

## **ALEC GOLDSMITH - ROYAL ARMY SERVICE CORPS**

Alec Goldsmith was the son of Mr and Mrs H.T. Goldsmith who owned the Low Street Post Office, he joined the army in April 1940 and became a driver in the Royal Army Service Corps (R.A.S.C). The R.A.S.C. was responsible for keeping the British Army supplied with supplies and provisions and units were allocated to any part of the army that needed them. In Alec's case his unit became part of the 1st Armoured Brigade which, in November 1940 was shipped via the Cape to Egypt arriving there on the 1st January 1941. It would be a short stay, by the early Spring the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, was trying to forge a Balkan alliance against Germany and its allies the key of which was Greece. The Greek government was promised significant support and to this end an expeditionary force was organised from the 8th Army in Egypt and dispatched to Greece arriving at Piraeus on the 2nd March 1941. The 1st Armoured Division was sent to the Vadar Plain in Northern Greece in order to block any German advance from either Bulgaria or Yugoslavia. Hitler, planning his invasion of the Soviet Union, could not afford to have the Balkans unsecured so using threats and promises he succeeded in suborning all of Greece's neighbours. Yugoslavia was, however, politically volatile and, in some exasperation Hitler ordered its invasion on the 6th April whilst simultaneously attacking Greece. In spite of the terrain the German advance could not be stopped and by mid April the British High Command was organising another evacuation. Eventually some 50,000 men were evacuated to Crete or Egypt but another 8,000 became Prisoners of War with Alec Goldsmith being one of them.