

Reference code: GB165-0572

Title: William Kerr Collection

Name of creator: Kerr, William Walker (1930-2012) Lieutenant Colonel

Dates of creation of material: 1971-2003

Level of description: Fonds

Extent: 2 boxes

Biographical history: Kerr, William Walker (1930-2012) Lieutenant Colonel

Born 17 April 1930, Haddington, East Lothian. Educated Knox Academy, Haddington and The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Commissioned to The Royal Scots Fusiliers (later The Highland Fusiliers) 1951. Served in Germany, Malaya (1953), Singapore, Cyprus (1957), Malta, Brunei, Germany, Canada and Turkey. In Britain, adjutant School of Infantry, Warminster, Staff College, Shrivenham (1963), Scottish Infantry Depot, Glencourse, recruitment officer Edinburgh Castle. Commanding Officer of The Muscat Regiment, Oman, 1972-1974, based at Nizwa, involved in Dhofar campaign. Later General Secretary of Red Cross, Scotland. Married Jaqui, two children. Died 2012.

Scope and content: Papers, photographs and artefacts relating to William Kerr's service in the Sultan's Armed Forces (Muscat Regiment) Oman, including administrative papers, maps, printed publications, 2 shield plaques and a photo album/scrapbook. The photograph album/scrapbook covers his period of service in 1973 and a visit to Oman arranged for Sultan's Armed Forces Association members in 1984, and includes photographs of Sultan Qaboos and the British and Jordanian Ambassadors. A further series of photographs documents Sultan Qaboos' visit to Simba in 1972.

System of arrangement:

1. SAF Personnel: Officers' appointments and leave
2. Maps of Oman
3. Mao's *Little Red Book*
4. Photographs: Sultan Qaboos' visit to Simba
5. Photographs: Kerr's Album/Scrapbook
6. Muscat Regiment History: Booklet
7. Dhofar article
8. Artefacts: Wooden shield plaques

Access conditions: Open

Language of material: Mainly English, with some Arabic. Mao's *Book* contains Chinese

Physical condition: A large space may be required to view the folding maps

Conditions governing reproduction: No restrictions on copying or quotation other than statutory regulations and preservation concerns

Custodial history: In the possession of William Kerr and then his widow Jaqui Kerr

Immediate source of acquisition: Received as a gift from Jaqui Kerr (widow of William Kerr), on 22 Jan 2013

Related units of description:

In MEC Archive

The MEC Archive has many collections relating to Oman's military history in the 1970s. Please consult the Guide to Collections relating to Oman for further information.

Finding aids: In Guide; Handlist

Archivist's note: Fonds and file and item level description created by Charlotte Austin, May 2013 and revised by Debbie Usher 20 Jun 2013. Biographical history based on information from Jaqui Kerr.

**SERIES AND ITEM LEVEL DESCRIPTION OF THE WILLIAM KERR
COLLECTION**

1 SAF Personnel: Officers' appointments and leave

- | | | | |
|-----|--|-----------------------|----------|
| 1/1 | <u>Officers' Leave Plot</u>
TS "Officers Leave Plot" table with pencil annotations, covering February 1973 to May 1974. Used to record the annual leave of twenty-four officers (including Kerr). | Feb 1973-
May 1974 | 1 sheet |
| 1/2 | <u>Officers' Appointments Plot</u>
TS "Officers Plot – Key Appointments" table, used to record the appointment details of officers (including Kerr). | 1973-1976 | 2 sheets |

2 Maps of Oman

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|-----|---|-----------|---------|
| 2/1 | <u>Shell Map</u>
1:1,000,000 scale folding colour map of the Sultanate of Oman, published by Shell Markets (Middle East) Ltd. | 1971 | 1 item |
| 2/2 | <u>Drawing Office Map</u>
Copy of a hand-drawn 1:5,000,000 scale map of Oman produced by the Drawing Office, HQ SAF, showing the international boundary, tracks and Jebel. A version of 2/3. | June 1971 | 1 sheet |
| 2/3 | <u>TS Drawing Office Map</u>
1:5,000,000 scale TS map of Oman produced by the Drawing Office, HQ SAF, showing the international boundary, tracks and Jebel. A version of 2/2. | [1971] | 1 sheet |
| 2/4 | <u>Aerial Photograph</u>
Black and white aerial photograph with annotations, showing a mountainous region with rivers. | Not dated | 1 sheet |

3 Mao's Little Red Book

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|--|--|-----------------------|-------------------|
| | <i>Little Red Book</i> issued by Chairman Mao as Communist propaganda, featuring his portrait. A memo from Captain Antcliff, HQ SAF, explaining that the book was found in an arms cache at Hazm, Rostaq, has been loosely inserted. | 28 Feb 1973
(memo) | 1 vol.
1 sheet |
|--|--|-----------------------|-------------------|

4 Photographs: Sultan Qaboos' visit to Simba

- Black and white photographs of Sultan Qaboos' visit to Simba, featuring Omani and British soldiers (including Kerr). [23 Dec 1972]-24 Apr 1993 9 photographs; 1 sheet
- Related material: For further photographs of Sultan Qaboos' visit to Simba see 5 Photographs: Kerr's Album/Scrapbook .
- 4/1 Photograph of Sultan Qaboos meeting Omani soldiers at a military camp. [23 Dec 1972]
- 4/2 Photograph of Sultan Qaboos shaking hands with an Omani soldier, with Kerr to the left. [23 Dec 1972]
- 4/3 Photograph of Sultan Qaboos with Omani soldiers and Kerr. [23 Dec 1972]
- 4/4 Photograph of Sultan Qaboos with Omani and British soldiers, including Kerr. [23 Dec 1972]
- 4/5 Photograph of Sultan Qaboos standing with Omani soldiers and Kerr. [23 Dec 1972]
- 4/6 Photograph of Sultan Qaboos meeting Omani soldiers, with Kerr. [23 Dec 1972]
- 4/7 Photograph of Sultan Qaboos meeting Omani soldiers, with Kerr. [23 Dec 1972]
- 4/8 Photograph of Kerr indicating something to Sultan Qaboos, with British and Omani soldiers watching. [23 Dec 1972]
- 4/9 Photograph of Sultan Qaboos shaking hands with an Omani soldier, amongst Omani soldiers and Kerr. [23 Dec 1972]
- 4/10 Letter from Dr. J. E. Peterson, SAF historian, to Kerr, on paper headed "Office of His Highness The Deputy Prime Minister for Security and Defence", Muscat, Oman, thanking him for the loan of the photographs, copies of which have been added to the SAF archives. 24 Apr 1993

5 Photographs: Kerr's Album/Scrapbook

Album/scrapbook assembled by Kerr, containing 129 photographs (including scenes of soldiers at work and rest, accommodation, aircraft, landscapes, places of interest and daily life), captions (naming some soldiers) and ephemera, grouped into four sections: 1970s, 1984 1 vol.

- First section (photographs 1-16) documents Kerr's time in Nizwa from 5 March 1973 to 25 May 1973; an

annotated 1:100,000 scale map of Dhofar has then been inserted

- Second section (photographs 17-68) documents Operation Simba from 6 June 1972 to 29 January 1973, including Sultan Qaboos' visit
- Third section (photographs 69-98) documents Kerr's time in Nizwa from 30 January 1973 to 12 November 1973
- Fourth section (photographs 99-129) documents the Sultan Armed Forces Association's visit to Oman in September 1984, with related ephemera (such as the visit programme, correspondence relating to travel arrangements, an accommodation plan, Muscat Regiment Staff List for Sept 1973, dinner tickets/invitations).

Photographs are in colour unless otherwise stated. A small number of photographs are non-extant, but some captions remain. There are no captions from 5/80 onwards.

5/1	Photograph of buildings and a garden, captioned "Bayt Maalee".	1973
5/2	Photograph captioned "The main road to Nizwa (after rain)".	1973
5/3	Photograph taken from a vehicle, captioned "The main road to Bahla".	1973
5/4	Photograph of soldiers standing by a vehicle, captioned "The main road to Muscat".	1973
5/5	Photograph of three Omani soldiers standing by a vehicle, captioned "Jeeves, Marconi and Fangio, alias Abdullah, Habeeb and Hilaal".	1973
5/6	Photograph a man (possibly Kerr) standing in a stony landscape, captioned "Entrance to Persian copper mine – Nizwa".	1973
5/7	Photograph captioned "Bahla Fort".	1973
5/8	Photograph of two British men and Omani men and boys standing by stone buildings, "After a fuddle a Radda. Ted Taylor, Sandy Blackett, Sh Akhmed, Sh Jaid, Hilaal".	1973
5/9	Photograph of Kerr, a colleague, Omani soldiers and vehicles, captioned "Ziki airstrip during company roulement. Johnny Johnston	1973

- and self”.
- 5/10 Photograph captioned “An arms find. Ted Taylor and informer”. 1973
- 5/11 Photograph of Kerr and two colleagues at rest, captioned “Saiq 1973
Officers Mess. Self, David Jones, Patrick Evans”.
- 5/12 Photograph of a mountainous landscape taken from a vehicle, 1973
captioned “Jebel Akhdar from Saiq”.
- 5/13 Photographs 13 and 14, showing British and Omani soldiers in a stony 1973
landscape, are captioned “The recce – Akoot. Martin Robb, Paul
Mangin and FTZ, Nigel Knockers Co Dr”.
- 5/14 Photographs 14 and 13, showing British and Omani soldiers in a stony 1973
landscape, are captioned “The recce – Akoot. Martin Robb, Paul
Mangin and FTZ, Nigel Knockers Co Dr”.
- 5/15 Photographs 15 and 16, showing British and Omani soldiers watching 1973
an aircraft taking off, are captioned “The move – FIRQ by Hercules”.
- 5/16 Photographs 16 and 15, showing British and Omani soldiers watching 1973
an aircraft taking off, are captioned “The move – FIRQ by Hercules”.
- 5/17 Aerial photograph of a landscape with military structures, captioned 1972-1973
“BN HQ – White III and the airstrip”.
- 5/18 Photograph of Kerr and the British Ambassador at a military base, 1972-1973
captioned “HM British Ambassador (Mr Donald Hawley)”.
- 5/19 Photograph of a British soldier at rest at a military base, captioned 1972-1973
“Major Martin Robb on his patio on Blue II”.
- 5/20 Photograph of an aircraft landing alongside a military base, captioned 1972-1973
“Caribou coming in”.
- 5/21 Photograph of an aircraft, captioned “Skyvan going out”. 1972-1973
- 5/22 Photographs 22 and 23, showing aircraft flying above military bases, 1972-1973
are captioned “Jets overhead”.
- 5/23 Photographs 23 and 22, showing aircraft flying above military bases, 1972-1973
are captioned “Jets overhead”.
- 5/24 Photograph of an aircraft landing, captioned “Yararm resupply. The 1972-1973
dust, the noise and the people”.
- 5/25 Photograph of four Omani and one British soldier, captioned “The 1972-1973
FIRQA in the Khareef. ? Achmed, Willie Watson”.

- 5/26 Photograph of a British soldier, with an aircraft in the background, 1972-1973
captioned "Colonel Mike Harvey Comd Dhofar, CBE, (OBE), OO,
WB, WKLM, Accession ?Meaul, GSM (Dhofar)!"
- 5/27 Photograph of a British soldier at rest at a military base, captioned 1972-1973
"Sandy Blackett OC B Coy on Blue II patio".
- 5/28 Photograph of Kerr and two colleagues in a vehicle, captioned "Dur 1972-1973
Kerr, Mary Fletcher and Brig Jack grumbling about ?Dur".
- 5/29 Photograph captioned "Ruth Hawley, Brit Ambassador & self outside 1972-1973
'Passiondale'" (a military building).
- 5/30 Photograph captioned "? Soaf, Jordanian Ambassador & self". 1972-1973
- 5/31 Photograph of a British soldier walking through a stony landscape, 1972-1973
captioned "Bob Tomlinson (RTR) off to the office".
- 5/32 Photograph, with Kerr, captioned "Briefing a Saudi delegation. 1972-1973
'Generals all'".
- 5/33 Photograph of four British and Omani soldiers, captioned "John Dean, 1972-1973
Oman artillery, Brig Jack Fletcher".
- 5/34 Black and white photograph captioned "Visit of HM Sultan Qaboos to 23 Dec 1972
Simba, 23 Dec 72", showing Kerr to the left of the Sultan.
- 5/35 Photographs 35 and 36 are captioned "HM Sultan Qaboos looking over 23 Dec 1972
scarp. Tim Langdon (PA?), Martin Robb, Brig Fletcher".
- 5/36 Photographs 36 and 35 are captioned "HM Sultan Qaboos looking over 23 Dec 1972
scarp. Tim Langdon (PA?), Martin Robb, Brig Fletcher".
- 5/37 Photograph of a mountainous landscape, captioned "The view with 1972-1973
"Capstan" on right".
- 5/38 Photograph of a British soldier (possibly Kerr) at a desk in a military 1972-1973
building, with office equipment and papers.
- 5/39 Black and white photograph of Sultan Qaboos during his visit to 23 Dec 1972
Simba, with two soldiers to the right.
- 5/40 Black and white photograph of Sultan Qaboos with Omani soldiers and 23 Dec 1972
Kerr, during his visit to Simba.
- 5/41 Black and white photograph of Sultan Qaboos with Omani and British 23 Dec 1972
soldiers (including Kerr to the right), during his visit to Simba.
- 5/42 Photograph of a British soldier walking at a military base, captioned 1972-1973

- “Young Lochinvar. Capt Hugh Lockhart on Green”.
- 5/43 Photograph of two soldiers at rest at a military base, captioned 1972-1973
“Malcolm Vining (?ZK) and Martin on the patio outside the command
post”.
- 5/44 Photograph of a British soldier at a military base, captioned “I wonder 1972-1973
if she will like it here? OC C Coy reflects on Black”.
- 5/45 Photograph of two Omani soldiers at a military base, captioned “Capt 1972-1973
Ghulam Rasool (OC HQ Coy) and ?ZLT Murad Jan (?ZK HQ Coy)”.
- 5/46 Photograph of a stony landscape with a gully and distant military base. 1972-1973
- 5/47 Photograph of two soldiers at a military base, captioned “A ?mochar 1972-1973
on White III looking west”.
- 5/48 Photograph of a military base, captioned “Soldiers tents in BN HQ”. 1972-1973
- 5/49 Photograph of a British soldier looking across a gully to a distant 1972-1973
military base, captioned “That bloody walk: Red to White. Romilly
David contemplates BN HQ on other side”.
- 5/50 Photograph of soldiers at a military base, captioned “Green with 1972-1973
Khareef”.
- 5/51 Photograph captioned “Salalah from west”. 1972-1973
- 5/52 Photograph of soldiers at a military base, captioned “Blue II Sgts 1972-1973
mess”.
- 5/53 Photograph of soldiers leading a blindfolded man at a military base, 1972-1973
captioned “Our first (and only) SEP (who wasn’t)”.
- 5/54 Photograph of Kerr awarding a medal to an Omani soldier, captioned 1972-1973
“Long service in the field”.
- 5/55 Photograph of soldiers at rest at a military base, captioned “Fuddle on 1972-1973
Yellow. Sandy, Ssgt Mubarak, CSM Hilal Ali”.
- 5/56 Photograph, with Kerr, captioned “Briefing a Saudi Arabian team”. 1972-1973
- 5/57 Photograph of a British and two Omani soldiers at a military base, 1972-1973
captioned ““Topcanna’. Ssgt ?, David McFadden, Lt Lal Bux”.
- 5/58 Photograph of a distant aircraft taking off, captioned “Camouflage? 1972-1973
Caribou taking off. Taken from Yardarm”.
- 5/59 Photograph of four Omani soldiers at a military base, captioned 1972-1973
“Gunners with Abdullah – note Bull –”.

- 5/60 Aerial photograph captioned "Farewell to Simba. BN HQ – Scarp – [Jan 1973]
White I & II".
- 5/61 Photograph of four British soldiers at rest at a military base, captioned [Jan 1973]
"The take over bid (successful). Martin, Simon Stewart, David
Williams, Andrew Swindale".
- 5/62 Photograph of soldiers standing alongside an aircraft, captioned "Hope [Jan 1973]
it works! RAF Hercules at Salalah".
- 5/63 Photograph of soldiers standing beneath an aircraft, captioned "Brig [Jan 1973]
Jack Fletcher, Ghulam Rasul". This page is captioned "The 'Off'!"
- 5/64 Photograph of an Omani soldier, a woman and a British soldier, with [Jan 1973]
Omani soldiers in the background, captioned "Jay Mohan (RMO),
Mary Fletcher, Martin and friends". This page is captioned "The
'Off'!"
- 5/65 Photograph of two British soldiers and Mary Fletcher, captioned "'I [Jan 1973]
wish to hell they would go!" Mary, Brig Jack, Nigel Knocker". This
page is captioned "The 'Off'!"
- 5/66 Photograph of Mary Fletcher disembarking from an aircraft, captioned [Jan 1973]
"All ashore that's going ashore".
- 5/67 Photograph captioned "Airborne. Cockpit of the Hercules". [Jan 1973]
- 5/68 Photograph of Kerr on return to Nizwa, captioned "Home sweet home. 29 Jan 1973
Nizwa 29 Jan 73".
- 5/69 Photograph captioned "The fort". 1973
- 5/70 Photograph of Omani men and boys gathered beneath trees, captioned 1973
"The auction mart".
- 5/71 Photograph of an Omani soldier in a garden, captioned "The Bustaan 1973
with Nagman and the new wall".
- 5/72 Photograph captioned "View from top of Nizwa fort". 1973
- 5/73 Photograph captioned "Street in Al Hamra". 1973
- 5/74 Photograph of Omani boys swimming outdoors, captioned "Temporary 1973
swimming pool in Nizwa after rain".
- 5/75 Photograph of two Omanis riding laden donkeys, captioned "To 1973
market (near ?Dhawk).
- 5/76 Photograph of Omani boys leading a goat through water. This page is 1973

- captioned “Going, coming, going, gone”, referring to a flood and the slaughter of a goat.
- 5/77 Photograph of a flood. This page is captioned “Going, coming, going, gone”, referring to a flood and the slaughter of a goat. 1973
- 5/78 Photograph of a flood. This page is captioned “Going, coming, going, gone”, referring to a flood and the slaughter of a goat. 1973
- 5/79 Photograph of an Omani man with a goat carcass. This page is captioned “Going, coming, going, gone”, referring to a flood and the goat’s slaughter. 1973
- 5/80 Photograph of four soldiers in a vehicle in a stony landscape. 1973
- 5/81 Photograph of vehicles and soldiers in a stony landscape. 1973
- 5/82 Photograph of 2 Omani men and 2 children 1973
- 5/83 Photograph of soldiers driving vehicles through a stony landscape. 1973
- 5/84 Photograph of an Omani soldier. 1973
- 5/85 Photograph of ten Omani soldiers. 1973
- 5/86 Group photograph of thirteen Omani men and boys dressed in white. 1973
- 5/87 Photograph of an Omani soldier, with vehicles in the background. 1973
- 5/88 Photograph of three Omani soldiers at a military base. 1973
- 5/89 Photograph of soldiers and men around a mast or winch. 1973
- 5/90 Photograph of camels in a stony landscape. 1973
- 5/91 Photograph of an aircraft. 1973
- 5/92 Photograph of two British men looking at a camel, with Omani men and a boy. 1973
- 5/93 Photograph of an Omani man standing by a building, with a lake beyond. 1973
- 5/94 Photograph of Omani men with camels and goats. 1973
- 5/95 Photograph of a British man inspecting an oriental carpet, with other British and Omani men. 1973
- 5/96 Photograph of a British man inspecting an oriental carpet, with other British and Omani men. 1973
- 5/97 Photograph of a British man and Omani men drinking beer on and around an oriental carpet. 1973
- 5/98 Photograph of Omani soldiers and a British soldier standing by a 1973

- vehicle.
- 5/99 Group photograph of SAF Association members during the visit to Oman. Kerr is second from the left on the front row. According to the itinerary, the photograph was taken on the morning of the first full day. [18 Sept 1984]
- 5/100 Photograph of SAF Association members standing outside a building. Sept 1984
- 5/101 Photograph of SAF Association members standing outside a building. Sept 1984
- 5/102 Photograph of SAF Association members disembarking from the ship SNV Al Mabrukah, following a sea trip and lunch (according to the itinerary). [19 Sept 1984]
- 5/103 Photograph of Kerr seated alongside other SAF Association members. Sept 1984
- 5/104 Photograph of a stony landscape with gullies and distant buildings, taken during a trip to Salalah, including the Jebel and Plains areas (according to the itinerary). [20 Sept 1984]
- 5/105 Photograph of SAF Association members outside a military building, during a trip to Salalah, including the Jebel and Plains areas (according to the itinerary). [20 Sept 1984]
- 5/106 Photograph of military structures and vehicles, during a trip to Salalah, including the Jebel and Plains areas (according to the itinerary). [20 Sept 1984]
- 5/107 Photograph of two soldiers, vehicles and a roadside structure, during a trip to Salalah, including the Jebel and Plains areas (according to the itinerary). [20 Sept 1984]
- 5/108 Photograph of a stony landscape with gullies and distant buildings, during a trip to Salalah, including the Jebel and Plains areas (according to the itinerary). [20 Sept 1984]
- 5/109 Photograph of camouflaged roadside buildings and a vehicle, during a trip to Salalah, including the Jebel and Plains areas (according to the itinerary). [20 Sept 1984]
- 5/110 Photograph of two SAF Association members looking over a stony landscape with a road and a car, during a trip to Salalah, including the Jebel and Plains areas (according to the itinerary). [20 Sept 1984]
- 5/111 Photograph of stone structures (possibly military bases) on a hill, taken from above, during a trip to Salalah, including the Jebel and Plains areas (according to the itinerary). [20 Sept 1984]

- 5/112 Photograph of six SAF Association members including Kerr (first left) [20 Sept 1984] with military buildings in the background, during a trip to Salalah, including the Jebel and Plains areas (according to the itinerary).
- 5/113 Photograph of SAF Association members observing the view from a [20 Sept 1984] military base, during a trip to Salalah, including the Jebel and Plains areas (according to the itinerary).
- 5/114 Photograph looking over a gully to distant military buildings, during a [20 Sept 1984] trip to Salalah, including the Jebel and Plains areas (according to the itinerary).
- 5/115 Photograph of a stony landscape with gullies, a road and distant [20 Sept 1984] military buildings, during a trip to Salalah, including the Jebel and Plains areas (according to the itinerary).
- 5/116 Photograph of SAF Association members and two soldiers standing on [20 Sept 1984] a road, during a trip to Salalah, including the Jebel and Plains areas (according to the itinerary).
- 5/117 Photograph of Kerr greeting Sultan Qaboos and an Omani soldier. The Sept 1984 inventory records that the Sultan invited SAF Association members to a dinner party at Ma'murah Gardens on the evening of 20th September.
- 5/118 Photograph of Kerr and other SAF Association members greeting Sept 1984 Omani soldiers.
- 5/119 Photograph of soldiers seated outdoors on an oriental rug. Sept 1984
- 5/120 Photograph of an Omani soldier and a woman. Sept 1984
- 5/121 Photograph of Kerr and other men and soldiers seated on oriental rugs. Sept 1984
- 5/122 Photograph of an SAF Association member and an Omani man with a Sept 1984 bundle on his head, standing outside a building labelled "Barrack Stores".
- 5/123 Photograph of Omani soldiers in a garden. Sept 1984
- 5/124 Photograph of Omani men (including five soldiers) outside a barracks. Sept 1984
- 5/125 Photograph of Kerr and another soldier, with barracks in the Sept 1984 background.
- 5/126 Group photograph of British and Omani men and soldiers standing Sept 1984 outside a barracks. Kerr is fourth from the right on the front row.
- 5/127 Photograph of Kerr and another SAF Association member by the sea. Sept 1984

- 5/128 Photograph of Kerr and another SAF Association member. Sept 1984
5/129 Photograph of two SAF Association members by the sea. Sept 1984

6 Muscat Regiment History: Booklet

Booklet entitled *A Brief History of the Muscat Regiment* Mar 2003 1 booklet
prepared by HQ RAO (Studies and Research Branch),
printed by RAO Publications, March 2003. Featuring
photographic images, some in colour.

7 Dhofar article

Photocopied article entitled “Dhofar – Land of Not dated 5 sheets
Frankincense and War” by Major R. E. H. David of the
Welsh Guards, in *Guards Magazine*, pp. 185-189.
Featuring a map of Oman and photographic images.

8 Artefacts: Wooden shield plaques

Two wooden shield plaques bearing emblems of the Not dated 2 items
Sultan’s Armed Forces. One, made by C. H. Munday,
London, bears Kerr’s name and “The Muscat Regiment”
and is labelled “Al Quaaid Feb 1972-June 1974”. The other
was obtained from NAAFI HQ, Singapore.