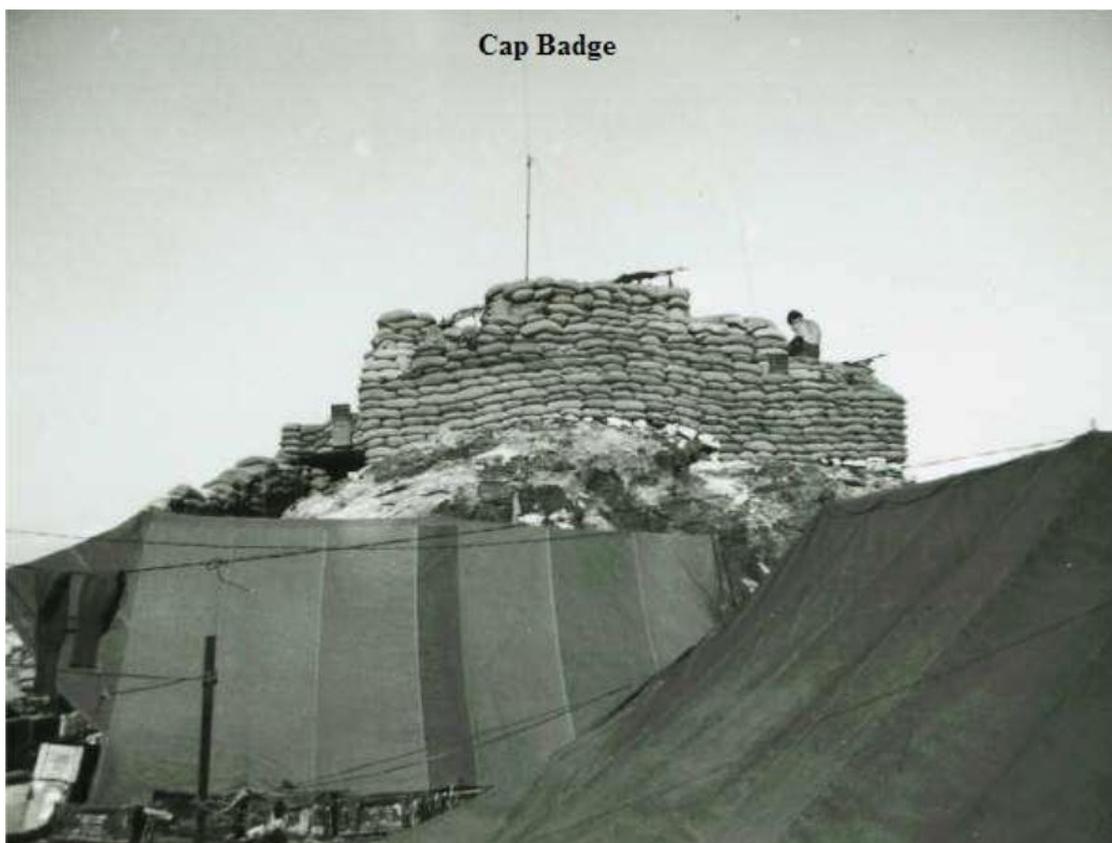
We were up early the next morning and went by helicopter over to the hills above Monksfield and patrolled into the valley looking for any signs of the dizzies that had attacked the night before. Nothing was found and after a few hours out we were flown back to base.

16th February 1966

Another Helicopter flight out over the mountains to look for any signs of trouble building up. We walked over the moon like rock features looking for anything that should not be there, the dissidents would often build up rocks to cover their positions.

We patrolled over the tops of the hills and down into the valleys until late afternoon. We sat around on the top of the hills just watching the tracks below, the Arab locals knew we were there and we made sure they could see us. It was nearly dusk before we were picked up by the helicopters and returned to base at Habilayn.

We were advised that the whole platoon would be flying out to a place known as CAP BADGE, another piquet up in the heights of the Radfan Mountains. The only way you could get to the mountain was by helicopter.



17th February 1966

We were flown to the hill in small groups early in the morning and by mid morning we were unpacking and getting to know the position, finding out

the DFs and checking the trip flares.

This piquet was about five miles from the nearest base and to a large extent we were on our own. The base consisted of two camps, one on a flat ridge and the other on a higher ridge about five hundred feet further up on the peak of the hill.

The platoon was based in the lower camp with a section of seven men on top camp. We had a quiet first night, we did not fire our weapons at dusk, we just watched as the other bases around the area fired their DFs.

18th February 1966

The following morning we rebuilt the makeshift shower, putting in a new bucket. Later on we made ready to receive our supplies from the helicopter. We settled down to our lunch and then checked the GPMGs and made a few amendments to the DFs. We check fired these DFs at dusk and all seemed well.

This location was important. It was taken a few years earlier by the Para's in a bloody fire fight and was the key in the defence of the Aden and Yemen border. The terrorists/dissidents would love to retake this position and it was our job to keep it.

Again we spent the first day making the camp a little more comfortable. There was one main sleeping area, which was two large holes surrounded by high double thickness sandbags, these walls were sleeping accommodation and guard positions. There were small passages overlooking the border and below us many trip flares, these were set out in case of close attack and covered the slopes of the mountain. The surrounding country side was mountainous and there were many possible positions for an attack to come from. We kept watch all the time looking out for any odd movements which could indicate a build up of dissidents and possible attack.

19th February 1966

After cleaning up we went through all the routine of being attacked and

where support came from. We practised calling for emergency assistance to see how quickly we could get support from the Air Force in the event of any attack or storming of the camp. We made the call at 1 pm and waited, it was only a few minutes, possibly six, before we heard the distant noise of approaching planes, then two came in very low right over our position. They were Sea Vixens from the Air Craft Carrier Bulwark and they had been flown to Khormaksar air field in Aden, about 150 miles to the south. This exercise made us feel a little better and the presence of the planes had been noted by the local Arabs, and we had a quiet night.

20th February 1966

Checked our supplies and ammunition, tidied up the sanger area and made our sleeping area a bit more comfortable. Prepared lunch and then went through the defence positions in the afternoon.

As night fell we stood to and fired our personal weapons into the hills, another long quiet night, only the stars to keep us company.

21st February 1966

A patrol out of base over the hills around the base looking for anything out of the ordinary, back by lunch time, then prepared to receive supplies from the Helicopter, After the supplies were sorted and stored we settled down for another night of watching the stars.

22nd February 1966

Filled a few sandbags and repositioned them around the camp, had a shower and after lunch a short patrol around the base to check the trip flares.

Shots were heard in the valley at night but we could not see where they were fired from or who they were being fired at. We watched and waited all night.

23rd February 1966

We took over guard on the top sanger. The morning was taken up with GPMG training, two hours of checking DFs and adjusting the gun.

Time for an evening meal, we all mucked in and prepared the meal and cleaned up afterwards. We stood too at dusk and fired at a few DFs, then settled down, doing two on and four off. All was quiet. I was on watch from 10 pm until midnight.

24th February 1966

I was beginning to settle down to sleep when a trip flare went off, we were stood to straight away but we could see nothing in the light of the flare.

We waited and then heard a shot, it was hard to tell where the shot was being fired from then we heard another shot, we spoke with the base camp below, they had also heard the shot and were stood to. We watched and soon heard a third shot they seemed to be firing at the village in the valley below us, we returned fire to the area where we thought the shots came from and again waited, all went quiet. We kept a look out for another half hour before returning to beds.

A few moments later we were called again, someone this time was firing at us, the guard on duty had heard a round strike the sandbags, we rushed into positions and advised the base camp that we were under attack; the shots now came in thick and fast.

We kept our heads down well behind the sandbags and waited for a lull in the firing, then we returned fire with the GPMG in sustained fire roll sweeping the area below us without looking, 1000 rounds a minute. We blasted about 15 seconds and waited, an explosion racked the side of the camp and we returned a couple of hand-grenades, pulling out the pin and throwing them as far as we could, we counted to five and stuck our fingers in our ears as the blast shattered the night air.

It was cloudy and the night was dark, we looked over the sandbags but could see nothing but the dark shape of the hillside, more shots were fired at us, hitting the sand bags above our heads and sending the sand flying everywhere.

We had had enough of this so we asked the base camp below to fire a night flare over our position, it came and burst over us, lighting up the area, changing night into day, we looked up and saw shadowy figures moving down the hill side. We let fly with all the weapons to hand, aimed shots and we covered all the DFs we had marked as escape/attack positions. They returned fire and we kept our heads down, moving to other fire positions around the piquet and pointing the rifle over the sand bags and firing a few shots every now and then. It went quiet and we watched the hills then we sat back and talked a while again waiting and watching. it was then the impact of what we had been doing for the last hours dawned on us. We admitted we were glad it was over and we were all safe.

We checked ammunition and waited until dawn before we made any attempt to check the area again. I made breakfast for the section that morning and two of us went to the base camp for supplies, both food and ammunition were required.

A patrol from the base camp were out early to check the area where the attack had come from, signs that Russian weapons had been used against us were found, and a certain amount of what appeared to be blood was found on the rock in the pass below. We re-supplied the top sanger and had a quiet day checking the weapons and making ready for the coming night, we watched and waited but it was a long quiet night.

25th February 1966

At last the dawn arrived I don't think many slept that night we lay on our beds listening and waiting for the early sun rise, after breakfast a few lads went down to the main camp for water and to re stock for the next night. We did our usual cookhouse duties and always tried to keep the area tidy. Slept in the afternoon to catch up on a few hours rest, a quick wash and change of clothes before starting another night watching the hills over Cap Badge.

26th February 1966

Another quiet day, a trip down to the base camp for supplies and a short patrol around the mountain, and back to the top sanger for tea time. Another night of two hours on and four off, We watched but saw nothing in the dark silhouettes of the mountains. Dawn came and a mist covered the valley below.

27th February 1966

After breakfast, I was to go down the base camp for water and we decided on a race down the hill. We were carrying a couple of jerry cans each, I was the third man away but as I took a few steps the rock below my foot moved and I took off.

I arrived at the bottom a long time before the rest, although I can't remember much about the fall other than flashes of sound and someone asking me not to move as the medical team were on their way to me. I was lifted onto a stretcher and carried into the base camp. Our Officer had already been on the radio to the base at Habilayn asking for a Helicopter to evacuate me to the MRS (Medical Reception Station).

The Helicopter arrived very soon and I was flown to the hospital at Habilayn, I cannot remember much about the flight, but after being checked out by the doctors it was found that apart from many cuts and bruises, I had broken one finger. I stayed in the hospital for observation and was given the all clear to return to return to Cap Badge on the next flight out which was to be early the following morning, I managed a few hours rest and was given my dressings and other bits and advised the helicopter was leaving mid morning.

28th February 1966

I arrived back, much to the surprise of my mates, but because of my injuries I was on light duties and spent most of my time either in the command post on the radio, relaying messages to out-lying foot patrols or

helping the cook prepare the meals.

1st March 1966

Working in the Command Post and when not on the radio, I was helping the cook prepare the meals, and washing up afterwards. I was not on duty, and had an early night, difficult to sleep, still very sore.

2nd March 1966

Another early start back on duty in the command Post, a few patrols were out in the surrounding area and we were there to relay messages from them to the main base at Habilayn. Went for a walk around our base in the afternoon, had the bandages removed and had an afternoon off. Tried to sunbathe, but it was just too hot, went for a shower and made ready to stand to at dusk for another watch and see night.

3rd March 1966

Back in the Command Post all day, all was quiet. A helicopter arrived mid morning with supplies which had to be checked and stored away. In the afternoon we re-supplied the top sanger. My injuries were getting better, and I was back on normal duties.

4th March 1966

I took over the machine gun post in the base camp over looking the valley below, we were doing two on and four off all night. It passed quietly and we made preparations to hand over to the next platoon the following morning.

5th March 1966

Back to Habilayn by helicopter to find out that helicopter duties followed. We were working on the airfield helping to refuel the Wessex Helicopter, man handling the forty gallon drums of fuel to the aircraft and refuelling them with hand pumps.

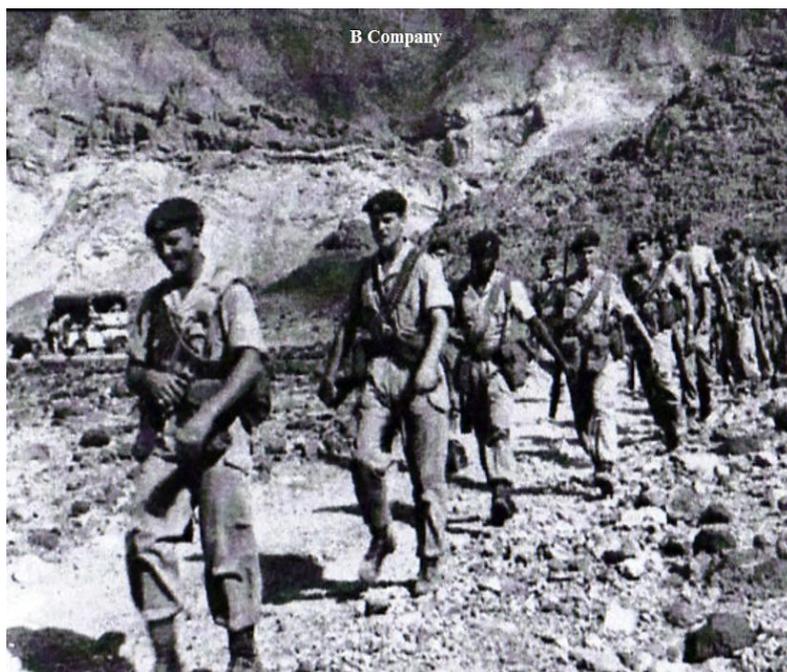
We found that some of the drums were damaged and the officer in charge said they could not be used as they could be contaminated so it was decided that these drums would be airlifted to various positions around the base. They were buried and stones were laid over them, the location of the drums were logged as DFs and bearings were given to the guns in case of attack from this position.

A night off in the NAAFI, some of the lads went to see a film, I returned to our tent and crashed out there listening to the radio.

6th March 1966

We heard the next day that a platoon from B Coy had come face to face with some dissidents out on patrol from their Dhala base. They were exchanging fire when the officer called for mortar support.

The first volley was too long, the fire control was altered to left 100 down 50, this was taken to be yards but the mortar section had just gone over to metric plots and it was read as 100 metres left 50 metres down. The second volley landed just behind our lads and two were badly injured. Cpl Wildman and Pete Shields received wounds which were so bad they were returned to the UK for treatment. We were making ready to return to Aden the following morning.



7th March 1966

The journey back to Radfan Camp was uneventful and we arrived back early afternoon, time to clean our kit and have a few hours rest before moving to stand-by in the late evening.

8th March 1966

We had the following morning off, time for a good shower and to catch up with letter writing.

We started Mobile Patrols, we moved down to HMS Sheba and took over the patrol land rovers, these vehicles worked longer hours than we did, with very little maintenance on them.

We drove out of the main gates and headed towards Steamer Point, a boat was in port and we stopped to talk to a group of Americans telling them to keep together and if any problems, they were to contact a foot patrol and return to the boat straight away. They were too full of themselves to take notice and they were last seen heading back to the boat carrying their purchases.

We moved to Hedjoff roundabout and into the Maalla Main road driving up towards Shanty Town and into the ASD via the back door. A quick cup of tea and we were out again, down to Steamer Point and Tawahi, on to Government House, check that area and back to Sheba, a four hour tour of duty and no problems, very unusual.

We did not return to Radfan until early morning, we did a spot of balcony Piquet. We were detailed to Ash House a few hundred yards from the families NAAFI, we were to cover the back of the main street and the rear of the flats. The night was quiet and we managed to get to our beds and have some sleep before sunrise.

9th March 1966

We had been told that we were to be involved in a Film about desert

warfare and this was to start within a few days. But before that we had still plenty of patrols to do around the Aden Streets.

We practised our IS duties and then had the afternoon off, we were on stand by and could not have a drink, we went to the pop shop and just waited around, until being stood down around 10 pm.

10th March 1966

Proceeded to Government House to take over there. Straight onto duty, post 4 and the rear gate. Walked around the servants quarters for two hours, then managed to get a few hours down at the Mermaid Club before going back on duty.

11th March 1966

A repeat of yesterday, two on and four off with a few hours down at the Mermaid Club. There was trouble reported in Crater and other parts of Aden. Our area seemed ok, but we were warned to be careful and keep an extra watch on the locals coming and going around Government House.

12th March 1966

Government house guard post 4 again, the rear gate. Walking around then heard a noise in the bushes near the fence, made the challenge. Halt who goes there (Waqqaff) Halt, then out came a dog.

The guard commander did his rounds checking us and after lunch we managed to get a few hours off and a rest down at the Mermaid Club before the night duty started.

13th March 1966

Still at Government House, same routine, two on and four off and some time down at the Mermaid Club if time allows. The CO was due around in the afternoon the Guard room and surrounding areas had to be Clean and tidy.

14th March 1966

After breakfast went out to collect the platoon mail, back for dinner time and then onto stag at the old gun emplacements, another quiet day at Government House.

15th March 1966

Made ready to hand over this duty to the next platoon, we were to go straight to Radfan Camp and clean the platoon area.

Later we were called out on the streets in Maalla. A ship was due in port and extra patrols were sent into the Steamer Point and Tawahi areas. We stayed out on patrol until the ships passengers were on board, it was to stay in port overnight and we were advised of an early start for tomorrow.

16th March 1966

Up early and into Tawahi and Steamer Point, the ship was still in port and the passengers were out shopping. We patrolled up the back streets and covered the main shopping area, the passengers were unaware of the ongoing troubles and they just wanted to shop, it was a long day with only a few hours rest until the ship was ready to leave port. We called at HMS Sheba base for a drink and then returned to Radfan to prepare for the move up country.

17th March 1966

We were up early for our return to Habilayn and we made our way to RAF Khormaksar. We flew up in a Beverley airplane, possibly the same plane that took us to Perim a few months earlier. After a delay we finally arrived in Habilayn mid afternoon. We moved up to an area near Echo piquet, in my dairy there is an entry to the effect that I was sitting with Mac (McDade) drinking cold tea from a water bottle.

We patrolled up and down the valley being filmed and then back again until they thought they had enough film for this shoot.

18th March 1966

We were filmed with the helicopters getting on and off for a few hours, before finally flying up to Dhala to be filmed on the airfield. The Beverley came into land and covered everyone with dirt, it got every where, our ears and noses were blocked with dust. A shower was the only thing we wanted at the end of the day followed by a drink in the tents, one pint only, we were on the front line and everyone was on duty, we slept with our rifles attached to the wrist

19th March 1966

We filmed the next day on the Dhala airfield, a Welsh Guardsman had been shot and although we were filming we were also there to show a bigger presence. We started to patrol up to the high plateau, where the film crew were located. We had to walk past them without looking at the camera, we did this from various positions and angles all morning. We sat down and watched the other sections doing their bit, then it was our turn again, running into position and diving for cover and crawling into fire positions and then making a move towards the enemy to make ready to engage them. A long afternoon out in the hot sun, were glad to get back to camp for a shower and a drink.

20th March 1966

Next morning we were doing mock section attacks against some of our own lads who were dressed as Arab dissidents, this went on for some time until the film crew thought they had enough on film to be able to be able to edit their film.

There was reported trouble down in the Aden Townships and we left to return to Radfan Camp that afternoon. We cleaned our weapons and were soon on duty in Sheik Othman, a man had been shot dead and we were sent as extra cover, these streets were out of our normal area and we took extra care in everything we did.

21st March 1966

Mick Smiths Birthday. We were out in Sheik Othman doing road blocks, a lot of people on the streets and trouble was building up.

A few shots were fired and a policeman was killed, shots were fired at a patrol and we had to keep our eyes on everyone and everything. Nothing moved past us without being searched, we kept extra sentries out from the road block to cover us.

22nd March 1966

The filming we thought was over was on again, we had to go to Khormaksar airport and be filmed supposedly arriving in the desert for the first time. Here we were well tanned after 7 months in South Arabia trying to act as though we had just arrived. We were back in Radfan Camp by mid afternoon, just enough time to do a few hours of sand bagging to our tents.

A night off but no beer, we were on thirty minutes stand by. We were allowed to go to the pictures.

23rd March 1966

Our departure date was announced 17 May, we had 50 odd days to go. A day of internal escort duties followed, if we were not escorting Arabs around the camp we were cleaning kit and trying to make ready to return to the UK.

24th March 1966

Back to RAF Khormaksar to do a few hours of filming, just stood around most of the morning while they decided what they wanted to do. The film shoot lasted a few moments, before we were onto the wagons and on our way back to Radfan Camp.

We had to unload MFO boxes from a lorry and take them to various company lines, these were to be filled with unwanted items and packed ready to be returned to the UK. We sorted out our unwanted bits and pieces plus anything we had bought in Aden and wanted to be shipped back to the UK, these boxes would take 6 weeks to return so nothing that would perish could be packed away.

25th March 1966

Dolphin Court guard duty followed, constant patrolling around Dolphin Square two on four off all day and night. The people who lived in this square were senior officers or diplomats and we were to guard their homes, but they were not allowed in if they did not respond when challenged. We finished this guard after twenty four hours and returned to Radfan Camp.

26th March 1966

A few hours off, shower and freshen up before moving down town to Tawahi for foot patrols.

Stationed at the Crescent Police Station. A call to the shopping area where some tourists were having trouble with a shop keeper, who was overcharging them. We talked to them both and told the tourists that they had to bargain for the best price, with this sorted we returned to our Crescent base before moving over to Sheba for a bout of mobile patrols. We moved up to the back streets, a report of groups gathering in the streets, we called up to check it out but all was normal.

27th March 1966

We were out on patrol before sunrise down to Steamer Point dock area and back through Tawahi. We finished Mobiles mid-morning, returned them to Sheba and had an hour off to relax in the base before returning to Camp.

A rest until dinner time and then we played football in the afternoon. The

rest of the day off and a night in the Camp NAAFI club.

28th March 1966

Internal guard duty in Radfan Camp, we were on the main gate checking all vehicles in and out of the Camp. As well as internal duties we were sandbagging the tents.

29th March 1966

After a night guard we had breakfast then a shower, a clean up of our kit and a few hours of rest before returning to do internal escort duties within Radfan Camp. We were on duty at night but on stand by in the NAAFI.

30th March 1966

A morning off cleaning our kit. Played football in the afternoon and left camp just after tea to move down to the Dolphin guard room and take over there. A night of walking around the Houses, all was quiet.

31st March 1966

Relieved from Dolphin Court, we went down to Tangmeer and patrolled around the Tawahi and Steamer Point areas in the afternoon. A few hand grenades were thrown, later a few shots fired at a Patrol. We kept a good watch on everyone and everything we passed, keeping alert at all times was the Key.

A woman was killed in Tawahi, lots of crowds around the area and we were told to stay out and keep up a high profile, we returned to Sheba for a late supper and were allowed a few hours rest there.

1st April 1966

We were briefed on the sighting of a group of Arabs, and they were known to be driving a white Opel car, we would have a purge on this type of car. We must have stopped every white car in Aden, nothing was found in any

search.

2nd April 1966

Even when we moved over to Mobile Patrols we were looking for the same type of car, nothing was found and we knew as soon as we started to check this type of car they would switch to another type, so we started checking cars at random and then started to find the odd gun.

3rd April 1966

We finished Mobiles in the morning and after a short break started to do foot patrols in the Tawahi area. We called in at the Crescent Police Station for a rest, the locals who were working near by seemed very restless, some stone throwing, but nothing serious. We managed to clear the area without too much trouble. A shot was fired in the Steamer Point area, but no injuries were reported.

4th April 1966

Back in Tawahi, a ship was in port but the passengers were not allowed off, much to the disappointment of the local shop keepers, we were relieved at 1 pm and returned to Radfan Camp and the rest of the day we were stood down, a night in the NAAFI and a pint.

5th April 1966

A lie in and a late breakfast. We were to do some Road Blocks in the afternoon, but were stood down and given the day off. We ended up filling and replacing sandbags around the tent for a couple of hours, before actually being allowed to relax and have a rest.

6th April 1966

Up early to take over guard on the main gate, the locals arrived early and had to be escorted at all times around the camp, We followed a delivery wagon around the base, making sure they took nothing or left nothing.

Some of the lads went down to the Mermaid Club as escorts. We finished out duty after tea and were stood down for the rest of the evening.

7th April 1966

It was deemed that our tents required more sandbagging, so the morning was taken up with filling and placing sandbags around our platoon area.

After a shower and lunch, we were to go down to Dolphin Square to take over the guard room there for the night. A long night walking around the place, checking the gardens and out houses, the odd Mobile patrol called which helped pass the time.

8th April 1966

We were relieved at 7 am, and returned back to Radfan Camp. We had weapons inspection and then were stood down. We played football in the afternoon and then the rest of the day off duty.

9th April 1966

Prepared to take over duty at Government House. Once settled in we went straight onto duty, first stag was up on the old gun emplacements, two hours of watching over the officers club. In the afternoon a few hours off at the Mermaid Club, then back for a night of two on and six off with little to do apart from eat and sleep.

10th April 1966

Government House duty and on early shift, walking around the gardens watching the local staff arrive and watching them go about their work, we changed stags and went over to the servants quarters, another day of guarding the diplomats and their families.

11th April 1966

Another long day at Government House, after inspection and given our duties, we managed to have a couple of hours at the Mermaid Club. Front gate stag first duty and then onto the perimeter for the rest of the night.

12th April 1966

Early morning stag up at the top, officers were out and about checking the posts, had to be very aware that they were around and to do the correct challenges. After breakfast and a clean up of the sleeping quarters we went down to the Mermaid Club for a bit of sun bathing, back on duty in the afternoon and another long night watching and walking around the fence.

13th April 1966

Mid morning and we were ready to hand over the Government House Guard duty to the next platoon. We moved back to Radfan Camp, and after a late lunch were back out into Tawahi and on foot patrols working out from the Crescent Police Station. A shot was reported to have been fired somewhere in the backs streets, we moved over there to take a look but nothing was found. We got back to Radfan in time to catch a last pint.

14th April 1966

A late breakfast, a weapons and kit inspection then out on Mobile Patrol in Maalla, we backed up the foot patrols and then went into the rear streets up to the Shanty Town. We called at the Red Sea Hotel and managed to get a free cup of Coffee. All was quiet and we returned to base at 5 pm just in time for a hot meal in the Canteen.

15th April 1966

Back out on Mobile Patrol, a grenade was thrown in Tawahi and an Arab woman was hurt, we toured the area and kept a high profile. Two liners had arrived in port, some of the passengers came off, and we kept a watch on them as they went about their shopping. They were told of the situation and most of them were happy to return to the ship when told, we had to escort them to the port entrance and waited there until the boats left the

port. A few more hours of patrol around Steamer Point before returning to Sheba and handing over the Rover to the next section.

16th April 1966

Back to Radfan Camp in the morning and stood down for the rest of the day, myself and a few lads went straight out on the passion wagon to Tawahi to do some of our own shopping, then on to the Mermaid Club for an afternoon of sunbathing and a drink or two. We caught the last wagon returning to Radfan Camp. A night in our own bed and slept well.

17th April 1966

A briefing in the morning and we were to do foot patrols in Tawahi concentrating on the back streets. We were dropped off and moved into the second and third street amongst the cardboard houses and tin shacks. How could people live like this we thought, but they did. We were aware that the young kids were following us, we had to be aware of them and also look out for the older lads who would often throw a stone, weapons ready we learnt to walk backwards. Mobile patrols were around and together we kept a high profile and the day went off with out too much aggro.

18th April 1966

Back out on foot patrols in Maalla. We arrived at the ASD mid morning and after a cup of tea, we were out on patrol in the Maalla Main Road. Murder Mile as it was known. We walked the full length and then down again to the Hedjoff roundabout, back up to the ASD for a rest and a bite to eat before doing a repeat trip up and down the Main Street until after the rush hour, before returning to Radfan Camp and the rest of the night off.

19th April 1966

A few grenades had gone off in Maalla and Tawahi during the early hours. The reports were that a white Opel car was seen at the same time, we were switched over to Road Blocks and during the day we did a purge on all

white Opels and most other white cars in Aden, we stopped and searched all day but found nothing, there were no further grenade incidents and we were allowed to stand down for a few hours, before moving out again late evening to start the checking white Cars again. Nothing found. We were kept out on the streets until late before returning to Base at Radfan for a late supper.

20th April 1966

Back onto Road Blocks and the same brief as before, look out for white Opel cars with two or more passengers. In two days we listed over 200 searches of this type of car and found nothing. Another late return to base.

21st April 1966

We were detailed to do more road blocks, but held back on stand by in Radfan. We were put on one hours notice to move and were then given time to do a bit of cleaning up and letter writing. We were stood down after tea and told to have a drink and an early night.

22nd April 1966

Foot patrols in Maalla, patrolled up the Relief Road to the top roundabout and then down the Maalla Main Road to the Hedjoff roundabout, had on hour in the ASD before going out again onto the Main Road until mid afternoon. A long hot day, we rested at ASD, held back on standby and were relieved just after 8 pm, we returned to Radfan Camp and after supper straight to our pits.

23rd April 1966

Foot patrols in Tawahi around the shopping area and into the back streets. We looked into the shops as we passed hoping to see something we could buy to take home. We had lunch brought to us and had it standing around the wagon, and then off again towards Steamer Point and the Dock area.

24th April 1966

Another day on Foot Patrols, walking the streets of Maalla, stationed in the ASD we went out to the back streets first before moving onto the Maalla Main Road. We called in on the Families NAAFI shop at the back of the flats, after a search around the area the families were allowed in. We spoke to many of the families there and told them we were in our last month of our duty in Aden . They seemed sorry to hear that we were going to leave soon.

25th April 1966

Back into Maalla and onto Search Light 4. On the top floor, we watched over the streets from above. Checking the front street and watching all the movement up and down. We stayed on this stag until after the rush hour and then were stood down to return to Radfan Camp for an evening off.

26th April 1966

Road Blocks on the Crater Road, we were checking vehicles both in and out of the area, nothing found, we moved into Maalla to do snap Road Blocks around the area, We would just stop in the road and within a few moments have the Road Block in position and start to search cars. We did this all day. Returned to Radfan in the evening.

27th April 1966

Trouble in the towns and we were out on patrol in Maalla early morning, a few shots had been fired at a patrol and we went out in support. We walked up the Main Road all morning, watching and checking everything. There was an atmosphere and we thought something was going to happen, but all was quiet.

We returned to Camp only to find out that this day should have been our day off and we were due back on duty in Maalla early the next day.

28th April 1966

Maalla Foot Patrol from the ASD. We went out to cover some of the Road Blocks that were operating in the area. We walked up and down the Maalla Main twice before being relieved and sent back to Radfan Camp, only to start filling and moving MFO boxes around ready for dispatch back to the UK.

29th April 1966

Morning off, we finished the MFO boxes and after lunch we tidied up the camp lines and then went onto Standby waiting to be called out at half hours notice. Trouble was reported around the prison area in Al Mansoura.

30th April 1966

The trouble at the Al Mansoura Prison was getting worse, some of relations of the inmates were rioting outside the Prison and we moved out as a company.

The Riot platoon arrived first and managed to disperse them. We arrived and took control of the perimeter and surrounding area. After an hour or so some of them came back and were again causing trouble, tear gas was thrown and we went out into the crowd and made a few arrests, taking the ring leaders back to the prison.

Some of our gas masks were not working correctly and a few of the lads suffered from the effects of the gas. With the area cleared we went inside to watch over the inmates.

1st May 1966

Still at the Prison we had to help the warders exercise the prisoners. We watched them walk around the yard making sure they did not talk to each other. We were relieved by the PWO (Prince of Wales Own Regiment) and returned to Radfan Camp.

The MFO (Movement Boxes) had to be loaded onto wagons, these boxes were being collected for shipment back to the UK that afternoon.

2nd May 1966

Back on Foot patrols in Tawahi and Steamer Point. We seemed to know every face and they knew us, a kind of mutual dislike, but one Arab approached us and thanked us for helping his son when he was hurt in an earlier grenade incident. We rested in Sheba and continued foot patrols until the late evening.

3rd May 1966

A day off, with just days to go, we could go shopping ourselves so we went to Steamer Point and bought a few goodies from the Arab Shop Keepers. They always liked to bargain, they say a price we half it, they come down 25% we say no and start to walk away, they call us back and we agree on a price that suits both parties. An afternoon at the Mermaid Club and back to Radfan Camp for tea time.

4th May 1966

Out on foot patrols in Maalla, we were doing stop and search, we would frisk any Arab we thought was carrying weapons, this was just part of the routine to keep ahead of the locals and they would accept it. We talked to the RAF and other people who were guarding their own flats on the Maalla Main, they had heard by this time that we were getting near to the end of our tour of duty and we were given tea and biscuits where ever we stopped. They were generous in saying we would be missed.

5th May 1966

Snap Road Blocks in Tawahi, Steamer Point and later in Maalla, 2 x 3 ton Bedford Lorries and a platoon of lads. We drove around and stopped at random, set up a Road Block and checked cars for an hour or so before packing up and moving off the do the same again at another location. It was hard work, the road blocks were always set up at the double, and we

were running around placing the angle iron supports in place and then setting up the control and search area for the vehicles. A long day with no results, but a deterrent to those who wanted to move arms around the area.

6th May 1966

We were to parade to have a talk by the GOC South Arabia. He gave us the usual pat on the back and thanked us for the job we were doing, then it was out on the streets again for us, whilst he and his party went for drinks in the Officers' Mess.

7th May 1966

We continued with foot patrols in the Steamer Point area. A liner was in port and extra patrols were put out in Tawahi and Steamer Point, we went down to HMS Sheba and patrolled out from there.

Plenty of passengers in the streets, most of them were British and were emigrating to Australia, we chatted and walked along with them most of the afternoon, they returned to the ship safe and the shop keepers again had another good day.

8th May 1966

Another grenade thrown in Maalla and we were off there to assist in the search. We moved to the ASD and were detailed to take over with Road Blocks in Maalla Main Road and we searched many more cars but found nothing. We had a meal in ASD, before moving to Tawahi and doing more road blocks there. A late night return to Camp.

9th May 1966

Mobile Patrols out from Radfan Camp, we toured the Maalla area, concentrating on the Relief Road and the Back Streets up to the Shanty Towns, we had a late meal in the ASD before returning the Camp in the early evening.

10th May 1966

Put on reserve platoon in Radfan Camp. We cleaned up our tent areas and had a few hours in the pop shop. A bit of sun bathing then a night at the pictures. Still on call, we did not have a drink, just waited for the call that never came.

11th May 1966

We moved down to the Crescent Police Station in Tawahi and patrolled from there. We covered the shopping area and met a few of our lads who were off duty doing a bit of last minute bargaining with the local shop keepers.

A bit of a skirmish between two groups of Arabs , They were fighting over a right of way up to the Shanty Town, we sorted it out and stayed around for an hour until we thought it was safe to leave it to the local Police.

12th May 1966

Maalla Main Road again, started just after 10 am, we walked up and down the full length before lunch, then called in to the ASD for a hot meal and a drink. We managed a few hours of sun bathing before going back out into the Streets until 6 pm, when we returned back to Radfan Camp.

13th May 1966

Road Blocks in Tawahi in the Morning, a grenade was thrown up in Maalla so we concentrated on cars coming from that area, any car or any one who looked out of place was stopped and searched. We listed details of all searches done, but nothing was found.

14th May 1966

Another Liner was due in and we were detailed into Tawahi to give extra cover to the foot patrols there, we went up the back streets and left the

main area to the normal patrol and the mobiles. The locals were talking to us, waving and they seemed happy, we were very aware things were unusual and kept an extra watch on everything. Did they know we were about to leave!

15th May 1966

Road Blocks in Maalla, Stop and search. We found a car with some ammunition in the back seat, some 9mm rounds but no gun. We called the search unit who would do a more detailed search whilst we carried on doing snap Road Blocks up and down the Maalla Area.

We got back to Radfan Camp, and started to pack up our kit, we were not finished yet but were told to pack any kit we did not require, ready to send down to RAF Khormaksar for return to Tidworth.

16th May 1966

One full day to go..... and into Maalla Main Road to do more patrols. We had lunch in the ASD and were out into the Streets all afternoon, the families who were guarding their own flats were chatting to us for a while. We checked the NAAFI and then moved onto the Maalla Main Road, our last day on the Murder Mile, walked down to the Hedjoff roundabout and then up the Arab side of the street.

Groups of Arabs were gathering near the shops and we kept an eye on them and advised the other patrols. We continued patrolling all night, two on four off, the streets went very quiet just before 11 pm and our thoughts turned to going home.

It was a warm night, not many of us slept, we chatted and played cards, and drank plenty of tea.

17th May 1966

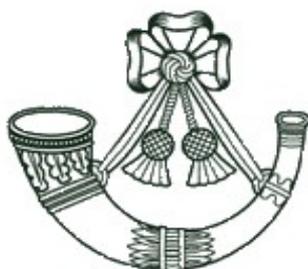
It was soon dawn, and we started to pack up our gear, the lorries arrived about 7 am. We left the ASD and moved down to the Hedjoff Roundabout

and started to drive up the Maalla Main Road.

About half way up we noticed a group of people waving at us, a number of families had got up early and were out to wave us good-bye. When we reached the top of the street we decided to drive down the Main Road for the last time, making a bit of a noise.

Many families were now out on the balconies and waving, we saluted them and blew the lorries horns, our job was done and we returned to Radfan Camp for the last time.

We packed up our bedding and returned it to the stores, cleaned and handed in our weapons and ammunition, had a quick drink in the NAAFI and then to the Company office to collect our travel papers and leave passes, not forgetting our overdue and outstanding wages, then on to the trucks and down to Khormaksar where an RAF VC 10 was waiting to take us back to the UK..... !!!!!



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