



## Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR

### The Daimler Fighting Vehicles Project – Part D04

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#### The 1st Royal Tank Regiment

When the war broke out in 1939, 1 RTR was based Peham Down and shipped to Egypt with the [Heavy Armoured Brigade](#), part of the [Armoured Division](#).

It was equipped with a mixture of [Mk VIb light tanks](#), [Mark II medium tanks](#), [Mk I cruiser tanks](#) and Dingo's.

The regiment also served in the Liberation of North west Europe.

BOAR 1945-1952

Korea 1952-53

Malta 1956

Aden-Persian Gulf 1965-66



The following accounts indicate the possibility of the use of Daimler Dingo Scout Cars by the Recce Troop of the 1st Royal tank regiment June 1944-45.

#### ACCOUNT OF A TROOPER (no name given)

The following was obtained from [www.bbc.co.uk/ww2peopleswar](http://www.bbc.co.uk/ww2peopleswar)

It was June 1944, a very hot summers day in Normandy. I was 19 years old, in a Stuart light reconnaissance tank which had a crew of four. Our mission was to find out the enemies strength and to capture a prisoner.

We pulled into a small copse of trees for cover. Across the open field was another small clump of trees and we noticed movement there.

The wireless operator and the driver stayed by the tank while the tank commander and me {the lap gunner} set off on foot crouching double alongside the hedge around the field to get closer to the German position. We had gone about 100 yards when bullets whistled around our ears and a shell exploded behind us.

We looked back towards our tank and saw the other two-crew members lying on the ground. Under intense mortar and machine gun fire we helped them into the tank and I drove it back to base where they were treated for shrapnel wounds and sent to field hospital. A few days afterwards we had two replacement crewmembers, and this time I was acting as wireless operator.

The following day we were sent to Villers Bocage region. The tank took cover behind a row of trees on the crest of a ridge with views across the valley to the enemy positions on the ridge opposite. I was told to stay in wireless contact with HQ. The tank commander, the driver and the lap gunner, set out on foot to assess the German defences. They had covered about 50 yards along the edge of the field when I heard the scream of a high calibre shell and a cloud of earth and dust enveloped my crew. I took off the headphones and ran towards them as high explosive shells were bursting all around us.

The tank commander came crawling very slowly towards me out of the dust and smoke and I helped him back to the tank and propped him up against the tank track then ran back for the other two. Sadly, they were lifeless with jagged shrapnel holes into their chests and heads.

I ran back to the commander, his tank suit was full of holes and he was in great pain, so I gave him a capsule hypodermic of morphine which we carried in our first aid kit. A sergeant major from another squadron came to help and took him back to HQ. Sadly the officer died soon after from his wounds. I was ordered to stay with the tank and see to the burial of the other two crew members.

I took the shovel off the tank and as I began digging their graves the Germans shelled us again and I had to wait until dark to bury them and then drive the tank back to base. Again I was fortunate to survive.

A few days later three more crew replacements arrived to bring the tank into operation again and I was back as lap gunner. We were assigned a "seek, find, and capture" mission and probed the German lines,



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but without success, so we went back to rejoin our troop. As the tank pulled up an armour-piercing high explosive shell hit it and I blacked out.

When I came to, I looked about me and saw a gaping hole in the side of the tank where the wireless operator had been sitting. All that was left of him was one arm laying on the ammunition boxes behind my head. I was amazed how white the bone was.

The tank commander's legs were dangling behind my seat and his body had been blown onto my hatch and so I had to climb out through the turret opening. The driver was slumped over his steering sticks and was very still and his head was bleeding .

I got to the ground still concussed and in a confused state from the effects of the blast in such a confined space as a tank. Enemy shells were exploding all around and with the remainder of our tanks roaring across the field the noise was deafening. Happily the driver climbed out as he had also survived the explosion, and we both returned to active service after a couple of days rest.

Again I had been in the right position in the tank. With no replacement tank available, I saw the war out in a two man Daimler scout car with Cpl.Nuttal, a desert rat from Clitheroe, Lancs.

I was in one of two "Dingos" a Daimler 2 man scout car of Recce Troop, 1st RTR, 7th Armoured Div. We liberated Fallingbommel POW camp & took 200 German prisoners back to be detained. I handed them over to the 51st Highland Div. The camp POW's were mostly RAF prisoners



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(Photo sourced from Internet-)  
Victory parade in Harrogate in Yorkshire.1945.



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#### ACCOUNT OF MATTHEW HANSE GUYMER MBE -Recce Troop 1st RTR

The following was obtained from the [www.bbc.co.uk/ww2peopleswar](http://www.bbc.co.uk/ww2peopleswar) site

#### NORMANDIE: JUNE, JULY AND AUGUST 1944

On March 2nd 1944, the day after my 20th birthday, I was posted into 'D' Squadron of my Regiment, The 11th Hussars (Prince Albert's Own).

The regiment was stationed in the forest at Ashridge Park Berkhamstead. When I arrived and reported to 'D' Squadron Head Quarters (SHQ), I was surprised and pleased to meet the Squadron Leader (Sqn Ldr) Major Tony Crankshaw MC, who I knew in Egypt when he was a subaltern and I was a band/boy trumpeter in Helmieh. I also knew the Sqn Major and several other people in the regiment of all ranks including many friends that I had previously served with in Egypt.

My first nine weeks 'back home' in the Regiment, were spent learning to drive and operate the armoured cars that the Regiment was equipped with. This was necessary because after I left the band I had spent fifteen months training on tanks, in both the 55th and 54th Training Regiments Royal Armoured Corps.

The regiment was equipped with Daimler Armoured Cars (DAC), **Daimler Scout Cars (DSC)**, Staghound Armoured Cars (SAC), Humber Scout Cars, (HSC) and American White Company Scout Cars (WSC). Throughout this training period, I attended courses on demolitions, explosives and booby traps.

It had been decided that Regimental Head Quarters, (RHQ) together with 'C' and 'D' Sqdns were to be the first party of the regiment to land on the beaches in Normandy during the invasion of France. They were loaded at London docks into a ship called Bristol City and arrived at Arromanches on the 9th of June 1944. Both Squadrons were put ashore after being r-loaded into Tank Landing Craft. The second landing party from the regiment was to be 'B' Sqn together with the Gun Troops of 'C' and 'D' Sdns. I left with them and we too sailed from London docks on board an American Liberty Ship T29, we arrived off Juno Beach 13th June 'D' Day plus seven.

The Gun Troops of 'C' and 'D' Sdns were to be landed on the left hand end of Juno Beach at Courseulles sur Mer. When we arrived close inshore to the French coast, the sea was covered with ships as far as the eye could see. When our ship anchored we got into our cats and we were lifted over the side and lowered into a Tank Landing Craft (LCT). Both 'C' and 'D' Sdn and some of B Sdns and some of B Sdn's Armoured and Scout Cars were loaded into the LCT behind us. A very young American Navy ensign captained our craft. He had a small crew one of whom was the coxswain who had to be up at the front as we approached the shore to test the depth of water.

His job was to tell the skipper when the water was shallow enough to let down the ramp when he considered it to be safe enough for us to drive off. He had a long pole for this task. We started our car engines and waited for the ramp to go down ready for us to drive off into France. Eventually as the ramp was lowered I looked towards the beach and saw to my horror and surprise, that we were much further from the shore than we had been told to expect. Instead of it being about two or three hundred metres for us to drive in the sea to reach dry land, it was well over eight hundred. With heart racing and adrenalin pumping at full blast I drove down the ramp into the water, hoping and silently praying that I had carried out the waterproofing of my car successfully. The skipper waited as we drove slowly down the ramp into the water to see if he had selected a good position to off load us into the sea before releasing the other vehicles on board. He must have realised that he had put us down onto a sandbar because he saw us drive off it into very deep water and I was soon within the last inch or two of my sea wading capability. The rough sea was almost up to the top of the specially erected wood and canvas structure, built on top of the officer's sliding roof hatch of our HSCs. (Rather like a submarine conning tower), these gave us the ability to wade through deeper water. Our height was now almost two metres, but even so driving in that rough sea was a bit 'hairy' because some water did come into the car over the top of the 'conning tower'. Because the car was completely submerged all I could see was the water lapping against my glass visor as I kept the car moving steadily over the seabed towards the shore.

I was far too busy concentrating on the job in hand to be very frightened about the situation. If my engine stalled it would have been a disaster. Quite naturally, anxiety was definitely uppermost in my mind. Lt Michael Wild my Troop Leader and I were in the car of 'D' Sqn. Lt. Richard Brett-Smith and Cpl Harry Davis the 'C' Sqn car. We drove along under water for what seemed ages before thankfully,





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daylight crept into the car and we started to rise above water level. At last, we were on French soil and I started to drive up the sandy beach. At this stage, we were considerably relieved and happy to have survived the sea journey. Especially through the straights of Dover where we could so easily have been shelled by the German shore batteries on the French coast. The wading ashore onto the French beach proved a bit of a problem because we only managed to drive about fifty yards before our luck ran out. The reason we were in difficulties was that as we moved slowly up the beach, we drove into very soft sand and due to the weight of the cars; we sank and became bogged down to our flat bottom plates. We were left stranded by the LCT in the soft sand, with our wheels spinning unable to drive out. Both cars were helpless 'sitting ducks' throughout our first day in France. I forced my roof hatch open and got my head out in time to hear Mr Wild shout to Mr Brett-Smith that the LCT had pulled up its ramp having left us stranded. We watched as the skipper sailed his craft further along the landing beaches towards Arromanches. A German air raid started but luckily for us we were not the targets. It was still a bit 'nasty' though because the JU88s came in so low over us flying towards Arromanches. Luckily no trigger happy bomb aimers.

We were alone on that part of Juno Beach for the rest of the day until the late evening. Whilst we waited, it started to rain and we were very wet and miserable. Every armoured car in the regiment, during the campaign in North West Europe, was issued with a half pint clip topped, leather covered bottle in which we carried our individual car's rum ration. It was to give us a very quick intake of calories and warmth in seriously bad inclement weather. Mr Wild decided that what we had been through was definitely 'inclement weather' and so he ordered 'Splice the Main Brace' (Rum Issue). The rum and some food cheered us up a little. It was well after dark before the Beach Master's Team eventually pulled us out of the soft sand. When we drove the last hundred yards off the beach we came onto a narrow track. It was between the beach and the road that ran between Courseulles-sur-Mer and Bernieres-sur-Mer.

There, a very tired L/Cpl of the Corps of Military Police met us. We stopped to ask him if he knew where our Regiment was located, (we had no radio contact yet), he said that we were the only ones to land there that day. He stretched out his left arm and with a big grin on his face he said, 'But I am to tell you to go that a'way.' He had been there all day and was a lonely, and quite fed up young man. Now we were all a bit upset. If anyone had had the temerity to ask us: Went the day well? Not b\*\*\*\*\* likely!

That night we drove into a nearby empty field and we were told to spread out and dig in and to make sure, we slept below ground level. The German Luftwaffe had started to drop butterfly bombs, these, on exploding, spread small killing shrapnel, very close to the ground. After the officers went off somewhere, I positioned my car next to a hedge and dug a trench at its base. I decided to sleep on the grass by the side of the trench, quite sure that if we had another air raid or if German Artillery started to shell us during the night, I would have plenty of time to roll into it. I felt so very tired that I immediately fell into a deep sleep. When I woke up the next morning and before I opened my eyes, I heard a terribly loud continuous buzzing sound. When I opened my eyes slowly in the unexpected bright sunshine I turned over, and on looking through the base of the hedge into the next field, I was looking into the face of the bloated, rotting decomposing corpse of a dead German soldier. The body was covered in thousands of flies. Goodness knows how long he had been there, the war must have passed him by several days before.

The dark dank sickly smell of death and putrefaction was so strong I was immediately violently sick. I will never, ever forget that most nauseating prologue to what was to be my introduction to close combat warfare. I then realised that his sort of sight and experience was to become a part of my young life in the front line over the next eleven months.

C and D Sqdns had been in action, carrying out dangerous patrols during that first push to Villers bocage on 12th and 13th June. The patrols included the areas of Briquessard, La Paumerie, Livre, Cahagnes, Tilly sur Seules, and the deathly village of St Germain d'Ectot.

This proved to have been a busy time for everyone. The enemy put in a counter attack; and our advance was halted. Everyone had a hard time and had many casualties and by the evening the enemy had caused 7th Armd Dev to contract into a defensive box nicknamed the 'Island'. 5th RHA firing over open gun sights using classical defensive fire halted the enemy counter attack, which they called off and so saved those in the box. On the 14th the regiment was once more in the thick of it and it was decided to pull 7th Amd Div back to Briquesard. Later during the night 'D' Sqdn was sent to



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Gueron near Bayeux. On the way Mr Newton's DAC (3TpLdr) ran over an MP and wrecked his M/C, he wasn't hurt but he swore a lot. Mostly because he could not reach his kit strapped to the underside of his bike. The next morning the Guns finally caught up with our Sqdns.

The names of the towns and villages fought in during those early days particularly St Germain d'Ectot will not be forgotten because of the casualties we sustained and the new bitter experience we learned patrolling in Bocage country.

I listened intently to the horrifying stories of close bocage country warfare, of troops who expended every single round of their small arms ammunition in a morning and of enemy snipers and artillery who 'didn't play fair when your only weapon to fight back with was a shovel'.

After a short break the regiment was soon back in action again but this time each Sqn had the support of its gun troop, which was a morale booster as well as a bonus. I was bloodied during the time we were sent to the area in and around Cahagnes and Tilly Sur Seules for the battle when we finally took Villers Bocage. On the way the guns proved themselves and most definitely earned their keep by causing many enemy casualties.

The regiment crossed the river over 'London Bridge' having left St Andre on the 17th and turned south to move among the congested outskirts east and then south of Caen. 'A' Sqn had only shortly arrived before we left the grounds of the Chateau and was with 'D' and 'RHQ' Sdns trying to get into position on the right of the Corps front to join 11th and Guards Armoured Divisions for Operation Goodwood.

The traffic jam caused by three armoured divisions having to cross the river and canal East of Caen using just two bridges and to squeeze into an area only three miles wide was a bit trying. We took our share of the enemy shelling and bombing again and during the air raid that night, one German bomber managed to get through the anti aircraft barrage and 'A' Sqn unfortunately became its target. Butterfly and heavy bombs scored direct hits and the casualties were disastrous. Nine officers and men were killed and six others wounded. The operation was memorable for us because of the acute unpleasantness we were subjected to and the resulting loss of our General 'Bobby' Erskine, our most experienced and respected commander of 7th Armoured Division. We suffered such heavy casualties and tank losses Goodwood was called off.

During the next few days the rain fell day and night soaking our cars, our bedding and clothing and turning our slit trenches into clammy baths. The French said that it was the wettest and the worst summer for 60 years. Besides the rain, which drenched everything, there was the dust when it did not rain. This was equally unpleasant and turned the cars, our faces, our bedding and brown and crimson berets a dull misty grey. Extremely virulent mosquitoes continually added to our further personal discomfort during this period, as they seemed to thrive on the anti mosquito cream supplied by the medical teams. From the aspect of sheer discomfort, many of us reckoned that the three days that we spent in the City, factory area and the area south of Caen on the racecourse.

Next morning we left what had been the most beautiful city in Normandie, now devastated and little more than heaps of stones and rubble. Those who saw the destruction of the City and the factory area would never forget either of them or the days that we spent there. The regiment went back across the Orne to rest for a while at Anisy and then we returned to the Chateaux at St Andre.

My troop leader Mr Wild was injured in a car accident, had to be medically evacuated to UK. Sgt Andrews took over the troop until we got a new officer and I carried on doing the gun surveying. During the night of the 25th, we moved southwards through la Belle Epine to start patrolling back to St Germain d'Ectot and to the outskirts of Caumont once again. Our start point for the 'breakout' was to be Caumont and after motoring all night we were on the outskirts on the 31st July.

The Sdn started from Cahagnes with orders to patrol the road to Villers Bocage and on to Aunay sur Odon. That night we were bombed heavily again and Mr Llewellyn-Palmer was killed and Mr Newton and two others were wounded, several cars were hit. On the 5th August, Sgt Wilf Luke with 5th Troop entered the main square of Aunay-sur-Odon and was met by 3 Troop 'C' Sqn coming in from another direction. Aunay, which had been destroyed by our bombers and artillery, was considered the most devastated town in France. The only thing still standing when later I drove through the town, was the hollow battered church tower. The Sdn was under constant shelling from the German artillery when we reached the high ground south west of Thury-Harcourt on the 6th August. It was from this area that the gun troops of the regiment were sent off to do some serious shooting as a complete battery with the 5th RHA, that lasted until last light, when we could no longer get any accuracy using the gun sight clinometers. We acquitted ourselves very well and split up to rejoin our Sqdns.



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It was night fall on the return journey to the Squadron, during which I made my most serious personal mistake using the radio during the war. We were nearly out of radio range and contact was difficult on speech, because of too much night static. The position I was given to find SHQ was in slidex code, the message was scrambled and difficult to understand. The call for the repeated slidex coded message was no better, so to get clarification I called up to query the squadron position in clear language instead of code. I knew I had made a terrible mistake the moment the words left my mouth. The next instant the Sqdn Ldr's signal Sgt (Tommy Sugget) called me up. 'Report to Sunray immediately on return'. When I arrived at SHQ, my Sdn Ldr Major Tony Crankshaw was digging his silt trench and he was very angry. 'Guymer, if one aircraft bomb, mortar bomb, enemy shell or bullet arrives in this headquarters over night, I will personally cleave your head off with this shovel. Now go and dig yourself a very deep hole.'

I didn't sleep well that night; luckily for me there was no enemy action anywhere near us throughout the night. I was glad that my life hadn't been shortened. Next morning as I walked over to SHQ to get the new codes and radio frequencies, I passed the Sqdn Ldr who to my great relief just looked at me and grinned. I was cheered up considerably, when he said 'Good morning Guymer, how did you sleep?'

By the 13th August, the Battle of the Falaise Gap was under way and it lasted for several days.

One of my worst experiences in Normandie was the disturbing journey from Thury Harcourt, where we took a lot of enemy shelling and mortaring, we were ordered to drive the route passing across the northern area of the battle of the Falaise Gap. The American army had pushed across France from the west to Falaise and the British, Canadian and Polish armies moved south from Caen to close the gap north of Falaise in the attempt to entrap the German army in Normandie.

The result of that devastatingly, fearful battle was that thousands of men and horses were killed and were for a time left on the roads, on the tracks, in the fields throughout the countryside. The abandoned ruined equipment, the paraphernalia and the bodies covering that beautiful part of Normandie was an appalling sight. We had to wet our scarves and handkerchiefs to cover our mouths and noses to try to cut out the awful stench. This was caused by the smell of rotting crops, the nasty unpleasant all consuming odour of dead men, farm animals and dead bloated army horses, to say nothing of the wet horrid stink of the churned up mud.

Traffic jams clogged up the roads, because of the large number of vehicles and equipment on the move as well as the abandoned equipment and the ruins of a retreating army. There were also hundreds of German Prisoners of War who had to be dealt with. If it was not chaos, then it was a hell of a muddle. Those of us who were there and witnessed the carnage will never forget with revulsion and the unspeakably dreadful horror of it all for the rest of our lives. Memories of these experiences will fade, although you do not think so at the time, they do do so. Because your mind protects you.

It was on the 21st of August that 4h Tp was embroiled in a suicidal attack from the nearby forest by a unit of the 'Hitler Youth'. For the next four days our Guns were in constant demand causing considerable damage and large numbers of casualties. We found it hard to keep up sometimes and at one time we pushed on 30 miles in one day. We fired so much ammunition that we had to have daily replenishment. Although the Germans were retreating it did not mean that they were disorganised. On several occasions we were able to lay our guns on to targets that were in full view so that both Gun Sgts were able to shoot over open sights. Morale was high because we were on our way to finishing the war.

The Sqdn then patrolled and fought our way down to Evreux and on to Louviers where we crossed the Seine and soon we were in action again from La Feuille. On the 2nd of September we crossed the Somme and patrolled through Bernaville, Doullens and spent the night in Nuncq before making our way the next day to Mazingarbe. On the 4th Sept., we moved at speed through Meurchin, Carvin, and Seclan and Templemars and we were quickly on the outskirts of Lille.

Sgt Wilf Luke MM, TP Ldr 5th Tp was the first Tp to reach the City centre and was seriously held up by the population. His reception was one of considerable excitement and the crowd was ecstatic and happy to be liberated. He cars became covered in flowers and the crowd hemmed each car in them everyone enjoyed incredible 'hospitality and refreshment'. The Sqdn had to wait for 5th Tp from the City. The complete Squadron, waited all afternoon in Lille until last light and then as night fell we left France and motored into Belgium. The 5th September was when we caught up with the Regiment at Oudenaarde. We were now at the beginning of a different and new war experience.



## Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR

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Thanks goodness, no sandy beach to invade, no dreaded bocage country, not so much terrible sorrow caused by witnessing the appalling devastation of those beautiful cities and towns we saw in France. I doubted if I would ever again see a sight like to massacre that I witnessed at Falaise.

How wrong can one be? Belsen was on the Centre Line of 7th Armrd Div fighting through Germany. 'D' Squadron lead the 7th Armrd Div into the devastated City of Hamburg. The 11th Hussars (Prince Albert's Own) was the first British regiment to enter the ruins of Berlin.

The 11th Hussars (PAO) was the Armoured Reconnaissance Regiment of the 7th Armrd Div most of WW2. In North Africa, in Italy and North West Europe, covering 3,000 miles throughout 13 countries.

The General had finally negotiated the surrender of Hamburg and on the 3rd of May 1945, 'D' Sqdn was chosen to lead the Regiment and the 7th Armrd Division into Hamburg for the surrender of the City. Our CO Lt Col Bill Wainman DSO. MC had arrived in the centre of Hamburg too early and refused to take over the keys of the City from General Wolz and made him wait until our General arrived. At five p.m we drove in at a very fast speed because our tasks were to take over the Town Hall, Post Office, Police Barracks, and the telephone exchange. We had difficulty finding these places because all we found were heaps of rubble where they had once stood. We moved to the northern suburbs for the night only to be badgered by hundreds of Germans who considered that they had had enough.

At first light on the 4th May, the Sqdn was once again patrolling northwards into Schleswig Holstein. 4th Tp was sent to patrol along the Hamburg Kiel Road to reach a stop line at the crossroads north of Quickborn. General Admiral von Friedeberg representing Admiral Doenitz the new Furer entered the British Lines and reported himself to my Troop Leader Lt Hunter and he was detained to await the arrival of our Sqdn Ldr Capt Toby Horsford MC.

He in his turn handed the Admiral and his German Staff delegation over to the staff officers from Field Marshall Montgomery's Headquarters on Luneburg Heath. These then escorted the Admiral and his delegation to meet the Field Marshall for the signing of the unconditional surrender of all German Land, Naval and Air Forces in North West Europe including Holland and Denmark. The instrument of surrender was signed later that day at 1830hrs. 4th Tp was sent back on patrol pushing further north towards the Kiel Canal. 4th TP was commanded by Lt Tony Hunter MC, TP Sgt was Sgt Tommy Trendall, the Tp Cp and Scout Car commander was Cpl Matt Guymer.

On 5th May Admiral Hoffmann Commander in Chief of the German Fleet arrived to hand over the German Navy. Cease fire was ordered at 0800hrs. Making our way north to the Kiel Canal during the 6th May, we were mustering hundreds of POWs into transport to send them back into the POW camps. On the 7th of May we crossed the Kiel Canal and moved to Bendorf where we celebrated VE Day. During the day the Commanding Officer Lt Col Bill Wainman arrived and he was invited to light 'D' Sqdn's vast bonfire that was surmounted by a huge Swastika Flag. Afterwards he visited every Troop in the Squadron, as he had done in A, B and C squadrons to say his personal 'thank you' for all that we had achieved in the fighting in North West Europe from the beaches of Normandie through Belgium, Holland and Germany to the day of the final surrender of Germany.

At last, our part of the war was over.

When the Commanding Officer drove out of our lines, we spontaneously fired every one of our small arms weapons into the air. As the last shot was fired and the spent ammunition fell to earth making a pattering sound on the rooftops and buildings, we looked back over our armoured and scout cars. The paintwork was peeling, mudguards bent and dented, the cars looked tired and appeared to be sagging. Even our kit lashed to the cars looked bedraggled and the cars looked scruffy. After all we had been through together, little wonder that there was a feeling of considerable gratitude and affection for them. They had protected us, carried us in safety and served us well over the past eleven months. We had lost 11 of our Armrd Cars, and 5 Scout Cars. (Mine was one of them).

Towards the evening as the bonfire eventually burnt down there was the feeling of mental as well as physical relief. It gradually dawned on us that tomorrow we would not have to get up before dawn to carry on with the dreadful constant horrifying acts of close contact warfare. This led to the reaction of immense relief but after a short time of elation, there was the inescapable period of sadness that we all felt for the high number of our casualties. Of the total strength of the Sqdn, when we landed in Normandie we had suffered 48% casualties.

I was sent on leave immediately and arrived home in time for the VE Day celebrations. All round was joy and happiness. But for me the sadness was not fully abated because I was still thinking of my lost friends. And then my nightmares started.





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#### EPILOGUE

The people of Normandie invited all the men of the allied forces who took part in the invasion of Europe, and in particular, those who had fought for the liberation of Normandie in 1944, to return and be presented with a decoration. It is a special badge to be worn on the chest and it is to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the Liberation of Normandie. This Chest Badge is from the people of Normandie to say 'Thank You' to those of us who had fought during the terrible months of June, July and August of 1944. I arranged for my Badge to be presented at the Abbaye aux Dames in Caen on the 9th July 2004. For the people of Caen, the 9th July 1944 is a memorable date in their history. It was the day that the City was liberated after thirty-four days of the fiercest fighting of the war in France in the Second World War. They will never forget the courage of the Resistance Fighters who risked their lives for the freedom of their City and for Normandie.

After the war the regiment served in the following theaters

Korea 52-53

Malta 1956

Ulster 52-64

Aden 65-66

BOAR 45-52 & 60-65

UK (Peham Down) 52,55-57, 67-68



image courtesy of the Bovington Tank Museum reference BTM490D6  
Daimler Scout Car **F329562 222500** of the 6th Armoured Division, and unidentified Senior Armoured Regiment  
Circa 1951





### The 2nd Royal tank Regiment

Based at Farnborough in Kent during ww2 and served in North Africa.....

After the war the regiment served in the following theaters

Egypt 59-62

Ulster 52-64

Cyprus 64-65

BOAR 47-48

UK 48-52 & 68

**EXPAND AS DETAILS ARE FOUND**



*A column of Sherman tanks forms up before entering Cava di Terreni, on the 5th Army front. TM*

Image courtesy of the IWM NA 7158

Photographer: Bowman(Sgt) War Office official photographer

Description: Spot the Dingo? The regiment has yet to be identified, this is not helped by the lack of any vehicle markings.

26 September 1943





**Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR**  
**The Daimler Fighting Vehicles Project – Part D04**  
[www.daimler-fighting-vehicles.co.uk](http://www.daimler-fighting-vehicles.co.uk)



Images courtesy of unknown source  
Photographer: unknown  
Description: 2<sup>nd</sup> RTR Germany  
circa 1947-1948



**Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR**  
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Images courtesy of unknown source  
 Photographer: unknown  
 Description: 2<sup>nd</sup> RTR Germany dingo F207267 08ZS75  
 circa 1947-1948



Images courtesy of unknown source  
 Photographer: unknown  
 Description: 2<sup>nd</sup> RTR Germany dingo F329703 22ZS52 RAPIER  
 circa 1947-1948





**Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR**  
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Images courtesy of unknown source  
Photographer: unknown  
Description: 2<sup>nd</sup> RTR Germany dingo 14ZS45 ROCKET  
circa 1947-1948



## Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR

### The Daimler Fighting Vehicles Project – Part D04

[www.daimler-fighting-vehicles.co.uk](http://www.daimler-fighting-vehicles.co.uk)

#### **The 3rd Royal tank Regiment**

During WW2 The 3<sup>rd</sup> RTR were in 3<sup>rd</sup> armoured brigade of the 1<sup>st</sup> armoured division (with 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>) and stationed at Foringbridge & Lyde in Kent.

They were the first tanks of that division to be sent to France and arrived in Calais on 21<sup>st</sup> May 1940 in support of the 30 Infantry Brigade in order to fulfill Churchill's promise that 'Calais should be fought to the death'



An account of the Recce Troop of the 3<sup>rd</sup> RTR at Calais by Major Bill Close MC, 21<sup>st</sup> May 1940  
Major Bill Close MC was then the troop Sgt of 3<sup>rd</sup> RTR Recce Troop.

He remembers that the ship on which they arrived had many hatches unloading the tanks. The cruiser tanks were stowed at the bottom of the ship below light tanks and scout cars above. Ammunition, radios and other essential parts had been tucked away in any available odd corner that suited the ship's displacement requirements. In addition, liberal quantities of mineral jelly had been spread everywhere to protect the steel from salt water corrosion.

The omission of mechanical machine gun belt fillers added to the general chaos of unloading and equipping ready for action and the crew worked through the night to make ready for action. As daylight improved the Recce Troop was ordered to find the enemy.

We split into two groups of five vehicles (Daimler Scout Cars). The troop commander led one up the coast towards Gravelines and Dunkirk. I set off with the other in a southerly direction to search the area around Guines. When we left the battalion, men were sitting in the dunes painfully forcing rounds of ammunition into belts, blistering their hands and breaking their nails. Others were cursing ill-fitting machine gun barrels.

It was another cool misty morning and we got our first close look at Calais as we drove up streets of red brick houses where bakers were opening up their shops.

Further on we saw the first refugees, some camping by the roadside and others heading for the town. We had seen plenty of newsreel scenes of the Spanish civil war but the haggard looks, crazy transport, lorries, prams, push carts, and bicycles piled high with household goods were a shock all the same.

French soldiers sometimes tramped past us shouting something but we could not stop and wouldn't have understood if we had.

Enemy planes flew high overhead and the crowd increased its rate of shuffle.

We drove along the side of a canal part of the way and a few miles out of town the refugees thinned out. With some relief I spotted the first body of troops that I had seen, vehicles hidden under some trees by the side of the road. They were eating. Some had tins in their hands. I signalled the section to halt and I raised my binoculars 'Oh Christ, Billy, there Germans. I can see the black crosses on their tanks'

There was a flash, a bang, and something rasped noisily overhead. Another flash, bang and rasp were followed by a solid thump somewhere behind. I had been standing and sat down quickly. The enemy had sited an anti tank gun to cover the road during breakfast, 'Let's get out of it quick'

Bullets cracked on the cobbles ramming home the personal nature of the affair. I thought 'My God it's me there trying to kill....me....' this wasn't like random bombing when you might be unlucky. This was with murderous intent. Someone had watched our approach and taken aim through a graduated sight, got us in his cross hairs and pressed the trigger.



**Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR**  
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Billy remained unruffled.

He reversed coolly and deliberately until we were at right angles to the ditch that ran along side the road, then bumped over it into field of half grown crops.

The two Dingo's immediately behind us were doing the same but tipped over, either hit or because they had taken the ditch at too sharp an angle and lay there wheels spinning. No one got out. Of the remaining two Dingo's I could see nothing.

Fear was now replaced by anger. We had no radio and it was our job to get back as fast as we could and report what we had seen. Then we'd show them 'Get Going Billy' we bumped over the field with soil flying all around us. The Germans were having no problem with their machine gun ammunition.

A shallow valley offered shelter and we fled up it. Everyone had been looking for light armoured forces, I recon we had found them ...but light?

When we arrived back the CO showed obvious irritation when I gave my report, as if I was personally responsible for the loss of two and possibly four of 'his' Dingos.

To make matters worse there was no news at all of the rest of the Recce troop under the lieutenant. I was told to stand by. And parked by the HQ. The RSM told me that the colonel had every right to be touchy as he was getting a string of contradictory orders...

In the early afternoon we advance towards Boulogne, my orders to stick behind the CO's HQ tanks in case I was needed.

Once again we drove through crowds of refugees. Half an our latter the leading elements swung off the road to investigate suspicious vehicles besides a wood. One of our top commanders got within pistol range before enemy tanks were identified.

It did me good to see our cruisers in action, they were mainly A13's, racy looking tanks with four big road wheels on each side and 2pdr gun for main armament. You could reach 40mph on firm ground. The long days on the Dorset ranges paid off, and soon half a dozen German tanks were ablaze. The armour of the A13s up to 30mm seemed able to keep out enemy shells. Only when German field guns join in did the scene change.

The panzers crept nearer and our squadrons began to suffer, one of the A10's ugly brutes with box like turrets and a 3.7in mortar instead of a 2pdr began to burn. A track was blown off another cruiser; the gun on the colonels A13 was shattered.

We withdrew over the crest of a ridge and took up position around a small wood. German bombers flew overhead but ignored us and dumped their cargoes on Calais where the drifting smoke was growing thicker. At 20.00hrs a staff car appeared from the direction of the town, an officers red band clearly visible. The wearer had a long conversation with the colonel and when he left the adjutant, Capt Moss, came over and told me my vehicle had been placed at the disposal of the Brigadier Nicholson who had been sent over from England to take overall command of Calais. He had arrived that afternoon but when he had tried to raise the colonel on the radio net, he was told to get off the air as the CO was trying to fight a bloody battle. The colonel at the time having no idea whom he was talking to.

We followed the Brigadiers car back to Calais. As we pulled away Billy Barlow nodded towards three bundles covered with groundsheets. Boots stuck out from under them. Who are they? I couldn't say. As they were from tank crews I must have know then nearly all of them had been a t Lydd. What will happen to them? I was not sure. We had never practiced buying the dead at Salisbury plain.



**Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR**  
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I was not long at the Citadel, after I made a couple of journeys the Brigadier said simply, 'I don't think you can do much more here, sergeant. If you want to make it back it's alright by me' then he added 'Colonel Keller has no further use for you'. When I asked about the Dingo he gave a little grin and said 'I shan't be needing it again'. I realised something must have happened but couldn't very well ask what. I wished the Brigadier Nicholson good luck, saluted and made off. There was no sign of the dispatch rider, the brigadier must have realised that the chances of getting away were fast disappearing. He'd been told that the evacuation had been agreed in principle but another signal was received late that night said that the French were against it. He was told to fight on for the time being. Of these matters I knew nothing as I headed for Gare maritime.

Things had worsened since we left and more burning and abandoned vehicles blocked the road. The dingo carried a box of six grenades and I slipped one of these under the bonnet to set it alight before continuing on foot.

I don't know where the little ship came from or what she was called, and I've wondered since if she was the little trawler mentioned in one account of the battle as having brought an important message for the naval detachment at Gare maritime. What I do remember is that they were pulling up the plank as I ran down the quayside. Those of us on deck lay flat as we steamed away, to avoid being blown overboard at the last minute. Shells were splashing quite close and once clear of the smoke we could see flashes of enemy batteries on the ridge above Coquelles. Destroyers were firing back while zigzagging to avoid the Stukas queuing up to dive bomb them.

One or twice the ships vanished under clouds of spray but emerged again with their pom pom guns blazing away. Near misses blew bits of our metal superstructure, gashing some of the men, but in mid-channel the air activity died down,

Ships from the other ports in France had been landing troops at Dover and the quay was packed. Salvation Army vans were dispensing tea, ambulances were crawling through the crowds, there were nurses, policemen, redcaps, people pushing chocolate into your hands and giving you cigarettes.

No one asked what was happening back there though the artillery fire could be plainly heard. I was shoved into a train for Aldershot with a lot of other weary soldiers and still wearing my revolver I had never drawn, fell fast asleep.

I never did get my BEF ID card.





Image courtesy of the Deutsches Bundesarchiv (German Federal Archive), [Bild 146-1980-132-01](#) Image s  
Provided by Simon Hamon.

Description: Englischer Panzerwagen in Calais.

Certainly a likely candidate for a surviving Dingo of the 3<sup>rd</sup> RTR as it is in the right place at the right time,  
and abandoned on the beach.

31.5.1940

Could this be the car featured in the account by Major Bill Close?

Unfortunately the F number is covered by the Jack, F9??3,  
However Car F9433 is indicated in the WD vehicle records to have been issued to the 3<sup>rd</sup> RTR



Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR  
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3RTR in the UK.

Image courtesy of Royal tank Regiment-A pictorial History by George Forty.

This interesting photo of AFV's belonging to 3RTR, A squadron, at Warminster, Wilshire 1948  
From front to back, a Daimler dingo **F47960**, RAM kangaroo, Cromwell, comet, centurion and Churchill tanks and a Sherman flail.

After the war the regiment served in the following theaters

Hong Kong 49-52

Malaysia 50-52

BOAR 47-49, 53-62 & 64-67

UK 48-49, 62-63 & 68-69





Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR  
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PUBLIC RELATIONS HQ, NORTHERN ARMY GROUP  
OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH  
NEG. NO: 112/23/53

3577

CADET SGT D.L. WILLIAMS OF 165, QUEBLETT  
ROAD, STRETTLY, WARWICKSHIRE, AND CADET  
D. DAVID OF 54, DUNEDIN ROAD, GREAT BARR,  
BIRMINGHAM ARE TAKEN FOR A RIDE IN A SCOUT  
CAR BY TPR D. BEBBINGTON WHOSE HOME ADDRESS  
IS 5 STATION HOUSES, MADELEY, NR CROWE,  
CHESHIRE.



# Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR

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### The 4th Royal tank Regiment

4<sup>th</sup> RTR were part of the British 1st Army Tank Brigade

**EXPAND AS DETAILS ARE FOUND**



After the war the regiment was served in the following theaters

Aden & Persian Gulf 63-64

Malasia 64 – 66

Ulster 71

Palistine 48

Italy/Austria 46-47

BOAR 45,54-63, 66-70

UK 53-54 & 63

The 4<sup>th</sup> RTR were equipped with Daimler armored cars and scout car in Egypt 1950-1953, refer to account '**Trouble in Ismialia**' in part B of the file.



Image courtesy of Simon Hammon

Description: In the background dingo F48494

Troopers of the RTR (Unidentified regiment)

Left to right Trp Bruce Kent Canada, Trp John Kelsall Born Belgium naturalized & Trooper Cyril Adam Mauritius

Circa 1950s





### The 5<sup>th</sup> Royal tank Regiment

In the years between the wars, equipped with Medium Tanks, 5th Battalion Royal Tank Corps was a major player in the important tank exercises of that era.

For most of this period it was based at Tidworth, on Salisbury Plain where many of these mock tank battles took place.



In World War 2 it had an equally varied time. And was based at Perham Down.

As part of 1st Armoured Division 5th Royal Tank Regiment went to France in 1940 and subsequently to North Africa.

It served right through that campaign and then went to Italy, now in 22nd Armoured Brigade of 7th Armoured Division.

The Fifth came back to Britain with the division in January 1944 and now equipped with Cromwell tanks landed in Normandy on 7th June - D plus one.

The regiment was equipped with the following equipment during WW2

France with BEF

????????????????

North Africa

Grant Tanks

Italy

ShermanTanks

North West Europe

Sherman Tanks

Daimler **Dingo Scout Cars** from? **??????** for use in the Regimental HQ.

The use of Daimler Scout car has been recorded by Jake WarDrop in his book 'Tanks Across The Desert' in the following paragraphs:

Page **????????????????**

Page**????????????????**

After the war the regiment was served in the following theaters

Korea 53,54

Cyrenaica 55-57

Malaysia 66

BOAR 45-53, 60-65 & 68-69

UK 57-59 & 65-67.



Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR  
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Image courtesy of the IWM F4600

NW Europe

Photographer : K y Keating War Office official photographer

HQ 3rd Armoured Brigade & 5th RTR

Description: British tanks and armoured fighting vehicles **F9420** moving through Luisnoy prior to going into action ironically this is likely to be one of the dingoes latter captured and utilised as armoured transport by German forces.

30<sup>th</sup> May 1940



Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR  
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Image courtesy of the IWM photo reference E11092

Photographer: Vanderson (Lieut), Smith (Lieut), Murray (Lieut) of No 1 Army Film & Photographic Unit  
Daimler scout car **F19377** of 5th Royal Tank Regiment, 4th Armoured Brigade in the Western Desert.  
Date: 28 April 1942





Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR  
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Image courtesy of the Tank Museum **F19377, Mk1B, North Africa**

This Scout Car was being used by an official army war photographer and reporter to tour the battle fields of the Northern Desert, Interestingly it was probably this vehicle with a few others that was observed by the 11<sup>th</sup> Hussars to be 'stooging' around the desert where it should not have been. It was suspected to be a captured vehicle and there was much discussion as to if the vehicle should be fired upon before its true identity was established.



Images courtesy of unknown source  
Description: Lt L Jones 5th RTR, 22 AB 7AD in Germany  
circa 1945



### **The 6<sup>th</sup> Royal tank Regiment**

When the war broke out in 1939, 6 RTR was based in Egypt with the [Heavy Armoured Brigade \(Egypt\)](#), part of the [Armoured Division \(Egypt\)](#).

It was equipped with a mixture of [Mk VIb light tanks](#), [Mark II medium tanks](#), and [Mk I cruiser tanks](#). Daimler [Dingo Scout Cars](#) were in use by the regimental HQ Liaison officers from late 1943.



The Regiment served in North Africa & the Middle East reserve until May 1944, it was then disembarked in Torretto Italy to serve under the 7<sup>th</sup> Armoured Brigade.

At this time it was equipped with [Daimler Dingo Scout Car](#), & Crocodile tanks

After the cessation of hostilities with Germany on 8/5/45 the regiment moved into Austria to follow up with the disarmament.

**The following are extracts of the War Diaries containing references to Daimler Armoured Cars or Daimler Dingo Scout cars for The 6<sup>th</sup> Royal tank Regiment September 1939 to March 1946,**

These have been sourced from the following site <http://www.warlinks.com>

**A full transcript of the diaries is included in Appendix 5.**

9/12/43	Accident to <a href="#">Daimler scout car</a> at ZIFTA (EGYPT). Capt P Helps and Tpr AA Rowland both sustained injuries.
6/9/44	<p>Sqn HQ in Auditore heavily shelled 0515 – 0545 hrs. dumps of petrol and ammunition set on fire. LO's <a href="#">dingo</a> burnt out.</p> <p>9Tp and 11Tp supported R Sussex advance on Pian di Castello but unable to proceed beyond Buzza. 9Tp held up by mines on road.</p> <p>Lt MacGregor killed whilst outside his tank making plan for further advance with Infantry Coy commander. 11Tp carried out successful shoot on farm buildings – area Pian di Castello.</p> <p>2100 – C Sqn relieved by B Sqn under command 7th Ind Infantry Bde. C Sqn placed under command 11th Ind Infantry Bde. Sqn commander, Major GD Addison evacuated to ADS. Capt RJC Williamson assumes command of Sqn.</p>





**Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR**  
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Image courtesy of the Simon Hamon

Photographer: Unknown, possibly IWM collection

Description: The crew of a Dingo Scout Car investigate an abandoned German light tank that looks to have been dug into to prepared positions.

The details of the specific Tank Regiment or other details are not known

Date: 6<sup>th</sup> June 1941





**Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR**  
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Image courtesy of the Imperial War Museum reference H15377

Photographer: Horton (Capt), War Office official photographer

Description: Standing in a Daimler scout car, the Prime Minister Winston Churchill inspects Valentine tanks and crews of 11th Armoured Division (possibly 6RTR) at Helmsley in Yorkshire.

6 November 1941.



*6 RTR in BAOR. Centurions led by a Dingo, march past the saluting base during a Coronation Parade at Munster in June 1953. 6 RTR were in Portsmouth Barracks, and 2 RTR occupied Swinton Barracks during the same period at Munster, at which time they formed part of 6th Armoured Division. TM*

Image courtesy of Royal tank Regiment-A pictorial History by George Forty.  
Daimler scout car **F47581** / **13ZS83** in the foreground





*RHQ 6 RTR and HQ Squadron loaded on the top deck of LST 'Puncher' on the journey out to Suez in 1956. TM*

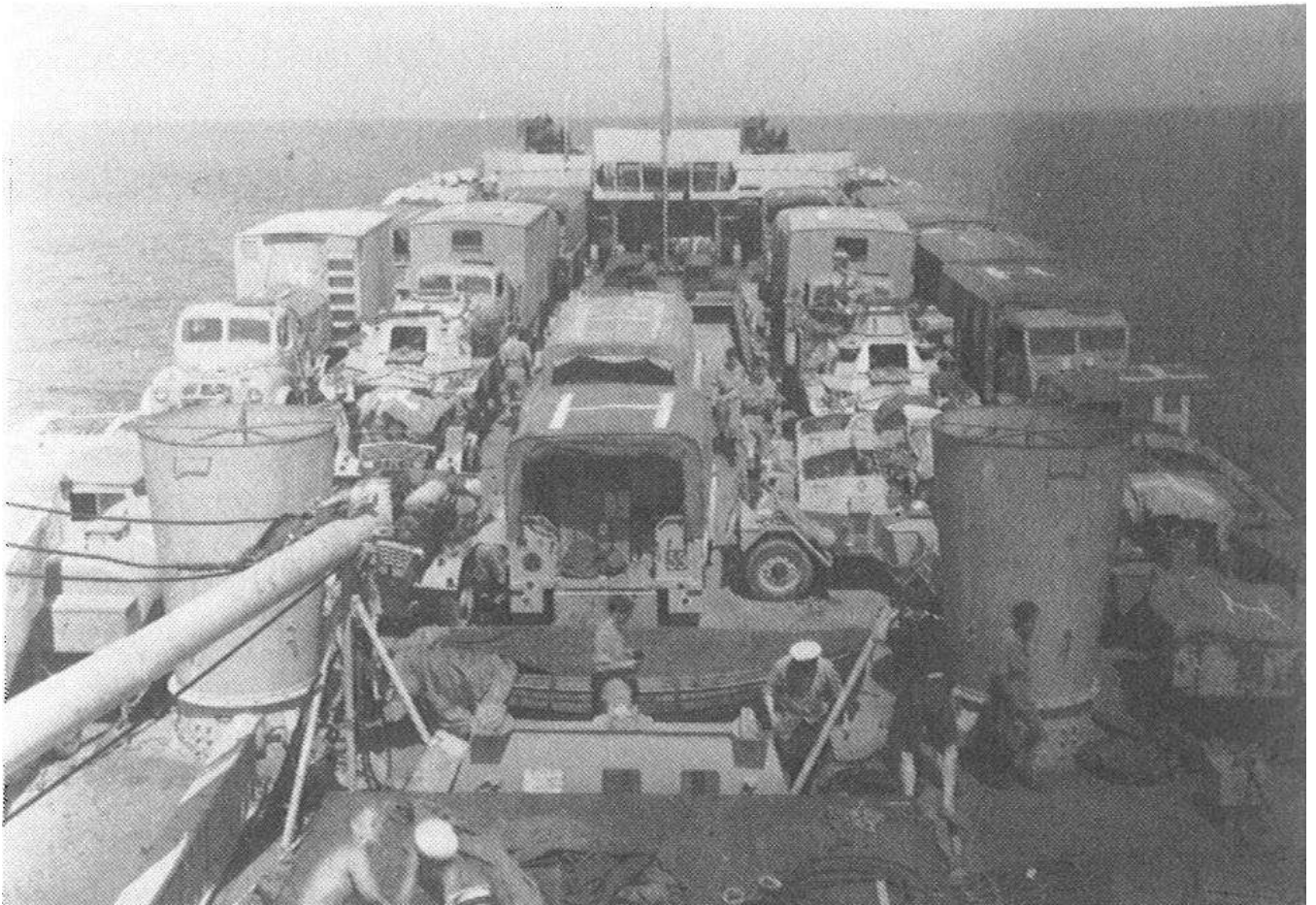


Image courtesy of Royal tank Regiment-A pictorial History by George Forty.







# Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR

## The Daimler Fighting Vehicles Project – Part D04

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### The 7<sup>th</sup> Royal tank Regiment

7th RTR were part of the British 1st Army Tank Brigade

Details to be added and confirmed



### Use of Daimlers

Captain Bryan of REME confirms attht the 7<sup>th</sup> RTR used Dingo's during whilst serving in Korea.



F47527 09Z578 with Mike J Wilson Recce Troop 7RTR,



Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR  
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Dingo **F206419 03ZS11**



Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR  
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**The 8<sup>th</sup> Royal tank Regiment**

8th RTR were part of the British 1st Army Tank Brigade

Details to be added and confirmed



(Photo sourced from mapleleaf)

Photo of car F48645 & F48618 reputedly taken in Libya 1944, and vehicles belonging to the 8<sup>th</sup> Royal tank Regiment





### The 9<sup>th</sup> Royal tank Regiment

Existed as a as hostilities-only battalion.

Details to be added and confirmed



### The 10<sup>th</sup> Royal tank Regiment

Details to be added and confirmed



### The 11<sup>th</sup> Royal tank Regiment

11 RTR formed part of 79th Armoured Division (aka Hobart's Funnies), equipped initially with CDL (tactical searchlight) tanks, but converted not long after D-Day to Buffalo (US LVT aka Amtrac), and participated in the assault crossing of the Rhine.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill was ferried across the Rhine in a Buffalo from 'C' squadron 11RTR



### The 12<sup>th</sup> Royal tank Regiment

Details to be added and confirmed





F14798



*A 'Speed The Tanks' parade in Bath, September 1941, with a Dingo and a Matilda MkII leading a detachment of the local Home Guard.*



This liaison vehicle belongs to the Senior Armoured Regiment, possibly of VII Corps  
(Image courtesy of Royal tank Regiment-A pictorial History by George Forty & Nigel Watson.



Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR  
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The 40<sup>th</sup> Royal tank Regiment



Image courtesy of the Tank Museum  
Dingo Scout Car **F14828, MkIA,**



Image courtesy of the IWM Reference H16292

Photographer: Tanner (Lt) War Office official photographer

Description: Scout car of 40th Royal Tank Regiment, 8th Armoured Division at Warren Camp, Crowborough in Sussex, 22 December 1941. The regiment was about to embark for the Middle East, hence the desert camouflage.





Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR  
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Image courtesy of the IWM Film Tank Battle 1942

Photographer: AFU

Description: Scout cars **F9713** & **F9704** of 40th Royal Tank Regiment take part in a major training exercise filmed in 1942.



Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR  
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Image courtesy of the IWM Film Tank Battle 1942

Photographer: AFU

Description: Scout cars **F9995** & **F10001** of 40th Royal Tank Regiment take part in a major training exercise filmed in 1942.





Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR  
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**The 41<sup>st</sup> Royal tank Regiment**

41RTR, and served from 1939, first in North Africa



dingo.F47700 in North Africa



F47700 ran over an anti tank mine on 26th October 42  
whilst commanded by Major Greaves





### The 46<sup>th</sup> Royal tank Regiment



Photo sourced from Imperial War Museum-Photo Reference NA11760

Photographer: Sgt Mc Conville, Army Film & Photographic Unit

Description:

46 RTR Italy 5<sup>th</sup> Army, Anzio Bridgehead

Tanks and anti tank get together. We did a recce along here, and observed some German tanks explain Sgt A.Huthchinson 46Bn RTR of Sutton Ashfield, Notts to Lieutenant Col J.W.Casey, Chicago, 5<sup>th</sup> Army anti tank officer.

F. Candy of Kingston upon Thames operator of the Bren gun was a former organist bin civvy street and his reputed to be a very light finger, especially with the Bren Gun.

7<sup>th</sup> February 1944



## Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR

### The Daimler Fighting Vehicles Project – Part D04

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#### **An account from Trooper John McIntock of an unidentified Royal Tank regiment (obtained from the London RTR association news Letter)**

'Having qualified as a Gunner class III on the C0111et tank with the Ayrshire Yeomanry. I was placed in HQ Squadron which was local to me. in the County town of Ayr. My first job was as a gunner on the Daimler Armoured Car in the Reece troop and liked the Daimler very much. It seemed to be a very well designed vehicle and had the advantage of letting us do a lot of 'road work'.

The gun, however, was something else! It was a 2-pounder (40mm) which I quickly discovered had an effective range of 800 yards, - about the same as a rifle. I remember being less impressed with this 'pop gun'. Despite being advised by my betters not to underestimate it.

Having had a very brief conversion course on this gun (there wasn't a lot to learn), I was on my way to my first annual camp. Which happened to be a gunnery camp at Castle Martin tank ranges in Pembrokeshire, South Wales.

Having practiced our skills on dry runs. it was onto to the firing point. This was a concrete hard standing where the gunners practice could be undertaken in ideal conditions.

The turret crew on the Daimler consisted of only two persons.- The gunner and the commander.

Loading; clearing stoppages operating the wireless set and looking out of the top was shared as best as we could.

The number 19 wireless set was a bit of a mystery to me as I knew nothing about wireless sets and the instructions on the front of the set were in Russian! (WW2 dated Canadian manufactured Lend Lease equipment apparently). At times this wireless set seemed to be worse than useless.

The 2-pounder and the BESA (Birmingham Enfield Small Arms) machine gun were fitted with canvas spent cartridge bags which were usually stowed in one of the bins with the tools and were often suitably oil soaked as a result. Being of WWII vintage the stitching wasn't much good either. Things were a bit labour intensive' in the Daimler turret especially on a 'battle – run' - which was firing on the move more or less across country.

The 2-pounder had a hand traverse handle to turn the turret. But elevation was by means of a shoulder pad. Which meant that as the vehicle "vent up and down you had to go with it to keep the gun pointing other than into the ground or at the sky.

The BESA machine gun performed magnificently, filling the spent cartridge bag with hot cases in no time at all - heating up the oily canvas bag and filling the turret with fumes.

It was like being at a barbecue!

When the stitching gave way, we were treated to a turret floor covered in hot cases. turning it into a skating rink. Clearing that lot up took a long time. As four machine gun belts gave us 1.000 spent cartridges:

With the 2-pounder~ we started work on a Sherman tank target, at about 400 yards range. Eye glued to the telescope, I fired my first AP (armour piercing) round. There was an almighty ear-piercing crack and the telescope almost poked my eye out when the gun recoiled.

There was a bright flash on the Sherman's turret - inspecting the damage later, the shot was stuck in the armour! It must have been the first AP shot that ever failed to penetrate a Sherman. As for 2-pounder High Explosive ammunition - short of a direct hit on an enemy soldier. I don't think that there was much to fear from it. Then the cartridge bag ripped: flooding the turret floor with 2-pounder spent shell cases.

Having mastered two guns, someone decide to remove me from the Daimler Armoured Car and make me the driver of a Daimler Dingo Scout Car.





Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR  
The Daimler Fighting Vehicles Project – Part D04  
[www.daimler-fighting-vehicles.co.uk](http://www.daimler-fighting-vehicles.co.uk)



Photo sourced from Imperial War Museum-Photo Reference IWM D68509

Photographer: Army Film & Photographic Unit

Description: Daimler armoured car **88ZR43 F208381** co-operating with the 16th Airborne Division (Territorial Army) during Exercise King's Joker at the Stanford Parachute Training Area.

Date: post war





## Royal Tank Regiments - 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> RTR

### The Daimler Fighting Vehicles Project – Part D04

[www.daimler-fighting-vehicles.co.uk](http://www.daimler-fighting-vehicles.co.uk)

#### **The 49th Royal tank Regiment, 'A' Special Service Squadron Royal Armoured corps**

Raised After April 1941 at Wickham Market. The squadron was formed from a squadron of 48th Royal Tank Regiment. It was re-equipped with light tanks, a few partially worn Valentines, two or three Dingo's and six Bedford trucks.

It was unofficially known as the 'Light Squadron.' It was organized with two Valentine troops and two light tank troops.

The 48th of which 'A' Special Services were a part did a lot of training for beach landings in Inveraray under Admiral Sir Roger Keys.

The squadron left Wickham Market in May 1941 and moved to Melrose, Scotland, where it came under command of 29th Independent Infantry Brigade along with 'B' and 'C' Special Service Squadrons. It then moved from Melrose 1941 and remained there until March 1942.

They were out in the Atlantic around June 1941 when the convoy were turned back because all ships were needed in connection with the Sinking of the Bismark! Their escorts at this time were Princess Beatrice and Queen Emma.

Apparently they were kept in Loch Fyne and confined on boat for 6 weeks to Inveraray to train with landing craft.

The squadron arrived in Freetown, West Africa in September While in Freetown, it trained with the Royal West African Frontier Force.

It returned to the United Kingdom in March 1942 at Wemyss Bay, Clyde and moved to Haddam Castle by 17 March 1942. It then moved to Auchterarder and was disbanded in August 1942



Dingo F19461 IWM H 14385 the dingo MkIB returns to base with recce info during a training exercise.  
Date 01-10-1941