

This unusual interview covers three members of the Ligertwood family, spread over 70 years of unique Royal Marine History. The interview covers the careers of Captain Peter Ligertwood, Sergeant Frederick Ligertwood and Corporal Don Ligertwood.

## **LIGERTWOOD, PETER**

**RANK:** CAPTAIN

**DECORATIONS:** MENTIONED IN DISPATCHES ?

**YEARS OF SERVICE:** 1906 – 1917

**SHIPS:**

**OPERATIONAL SERVICE:** WWI, SOMME, PASSCHENDAELE

**UNITS:** 2<sup>nd</sup> BATTALION RMLI

Peter joined the Royal Marines in 1906 and lost his life at 27 at Passchendaele, this was after returning to the front from the UK, having been wounded on the front line already. Peter commanded A Company 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Marines, during this battle and was an innovative and rousing leader. At the start, to ensure all his men made their way safely to the start line, along a narrow path through the deep, sucking mud he got them all to rope together with twine, as they all made the difficult move forward. To inspire his men, he devised a way of rallying them during the battle, following a platoon flag! For each of his platoons, he had hand-made (in his convalescence), a small platoon flag. The system worked well in the confusion of battle. The advance was successful, the ridge was captured, but with very heavy losses. One was Peter Ligertwood, he was shot three times, twice, bandaged up, he again led the charge from the front. On being hit the third time he was killed almost instantly. He was a remarkable hero to his men and an inspirational leader throughout. The Platoon flags became an emblem which inspired the company. Three were saved at the end of the battle, but only one survived WWI. That one has been recovered and remains with the Corps today and is held in Stonehouse Barracks.

## **LIGERTWOOD, FREDERICK**

**RANK:** SERGEANT (1<sup>st</sup> Kings Badge)

**DECORATIONS:** MENTIONED IN DISPATCHES ?

**YEARS OF SERVICE:** 1916 – LATE 1930's

**SHIPS:** HMS LION (I THINK), JUTLAND, HMS REPULSE, HMS INCONSTANT

**OPERATIONAL SERVICE:** WW1, JUTLAND, POST WAR: CHINA STATION

**UNITS:**

Frederick, Peters brother, joined the Royal Marines initially as a boy bugler in 1916. He was seriously injured by shrapnel during the battle of Jutland and after recovering from that trained as a GD Marine in 1918 as part of the 41<sup>st</sup> Squad. He was one of the first Royal Marines to be awarded the Kings Badge.

He was a "Ships Marine" and served on several ships including HMS REPULSE and HMS INCONSTANT. It was during his time on this ship that he gallantly saved two of his shipmates from drowning by diving into the Firth of Forth and pulling them from the waters.

Serving on the China Station, he was MOA to Captain Bamford VC (Zeebrugge), who sadly died, at sea on the China Station.

On leaving the Corps, during WW2 his knowledge of German and English mines made him a valued member of the team assisting Barnes Wallis with the Bouncing bomb project.

## **LIGERTWOOD, DON (DOUGIE)**

**RANK:** CORPORAL

**DECORATIONS:**

**YEARS OF SERVICE:** 1954 – 1976

**SHIPS:**

**OPERATIONAL SERVICE:** CYPRUS, BORNEO, NORTHERN IRELAND

**UNITS:** 40, 42 & 45 COMMANDO

Don Ligertwood was the member of the family being interviewed. He was the son of Frederick and therefore the nephew of Peter. He joined the Corps in 1954.

After passing training, just short of being awarded the Kings Badge, Don went to Cornwall and carried out climbing training. After that he was sent to support the 1955 Royal Tournament Cliff Assault display at Earls Court.

He was then sent to 40 Commando RM and Cyprus during the EOKA troubles and during one incident his Officer, (Lt P Haynes) was killed by terrorists, after which his section killed 3 and captured 7. Drafted to HMS TIGER based in Malta; then to 43 Commando RM in Stonehouse. Then sent to France, as the first Royal Marine, to carry out trials on the SSII wire guided Anti-Tank missile.

Then drafted to 42 Commando RM, just after Limbang. Operated on boats with the SBS in Sarawak and Borneo. Deployed with 42 Commando to Borneo again, where he did valued work as the projectionist. A draft to 45 Commando RM, in Stonehouse followed.

In 1969, Don was again sent to Singapore, this time to HMS TERROR. where he was MOA to Colonel Alexander, who was co-ordinating the Royal Marine withdrawal from the Far East. A most interesting job meeting senior staff officers and others including Lee Quan Yew! He believes he was the last Royal Marine to leave Singapore.

Don returned to 40 Commando, here he completed a driver's course and carried out tours in Northern Ireland as 2iC's driver. Then became Officers Mess Butler at Seaton Barracks. He left the Corps in 1976 joining Securicor. Doug also carries out good work for the RMA and other charities.