

The YORKSHIRE Regiment



FORTUNE FAVOURS THE BRAVE

WINTER 2021

Foreword

By Brigadier ED Colthup

On behalf of the Colonel of the Regiment and the Regimental Board, could I wish all members of the Regiment, whether Regular or Reserve, service leavers and veterans, our many Cadets across the county and the many supporters of the Regiment, and all our families, a very Happy Christmas. It has been another busy year with all the battalions heavily involved in training opportunities and either supporting or deployed on operations. The 2nd Battalion's work in Kabul for a hugely intense period in August stands out but should not overshadow the fantastic

individual and collective work across the rest of the Regiment. After a well-deserved rest, we will return in the New Year to the work needed to deliver Future Soldier and to kick this off, the Regimental Board will be meeting on 13th January to discuss our revised strategy for the next 5 years. Any further details will be announced thereafter. For now, enjoy the festive leave period with family and friends but also look out for each other and especially those for whom the deteriorating COVID situation will be particularly challenging. *Fortune Favours the Brave.*



■ Brigadier ED Colthup (Dep Col of the Regt)

Future Soldier and what it means to the Regiment

In March, the Integrated Defence and Security Review unveiled a blueprint for a modernised Army, an Army that is more effectively matched to the threats, modernised, digitised and expeditionary and able to underwrite a modern Global Britain. The Army is embarking on what is possibly the most significant transformation since mechanisation in the 1930/1940s when it did away with hay-nets and moved to fuel cans and adopted the combustion engine.



Changes to the character of warfare, including advances in artificial intelligence, computing and robotics require the transformation of the Army's equipment, structures and ways of operating and warfighting. The Government's Integrated Review has driven the modernisation of the Army for the Information Age. The programme of change is called: 'Future Soldier'.

This technical modernisation comes alongside a reduction in the size of the regular Army to 73,000, in part to make it affordable. This has required some extremely difficult choices to be made to ensure the Army is as useful and usable as possible, whilst retaining the ability to rapidly expand if required. When combined with the 30,100 in the Army Reserve, the British Army will still be over 100,000 strong. It is an exciting prospect and what will emerge is a more expeditionary, capable and competitive

Army, better suited to the challenges of the IT digital era and technically one of the most modernised armies in the world. An Army fit and ready to fight the wars of the future not those of the past.

Investment in innovation and experimentation is at the heart of Future Soldier and the 2nd Battalion will form the nucleus of the new Experimentation and Trials Group alongside existing specialist trials and development units. It will return from Cyprus to Chester in Summer 2022 and subsequently



move to its permanent home in Warminster in 2024. Reorganisation will be complete by May 2024.

The 1st Battalion will re-role from Armoured to Light Mechanised Infantry and re-subordinate from 12th Armoured Brigade to 7th Light Mechanised Brigade Combat Team in summer 2022. It will re-organise to its future structure by spring 2023, remaining in Catterick but as one of three Light Mechanised Infantry battalions which will rotate through Cyprus. The 4th Battalion will be paired with the 1st Battalion, remain in York and re-subordinate to the newly formed 19th Brigade in summer 2022.

In order to meet head-on, the challenges and opportunities afforded to us by Future Soldier, the Colonel of the Regiment and Executive members of the Board, have been busy behind the scenes, developing a revised strategy that will provide us with a framework of objectives

designed to deliver all that has been asked of us. The Board will be meeting in early January 2022 to consider the implications of the changes in greater detail.

Many of those serving in The Yorkshire Regiment today will wish to know; 'what does this all mean for me?'

- As previously announced, we will maintain three battalions, we will reduce in size, but not in structure. We're adjusting for the future, not deleting.
- People remain the Regiment's greatest source of strength. We will sustain sufficient 'Yorkshire Mass' in order to remain readily identifiable as; 'The only County-named Regiment in the British Army' and recruit sufficient quantity of home-grown Yorkshire soldiers to enabling us to retain our identity and the very essence of who we are.
- We will build our future warfighting and operating capability by leveraging the skills we have acquired over the last 20 years in the armoured infantry and light/mechanised Infantry roles.
- Finally, we will carefully manage the transition of change on our 1700 officers and soldiers over the next 5 years. Changes in our structure will be managed efficiently, enabling the Regiment to quickly assume its place in the Army's Order of Battle for the future. We will also strive towards greater diversity and inclusivity and put in place career pathways that enable interoperability between all three battalions; promote ability, maximise the potential of our people and reward effort.

In summary, the outcome of Future Soldier presents the Regiment with significant opportunities. In true Yorkshire spirit, we intend to embrace the future in a positive and pragmatic way, ensuring that our three-battalion structure remains intact and, that we continue to progress in the next decade as an agile, forward-leaning regiment, re-energised with new roles and challenges.

Fortune Favours the Brave

1st Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment

By Lt Col T Exton

The arrival of Christmas and the prospect of some very well-earned leave gives the 1st Battalion opportunity to reflect on the latter half of 2021, which has brought: challenge and excellence in abundance; clarity and certainty for the future; but also, very sadly, a tragic training accident that resulted in the loss of Pte Jethro Watson-Pickering. A former cadet and Reservist with 4YORKS, he was a terrific, talented and popular soldier who represented the very best of the Regiment – he remains forever in our thoughts.

Much of the Battalion's focus since the summer has been on supporting and participating in Ex IRON STORM, the largest Armoured training exercise the Army has conducted on Salisbury Plain for many years. Preceded by a hugely extensive live firing package in Castlemartin, which was largely facilitated by a 1 YORKS Permanent Range Team drawn from across the Battalion, the exercise ran from the September into November. The Battalion's fleet increased to 125 vehicles, requiring a herculean effort from the QM(T) and the LAD to sustain all of the various platforms from an austere and expeditionary set-up at the northern edge of Knook Camp. After live training was unfortunately curtailed owing to safety constraints across the Army's tracked vehicle fleet, the culmination of



■ Foxhound Familiarisation

the exercise was conducted virtually, using the simulators in the CATT building just outside Warminster. This phase saw the KRH Battlegroup, featuring Burma Coy as one of their Armoured Infantry companies, being put through their paces and tested by a synthetic and thinking enemy from the 1 YORKS BG HQ.

The 1st Battalion has also showcased an excellent standard of dismounted soldiering in recent months. Burma Coy won the 12 Brigade Operational Shooting Competition outright, with Cpl Fox also winning the Best Section. The RSM delivered a fantastic, and suitably arduous, Patrols Competition with 15 teams attempting a 60km route across Otterburn featuring 15 stands to test their military skills – Cpl Whitton's section from Corunna Coy emerged as the winners, by the narrowest of margins.

Following the return to competitive sport, the Battalion has also re-established its reputation for sporting excellence. So far this season, 1 YORKS won the Army Rugby 7s; runners up in the Rugby League Yeoman Cup, and winners of the Army Offshore Sailing Regatta. The

Rugby Premiership season has begun in earnest, with some impressive early results that augur well for the remaining fixtures. And the Battalion's Alpine and Nordic ski teams have recently departed for their respective training camps.

Finally, looking to the future, the confirmation next year we will transition to a new Light Mechanised Infantry role after nearly 20 years as Armoured Infantry is a fantastic opportunity for the Battalion to seize, and will result in a more stimulating, dynamic, relevant and deployable role over the next decade. The Battalion has also now got the certainty that it will remain in Catterick Garrison for the remainder of this decade, before moving for a two-year rotation to Cyprus as the Regional Standby Battalion, likely in 2029.



■ Winners 12 Bde Op Shooting Competition



■ The Landrover pull

2nd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment

By Lt Col JE Ashworth

Since the conclusion of our contribution to the extraction of eligible people from Kabul on Op PITTING, 2YORKS have handed over our role as the Regional Standby Battalion 1 R ANGLIAN and have taken over the duties and responsibilities of the Cyprus Operations Battalion. This role has required the Battalion to change our training focus and expand our capability. This switch in focus was most clear during Alma's Public Order validation exercise in November. During this validation, the Company was assessed on their ability to deliver riot control, remain calm in front of a hostile crowd and apply only necessary force to hold the line. Aside from this bespoke training, normal infantry training has continued. Quebec Company delivered a Mortar Cadre in September, qualifying many of the junior soldiers in Quebec to deliver this vital fire support capability. Burma

Coy successfully completed Training Level Charlie in October, validating them up to Subunit level. There has also been time for fun in Cyprus. The Duke of Wellington's Inter-Company Sports Competitions. Alma, Burma, Corunna, Quebec and Helmand Coys battled it out at X-country, Football, Rugby, 4 x 400m, 4 x 100m and Landrover pulls to find out which Company would take the Crown. Alma Coy won the sport events following outstanding performances on the Rugby and Football pitches; Burma Coy were victorious on the

X-Country and Quebec Coy proved their physical strength on the Landrover pull. The overall crown went to Corunna after a series of fine performances across each competition including wins on the 4 x 100 and 4 x 400m events.



■ 2YORKS Public Order Training

4th Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment

By Lt Col WH Blackhurst

It has been another busy yet rewarding winter for the 4th Battalion. The latter half on 2021 began with our ADE in Kirkcudbright and ended with the deployment of Kohima Platoon to Kenya.

Recruiting continues to be impressive with a new influx of new recruits. We have a strong crop of newly qualified reserve infantry soldiers as well as a healthy number of men and women progressing through the training pipeline. Promotions remain strong, we have promoted 14 soldiers to LCpl as well as three new Cpls. We continue to be successful at the Infantry Battle School, with 3 PSBC passes and one of our young Officers, 2Lt Oli Sherwood, successfully passing PCBC.

September saw the Battalion deploy on our second ADE of 2021 to Kirkcudbright and Galloway Forest. This two-week package contained a challenging LFTT element before switching onto a dry phase in Galloway Forest. The physical and mental demands placed upon our Soldiers and Officers from the terrain and weather were telling; however, both the combination of experienced PSIs and the grit from the troops ensured a successful deployment. The fortnight culminated with a rewarding AT package organised by OC Burma Coy. Soldiers and Officers took part in activities such as mountain biking, rock climbing and coasteering with a stunning backdrop of the Solway Firth.



■ Alma Company Remembrance Hull



■ CO 4YORKS and Kohima Platoon

As ever, the Remembrance period brings sharp focus for the Army Reserve and 4YORKS, under the direction of the RSM, was once again a presence across the county. We laid wreaths in over 20 towns and cities and participated in parades in Hull, Middlesbrough, Huddersfield and York as well as representing the Regiment at football matches at Sheffield United and Leeds United. The Battalion's crowning achievement was the mobilisation and deployment of Kohima Platoon to conduct Force Protection duties at the British Army Training Unit in Kenya over Christmas and New Year. The Platoon has now completed its pre-deployment training and at the time of writing has arrived in theatre conducting RSOI prior to assuming its force protection duties. They will take over from The Royal Gurkha Rifles and will remain in place until the middle of February. This is only the second time the Army Reserve has assumed the BATUK Force Protection role. The challenges and nuances of deploying a formed Army Reserve force will serve the Battalion well as the Regular Army decreases in size and deployments such as this become the norm for the Reserve.

As we understand the implications for the Army Reserve following the Future

Soldier announcements, we look forward to the opportunities that 2022 will bring. We anticipate providing a healthy portion of the troops for the upcoming 4 Brigade Army Reserve deployment to Oman in the second half on 2022, as part of the Land Regional Hub on Ex KHANJAR OMAN. We also eagerly await the details for the Battalion's transfer to 19 Brigade with the rest of our Army Reserve Infantry counterparts.

4YORKS continues to grow and remain an agile, and adaptable force poised to support the Regular Army. Whilst the finer details and structure of the Battalion looks uncertain, the Army Reserve and its pivotal role in the defence of the UK looks stronger now than at any time in recent years, with 4YORKS seen as a vital, and importantly, highly respected and capable Battalion.

Fortune Favours the Brave



■ Ex Yorkshire Strike in Galloway

Festive Message from the YRA Chairman

By Maj Pat Ralph MM

Dear members, family and friends, there is no need for me to remind you of the challenges the last 12 months have been for us all. But I want to thank you for all the work that you have done to ensure the whole of the regimental family is looked after.



■ Maj Pat Ralph MM

You have pulled together magnificently to provide invaluable support to our members who are vulnerable, homeless, or living with mental illness. Because of your generosity, both financially and with your personal support, no one in the regimental family has suffered. For that I thank you and encourage you all to continue to help those in need in 2022. As I write this Christmas message, I am mindful of the homeless veterans that we are still supporting, and I have no doubt that in the New Year, we will be helping them to move forward and re-build their lives. I trust that one day, it will not be you who needs the help, but either way, the YRA will be there to make sure you receive the support you need and help to provide you with the best quality of life possible.

On a lighter note, we have had some great regimental family events this year, such as the Regimental Race Day and the Regimental Remembrance Service at York Minster, which was very well attended. In January, we will hold a YRA Executive Committee Meeting to plan what the next 18 months will look like, followed by the Annual General Meeting at a venue in

York during March, including a curry lunch and a beer – details to follow.

Looking forward to 2022, the usual regimental events will once again take place, but we will also be introducing one or two new ideas aimed at our younger veterans, many of whom have left the Yorkshire

Regiment over the last couple of years. To that end, the Regiment will be looking to put on some informal gatherings, particularly for those who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. It would be great to be in a position to introduce a new cohort of veterans to the Association and help promote what help is available to those who may be suffering. I will also be canvassing members as to whether

the YRA should parade in London on Remembrance Sunday 2022, as a couple of years ago we had a great turn out of regimental veterans at the London Cenotaph.

So, in summary, a heartfelt thanks from me to you all, particularly our Association Branches for helping those who have been in difficulties this year! In 2022 my aim is to encourage members that are not engaged with the YRA to get involved and, if they're not able to join in as a member of a branch, they can always be contacted and informed as an electronic member through an e-mail address. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous and safe New Year and don't forget we are here for you and be contacted as follows:

07943 612521

yorksassociation@btconnect.com



■ The winning owners Race Day 2021



Regimental Headquarters

RHQ Yorks, 3 Tower Street, York YO1 9SB

E-mail: rhqyorks@btconnect.com



YORKS_Regt



YORKSRegt



@yorksregt