

**THE BRITISH
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF PORTUGAL**

**TWENTY THIRD ANNUAL REPORT
AND REVIEW 1996**

**13, Rua da Arriaga
1200 LISBON**

**THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION
1946-1996**

Compiled by D. C. d'Arcy Orders

Introduction

There can be little dramatic or exciting in an history of the Portugal Branch of the Royal British Legion because it is merely an account of the hard work of changing groups of dedicated ex-servicemen raising funds for their less fortunate brethren.

It is perhaps natural that many people do not recognise the amount of administrative and organisational work that is required to distribute the poppies and recover the collecting boxes in every area in Portugal where there may be a few British residents.

The Branch has built up a network of collectors but as most are expatriates they come and go.

A large majority of the members are in their 60s and 70s and have, so far, borne the burden of the Legion's affairs and will, in the natural course of events, fade away. The much reduced British Armed Forces can never make good the wastage - even if substantial numbers become members on termination of Service.

Meanwhile, the Legion's task of caring for the needs of the disabled, the widows and dependents will grow rather than diminish with the increasing age of those looked after.

Few people realise that at the end of January 1994 there were 696 pensioners and 2,024 war widows from the 1914-18 War. All of these are elderly and most of them very frail requiring special accommodation or intensive nursing. On the same date there were 240,803 pensioners and 48,014 war widows

from the 1939-45 World War until the present time. All of them will be looking for help for many years to come so the work of the Legion is far from complete.

*"They did their duty whom we remember.
They gave their lives; no more they had to give.
And as the years roll on, each November
We think of them in silence - we who live."*

A solution to the "ageing population" syndrome is by encouraging as many people as possible - both men and women - whether they are ex-service or not, to become Associate Members. These, today, already constitute 27% of overall Legion Membership. They can help in all manner of ways and, especially, at Poppy Appeal time and will eventually be invited to replace Ordinary Members in positions of responsibility on Committees and other Legion organisations.

Those prepared to volunteer their services should contact a member of the Committee. They will be most welcome.

The Royal British Legion Portugal Branch

Soon after the First World War many local associations sprang up in Britain with the object of raising funds to help ex-servicemen and their dependents. The British Legion was founded on 1st July 1921 to incorporate these associations into a national body. It received its Royal Charter, from which the following paragraphs are quoted, in April 1925. To mark the Legion's Jubilee, H.M. The Queen granted it the title of "Royal" on 1st July 1971.

"The Legion shall be created to inaugurate and maintain in a strong, stimulating, united and democratic comradeship all those who have served in H. M. Navy, Air Force, Army or any Auxiliary Forces so that neither their efforts nor their interests shall be forgotten; that their welfare and that the equitable treatment shall be secured to them in respect of the difficulties caused in their lives as a result of their services."

"The Legion shall exist to perpetuate in the civil life of the Commonwealth and the World the principles for which the Nation stands; to inculcate a sense of loyalty to the Crown, Community and Nation; to promote unity amongst all classes; to make right the master of might; to secure peace and goodwill on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to conse-

crate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual service and helpfulness."

Although since the 1915-18 War, Poppy Day, November 11th, had each year been commemorated in Portugal by special church services and the raising of funds for Earl Haig's Appeal by the British colony - as the British community referred to themselves in those days - there was no formal expatriate servicemen's organisation between the wars.

An informal British Old Comrades Association was formed in Lisbon in 1920, mainly through the exertions of Lt. Col. G.W.Y. Pope, MC, RE ably supported by W.M.F. Stilwell, and several other members of the British community including Dr Pinto Levy, late of the Hampshire Regiment.

It appears that, each year, a small committee was formed to arrange and issue invitations for the Remembrance Service at St. George's Church. In 1937 it comprised H. V. Harby as Chairman, Mr Johnson as Honorary Secretary and Mr Bateman, the Chargé d'Affaires at the British Embassy.

In the Anglo-Portuguese News the announcement of the Service was followed by:

"Such a celebration recalling as it will the spirit, sacrifice, camaraderie and deeds which were circumscribed only by the limits of the globe, is welcomed on all sides and the suggestion of Mr. Bateman voiced the feeling of all those who answered their nation's call to arms.

If need be, they, and thousands even millions, of a younger generation like them, would do the same again, instantaneously.

It is profoundly to be hoped that no such necessity will ever again arise."

Little did they know.

At that time there existed the Federação Internacional des Anciêns Combatentes, representing 11 countries, and the President of the Ladies' Section laid a wreath at the Cenotaph in Lisbon and another at the War Memorial to the Unknown Soldier at Alcobaça.

In the report of the Poppy Day Dinner-Dance held at the Royal British Club, there is a note that the English community in Coimbra took part in local commemorative church services.

The grandest occasion was an ex-servicemen's dinner presided over by C.H. Bateman H.B.M. Chargé d'Affaires, held in November 1937 at the Royal British Club at Rua S. Pedro d'Alcantara - the first since a similar

dinner in 1919 - and the largest dinner ever held at the Club when 80 British hosts entertained 15 distinguished officers of the Portuguese armed services. Speeches were made and this stirring and cordial event ended with rousing choruses of World War I songs sung with great gusto by allies and friends alike until late in the evening. The following evening a formal Dinner-Dance was held, also at the Club, to raise funds.

During the 1939-45 War November 11th was commemorated each year with church services but the fund-raising tended to become absorbed by the Appeals Sub-Committee of the British Community Council whose activities continued the year round. The Council continued to distribute and sell poppies until 1959 because, even though the Lisbon branch of the British Legion had been formed in 1956, it was discovered that the Legion's original statutes did not permit the Branch to engage in the sale of poppies.

In 1944 with the end of the War in sight, there was a great deal of fund raising activities, various ladies gave lunches, dinners, evening parties, bridge drives, there were violin recitals, cinema shows, dramatic performances at the Estrela Hall, which, together with the sale of poppies raised over £2,000 - quite a considerable sum in those days. Of course, after the end of the war the enthusiasm was the same in 1945.

In 1947 was the first of the parties at St. Julian's when 230 people attended a "Poppy Day Party and Fayre." There were numerous stalls offering games of skill or chance, hoop-la, darts and a Swiss lottery the first prize of which was a lady's nightie won, fortunately by a lady, Mrs. N. M. G. Leslie, wife of the British Military Attaché. Entrance fee was Esc. 10 per head and as much supper as you could eat!

These parties continued for several years.

Special dramatic performances were put on at the Estrela Hall including three performances of 'Is your honeymoon really necessary?' by the recently formed Lisbon Players.

Between 1949 and 1956, most years there was an Autumn Ball at the Residence of H.B.M. Ambassador which was always a great success socially and financially.

Each year, Poppy Day Dances were held at the Royal British Club and, of course, the traditional Remembrance Services took place.

Until 1954 there were no overseas branches of the Legion outside the colonies and Commonwealth countries.

It was due to the initiative of the Military Attaché at the British Embassy, Lt. Col. N.M.G. Leslie, that the Branch was founded. He hosted a cocktail

party on 27th July 1956 and those who attended and signed up on the spot may be regarded as the Founder Members; they were:

Lt. Col. Leslie
Capt. F. A. Vemon
Lt. W. M. Clinch
Major M. W. Stilwell, CBE, MC
Lt. F. B. Stilwell
Lt. J. B. Stilwell
Lt. H. R. Stilwell
Major T. W. James
Major St. J. Graham
Subaltern B. A. Woolett, ATS
LAC. L.D.G. Beadle, RAF

All chiefs, only one indian!

Lt. Col. Leslie was elected Chairman, Major M. W. Stilwell, Honorary Secretary and LAC L.D.G. Beadle, Honorary Treasurer. The annual subscription was Esc. 20 equivalent to the U.K. subscription of five shillings per annum.

Unfortunately, the records for the period 1956/7 have not survived but from browsing through the Anglo-Portuguese News it appears to have been a relatively uneventful period. A major fund-raising effort each November, dances at the Royal British Club or at Casa B at St. Julian's School with the occasional social event during the year.

A special lunch was organised in 1957 to honour a member of the Lisbon Branch, Major T. W. James to commemorate the 60th anniversary of his joining the British Army in 1897.

The same year, the Legion formed a Guard of Honour during H.M. The Queen's visit to Batalha to lay a wreath on the grave of the unknown soldier.

In 1958 a Ball at St Julian's was the highlight of the fund-raising and the evening was enlivened by the presence of the Sintra Taxi Drivers Band!

In 1958 and 1959 the Branch initiated a Trafalgar Day Dinner but this event appears to have been taken over subsequently by the newly-formed Royal Society of St. George.

The 1960's mostly continued the pattern of dinner-dances at the Royal British Club - in 1968 referred to as 'The British Community Centre' - with the usual Remembrance Services.

A Poppy Day Ball was held on 10th November 1966 at Casa B and included a raffle, tickets 5 escudos, for no less than 40 prizes, all donated and most very practical: 2 x a ton of logs; a ton of coal; 2 x 25 kilos of sugar; 4 x 100 litres of petrol; a bacon-slicing machine and the usual bottles of whisky, gin, port and madeira. Church services were held at St. George's uniting with St. Andrew's, Corpo Santo, the English College and, down the line, at Igreja Paroquial, Carcavelos, St. Paul's, Estoril, and at Capela de S. Sebastião, Cascais.

In 1968 is the first mention of a service held in the Algarve conducted by Rev. Canon D. A. Duncan, OBE, MC at Praia da Rocha.

The only exceptions were the years 1963 to 1965 when the Branch announced in the APN that:

"In view of the tremendous demands made on the British community, the Committee have decided not to hold a Poppy Party this year and to limit the Appeal to the sale of poppies."

Curiously, during the period 1969/71 the sales of poppies and the amount of donations declined which is probably why, in a circular sent out after the Annual General Meeting on 6th December 1971, the newly elected chairman of the Executive Committee, Sir Alfred Norris KBE announced that the new committee would set about re-organising the affairs of the branch and requested all members to write to the Honorary Secretary to confirm their present addresses.

To revive the activities of the branch a buffet luncheon, attended by 87 members and guests was held at the Royal British Club on 8th June 1972 at which the Guest of Honour was General Luís Camara Pina GCVO, OBE, Director of the Instituto de Altos Estudos Militares and formerly Chief of Staff of the Portuguese Army who gave a talk on "NATO's Southern Flank Becomes a Front in Africa." The occasion was widely reported in the Portuguese press.

Collections increased in 1972 and have done so every year to date. During the year, apart from the usual November events, the branch Entertainments Committee organised a visit to a brewery for 88 ratings from HMS Antrim which was visiting Lisbon. Quite a hazardous undertaking! The branch also undertook with the permission of the Worcestershire & Sherwood Foresters and in conjunction with the local branch of the Royal Society of St. George the restoration of the grave of Col. Lake on the Peninsular War battle field of Roliça; he fell on the 17th August 1808 leading the 29th regiment of the

Worcestershires in driving the enemy from the heights of Columbria and was the first officer to make the supreme sacrifice in the Peninsular War.

It was this year that the Committee resolved to retain a proportion of the amount raised to initiate a Benevolent Fund to meet local needs but it was stipulated that not more than 10% of the Fund could be granted without reference to HBM Consul General.

At the Annual General Meeting in April 1973 the draft of new bye-laws approved by the Committee was submitted to the members. As the Chairman pointed out, the fundamental change proposed was that HBM Ambassador would not be President and Chairman of the Branch as heretofore. Instead, he would be invited to become Patron. The President of the Branch, in effect, being Chairman of the Executive Committee. The resolutions were passed unanimously and all succeeding British Ambassadors have agreed to become Patrons. Also at the meeting, it was resolved that, for their services to the Branch, N.M.G. Leslie and M.W. Stilwell be elected Life Vice-Presidents.

In September, Col. J.W.G. Bowden C.B.E. represented the Branch at a formal dinner at the Liga dos Combatentes celebrating their 50th Anniversary. Later, the President of the Liga and other high-ranking officers were guests at a Branch luncheon at which the guest speaker was Rear Admiral Eugene Fluckey, USN Retd. recently head of Iberlant.

With the distribution and sale of poppies better organised and increased donations from the business sector, the Branch was able to improve on the previous year's remittance to HQ and still retain an equal sum for local relief. Membership at the end of 1973 totalled 131.

Allan T. Reid, in his seventies and wishing to find a successor advised the Committee that it was becoming increasingly difficult to raise funds for the Poppy Day Appeal as many of the old British family businesses had been taken over and these companies tended to make their donations to British charities from their head offices in the UK.

As the number of British residents in the Algarve was increasing the Committee decided to approach Cdr. E.J. Webb, DSC, RN with the intention of forming a local sub-branch in order to organise more efficiently the distribution and sales of poppies in the Algarve and coordinate fund-raising.

A notice, floating the idea, was placed in the Anglo-Portuguese News; a Mrs. Cattermole replied, offering help to arrange a meeting to be held on 18th October at the Hotel Eva, Faro, to be attended by the Honorary Secretary. Only two people turned up, Mrs. Cattermole and Lt. Col. E.N. Elford, OBE. Fortunately, the latter, a former Branch president in the UK, undertook to

sound out various people who might be interested in which case a further meeting could be held in the future when a reasonable number might be present.

HMS Tiger visited Lisbon at the end of October and the President, Sir Alfred Norris and Mr. G. H. Perkin, conducted a party of the ship's company around the Lines of Torres Vedras.

In November 1974 the traditional Poppy Day Buffet-Supper Dance was held for the second time at the home of Mrs. H.A.B. Leacock at Esc. 150 per person with whisky and soda Esc.20 and a gin and tonic Esc. 15. Those were the days!

The usual church services were held and Lt. Col. Leslie represented the Legion at a wreath-laying ceremony at the cemetery of Alto de São João organised by the Liga dos Combatentes and another at the War Memorial in the Avenida da Liberdade. The Branch has sent representatives to both these ceremonies most years. As also to Batalha on 9th April to commemorate the Battle of La Lys in the First World War.

The collection for the 1974 Appeal was only marginally above that of the previous year which was a creditable effort considering the unsettled political situation resulting from the revolution the previous April. Although there was still no formal sub-branch there, Algarve supporters managed a 53% increase in their contribution, organised by Cdr. E.J. Webb RN.

In February 1975, coinciding with a visit of one of HM Ships, the Branch organised a memorial service at St. George's for the officers of the Royal Navy drowned in an accident in Setubal in 1950 and who are buried in the British cemetery.

Allan T. Reid finally retired as Oporto representative early in 1975 but was later persuaded to carry on for a while with Mr Roger Pye as joint representatives.

In order to augment income by additional subscriptions and support at Legion events, the Committee decided to offer associate membership to those who, although supporting the objects and ideals of the Legion, did not qualify by being H.M. ex-servicemen for full membership. This was permitted by the Legion statutes and several members of the community joined.

In March Legion HQ in London wrote querying the Branch's authority for retaining 50% of the collections in Portugal for the relief of local ex-servicemen.

Col. Bowden, who had succeeded as Chairman replied that as HQ was unable or unwilling to help financially ex-servicemen resident outside Great Britain the Committee had resolved that, in view of the increase in the number

of cases in Portugal requiring help, local funds were needed and a Bye-Law of the Branch sanctioned this. Further, he pointed out that knowledge that a substantial portion collected is retained in Portugal and, therefore promptly available for local relief was a great boost to collecting. Response would not be so good if it were known that the entire donation would be sent to the UK. He ended by suggesting that the proportion remitted should be left to the local Branch.

HQ replied that, in fact, relief, where justified, could be given by HQ to servicemen resident abroad and pointed out that the balance on the Branch Benevolent Fund amounted to Esc. 77,504 but only Esc.2,907 had been incurred that year for relief.

After debate, the Committee agreed to retain a float of Esc.20,000 and remit the balance of the Benevolent Fund to HQ on the understanding that HQ would, in the future, assist financially if the float proved insufficient for local needs.

The 1975 Poppy Dinner and Dance was held at the Royal British Club, with soup, cold buffet, sweet, coffee, wines, port at Esc.95 per head. Unfortunately, the Branch's stock of spirits which had been given for safekeeping to a member who had subsequently died during the year was not amongst his effects!

Collections in the Algarve dramatically increased in 1975 and for the convenience of supporters two Remembrance Services were held, one at Vila-moura Golf Club on 9th November and the other at Casa Grande, Burgau.

In February 1976, following the Annual General Meeting, the Legion gave a farewell luncheon at the Royal British Club to The Rev. Canon Chatfield-Jude and Mrs H. Chatfield-Jude on their leaving Portugal.

Canon Chatfield-Jude had acted as The Honorary Chaplain of the Branch for many years and his wife was a great supporter of the social events.

It came to the notice of the Committee that, because of the business failures resulting from the politico-economic situation in Portugal the Trustees of the Estate of the late Dr. Pinto Levy could no longer provide wreaths for the annual Remembrance Services at St George's and for the War Memorial Service. Dr. Pinto Levy who died in 1964, had, in his will, provided that the cost of these should be met in perpetuity from his Estate.

As Dr Pinto Levy had been very active between the Wars in remembering the fallen of World War I it was sad that the connection with him was finally broken.

As part of the 1976 fund-raising, a film show and supper was held at The International Club, now occupying the premises of the Royal British Club.

This event was followed by the usual social evening during early November, also at the Club but, presumably, because of the political climate, no wreath-laying ceremony took place at the Cenotaph in Lisbon. However, Remembrance Services were held in Lisbon, Algarve and Oporto.

On his arrival in 1977, The Rev. Canon Victor Ravensdale as the permanent incumbent at St. George's, became the Branch's Honorary Chaplain. Later that year Roger Pye accepted the position of Legion representative in Oporto and Allan Reid was, at last, able to fully retire.

During March 1978 the Branch was honoured by a visit to Lisbon of the Chairman of the Royal British Legion, T.S.C. Busby, CBE, TC and the General Secretary, D.E. Coffey. On arrival they were met at the airport by Col. Bowden, the Branch Chairman and taken to the British Embassy to pay a formal call on the Ambassador. The following day, after drinks with HBM Ambassador, members of the Committee and their wives at the home of Col. Bowden, supper was taken at Quinta de Tapadica with Mr and Mrs J.W.S. Foote. Legion matters discussed ranged over a wide field and all present considered the visit both a success and fruitful.

There having been few claims for local assistance and, having, as a result built up a substantial balance in the Benevolent Fund, it was decided to transfer what was really surplus to requirements to HQ retaining a small sum of Esc. 26,305 to meet urgent local needs. In return HQ confirmed that they would remit immediately to Portugal any funds required in excess of the amount retained.

In March 1978 the Committee were delighted to learn that Major M. Browne of Boliqueime had offered to take the first steps to form a sub-branch in the Algarve and later in the year both he and Roger Pye from Oporto attended a Committee meeting.

This year the Legion provided Commemoration crosses for placing on the grave in the British cemetery of ex-servicemen by their families or by representatives of the countries concerned. Several letters were received from grateful family members.

The 1978 Appeal produced a record result Esc.233,487 (1977 Esc.152,130) largely due to a magnificent response from companies and firms who had, at the suggestion of Committee Member W. R. Grigsby, OBE, been systematically approached for the first time. By the end of the year membership was 117, 63 in Lisbon, 24 in Oporto, 15 in the Algarve and 11 others.

As HQ had advised that the rules concerning the appointment of associate members i. e. non-British, to the Committee had been relaxed it was unani-

mously resolved to elect Col. J. Jeffries of the USA Army who had been a staunch supporter of Legion activities.

The following year it was decided to widen membership to include those who accept and support the policy, aims and objects of the RBL whether or not they were ex-service with a view to augmenting subscription income and, hopefully ensuring better attendance at social functions.

That year's Remembrance Service on 11th November was a most moving occasion not in the least because of the presence of a bugler from a visiting naval ship, HMS Hecate, whose rendering of the Last Post brought a lump to many a throat.

The Algarve Branch, now very active, organised a bridge evening and raised Esc.23,000 which was timely as the Legion was called upon to make a grant towards the medical expenses of a veteran of the two world wars in difficult circumstances in the Algarve.

The 1981 Social Evening preceding the Remembrance Service was for the first time held at the Officers' Mess of HQ Cinciberlant by kind permission of the Commander, Iberian Atlantic Command. It has been held there ever since and is always well-attended by members and friends.

In September 1981, the Legion learned of the death of Major Browne, RA, the Algarve representative. Fortunately, Capt. A.M. McKillop, RN who had already contributed so much to the Legion offered to take over.

Because of galloping inflation it was necessary, to cover running expenses, to double the annual subscription to Esc.200 but, on the other side, inflation, no doubt, was partly responsible for the result of the 1981 Appeal amounting to Esc.575,000 showing a 70% increase on the previous year.

In May 1982, during the Falklands crisis the President of the Branch sent the following message to HBM Ambassador:

"I have been requested by the Committee and on behalf of the members of the Royal British Legion (Portugal Branch) to express anxiety over the present lamentable situation in the Falkland Islands. You may count on the full support of all our members for the measures taken by Her Majesty's Government to recover British Territory and afford full support to its loyal British nationals."

HBM expressed his gratitude and continued:

"I am very grateful to you and your Committee for this expression of support at a difficult time."

The years 1982/85 were relatively uneventful; the pattern very much the same each year; various social/fund-raising activities and the party at Cinciberlant just before Armistice Day and the Remembrance Services.

In January 1983 Major R.M. Bagnall took over as representative in the Algarve, grants from local funds were made to disabled ex-servicemen and a very successful dinner and the inevitable raffle held in Lisbon to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of D. Day in 1944.

The 1983 total of the Poppy Day Appeal was augmented by a legacy of Esc.70,000 from Miss M. Reynolds.

In the summer of 1985 Michael D. Symington, CBE became the Oporto representative. As a result of his enthusiasm and connections Oporto's 1985 contribution to the Earl Haig Fund of Esc.428,000 (1984: Esc.201,000) was a record, no less than Esc.159,000 being raised at a Poppy Day Lunch and Raffle on the 9th November at the Oporto Cricket & Lawn Tennis Club.

Not to be outdone, Algarve contributed Esc.425,000, also a record, Esc.205,000 arising from a Grand National Sweepstake and Grand Draw. These excellent results enabled Esc.1,368,000 to be remitted to HQ, more than 350% up on the previous year.

In March 1985 the Branch was offered the honour of dipping its banner in salute to H.M. The Queen during her visit to the British Embassy. Unfortunately, shortly before the ceremony, it was discovered that the condition of the banner was not up to standard and a new one was obtained from London in record time for the occasion. It was subsequently solemnly dedicated by the Bishop of Chichester and the old banner received by the Chaplain of St. George's for laying up in the chapel.

The same year three benches with suitable plaques were placed in the British Cemetery in memory of W. Bailey, CBE, DSC, GM, G.H. Perkin, MBE and 'Those who fell in the two World Wars'. Bill Bailey had been President of the Branch and Geoffrey Perkin Vice-President and, for many years Poppy Appeal organiser; his sound planning and dedication had resulted in consistently increasing results and placed the Portugal Branch firmly on the Legion map.

For the 1986 party at the NATO mess British Airways kindly donated a return ticket to London as first prize for the raffle which substantially increased the demand for raffle tickets. British Airways continued to do so for several years until a change of group policy decreed otherwise. For the first time The Charity Bridge Association, chaired by Rena Thorne, MBE held a special Bridge Evening, raising Esc.63,000; this event has since become a regular feature of the Legion's Poppy Day activities.

In 1987, Wing Com. W.E. Thomas, OBE, AFC took over responsibility for the Algarve and later that year, Lt. Col. Cetre MC + BAR stepped down as President after serving the statutory four year term and having given 14 years continuous service to the Branch. Under 'Joe's' capable and kindly guidance the Branch had continued to flourish, marked by good fellowship, by significant help to some ex-servicemen and women in Portugal and by ever-increasing contributions to the annual Earl Haig Poppy Appeal.

In 1987 the Algarve felt it wise to discontinue the Grand National Sweepstake, the previous year's money spinner, as there were indications that the authorities would intervene and stop what was, under Portuguese law, an illegal activity.

Nevertheless under the new President, J.E. Quin, OBE, a former President of the São Paulo, Brazil branch of the Legion, the 1987 Appeal produced just over Esc.1,700,000 and was nearly doubled by a legacy of over £10,000 from the Estate of the late Phyllis Milne, MBE a longtime member of the Legion and who had served in the VAD in the First World War; in recognition of her generosity a fourth bench was placed in the British cemetery.

The Legion's Royal Charter states that the total amount raised as a result of Earl Haig Poppy Appeal must be remitted to HQ but the Branch was able to respond to HRH Prince Philip's Appeal for Commonwealth Veterans with a donation of Esc. 50,000 from funds accumulated from subscriptions, donations and other events.

The 1988 Appeal broke the Esc.2,000,000 barrier and was the first time Oporto came 'top of the league' albeit exceeding Lisbon by only Esc. 8,000. Lisbon's demotion was, no doubt, due to the fact that the incumbent of St. George's Church had withheld one half of the amount of the collection at the Remembrance Service on the grounds that a collection for Church funds would normally have been taken at the Sunday service.

The Legion Committee sent a diplomatically worded letter to the Church Council pointing out that the congregation present was under the impression that the collection on this day would be for the Earl Haig Fund exclusively and that within living memory the entire collection had been passed to the Legion, which, according to the Minutes of the Church Council was not strictly correct. The Church Council replied that according to the Laws of the Church of England the collection accounting, distribution and registering in the Service Book of all monies collected in the Church is the responsibility of the Church Wardens and the power of allocating all collections rests with the incumbent and the Parochial Church Council.

After another letter or so, to and fro, it was agreed that the collection should be divided and the fact brought to the attention of the congregation by adding an appropriate note on the Service Sheet. This arrangement has continued but the Church Council reserves the right to vary the agreement in future years if they so wish.

In the A.P.N. it was announced that on 12th May 1990 the Band and Bugles of the Green Howards would 'Sound the Retreat' in the grounds of St. Julian's School. This provoked a letter that it should be 'Beat the Retreat' and a Legion representative was able to point out to the author that, as no drummers were present, 'Sounding' was the correct term.

During the 1990's the Earl Haig Appeals were organised finally breaking the Esc.3,000,000 barrier in 1993. Other fund-raising activities were held to raise funds for local use, bridge evenings at the British Retirement Home, summer barbecues and parties at The British Embassy Club. Unfortunately, a party arranged at the home of the British Consul, Jack Eden and his wife Christine had to be cancelled because of his sudden death. For this event large quantities of black puddings were to be brought in, courtesy of the Royal Navy. As it happened the ship on which they were to have arrived was diverted to the Gulf. As Chairman, Jack Quin in his annual report said:

"I am sure that members will not begrudge our Armed Forces in the Gulf a chance to sample this well-known northern delicacy which, although it may not look appetising, will, because of its exceptionally high nutritional value, fortify them against whatever perils they have to face."

The Branch later donated Esc 100,000 to the Christmas Appeal for troops in the Gulf.

In 1994, E.A. Shaw completed his four year term as President and was succeeded by Rev. Roy Hill. Ed Shaw had served as Poppy Appeal organiser for twelve years and seen results increase from Esc.327,000 to Esc.3,652,000 made up as follows:

Lisbon	Esc.	1,161,000
Oporto	Esc.	1,475,000
Algarve	Esc.	694,000
Madeira	Esc.	200,000
Elvas	Esc.	122,000
	Esc.	<u>3,652,000</u>

Another record.

The Lisbon Branch of the Royal British Legion can be justly proud of their achievement but there must be no relaxing, there is still the need to provide assistance of almost any nature to needy ex-service personnel and their dependents. Such assistance varies from the completely charitable, such as pensions, financial grants to housing schemes to old people's retirement homes and rest homes which usually call for some financial contribution from the applicant.

Another important aspect of the Legion's works is the training and/or rehabilitation of ex-service personnel to enable them, whether fit or disabled, to lead an active and normal civilian life. The Branch recently contributed £250 to the new training centre at Tidworth.

Membership at 30th September 1995

Ordinary	104	
Associate	31	
Life	3	
Ex-Oficio	4	
	<u>142</u>	(1994 126)

The Committee of the Lisbon Branch, therefore, confidently hope that the British Community in Portugal and, also the nationals of our war-time allies who have frequently helped the Branch in the past, will continue to respond to each year's Appeal with their usual generosity and enable the previous year's record to be broken.

The Poppy Emblem - How it all began

The Flanders Poppy was first described as the 'Flower of Remembrance' by Colonel John McRae, who before the First World War was a well-known Professor of Medicine at McGill University in Montreal.

He had previously served as a gunner in the South African War, and at the outbreak of the First World War decided to join the fighting ranks. However, the powers-that-be decided that his abilities could be used to better advantage, and so he landed in France as a Medical Officer with the first Canadian Army contingent.

At the second battle of Ypres in 1915, when in charge of a small first-aid post and during a lull in the action, he wrote, in pencil, on a page torn from his despatch book, the following verses.

*In Flanders' fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders' fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe;
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders' fields.*

The verses were sent anonymously to "Punch" magazine, and published under the title "In Flanders' Fields."

In January 1918, Colonel McRae was brought as a stretcher case to one of the big hospitals on the channel coast of France. On the third evening he was wheeled to the balcony of his room to look over the sea towards the cliff of Dover.

The verses were obviously in his mind, for he told the doctor who was in charge of his case:

*"Tell them this,
If ye break faith with us who die, we shall not sleep "*

The same night Colonel McRae died. He was interred in a beautiful cemetery on rising ground above Wimereux, from where the cliffs of Dover are easily visible on sunny days.

The First World War finally came to an end in November 1918, when an Armistice was declared, so that peace terms could be arranged. At 11 am. on November 11th, the last shot of the War was fired. For many years afterwards Armistice Day was observed on the 11th November, but now it is known as Remembrance Sunday, and is held always on the second Sunday in November.

An American Lady, Miss Moina Michael, had read the poem and was greatly impressed, particularly by the last verse. The wearing of a poppy appeared to her to be the way to keep faith, and she wrote the reply:

"THE VICTORY EMBLEM"

*Oh! You who sleep in Flanders' fields
Sleep sweet - to rise anew
We caught the torch you threw
And holding high we kept
The faith with those who died.*

*We cherish too, the Poppy red
That grows on fields where valour led
It seems to signal to the skies
That blood of heroes never dies
But lends a lustre to the red
Of the flower that blooms above the dead
In Flanders' fields.*

*And now the torch and Poppy red
Wear in honour of our dead
Fear not that ye have died for naught
We've learned the lesson that ye taught
In Flanders' fields.*

On November 9th, 1918, only two days before the Armistice was signed, Miss Michael was presented with a small gift of money by some of the overseas War Secretaries of the Y.M.C.A. for whom she worked, and whose Conference was being held at her house. She told them about the two poems, and announced that she was going to buy 25 red poppies with the money. This she did: she wore one herself, and each Secretary there bought one from her. It is claimed, probably rightly, that this was the first group selling of poppies.

The French Secretary, Madame Guerin, had a practical and useful idea. She visited various parts of the world to suggest that artificial poppies should be made and sold to help ex-Servicemen and their dependents in need.

As a result the first ever Poppy Day was held in Britain on November 11th, 1921. The Poppies were obtained from a French organisation, which used its profits to help children in the War devastated areas.

Today, the Royal British Legion Poppy Factory Ltd carries on the same work in modern premises in Richmond, Surrey where disabled ex-Service men and their disabled dependents and relatives are employed in manufacturing 40 million Poppies, 80,000 wreaths and 300,000 Remembrance Crosses used in the annual Poppy Appeal.

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION - PORTUGAL BRANCH

Chairman

1956	N.M.G. Leslie
1958	M.W. Stilwell, CBE, MC
1964	N.M.G. Leslie
1971	Sir Alfred Norris, KBE
1975	J.W.G. Bowden, CBE
1979	W. Bailey, CBE, DSC, GM
1983	F.O. Cetre, MC
1987	J.E. Quin, OBE
1991	E.A. Shaw
1995	Rev. R. Hill

Honorary Treasurer

1956	L.D.R. Beadle
1967	K.F. Findlay
1971	L.D.R. Beadle
1972	C.J. Cross
1976	E.J.W.S. Foote
1977	H.G. Crawshaw, CBE
1981	J. Jeffries
1984	W.R. Grigsby, OBE

Honorary Secretary

1956	M.W. Stilwell, CBE, MC
1971	C.J.S. Mumford
1974	F.O. Cetre, MC
1983	W.R. Grigsby, OBE
1984	J.E. Quin, OBE
1987	H.W. Friend
1993	Rev. R. Hill
1995	G.L. Wells

Oporto Representative

1964	Allan T. Reid
1975	R. Pye
1985	M.D. Symington, CBE

Algarve Representative

1973	E.J. Webb
1973	E.N. Elford, OBE
1978	M. Browne
1981	A.M. McKillop
1983	R.B. Bagnall, MBE
1987	W.E. Thomas, OBE, AFC

Madeira

1994	G. ff. Bellairs, ERD
------	----------------------

Eastern Portugal

1995	N.A. Hallidie
------	---------------

—ooOoo—

D'Arcy Orders, one of the founders of the Society in 1974, was its first Honorary Secretary. Subsequently he was Honorary Treasurer and served on the Council for many years. He has written several books on British community subjects, all of which are available from Society.