



PERSONAL **INFORMATION** **SHEET**



Name: John Stuart MURRAY

DOB: 28th December 1912

Rank: Private (Drummer)

Service Identity Number: 6201274

**Service/Regiment/Corps: Middlesex
Regiment (Duke of Cambridges Own)**

Unit: 1st Battalion

Died: 1st/2nd October 1942

Personal history before the war:

John was one of eight siblings (one died at birth) born to George and Margaret Murray in Poplar, East London. Their mother died when the youngest child was still an infant. The children were subsequently brought up in various institutions including Catholic convents and schools for 'working boys'.

Many boys at that time and in that area went into the tailoring business and John and my father, Bob, both served apprenticeships in the trade. My father left as soon as he could and enlisted in the Army in 1932; a year later, having told John of how good army life was, he convinced him to do the same.

That year delay became very significant for Uncle John, both enlisting on 7 & 5 year respectively contracts which meant my father's term ended in March 1939 and Uncle John's in 1940. Both had served together but my father came home in March 1939 and John had to stay for the extra year.

John had served in Hong Kong from 1937 in the camp at Shan Shui Po and followed my father into the Corps of Drums in August 1938. They both loved sport and music; and, judging by the photos attached, they seem to have had a relatively good time.

It appears that they were both good friends with Charlie Holford (see pics). I believe the same Charlie is mentioned frequently, as 'Drummy' Holford, in the diaries of William Henry Poulter (NAM ref 69297) who survived the remainder of the war as a POW in Kobe.



Wartime experience:

When war broke out in 1939 John will have been expected to serve out his remaining time plus his five years as a reservist with the Middlesex Regiment, probably in the Corps of Drums. I believe that the musicians were trained to operate the Vickers machine guns (see pic) and that they subsequently fought in the pill boxes during the battle for Hong Kong.

John is recorded as being captured on the 23rd December 1941. Uncle John's story, thereafter, is common to all our relatives with time spent back in Sham Shui Po until their embarkation on the Lisbon Maru in 1942.

Personal history post war (if survived):

Sadly John did not survive the sinking of the Lisbon Maru; he would have been 29 when he died.

His WWII medals were issued to an undisclosed person on 20th September 1949.

Additional photos:



Drummers machine gun training
1938 (John on right)



Drummers after a party
1938



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The Murray Brothers
John and Bob



John Murray



John (lower) and Charlie Holford



Charlie Holford



Sham Shui Po 1938/39



John with Blue Rhythm Boys Drum





The Corps of Drums



Christmas Day 1938 Sham Shui Po

The above information was provided by Ian Murray who is the Nephew of John Stuart Murray.



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