

RICHARD VAUGHAN-GRIFFITH MC (K60-64)

He was born 5 December 1945 and on leaving Framlingham, Richard went to the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst from 1964-66. He was commissioned into the Queen's Own Hussars and served in Aden, Hong-Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Germany.

In 1967 during the Aden campaign, 2nd Lieutenant Vaughan-Griffith, Queens Own Hussars, won the Military Cross. The following is a description of how he came to win the MC :-



This young Officer was in charge of a troop of armoured cars sweeping the built-up area of Al Mansoura in Aden when he saw red smoke and a beret sticking out of a window on a stick. Later it transpired that a platoon of the Queen's Lancashire Regiment infantry had been cut off without communications.

He reversed his Saladin up to the house where a group of British soldiers was under fire from many points. He engaged the enemy in a heavy fire fight. This was a dangerous manoeuvre for static armoured vehicles in a built-up area where the buildings overlooked his exposed vehicles.

On his own initiative and himself under considerable fire in an area notorious for its terrorists, landmines and anti-tank weapons, he called up an Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) and positioned his own vehicles between the soldiers and the terrorists to form a screen while the soldiers evacuated to the APC. During this two and a half hour battle, his armoured car crews are believed to have accounted for a considerable number of terrorists.

Richard Vaughan-Griffith repeated this tactic to rescue another group under similar intense fire at short range. By his bravery and initiative he saved the lives of many British soldiers while risking his own, and was awarded the MC.

He was appointed as an Instructor at the RMAS in 1970. After a period as Adjutant, The Royal Armoured Corps Centre at Bovington in Dorset, he retired to pursue a career in business.

In 1977 he joined Brinks-Mat Ltd, the international security group based in London, as International Operations Director. He was a Main Board member and fully participated in the international expansion of operations in Arabia and Asia. The Group served the requirements of the majority of banks and financial institutions worldwide. Brinks-Mat owned subsidiaries in Europe, the Middle East and Asia.

Richard formed his own company in 1982 and has worked as an international Risk Management consultant for Oil and Gas Exploration and Production companies since then in South East Asia, North Africa, Indian Sub Continent and The Arabian Gulf. He has taught at the Cranfield University Resilience Centre in England.

He represented Welsh Schoolboys at hockey in 1963 at the Edinburgh Hockey Festival.

Richard is also a co-founder of the Cock Up Club, along with another OF **Charles Blackmore (K70-75)**. See the following article in the Sunday Telegraph on 24 February 2007
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2007/02/25/nrcock25.xml>

The above was largely written by Richard prior to his death on 4 January 2012 of cancer at the age of 66. The following is the obituary that appeared in *The Times* on 3 February 2012.

Towards the close of the campaign in South Arabia in 1967, when, all initiatives to hand over political power to a responsible successor administration had failed, British Forces had taken up a semi-circular defence of Aden port, town and outlying, suburbs in preparation for complete withdrawal. Despite HMG's declared intention to leave,

the two local terrorist organisations continued to compete for support among the resident and immigrant Yemeni populations by the ferocity of their attacks on British positions and installations.

The outlying district of Al-Mansoura, to the north of the port, was held by 1st Battalion The Lancashire Regiment, supported by C Squadron The Queen's Own Hussars. Al-Mansoura and the neighbouring district of Sheik 'Othman were subjected to intensive attack by day and night, as the terrorists were able to pull back to the safety of the Western Aden Protectorate no longer under British control.



On the morning of September 8, a foot patrol of The Lancashire Regiment was ambushed in a built-up area of Al-Mansoura and took cover in two nearby houses. Intense machinegun and rifle fire from surrounding buildings kept the patrol from breaking out and two men were wounded. The patrol commander called for support by radio and Second Lieutenant Vaughan-Griffith, with a half troop of C Squadron QOH, was instructed to go to the patrol's assistance.

The task was complicated by difficulty in distinguishing the two houses where the patrol had taken cover from those from where the terrorists were firing. Vaughan-Griffith eventually pinpointed one house by a beret held out of a window on the end of a broomstick. Suppressing the terrorists' fire with his vehicle's Browning machineguns, he called forward a Saracen armoured personnel carrier from his squadron base and manoeuvred it into a position to allow the infantrymen in one of the houses to climb in through the vehicle's rear doors.

Having escorted the Saracen to safety at The Lancashire Regiment's base, he returned to the scene and extracted the remaining infantrymen by reversing the Saracen up to the house where they had taken cover, allowing them to climb in the rear. In course of the two actions, which extended over a period of two hours, it was estimated that six terrorists were killed and seven others wounded.

During each evacuation, Vaughan-Griffith was obliged to keep his scout car stationary, so he could see clearly what was happening and maintain radio contact with the other vehicles. This exposed his car to attack by "Blindicide" anti-tank bazookas, with which the terrorists were known to be well supplied, and also to the threat of a grenade being lobbed into his vehicle turret from the upper storey of one of the nearby buildings.

The citation for the Military Cross awarded to Vaughan-Griffith four months later praised his action under most difficult conditions, his outstanding courage, leadership and determination. A week or so after this incident, his Saladin armoured car ran over an anti-tank mine that blew off one complete front wheel station and slightly injured his driver and gunner. Although himself shaken by the explosion, he helped his injured crewmen into the back of an accompanying Saracen APC, in the course of which they came under terrorist fire, and photographed his damaged vehicle before taking cover in the Saracen.

Richard Derek Lloyd Vaughan-Griffith was the son of Colonel Trevor Vaughan-Griffith, who served in Probyn's Horse of the Indian Army before transfer to the British Army on the grant of independence to India in 1947. The

family lived in Suffolk, and Vaughan-Griffith attended Framlingham College, where he excelled on the sports field, before going to RMA Sandhurst from where he was commissioned into the Queen's Own Hussars in December 1966.

After service as a troop leader in Aden and Hong Kong and as a Squadron second-in-command in Germany, he was posted to Sandhurst as an instructor. He later served as Adjutant of the Queen's Own Hussars before leaving the army to begin a career in the security business.

Following a period undertaking kidnapping negotiations on behalf of the Lloyd's insurance market and then as managing director of a United Kingdom-based risk management consultancy, in 1992 he formed MacIvor Grant Ltd to undertake a contract with a drilling company operating in Indonesia and Pakistan. The company was successful and it expanded first into international risk consultancy and then political risk analysis. It later opened an office in Houston, Texas, specialising in services to the global oil industry.

A natural sportsman, very popular with his brother officers and his men, Vaughan-Griffith maintained regular contact with his old troop sergeant until the latter's death last year. He was instrumental in organising the informal gatherings of regimental friends known as the Rocking Horse Lunches, an irreverent reference to the White Horse of Hanover cap badge of the Queen's Own Hussars.

He married first Jan Halliley, by whom he had a son and daughter, and second Jennifer Young, all of whom survive him, together with a stepson and stepdaughter.

The following letter was published in The Times afterwards by Alistair Cooke OBE (K55-63), now known as Lord Lexden of Lexden in the County of Essex and of Strangford in the County of Down.

Richard Vaughan-Griffith

Lord Lexden writes: Richard Vaughan-Griffith (obituary, Feb 3) sits three places from me in the front row of the Framlingham College school photograph taken in the blissful summer of 1963 — he in a blazer edged with the sports captain's ribbon, I in a plain unadorned version. As editor of the school magazine, I often turned to him for extra copy. "Richard, I have got another half column to fill in the sports section. Please score at least another half century in the next three weeks." I once asked what he wanted to become. "A victorious general," he replied. If he had lived at a time when British power was advancing, that is exactly what this charming, courageous and confident man would have become.

The following is the fairly similar obituary that appeared in *The Telegraph* on 5 March 2012, featuring the same tank picture :-

In September 1967 Britain was in the process of withdrawing from Aden, where its soldiers were subject to persistent attacks from the National Liberation Front. "C" Squadron, The Queen's Own Hussars (QOH) was supporting a battalion of the Parachute Regiment and the Lancashire Regiment. On the morning of September 8, a 14-man patrol of the Lancashire Regiment was ambushed at Al-Mansoura, in the north of Aden, and forced to take cover in two houses.

They were pinned down by intensive machine gunfire from surrounding buildings. Their radio had been hit, communication with their company base was lost, and two men were wounded.

Vaughan-Griffith, in command of a half troop of the QOH, advanced his Saladin armoured car in support but struggled to identify the buildings in which the beleaguered patrol had taken cover; when an infantryman poked a beret out of a window on the end of a stick he was able to pinpoint their position. Heavy fire was coming in from 10 different locations.

The rules of "minimum force" forbade him using his main armament but by returning fire with his Browning machine guns he kept his adversaries' heads down. Having established that the Lancashires were in two groups he called up a Saracen armoured personnel carrier (APC) from the local jail, which served as their base.

He ordered the APC to reverse up to the house which held half the patrol, including the two casualties and, while they were escaping into the rear of the vehicle, positioned his two armoured cars in the line of fire to act as a shield. His small force was then highly vulnerable to surprise, short-range attacks with bazookas, a weapon with which the attackers were well supplied, or to having grenades lobbed into their turrets.

Having extracted the first group and delivered them safely to the jail, he returned and rescued the remainder from another building employing the same tactics. The citation for the award of an MC stated that despite knowing of the hazards he faced, Vaughan-Griffith had been determined to rescue the infantrymen before they suffered further casualties and had shown "outstanding courage". Six of the enemy were reported killed and seven wounded during the course of the two-hour action.

Richard Derek Lloyd Vaughan-Griffith was born at Jhansi, India, on December 15 1945. His father served in Probyn's Horse and transferred to the British Army upon India being granted Independence.

Richard was educated at Framlingham College, where he excelled on the sports field, before going to Sandhurst. In 1966, he was commissioned into the QOH, which was preparing for an active service tour in Aden.

The streets there comprised a high proportion of dirt roads, which made them ideal for laying mines, and a few weeks after the action for which Vaughan-Griffith was awarded an MC, his Saladin passed over an anti-tank mine.

The explosion blew off a front wheel, disabling it and injuring his driver and gunner. Despite being stunned, Vaughan-Griffith helped his injured crewmen into the back of an accompanying APC while under fire. He then retrieved his camera from the Saladin and calmly photographed the damage before taking cover inside the Saracen.

After service in Aden, Hong Kong and Germany, Vaughan-Griffith was posted to Sandhurst as an instructor. He returned to the QOH as adjutant but, in 1975, resigned his commission and embarked on a career in the security business.

He started in Brinks Mat and was subsequently involved in negotiations to obtain the release of victims of kidnapping on behalf of the Lloyds of London insurance market. In 1992, he formed MacIvor Grant which expanded into a global risk management consultancy.

Settled in Hampshire, he kept up with his old regimental friends and organised so-called "Rocking Horse Lunches", an irreverent reference to the White Horse of Hanover cap badge of the QOH.

Richard Vaughan-Griffith married first (dissolved) Jan Halliley, with whom he had a son and a daughter. He married, secondly, Jennifer Young. They all survive him.

Richard Vaughan-Griffith, born December 15 1945, died January 4 2012

The following was written by **Charles Blackmore (K70-75)** on the train returning from attending Richard's funeral :

FAREWELL

The Union Jack adorning the coffin
Spoke of a past life, and past deeds,
About a man who clearly had steed,
And once risked his life for others in need.

On a chill January country afternoon
The congregation gathered one hour before noon;
They gathered to bid a final farewell
To a former soldier's last journey about which none can tell.

For he had lived a span of sixty six years
Before departing this mortal life earlier than his peers.
He was a man modest in the extreme,
Seldom mentioning his past military spleen,
Or of the battles once as a young lieutenant seen.

His citation was for valour in Aden,
A colonial conflict fought in nineteen sixty seven,
When he drove his tank under fire,
To the rescue of fellow soldiers in the mire.

The award for his self sacrifice
Was the Military Cross for valour,
For saving so many men's lives
An act which became an enduring part of his glamour.

Something of the man who was buried today
Silently rested on the mourner's lips to say,
Which that there was more about his Aden endeavour
And of the past from which he chose to sever.

And yet the regimental trumpeter came,
To sound a final lament in his name,
Because forty years of commercial strife
Never can expunge nine years of Army life.

In Memory of Richard Vaughan-Griffith MC

26th January 2012