



## **Gibraltar: Challenge, Change & Continuity**

The Friends of Gibraltar Oral History Project (1930 to 1970)

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### Object description

British NCO served with 2nd King's Regt in GB and Gibraltar, 1936-1941; NCO served with 3 Commando in GB, during Dieppe Raid, Sicily, Italy and North West Europe, 1942-1945

### Content description

REEL 1 Background in Liverpool, 1920-1936: family; education. Recollections of period with 2nd King's Regt in GB and Gibraltar, 1936-1941: initial training at Seaforth Barracks, 1936; duties with Horse Transport Section at Plymouth; transfer to Heavy Weapons Coy; move to Gibraltar, 1938; incident when Spanish destroyer San Jose Del Rey took refuge in Gibraltar harbour, living conditions and duties; attitude to serving in Gibraltar; attempt to recruit for International Brigades; start of Second World War; duties constructing airstrip; French Air Force attack, 6/1940; return to GB, 1941. Aspects of training with Commandos in GB, 1941-1942: background to volunteering for commandos; destruction of family home by German bombing. REEL 2 Continues: training at Achnacarry. Recollections of operations with 3 Commando in GB and Dieppe Raid, 1942-1943: joining 3 Commando; proposed role for Dieppe Raid; training on Isle of Wight, 7/1942; German E-Boat attack on flotilla; reasons for not getting ashore during Dieppe Raid; billeting system; further training; returned to unit system. Recollections of operations as NCO with 3 Commando during Sicilian Landings, 7/1943: voyage from GB to Mediterranean aboard Letitia; embarking aboard Princess Emma; landing at Casa Bili; rescuing glider borne troops from sea. REEL 3 Continues: capture of objective at Casa Bili, landing at Agnoni and capture of Ponte di Mulatta; ambush of German road convoy at Ponte di Mulatta; slight wounding by German mortar fire; advance towards Messina. Aspects of operations as NCO with 3 Commando during Italian landings, 1943: landings in southern Italy and advance northwards; landings at Termoli, 3/10/1943. Aspects of period as NCO with 3 Commando in GB, 1943-1944: return to GB, 12/1943; assembling of unit at Worthing; news of hospitalisation of his brother. REEL 4 Continues: weather prior to invasion of Normandy; issue of landing 'chits'. Recollections of operations as NCO with 3 Commando during Normandy landings, 6/6/1944: landing procedure; character of landing on Sword Beach; advance to Orne bridges; role of his Vickers machine gun section. Recollections of operations as NCO with 3 Commando in Normandy, 1944: German counter attack, 7/6/1944; theft of his bicycle;

arrival of glider force, 7/6/1944; use of unit snipers; threat from German air bursts; use of chateau as base; breakout at Angreville; opinion of German troops; return to GB. Recollections of operations as NCO with 3 Commando in North West Europe, 1944-1945: return to Belgium, late 1944. REEL 5 Continues: capture of Linne area; apprehension of Vickers machine gun freezing; crossing River Rhine at Wesel; street fighting at Wesel; 'pointman' and 'me and my pal' systems; role commanding Vickers machine gun section; character of German opposition on River Aller; traveling on tanks to Wilhelmshaven; contact with Russians at Lübeck; liberation of concentration camp; return to GB and demobilisation. Memories of landings on Sword Beach, 6/6/1944. Attitude to having served with commandos in Second World War. Character of Commando Association. Story of application for war pension.

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