



## FOREWORD

Not too long ago I fulfilled a long time ambition and visited many of the Second World War battlefield sites in North West Europe. I recall my first visit to a Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery, when I stood among the rows of pristine white headstones, immaculate green lawns and colourful borders, and experienced a sense of deep sorrow that has remained with me ever since. As I stood there alone and paused to read the individual inscriptions on the headstones, I became aware that many of the graves belonged to young men who had been killed whilst serving with 47 Royal Marine Commando. Later, during the same visit, I was made aware of the distinguished part played by the Commando in the liberation of Europe.

The high achievement of 47 Royal Marine Commando throughout the European campaign came at a heavy price; 114 men killed and 327 wounded. How could I pay my own personal tribute to those men who had made the supreme sacrifice?

With the assistance of information obtained from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website and in the Royal Marines Historical Society publication, '*Bid Them Rest in Peace – A Register of Royal Marines Deaths 1939 – 1945*', I decided to visit, and photograph, all of the 114 graves or memorials to those who have no known grave, located in 16 separate cemeteries and on 3 memorials across the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Holland and Germany.

In addition to paying my own respects to the Fallen there were three other purposes for compiling this book: firstly, to help perpetuate the memory of those who lost their lives whilst serving with 47 Royal Marine Commando; secondly, to provide a photographic record of the graves and memorials for the 47 Royal Marine Commando Association and the surviving generations of relatives; and finally, I hope you will pause to look at the images contained here and perhaps experience the same feeling of sorrow as I did when I stood alone amongst the uniform rows of the immortal. In doing so you may ponder on Laurence Binyon's poignant words:

'At the going down of the sun  
And in the morning,  
We will remember them.'

Major Bob Perry Royal Marines  
April 2008