

New Forest Remembers WWII Project

Oral History Team: Transcription Document

Contributor's name	Anthony Harry Mott	Name code	AHM
Interviewer's name	Nick Osman	Code number	019
Audio Typist name	Sue Jackson	Transcription Date	07/10/14
Transcription file name	AHM - Anthony Harry Mott		- OH Transcription.doc

Web Pages:

Oral History article:

<https://nfknowledge.org/contributions/memories-of-an-artillery-man-and-motorcyclist/#map=10/-1.55/50.77/0/20:0:0.6|34:1:1|35:1:1>

Project information:

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/wwii

File name	AM	019	0001M0.WAV	Interview date:04/11/13
-----------	----	-----	------------	-------------------------

OK, so what's your full name and date of birth please?

Yes, Anthony Harry Innes Mott. 12 January 1925.

That's lovely. So can you tell me what happened and how you got involved with the Service?

With which service, the Army or...?

With the Army, yeah.

With the Army, oh yes, well, I think, as I was saying there were these guns that were captured from the First World War and my sister and I used to like playing around on them, so I got an interest in artillery and also having been in the school Cadet Corps so on, and the Home Guard, and so on, I volunteered for the Royal Artillery. And meanwhile on one of my holidays, I think I told you, I was instead of working on the farm as I had done on previous occasions I was able – through my father being in charge of the petrol coupon distribution and me helping with it – I knew a Mr Cranny, the transport manager at Airspeeds and I managed to get a job in there spraying the Horsa gliders. And through that I went to the office and asked if it were possible to go on a test flight with an Airspeed Oxford that they were putting together down there and achieved that. At that time my friends were working out in the fields and the test pilot did some particularly good manoeuvres, diving straight down and straight out, and later they told me all about that so, you know, it was quite an experience, so I was very pleased to have done that. And later,

© 2016

New Forest National Park Authority

Lymington Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 9ZG

Email archaeology@newforestnpa.gov.uk

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/wwii

VAT Reg No. 871 9343 00

CHAIRMAN OLIVER CROTHWAITE-EYRE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ALISON BARNES

as I say, I went into the Artillery and I was trained on the 25 pounder gun which was used by most of the field regiments and the 5.5 with the two arms that stretched out and were dug into - pushed into the ground. And the heavier 7.2 Howitzer model which took four of us to lift the shell and ram it in and so on (laughs). So, did you want me to go on about the Army?

Yes please.

So, anyway, I was stationed at Larkhill and, during the time of the first invasion, very friendly with some American paratroopers I used to meet of an evening in the NAAFI place there, talking, and on D-Day the next day they weren't there and so on. I only hope they returned safely, I never heard any more of them. But, later on I was sent out as a reinforcement, one of a group there, to Arromanches, where we landed towards the end of June and (laughs) was interviewed by the receiving officer there. It turned out that the regiment was the 3rd Royal Horse Artillery, part of the 7th Armoured Division, which was Montgomery's favourite "Desert Rat" lot, so these were all desert men there. And the interviewing officer said "Is anybody here interested in motorcycles?" So I said yes, I am, I've had three at home. Sounds as though we were very rich and so on, but in fact at that time between us motorcycles were changing hands at about £4-5 – a simple Velocette and an old Douglas that wasn't going very well. Anyway, he said "Oh, oh" he said "You're just the man for us", he said. "Donovan's just got shot in the leg", he said, "and he's got a BSA 500", he said, "Do you think you can manage that?" I said "Yes, I can do that alright." So, instead of going on the guns, which I wouldn't have had the chance I think of being a gun layer because these other people were experienced and they were there before me, and so on, and that was the favourite position on the guns. So I'd have been one of those that carted the shells up or something of that nature. So I was very pleased to become a motorcyclist, which proved very useful to me.

00:04:29

Later on in the campaign, the colonel there had a great suspicion. During the time that he had been in the desert, when he had been using the radio at times the Germans had managed to pick up his signals. So he tried to avoid using the radio. If the landlines were laid, as they obviously did wherever possible (we used to lay out lines to the various troops and so on) if they weren't available, then I was used to go around with messages to the battery commanders and other things by the colonel so, you know, I got to be, I don't say friendly, but to know him quite well and he treated me extremely well. I mean, there was a time in Hamburg when the German ladies were stretching piano wire across between the trees, and so on, and I know once I was due to go on some message there and I looked a bit askance and he asked what was the matter and I told him what I'd heard about this and "Oh yes," he said "Well, you can put your motorcycle with the people – I've forgotten the name of the vehicle – the vehicle that looked after repairs and all that sort of thing, he said

© 2016

New Forest National Park Authority

Lymington Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 9ZG

Email archaeology@newforestnpa.gov.uk

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/wwii

VAT Reg No. 871 9343 00

CHAIRMAN OLIVER CROSTHWAITE-EYRE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ALISON BARNES

"And you can use the Jeep". "And," he said, "Before that," he said, "I'm going to have something fixed up" and he had triangular pieces of steel fixed to the front of all small vehicles and so on. I think we were one of the first regiments to do that. Later on I saw one of these things on a visit to France to a lot of the old weaponry there with a group that I belong to. We had visits to different places and it was good to see one of these Jeeps with this triangular metal sticking up there (laughs). So, that was it. So, as I say, I was very lucky on occasion. Twice some German – I don't think it was a proper sniper because the don't think he would have missed – but I think there were quite a few people who were sympathetic towards the Germans still around there. I mean, some of them had done quite well I think. Anyway, whoever it was, somebody took a pot shot at me and hit a rear pannier. It went through the panniers, didn't injure the wheel whatsoever, and I put the bike into a ditch and some friends came along in another vehicle and they laid up a bit of fire towards where this person was supposed to be. I don't know whether he ever stayed there, or what not, but anyway I got the motorcycle out and so on.

That was in France, and then later a similar thing happened in Belgium and this time I was on the move and so all I did was when I heard the shot and what not ... back at the ... missed again ... in the rear wheel, I just twisted the accelerator grip cause that's what we had at that time, and shot forward and just got out of the way. But, other than that and what a lot of people, well we were all under shell fire at times, as you know, and I was very fortunate I must say, so, you know, I thank God for my preservation.

00:07:45

What was it like there for the, you know, when you were under shelling, what was it like at the time?

Well, you know, these chaps who'd been in the desert, they were very good and knew what to do and if possible they'd get into some house, ruined or otherwise and get under the table, which was a well known thing to do, and so on. Other than that, to get flat down on the ground as possible. And also they were very good at night because they seemed to know when it was advisable to dig a slit trench and when not to bother, you know. As I say they were all experienced soldiers so I was very lucky to be able to join this regiment that had got a great history anyway and I'm quite proud to have been a member of it.

You made lots of friends?

Yes, and also, I belong to the Royal Horse Artillery Association and the ordinary Artillery Association, different things, and we have reunions at Larkhill and Trowbridge and, you know, it's nice to see and meet the soldiers from later occasions and hear the terrible things that they had to put up with. I think, you know, nowadays when I read about the poor devils in Afghanistan and so on, they don't know who their friends are and who their

© 2016

New Forest National Park Authority

Lymington Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 9ZG

Email archaeology@newforestnpa.gov.uk

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/wwii

VAT Reg No. 871 9343 00

CHAIRMAN OLIVER CROSTHWAITE-EYRE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ALISON BARNES

enemies are. At least we knew the people in grey uniforms were the ones we had to watch out for (laughs).

00:09:13

So, you know, after that, those of us who were under 30, were not married, did not have children (either legitimate or otherwise), were selected to be seconded to some force going to either Burma or Far East. So I missed the great parade in Berlin, you know, at the end of the War, and I was sent back to Larkhill – no, wrong – what's the name of the place in the ... what's the name of the chief artillery place in London, I've forgotten at the moment, isn't it awful? Your memory goes. Anyway these barracks - Woolwich, Woolwich Barracks, that's it - and I made friends there. Funnily enough the fellow on the bed next door to me was one of those who had been in that van that had originally helped me when I got shot at, so I made great friends with him. While we were there, they dropped that atom bomb, so instead of going to Japan, as was possibly rumoured, we thought we were going to get a posting in Britain, you see. But, oh no, when it came to it we were sent to collect our jungle greens uniform and all those sort of things, mosquito nets and things, and it was obvious we were going off somewhere East. So he was with me as well. He lived in Hammersmith and while we were there at Woolwich he was able to show me round different places and we went to Palais de Dance, you know at Hammersmith Palais, that was quite pleasant. And so, eventually we were sent off into a ship called the Durban Castle. That had come from Liverpool way and it had got a lot of recently trained soldiers. And there was our group of relatively experienced ones ... Oh yes, one of the other things was that you were exempt from it, if you had served in the desert, cause there were a few younger men under 30 there who had served in the desert, so they were exempt. After all, they'd done two campaigns so it was only right that they needn't go out. So had a lovely trip out to Rangoon. The sea was calm and we slept on deck. And the stars and the mast waving above, it was really beautiful. And, at half past six in the morning of course they came and washed the decks down so we had to get out of the way quickly. At Rangoon we met soldiers who had been released from prisoner of war camps there – a terrible state they were, poor devils. And they were waiting, they were going to go back on the Durban Castle back to England and I hope on the way, well I know the meals were good there, they'd fatten them up a bit poor devils, they looked awful. So, anyway, cut a long story short, I made great friends with my friend Les Kirkham, he was the chap that I told you about. Eventually when we were released and got home I was best man at this wedding and he at mine. He called his son Tony after me and we've been great friends ever since and so on. So from that side of it, you know, I gained. One time a colonel at Larkhill very kindly invited not only Les and me to a reunion dinner, and so on, but also our two sons. They came along and they were able to manipulate all the weaponry that was on show in the afternoon before the big dinner at night. So, very decent of him, so we were very grateful for that.

00:13:25

© 2016

New Forest National Park Authority

Lymington Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 9ZG

Email archaeology@newforestnpa.gov.uk

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/wwii

VAT Reg No. 871 9343 00

CHAIRMAN OLIVER CROSTHWAITE-EYRE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ALISON BARNES

In Burma we were there until they gained their independence. I was left behind in charge of a lot of guns that were going to be moved on later while the regiment had moved on themselves and so that was a bit delayed. The post all got delayed because it was addressed to India rather than ... where it was addressed to Rangoon they crossed that out and sent it on to India naturally, so we didn't hear for, oh, well over a month or more. Eventually we got back there and so different things happened there in as much that we joined the 28th Field Regiment, that was the one that was there. And of course a lot of them had been in Burma, some of them felt – quite rightly I think – that the European campaign had had the better side of any equipment that was available and, you know, some of them had a bit of a chip on their shoulder about it. They'd had terrible things to put up with there's no doubt of that. You've only got to go to the place in the Midlands where there's different places on show for different regiments and so on. There's a hut there with all things about Burma campaign in there and you can see the terrible tortures and things that the Japanese inflicted on the soldiers there. Well, when we were there we were always hoping to come home again really but now when I think back I would never be able to go to India and Burma now, that sort of thing, only at great expense. But we saw a lot of India, very nice, went to (pauses) Wellington and Ootacamund, those were hill stations and were very well received there and were able to join in the local dance and so on, that sort of stuff. We were housed in the tennis club and we were able to play tennis there, very nice. And later on the regiment was moved up to a place Taunggyi in the Shan states there, and, it's on the border with China. There were some - I don't know - a group had managed to get hold of some munitions and so on and were putting on a little bit of display of force, so our move there was to go up with the guns and do some practise shooting and what not, and so that, you know, dispelled any trouble that they had there. Mind you, we were caught in the Monsoon and the roadway got blocked off there so we were isolated for a little while, but eventually it was very good.

00:16:33

Well, as I say, these people were all waiting to go home so the regiment had to do something to interest people and so a lot went on in the way of sport. There were football teams playing against other teams there. Now my pal Les, he had been a PE instructor before he had come into the artillery for this business and so they wanted a boxing team formed. So I had done a bit of boxing at school and was quite interested in that, so I became their lightweight representative at 9st 9lb. Les was 12st odd and we had a group of about six – I've got photos of them somewhere. So we had competitions not only within the regiment but against other regiments and so on. I had some success, three wins, one draw and one terrible loss. I was against the division champion there and three rounds he knocked me about and I was very pleased to still be on my feet at the end. So I was quite pleased to get out of that one (laughs). So, anyway, that was the sports side of it. Well when we went ... that was in Burma. When we went into India the emphasis seemed to

© 2016

New Forest National Park Authority

Lymington Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 9ZG

Email archaeology@newforestnpa.gov.uk

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/wwii

VAT Reg No. 871 9343 00

CHAIRMAN OLIVER CROSTHWAITE-EYRE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ALISON BARNES

change into looking forward to being demobbed and so on. So a group of us with various interests formed, I wouldn't say a school but a set of instructors who could provide things that might be interesting to them. There was chap who was very good on woodwork. He had been a furniture maker in his past, you know, and so he got quite a lot of people going along. They got the wood in and everything installed, really good. So several days during the week there were these things, different things where soldiers could go to, you see. You'd be surprised. I picked up that PAYE system was coming out shortly there so I got hold of that and that was one of my things. Another thing that they enjoyed – you wouldn't hardly think it – was play reading. We got hold of different plays and they enjoyed reading the various parts and so on. There was another chap who was keen on British history, a lot of them liked that and were able to provide things about their own areas. So it wasn't just a case of one person instructing the whole time, it was the group sort of getting together and talking about things and that went down very well. And through that I became interested in teaching and when I left the Army and came back home my father wanted me to go into the butchery business but I didn't want to do that and, as you know, now it's practically extinct due to the advent of the supermarkets.

00:19:45

So I went in for teaching and my first appointment was as an ... I couldn't get into the course, you see, they were all full up, so I took a job as an un-certificated teacher, very low wage, at Bransgore School. In the headmaster's room where he taught, I sat at a desk and listened to him and later on he let me take on various parts and things. I took on Maths to start with and then English and a little bit of religion (I wasn't very good at that, but anyway I got on where I could). Do you know, I learnt more from him than later when I went to the college. And also, of course, having taught in a room with somebody else standing there listening, I got so used to it. And if I'd made a mistake he was so good, he wouldn't come and correct me straight off, he just walked by me and passed a little note and I would look at that. So he upheld me in the sight of the children the whole time. And I still see some, though they're grown up now, occasionally (laughs). So when I did actually go to Gladstone Training College in Hertfordshire, whereas a lot of both men and women were put off by the fact of somebody else standing in there listening while they were trying to expound, (and they left during the night some of them, they gave up, you know) it didn't worry me at all and I did quite well there. And my first proper appointment was at Lymington here, in New Street at the place which is now a museum. And, very nice, under Mr Smith and another gentleman, Mr Haw, who was known locally, especially at All Saints Church and with the cricket teams and so on. So I got on well there and now I meet a lot of those children grown up and they have got various businesses or jobs in Lymington. There's one runs sea trips, he runs the Challenger, an ex-guardsman in fact and great big fellow now – he towers above me (laughs) – I like to meet him occasionally. You know, and so I'm very pleased to be here in amongst those ex-pupils.

00:22:05

© 2016

New Forest National Park Authority

Lymington Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 9ZG

Email archaeology@newforestnpa.gov.uk

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/wwii

VAT Reg No. 871 9343 00

CHAIRMAN OLIVER CROSTHWAITE-EYRE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ALISON BARNES

As I say, from Lymington I went to Hythe. I worked there in a brand new school and eventually I got a job as headmaster at a school in Sandown, which would have been an old grammar school and they'd been downgraded to secondary modern and then to junior, and that's when I got there. But luckily all the things that had been used by the grammar school (the wall bars and the horse and the ropes and the various things that could be brought out and made into a sort of construction where you walked along in the centre of the hall, it all slotted into place) all that was left. There was a swimming pool there and I managed to get funding to get US what they call the Russian surround. It wasn't completely covered but with the aid of a heater, a boiler, as well, we were able to do swimming, you know, not as I say through the whole year but a good part of it. And other schools came and used the pool as well. So, you know, I was very happy. I was 18 years there as Head and that's recently been pulled down and a new school built in the football ground at the back there, a very beautiful place. I went to a little reunion about a fortnight ago where children there put on an excellent show and the headmaster gave us information about the new school, the background. So I saw several of my previous colleagues there, it was very pleasant. No children that I had known before but there you are, here I am settled back here and interested in the various things that go on, the local bridge club and local church and Oakhaven Hospice, you know. So those are my interests.

Thank you.

00:24:04 Ends

Keywords:

Royal Horse Artillery

Airspeed

Horsa glider

Motorcycle

Rangoon

Burma

Boxing

Teaching

File name	AM	019	0002M0.WAV	Interview date: 04/11/13
-----------	----	-----	------------	--------------------------

If you could just explain these photographs and where we are here.

This, my father's butcher's shop which now is a pet shop. When he retired it was still a butcher's shop and then it eventually became a pet shop. That was my little room at the top there.

© 2016

New Forest National Park Authority

Lymington Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 9ZG

Email archaeology@newforestnpa.gov.uk

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/wwii

VAT Reg No. 871 9343 00

CHAIRMAN OLIVER CROSTHWAITE-EYRE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ALISON BARNES

What year would this have been, when he had this shop, do you know?

Well, I would say that would have been about '38, '39, that sort of time, you know. Yes. And there he is at the Christchurch Bowling Club. Oh yes, that shop got bombed with incendiary bombs and this was the staff place at the back. There was a bathroom and a place for them to sit and everything there. I have other photos somewhere but I couldn't find them, they got lost. But that's the result of the incendiary bomb there.

This is a French family. There's one of my motorcycles (laughs).

Oh yes.

A triumph 1930 something. Very nice bike that was.

No, a 250 wasn't it?

350 – 250, yeah, yeah. There's this French family. These two boys...

How quick would that motorcycle have gone up the road?

Do 60s, yeah, oh yeah a good bike. And very manoeuvrable. When I first joined the 3rd RHA some of the desert fellows said to me "While you were at school, at a certain age, at that age we were out working and what not. Now, you learnt French at school, didn't you?" I said "Yes". They said, "Right, here we are, there's some biscuits and some tins of bully beef and so on. Would you go out and bring back some old wine for us from round about here? And make sure you don't come back without it", rather nasty sort of thing. Anyway, I went to this cottage and they were all having an evening meal and what not. So I apologised for butting in and so on, but they said "Oh come on in and join in with us." So they had these two lads here, so I gave them rides on my motorcycle and the French family. Do you know, I still exchange Christmas cards with the great granddaughter - well it's the granddaughter of this fellow here.

You're sat down there on the photograph there.

(Laughs) there I am in my motorcycle kit and so on, that's it.

That's at Brussels, there.

Ah, here's – in Denmark after the Armistice there, the German army in Denmark (it hadn't been used actually) marched on down and were put in a great big field. And we had our guns all the way round the outside. They weren't any trouble and what not. But it put great difficulty on the British Army for feeding them, you know (laughs). So, they all came on

© 2016

New Forest National Park Authority

Lymington Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 9ZG

Email archaeology@newforestnpa.gov.uk

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/wwii

VAT Reg No. 871 9343 00

CHAIRMAN OLIVER CROSTHWAITE-EYRE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ALISON BARNES

down. I've got quite a lot of photos of them. Now, here they are.

There are things that I ought to have done and many things that I regret having done. But one thing I was pleased about, after the Armistice and what not, we were in a big farm. And I was out walking with a pal, and he was drunk to be quite honest. And we both had our guns with us and what not. And these two German officers here came riding by on their horses. And they had obviously either been in a camp nearby or else they had been in that other camp and they had got horses – they were obviously going home. My pal said “I'm going to shoot them.” He took off his gun and what not. I pulled his gun down and I said “Don't be stupid” I said. “We've had the Armistice. They're not our enemies any more” and so on, and stopped him from that. And as they came by they gave us a wave and off they went again. So I'm quite happy that I saved their lives, I think, because we were pretty close, I mean, as you can see from the photo there. Now here are the German Army people coming down, look. All the different lots there. (Reads) German mechanised horse-drawn and infantry troops marching down from Denmark at Flensburg. That's a girlfriend, she was very nice, still write to her. Here we are at Kiel. That's where they scuttled one of their battleships.

00:05:16

Stien Monastery (laughs). This is a monastery nearby where we were staying and they were non-speaking, but they did speak to us and so on. This was in the Christmas of '44. It was very, very cold but one or two shops were still open and I saw that these monks at night were skating on the lake at the background. I thought, “That looks pretty good”. I went to the shop and I enquired about it and they had some skates that they'd hidden there from the Germans, didn't want to sell them to the, sold them to me. I had a spare pair of army boots because we all had two pairs, see, screwed them on and that night I joined in with these other fellows skating round with their black robes. It was lovely (laughs). There's a big monastery. Yeah, there you can see another scuttling. Now these are pictures that I took from a German soldier there, about how at the end of the Franco German war, that side of it, they brought this railway carriage that they had signed the Armistice in 1919 there. They brought it back out for Hitler to sign up with – who was it - General Foch, I think, somebody like that.

So who are these two here in this photograph?

I don't know. These were taken ...These aren't my pictures. Ah, here we are, here's one of my better bikes. This is a Douglas 500 OHV, a Brooklands model. I never really got it going right. That's our thing, there, an example. These are just friends. That's our house in Barrack Road. That's now the police station. This tree here, if you ever pass by the police station there, you'll see this tree is still growing. It was next door to us (laughs). It's all friends. There we are. Now, let's see something else.

© 2016

New Forest National Park Authority

Lymington Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 9ZG

Email archaeology@newforestnpa.gov.uk

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/wwii

VAT Reg No. 871 9343 00

CHAIRMAN OLIVER CROSTHWAITE-EYRE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ALISON BARNES

00:07:45 Ends

Keywords:

Butcher's
Incendiary bomb
Christchurch
Motorcycle
Denmark

File name	AM	019	0003M0.WAV	Interview date:04/11/13
<p>... message that I managed to save. It was issued by Montgomery to all units just before we were lining up to try and cross the Rhine and so on, and it was stuck up there and I asked if I could keep this particular one. So they let me keep it and I've got it framed at home here. You know, he goes on about how well we've done so far and how this great effort will be we now cross the Rhine. Of course, once we'd crossed the Rhine our lot, 7th Armoured Division, they really got going (laughs) and made terrific progress, you know, up one side up towards Denmark.</p> <p><i>You could read it out if you like, if you want to read it out.</i></p> <p>May I?</p> <p><i>If you want to, yeah, of course.</i></p> <p>(Reads) "Personal message from the CNC, to be read out to all troops. On 7th February I told you we were going into the ring for the final and last round. There would be no time limit, we would continue fighting until our opponent was knocked out. The last round is going very well on both sides of the ring and overhead." (I like the little bit about a boxing ring brought into it). (Reads) "In the West, the enemy has lost the Rhineland, and with it the flower of at last four armies, the Parachute Army, 5th Panzer Army, 15th Army and 7th Army. The 1st Army, further to the south, is now being added to the list. In the Rhineland battles, the enemy has lost about 150,000 prisoners and there are many more to come. His total casualties amount to about 250,000 since 8th February. In the East, the enemy has lost all Pomerania east of the Oda, an area as large as the Rhineland, and three more German armies have been routed. The Russian armies are within about 35 miles of Berlin. Overhead the Allied air forces are pounding Germany day and night. It will be interesting to see how much longer the Germans can stand it. The enemy has in fact been driven into a corner and he cannot escape. Events are moving rapidly. The complete and decisive defeat of the Germans is certain. There is no possibility of doubt on this matter".</p> <p>(Continues reading) "Number 6. 21 Army group will now cross the Rhine. The enemy</p>				

© 2016

New Forest National Park Authority

Lymington Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 9ZG

Email archaeology@newforestnpa.gov.uk

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/wwii

VAT Reg No. 871 9343 00

CHAIRMAN OLIVER CROSTHWAITE-EYRE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ALISON BARNES

possibly thinks he is safe behind this great river obstacle. We all agree that it is a great obstacle but we will show the enemy that he is far from safe behind it. This great allied fighting machine, composed of integrated land and air forces, will deal with the problem in no uncertain manner”.

(Continues reading) “Number 7. And having crossed the Rhine, we will crack about in the plains of northern Germany, chasing the enemy from pillar to post. The swifter and more energetic our action, the sooner the War will be over. And that is what we all desire, to get on with the job and finish off the German War as soon as possible”.

(Continues reading) “Number 8. Over the Rhine, then, let us go and good hunting to you on the other side”.

(Continues reading) “Number 9. May the Lord, mighty in battle, give us victory in this our latest undertaking, as he has done in all our battles since we landed in Normandy on D-Day.

BL Montgomery, Field Marshall, CNC, 21 Army Group, Germany, March 1943”.

Lovely.

Yeah. I was so proud to be able to keep it.

00:03:45 Ends.

Keywords:

7th Armoured Division

Montgomery

File name	AM	019	0004M0.WAV	Interview date: 04/11/13
<p>... outside every village there was a little tray, and so on, and a jug of water and so on for these priests who were going round to the various villages. It was very impressive. It was a wonderful country Burma. So massive, you know. And I'm pleased to see that now they're letting people go back as visitors. I think they must be well conducted. I asked them – I heard from somebody who'd been, I asked them “Did you ever manage to get to the railway station Pyin Ma Nar, where I was?” They said none of them had done that, no. That was – it had a brick building there, that I think had been built by some American missionary group to help encourage agricultural practices out there. And of course that had been used by the Germans (corrects himself) by the Japanese and we eventually took that over. But most of it was in tents. Big football field and, as I say, sport was the great thing there.</p>				

© 2016

New Forest National Park Authority

Lymington Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 9ZG

Email archaeology@newforestnpa.gov.uk

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/wwii

VAT Reg No. 871 9343 00

CHAIRMAN OLIVER CROSTHWAITE-EYRE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ALISON BARNES

And another thing – it's always stuck in my memory - at night down in the little village of Pyin Ma Nar there wasn't proper electricity on the go, there were these Tilley lamps lighting up the stalls and so on. And to walk down there you walked along a little path and there were these lovely bushes in the background on either side producing a tremendous scent - and that was with me quite a lot, you know, I remember that very well. And, they were all very friendly the people down there (laughs). It was very laid back. You know, some of the farmers out there, they had the bullock carts pulling along their carts and they would sit up in the carts and because the carts had made ruts and so on the bullocks were confined to going along that particular, there. And I'm quite sure that I saw going by their heads drooping and off to sleep, you know (laughs). Some of their little houses were beautiful. They were set up on poles so they actually slept in the upper part and I think the animals went in the lower part. But the floors upstairs were made of very narrow teak planks put together really well and very well constructed. Les and I and the boxing group, we used to go ... a picture, I'd love to show you this cause I've got his training schedule as well. Part of it was to go out on a run to start with then do exercises, and then there was a river there which was at low flow. And there was big teak logs stuck across there because they would float down so far and then when the Monsoons came they would go on a bit further. And we'd all get in the river and bathe off and so on, then more exercises and run and walk back, sort of thing. But that used to be part of the daily thing. Of course the great advantage with this boxing team, and I think one or two other special teams that they had there, was that you missed other particular duties, you see (laughs). And, well, food was quite reasonable. As I say, the only thing was that I won't say there was ill-feeling but those chaps did resent the fact that they hadn't been as well looked after as we were, you see, there we are.

And funnily enough, my sister worked for Lord Mountbatten, at Broadlands, looking after polo ponies. And so I had occasion to meet him on occasion there. Very nice gentleman, very pleasant, treated me very nicely and so on. And when I think back, there he was, he was CNC out there, you know (laughs). So we used to go and watch the polo ponies and so on. My sister enjoyed that very much and later on she went out to Christchurch in New Zealand and helped Boots there with ... they were opening a new branch and she was very good at display work in the windows, and so on, that was her job. Lives in Canada now.

00:04:18 Ends

Keywords:

Burma

Boxing

All material is © 2016 New Forest National Park Authority

© 2016

New Forest National Park Authority

Lymington Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 9ZG

Email archaeology@newforestnpa.gov.uk

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/wwii

VAT Reg No. 871 9343 00

CHAIRMAN OLIVER CROSTHWAITE-EYRE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ALISON BARNES