

## BRANSTON AND METHERINGHAM

In the quest for information to formulate some history of the Army Cadet Force in Lincolnshire a file has been received to assist the project.

Part of a letter from the Director of Education of the Kesteven County Council Education Department dated 28th January 1948 reads "I am very pleased to learn that a unit of the Army Cadet Force has been started at Branston as I have felt for a some time that the boys in that village needed some kind of youth activity".

The letter was addressed to Captian G D Pennington of Branston and was in response to a request for the loan of sports equipment for the unit.

The application was successful and an array of stores from boxing gloves to table tennis equipment was loaned.

With a strength of twenty boys the unit paraded at the recreation hall on two nights a week. They were known as D Company 1st (Cadet) Bn Royal Lincolnshire Regiment.

At the same time Captain Pennington was involved in raising and running a platoon at Metherringham of seventeen cadets, parading on Thursday evenings.

Subscription fees at the time at both units was sixpence (2½p) per week.

Attendance at Branston in August 1948 was reported to have reduced during the summer months as outdoor activities took their toll.

Negotiations were in hand at this time for the use of a rifle range at Metherringham in the hope that this would regenerate interest.

It is recorded that in August 1949 the hut at Branston (of the old wooden Nissan design) had now been erected and made available for use by cadets of that village.

It was at this time that a hut was in the process of erection at Metherringham both sub units having struggled along for the past year in rented accommodation.

The approximate strength of the company was 30 to 35 cadets, split between each location with an anticipated increase in numbers now that each would have their own accommodation.

A change of command took place with the resignation of Captain Pennington and Lt F C Amos of Metherringham was designated to succeed as detachment commander.

Assistance continued to be given to the units by the Education Department in the provision of books, furnishings and finances.

Strengths for the two detachments was stable during the ensuing year with a regular attendance of 15 cadets at each location. This was to change dramatically for Metherringham in 1952 when numbers took a downward turn and the unit was put into suspended animation. This was short lived and the detachment was resurrected in early 1953 as a platoon of the Sleaford Company, later to become part of 2 Squadron.

In November 1952 F C Amos, now Captain, ceased command of the units and was succeeded by Lt D J Whiteley.

The detachment strength at Branston had now dropped to eleven cadets on the register with a general attendance of only seven cadets. This reduction was attributed to the thriving youth club activities.

These attendance figures appear to be the general trend during the years up to 1960 when a purge on recruiting increased the unit to over twenty cadets.



During these years Metheringham detachment were very strong in representing their unit and the county at boxing. The sport was the forte of the then executive officer, Major Harry Clayton, who himself had represented the army during his wartime years of service.

The annual county competitions were held at Newport TA Centre.

In 1962 the detachment was boosted by the addition of another instructor, Lt Dickins who introduced an interest in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, many cadets undertaking the challenge.

By 1963 however this interest had wained as the cadets did not appear to be making progress in the scheme. This could also be attributed to the departure of Lt Dickins from the unit.

He was succeeded by SMI E Hacker of Lincoln who was appointed detachment commander and served until the closure of the unit.

The command of the Metheringham detachment was taken over by SMI D G Etccl in 1973, an ex territorial company sergeant major of the local battalion, and remained under that regime until 1986 when it passed to Lt R Phillips and latterly to SMI G Long.

On the reorganisation of the county boundaries in 1974 Metheringham detachment was transferred to the present 4 Company.

The unit has since maintained a steady strength of cadets with moderate progression in the Army Proficiency Certificate over the years.



Metheringham detachment Banner Party, with the detachment commander and assistant. Cadet Sunday 1979. On the right is Cadet RSM Cox, the last cadet RSM of the county.





## Flashback to 1959

The picture was lent to me by Lincoln, who is researching the history of the cadet force.  
Eric Sharpe of Thorpe Avenue,

IF you were a member of the Branston Detachment of the county army cadet force around 1959, or know someone who was then you may spot a familiar face or two in this picture, which belongs to J. Kirk of Branston.

It shows (back row, from left):-  
—, D. Sewell, J. Ward, J. Twigg  
and T. Allison; middle row: T.  
Chamberlain, Cpl J. Kirk, Cpl S.  
Cousins, Sgt Instructor Bellamy,  
Lance Cpl J. Ingleby, Lance Cpl  
J. Read and Cpl J. Chamberlain;  
front row: —, P. Ring, —, —, S  
East, P. Ingleby, M. Smith and —