

Spring 2014  
No. 276

# THE IRON DUKE

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**2nd Battalion Officers in Dublin just prior to embarkation for France in August 1914.  
They would be in action on the front line at Mons within two weeks.**

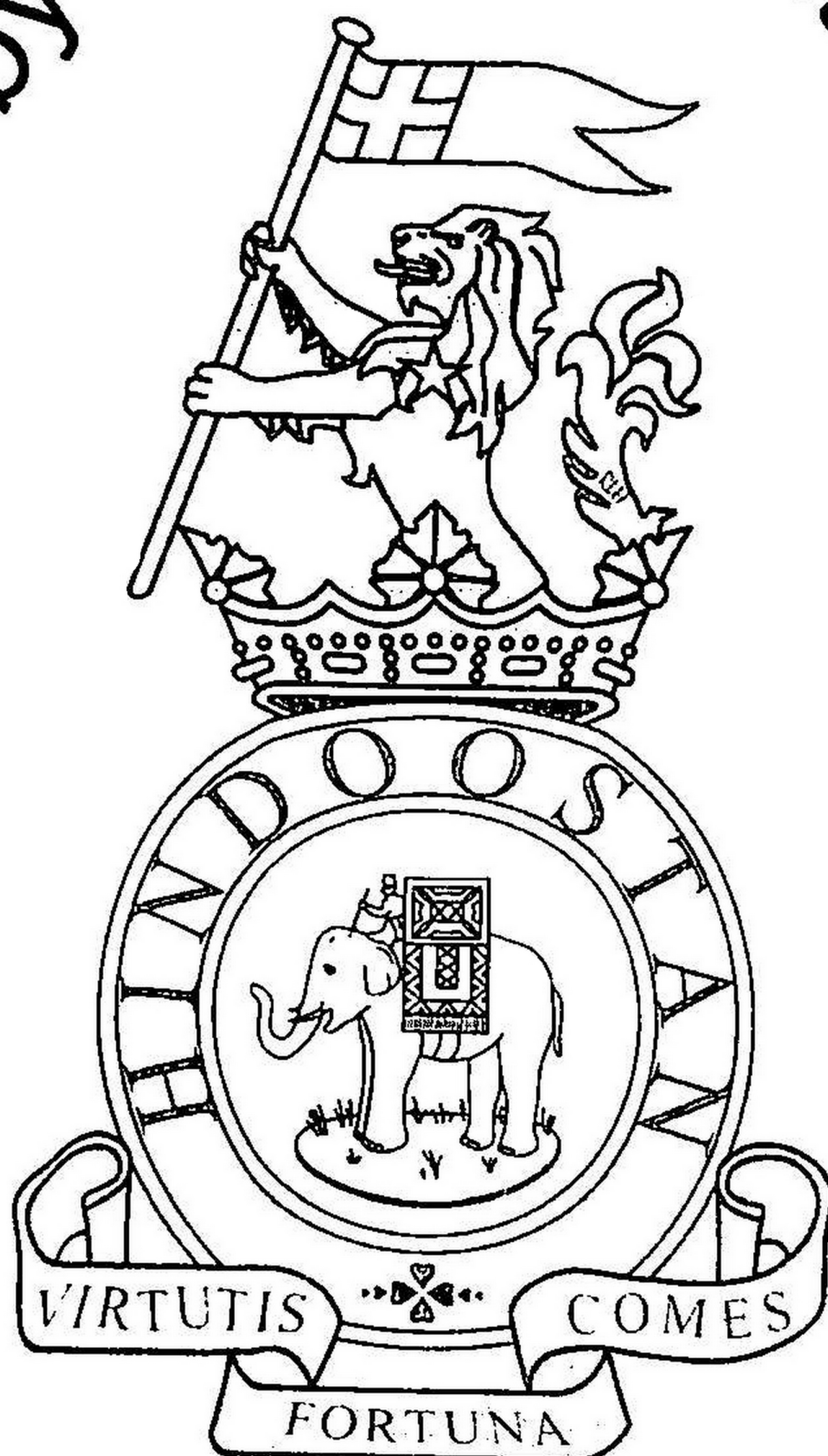


**Haufrage War Graves Cemetery – the bodies of a number of Dukes who fell at Mons on 23 and 24 August 1914 lie here.**

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**Cover photograph – Named in the Mons article on page 13 are Lt Col JAC Gibbs, CO, seated, centre; Lt LE Russell, back row, 5th from left; Lt HK O’Kelly, back row, 2nd from right; Maj KA MacLeod, second in command, seated on the CO’s right; Capt CO Denman-Jubb, seated on the CO’s left. Lt CW Ince was absent, escorting the Regimental Colours to Halifax. Eight of the officers in this photograph were killed or died of wounds, six others were wounded, and three were taken prisoner. 2Lt FH Fraser, bottom row on right, became CO 2 DWR in 1938 and became a prisoner of war of the Japanese.**

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# THE IRON DUKE

*The Regimental Journal of*

## THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S REGIMENT (WEST RIDING)

*Dettingen  
Mysore  
Seringsapatam  
Ally Ghur  
Delhi 1803  
Leswarree  
Deig  
Corunna  
Nive  
Peninsula  
Waterloo  
Alma  
Inkerman  
Sebastopol  
Abyssinia  
Relief of Kimberley  
Paardeberg  
South Africa 1900-02  
Mons 1914  
Marne 1914, '18  
Ypres 1914, '15, '17*



*Hill 60  
Somme 1916, '18  
Arras 1917, '18  
Cambrai 1917, '18  
Lys  
Piave 1918  
Landing at Suvla  
Afghanistan 1919  
North-West Europe  
1940, 1944-45  
Dunkirk 1940  
St Valery-en-Caux  
Fontenay-le-Pesnil  
Djebel Bou Aoukaz 1943  
Anzio  
Monte Ceco  
Burma 1942, '43, '44  
Sittang 1942  
Chindits 1944  
The Hook 1953  
Korea 1952-53*

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### BUSINESS NOTES

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## Editorial

### Looking Back

Just as we look back at the men of 2 DWR that fought at Mons 100 years ago on 23 and 24 August 1914, so they looked back another nearly 100 years to their predecessors who fought at Waterloo. For some of us, perhaps, 1914 seems an awfully long time ago, and maybe to some of them 1815 seemed an awfully long time ago, but it is not so distant that we should find it at all difficult to reach back through the generations to connect with them and their achievements.

As is noted elsewhere in this edition we have a period compressing many anniversaries ahead of us in the next few years – from WW1, WW2 and earlier. A Regiment with our sort of history never has to wait long for some historical event, campaign or battle to appear on the calendar that merits our attention, looking back. (How much harder it is now for us to look forward, but that is another story).

However we remember our predecessors through history, and whether or not we can make a personal connection with them and the conditions of their time, every man of the 33rd Foot in its various guises since 1702 has been one of “our boys”. I have formed the occasional habit of putting the faces of the Dukes I served with onto those I read about 100, 200, or 300 years ago, to bring them and the events of their times to life in my head. It works for me, anyway!

### Mons and Waterloo

This edition contains articles about the start of the Great War 1914-18, and the end of the Napoleonic Wars, although we must wait for the next edition for anything about Waterloo itself.

One of the things about 2 DWR in 1914, formed with 1st Bn Queens Own Royal West Kents, 2nd Bn Kings own Scottish Borderers, and 2nd Bn Kings own Yorkshire Light Infantry as 13 Brigade based in Dublin, is how it was expanded from something over 600 men to around 1000 in a matter of days, by calling up reservists. War was declared as Germany invaded Belgium on 4

August; that day or the next reservists got their call up letter (the postal service was somewhat better than it is today): the next day they were in Halifax being kitted out: a few days later they were in Dublin, and a few days after that on a ship, disembarking at Le Havre on 16 August, and in action at Mons 7 days later.

All four battalions were well- found, well-trained and well-led, but how they absorbed around one third of their number and fought the way they did against far superior enemy forces is a mystery. It is not as if there was a particularly good plan – it was a hurried affair, “Plan A” having been abandoned on the hoof as the French stumbled backwards and the Germans rushed forwards, and battle had been joined along the Franco-German front a week or more earlier. They were very short of artillery and some of the reservists were unfamiliar with their rifles (see Lt Henniker’s tale in the Mons article). All in all it was an extremely hazardous situation, and yet something remarkable was achieved, albeit at great cost.

Reservists play a major part in our current defence strategy. One has to wonder if, at time of need, it will work as well as it did in 1914. I attended a presentation recently by the Army Engagement Team – key task to persuade employers to encourage their employees to join the reserve army – to learn that of the 30,000 reservists needed, 20,000 are signed up already. Taking comfort in statistics, the presenters said that they need only 1 person in 10,000 in current employment; that the old TA was more than twice as large as the reserve force levels now targeted; that more money for compensation to employers who allow key personnel to be reservists is available and additional legislation is in the pipeline; and many more facts and figures to support the strategy. It can be done, they said.

It is encouraging that, despite the loss of our battalion and new circumstances, the Association’s members continue to meet and communicate. The following News Round Up has some reports and without doubt there will have been all manner of informal get-togethers that are not reported. Long may it continue.

### The President’s Column

In the previous issue of the Iron Duke I explained the challenges the Association faces due to the reduction to the size of the army and the consequent loss of support we have received. The situation we face remains unchanged although the time-frame we have to make the necessary changes has in fact lengthened somewhat: we are likely to remain in Wellesley Park for the remainder of this year. The additional time has meant that we have been able to undertake a review of the Regimental Association the conclusions of which will determine what the Association does in the future as well as how it will be achieved. Critically the review sets out the purpose and aims of the Association which are: to commemorate, celebrate and sustain the history and heritage of the Regiment; to enable comradeship for all



**Brigadier  
Andrew  
Meek CBE**

those who served in the Regiment; and to support the efficiency of the armed forces through support to the Yorkshire Regiment.

As far as our history is concerned the Bankfield Museum holds the key as that is where our museum is situated. It is by the way an excellent museum and for anyone interested in our history, well worth visiting particularly next year when the National Army Museum will base its Northern celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo at Bankfield. In the longer term we want to ensure that the archives currently held at Wellesley Park are secured at Bankfield and negotiations are in hand to achieve this. Assuming that these are successful it will mean that we will have done much to secure our heritage although there will then be the challenge of digitising everything, a major undertaking to say the least.

Enabling comradeship essentially means providing opportunities for members of the Association to meet up, something that has of course been happening since our formation. Over recent years there have been a number of what might be called 'set events' which have been seen by some as 'official' along with various other gatherings. For the future I see no distinction between any events at which members of the Regiment come together to enjoy the comradeship that was forged during service. What I would like to ensure that any and all gatherings of 'Dukes' are publicised widely so that everyone knows what is being planned but to achieve this will of course require a different way of communicating.

Finally our support to the Yorkshire Regiment enables us to fulfil one of our charitable purposes (that of supporting the efficiency of the armed forces) and should also ensure that the heritage of the Regiment lives on in the army of today.

The biggest challenge facing the Association remains that of how we are to administer ourselves now that there is no official support provided by the MOD. Thankfully Major Bob Heron has kindly agreed to continue to manage our affairs on a volunteer basis until the future is determined. This provides us with breathing space in which to plan not only how we will operate but also from where. However we decide to operate (and from where) it is clear that if the Association is to prosper we shall have to rely far more heavily on volunteers. In saying this I do not underestimate the excellent work already being

done by many who already give freely of their time to the 'cause' and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for all they do be that within the branches, the ongoing work with the archives, the museum, the editing the Iron Duke or the organising of various events. In the future there will a variety of opportunities for volunteers to help the Association especially with the organisation of events. This is therefore a plea to anyone who would like to become involved to come forward and help. I am convinced that the future vibrancy of the Association lies in working collectively and collaboratively.

As I have already said, one of the keys to the future is that of communication and in particular how we can make best use of modern media including the website along with social media (Facebook and Twitter for example). Lt Col Toby Lehmann has volunteered to lead on this and I anticipate that by the middle of the year we shall have a much clearer idea as to how we harness all these tools in a manner that ensures quicker and better communications for the whole of the Association.

As far as events are concerned it has been decided that the Regiment will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo in a fitting manner. Although it is too early to say exactly what will be organised it is our intention to have a major event in the heart of our Regimental area on the weekend of 20/21 June 2015 which will replace the annual Association dinner. Major David Harrap has agreed to lead the organising committee for this and once more details are known they will be publicised. If you wish to become involved please let us know.

Looking further ahead, it will not have escaped anyone's notice that it is 100 years since the start of the First World War, a war in which the Regiment distinguished itself in so many ways. Over 7,000 members of the Regiment gave their lives during the conflict and I feel that as an Association we have a duty to commemorate all those who served in the Regiment during that time.

Whatever we do in the future the one simple fact remains that the Association can only survive and prosper if the membership wishes it. The Association exists for its members: it is our Association and with that in mind I am keen to understand what people want of it in the future and thus I do welcome your views.

## Keep in touch with the Regiment and your old service friends and colleagues through:

- The Iron Duke, the Journal for all who served with the Duke of Wellington's Regiment. Published twice yearly, price £10 per year.
- The Duke's website, {<http://www.dwr.org.uk>}, for latest news, historical information and an opportunity to comment through the forum. Contact {<mailto:editor@dwr.org.uk>} with your news.

## News Round Up

### Association Annual General Meeting and Dinner Dance

Once again the function at the Bradford Hilton drew a big crowd of Dukes and their partners. We were fortunate to have as our guests Lt Col Andy Garner and Major Mally Birkett from 1 YORKS.

The AGM was also well attended (it is open to any member of the Association, and invariably precedes the

Dinner, so attending both is very easy). The President reported on several of the matters he has addressed in his column above, and there was a lively discussion on ways to secure our future. The bottom line message is that we will only be successful if members come forward to help in some way, however small.



**From left - Brig Mundell, Lady Huxtable, Lt Col Garner, Brig Greenway (standing), Brig Meek, Gen Sir Charles Huxtable.**



**At the end of dinner.**

## Officers' Annual Lunch

The lunch, organised again by Brigadier Michel Bray, was held at the East India Club in St James's Square, London on Saturday 29th March 2014. One year ago bad weather made travel from the North extremely difficult, but this year it was a pleasant spring day.

It was good once again to have Tom Moore, organiser of the 9th Battalion (146 Regiment RAC) Reunion from 1947 until October 2012, and his two daughters and a son-in-law, with us. Those attending were –

Lt Col Peter and Mrs Annie Andrews  
 Mrs Liz Best  
 Brig Michael and Mrs Anne Bray  
 Colonel Charles and Mrs Jo Cumberlege  
 Capt Simon and Mrs Suzy Dixon  
 Brig Join and Mrs Judith Greenway  
 Gen Sir Charles and Lady Mary Huxtable  
 John and Mrs Patricia Lobanov-Rostovski  
 Brig Andrew and Mrs Sandy Meek  
 Lt Col Peter and Mrs Sasha Mellor  
 Col Peter and Mrs Di Mitchell  
 Tom Moore, Mrs Lucy Texeira and Mrs Hannah Ingram-Moore



**Tom Moore, with daughters Lucy Teixeira (L) and Hannah Ingram-Moore.**

Captain Simon and Mrs Sally Morgan  
 Lt Col Tim and Mrs Sheenagh Nicholson  
 Maj Mike and Mrs Penny Sherlock.



**Drinks before lunch**

## York and Lancaster Officers' Lunch

Just to show that being an "antecedent" regiment does not mean that old friends lose touch, a small lunch was held at the Naval and Military (In and Out) Club in St James's Square, London on St George's Day, 23 April. On the disbandment of 1st Bn The York and Lancaster Regiment in December 1968, the officers and men were transferred to other cap-badges, mostly within what was then called the Yorkshire Brigade (ie PWO, Green Howards or Dukes), though a few went farther afield.



**From left, Kevin Robbin (PWO), Tim Nicholson (DWR), Leslie James (Green Howards), Howard Holroyd, Ted Wilkins (Both PWO), Peter Gardner (DWR).**





# YORKSHIRE REGIMENT NEWS

For full news of the Yorkshire Regiment readers should subscribe to the Yorkshire Regiment Journal, and/or look at the Regimental website.

Many will recall that the Editor's grand design, when the battalion link was lost, to delay publication of the Iron Duke to May and November, from April and October, in order to take from the Yorkshire Regiment Journal

information thought to be of interest and use to our readers. However, the non-appearance of the YRJ has scuppered that plan, at least on this occasion. Let us hope that no news is good news.

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## ANNIVERSARIES

The Regiment has some important anniversaries in the offing through 2014 and 2015, and not only those pertaining to WW1. Next year, 2015, is of course the 200th anniversary of the Battles of Quatre-Bras (16 June 1815) and Waterloo (18 June 1815), and before too long we will need to decide just how we plan to celebrate one of Britain's greatest land victories, won by the Iron Duke himself whose name we were honoured to carry in our regimental title for so many years, and the courageous conduct of our ancestors in the 33rd Foot (First Yorkshire West Riding Regiment) as we were then known. 2015 will also be the 75th anniversary of 1 DWR's fighting withdrawal from Brussels, which culminated in the evacuation at Dunkirk.

Of course, before then this year's commemorative WW1 events will be in full swing. 2 DWR landed at Le Havre on 16 August 1914 as part of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). Under the command of 13 Brigade – with 2 KOYLI, 1 Royal West Kents, and 2 KOSB – by 22 August it was deployed with the rest of the British II Corps along the line Condé-Mons. Mons is very much a focal point for many planned national events this coming summer. The retreat from Mons was a terrible business, fighting all the way and heavy casualties. By 20 November 2 DWR had earned the battle honours Mons, Marne and Ypres 1914, but paid a shocking price in casualties. An article elsewhere in this issue offers a description of the battalion's part in these events.

This year is also the 220th anniversary of the 33rd's much lauded action in the Boxtel skirmish (15 September 1794, the Netherlands campaign), when some quick thinking by the Commanding Officer (Lt Col Sherbrooke) saved the day, facing the Regiment about to repulse a French cavalry attack as this unexpected enemy loomed up and charged a confused mixed infantry and cavalry allied force that was attempting to withdraw. The Duke of York, C in C, sent his personal thanks to the 33rd

“for their good conduct” in shielding this force from certain defeat.

Thinking again about 2015, amongst events deserving of our respect will be the 300th anniversary of the re-raising of the 33rd (as General Wade's Regiment, 25 March 1715), having been “broke” after its long and tough service in the War of Spanish Succession 1702 – 1714, initially under Marlborough along the Meuse. Next year will also be the 270th anniversary of the defeat at Fontenoy (9 May 1745), where, despite losing the battle in the face of superior numbers, the British infantry behaved with great courage and sang-froid - “As an example of the prowess of British infantry” wrote Fortescue “Fontenoy stands almost without a parallel in its history”.

It will also be the 225th anniversary of the 76th Regiment's (to become 2 DWR in due course) initial deployment (after two uneventful years in-country) in the initial campaign against Tipoo Sultan, “the Tiger of Mysore” which led after some years to the eventual victory at Seringapatam (4 May 1799). It will be the 195th anniversary of the ousting of the French from Mauritius by a British force including the 33rd's Flank Company (2 December 1810). We should remember that the Waterloo campaign started in 1814, when, as described in the last issue of the Journal, the 33rd's took part in the unsuccessful assault on Bergen-Op-Zoom, in the Netherlands.

2014 is the 160th anniversary of the Battles of Alma (30 September 1854) and Inkerman (26 October 1854) in the Crimean War, to be followed a year later by Sebastopol (taken 8 September 1855). Crimea is very much in the news as I write.

With a history like ours, there is always an anniversary of something to be celebrated, so never a lack of an excuse for a party.

## Waterloo

### THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO



**Peter Mellor**

Lt Col Peter Mellor recalls the celebrations 50 years ago.

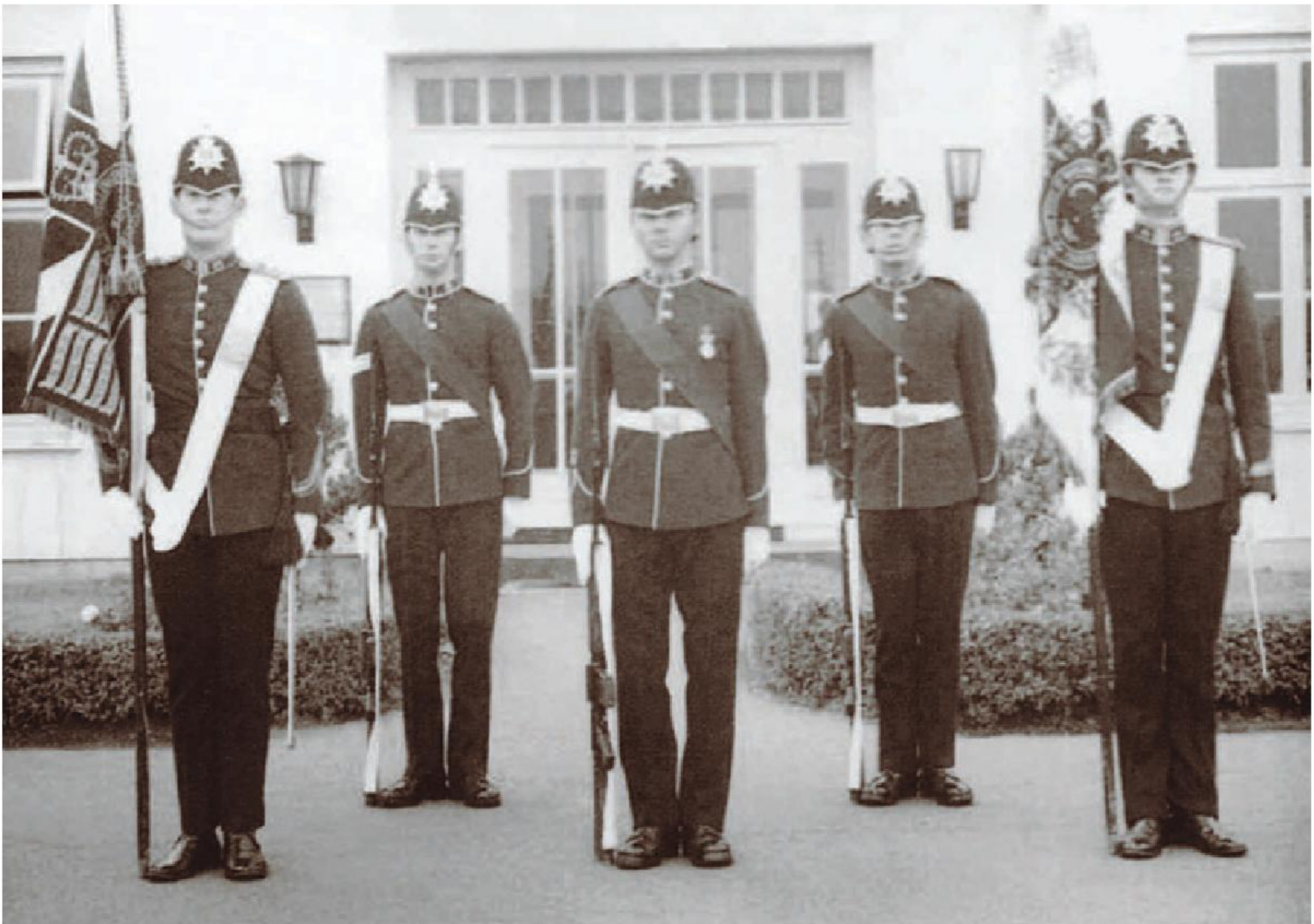
When readers receive this edition it will be forty nine years ago that the Battalion (1 DWR) was invited to send a colour party to the 150th anniversary celebration in London and Belgium in June 1965. So, the Colour Party set off from Quebec Barracks, Osnabruck in early June to begin rehearsals in Woolwich. The scarlet tunics raised

some eyebrows in London District! The Colour Party consisted of Lt John Power, 2Lt Peter Mellor, WO2 Derrick Battye, and Sergeants Blacoe and Bloomfield.

On the evening of 12 June the Standards, Guidons and Colours of 37 regiments which took part in the battle formed up in Whitehall and marched on beneath the archway and onto Horse Guards, forming two ranks on either side of the carriageway to salute members of the Royal Family, who, in a carriage procession, had travelled from Buckingham Palace at 9 pm.

The musical pageant began by depicting the early morning mists, and drummers with flaming torches and buglers sounding the alarm calling regiments to arms. The photograph illustrates the finale with massed bands playing the Waterloo music by Eckersburg, guns fired by the King's Troop and fireworks from St James's Park.

The 150th was marked in several other ways: a ball at the Law Courts with guests in period costumes; the Lord Mayor of London held a luncheon "in honour of the



**The Colour Party; from left Lt John Powell, Sgt Blacoe, WO2 Derek Battye, Sgt Bloomfield and 2Lt Peter Mellor.**

**The parade on Horseguards, Whitehall, with the Guards Memorial in the background.**



regiments” who fought at Waterloo; and an anniversary medallion was struck for those attending. The Army held a dinner for Her Majesty The Queen in the Banqueting House, Whitehall.

Following the Pageant on Horse Guards all colour parties travelled to Brussels and both Dukes’ subalterns acted as ADC to HM’s Ambassador who had recreated

the Duchess of Richmond’s Ball by inviting 540, mostly Belgian, guests on 15 June.

The Dukes’ Colour Party, together with the other 37 regiments and bands then took part in the Church Parade near Hougoumont Farm and subsequently returned to Osnabruck, (where not a lot of interest was shown!).

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## Waterloo 200 – The Plans for Celebration

Maj Gen Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter is very much involved in the British side of the celebrations.

When you read this it will be just over 12 months to the 200th Anniversary of Wellington’s great victory over the tyrant, Napoleon. As the man responsible for the British side of the commemorations the countdown is always close to my mind and my i phone on which the clock ticks away nags at me.

The purpose of this short article is not to debate the whys and wherefores of the battle but to tell you what to expect in 2015. Our approach in Waterloo 200 has been that this event should focus less on what happened on the few square miles of the battlefield but more on the consequences of the battle in terms of the political, diplomatic, social and cultural outcomes. Waterloo was a defining moment in European History as the map of the subcontinent changed beyond recognition by 1914. Gone were the dynastic quarrels of Bourbon and Hapsburg but instead we have the burgeoning nations of Germany and Italy and the creation of smaller states of Belgium and Denmark. May be there was an international peace of sorts but the nation building in Europe caused its fair share of bloodshed. It’s the changing shape of Europe much of it generated by the Congress of Vienna which leads us to something which we now know for better or ill as the idea of Europe.

So therefore Waterloo 200 is not just a British commemoration. Did you know that only 25% of the

Allied Army spoke English? Most of the rest spoke variations of German. For example the Kings German Legion valiantly defending the farm of La Haye Sainte spoke little English if at all as they all hailed from Hannover, that other dominion of the King. Belgium which did not exist in 1815 is naturally playing a large and significant part as Waterloo is an important Wallonian legacy. Over the period of the anniversary there will be a multitude of events around Waterloo, not least the re-enactments taking place on the evening of Friday 19th June and the morning of Sunday 21st June. These will be spectacular events and every effort is being made to ensure they are viewable and accessible by those who wish to travel to Belgium. In the New Year there will be a massive campaign to publicise the events and promote the facilities. On the Wednesday, 17th June there will be a largely British event to unveil a memorial to the British Army ( amazing to think there has not been one up to now) at Hougoumont. At the same time there will be the cutting of the ribbon on the restored farm at Hougoumont. This has been a monumental campaign to find the €3.1 million to fund the restoration. Now fully funded the work is going apace and seldom does one applaud a Government Minister still less the Chancellor of the Exchequer who has underwritten the project to the tune of £1.2 m with the quip in the Commons that Hougoumont “represented the overturn of a tyrant by a coalition”. Maybe it was an expensive political sound



**Charge of the French Cavalry, from the Panorama at the Waterloo Visitors Centre.**

bite but it was a triumph for all who are interested in history. On the actual anniversary there will be an International Ceremony near the famous Mound but as none of us will be there I can safely say it will be a fairly dull affair. Better to attend the *Son et Lumiere* on the Saturday evening where you will surely see Napoleon win the day!

So what will be happening in England if you are not attracted to travel to Brussels on the Euro Star by kind permission of our gallant and enterprising editor? The main effort of Waterloo 200 has been “education” and to that end we are building with HLF funding a learning resource based around 200 iconic items like Lord Uxbridge’s false leg and the saw which took off his real one. This site will also produce a mass of learning materials for the student and teacher and a great deal of other detailed and fascinating information for the informed member of the public. On the 18th June while things are happening around the Mound at Waterloo a Service of Commemoration will be taking place in St Paul’s Cathedral attended by a senior member of the Royal Family. This will be the Nation’s homage to the bicentenary and the emphasis will be on passing the legacy of Wellington and Waterloo on to the younger generation; for example the Great Duke’s Field Marshal’s Baton (did you know they had to make a replica for his funeral? I didn’t!) will symbolically be handed to the

youngest soldier in the Army. There are many other events related to the bicentenary taking place not least the large number of exhibitions being arranged throughout the year at Windsor Castle, the Royal Academy, the National Portrait Gallery and the British Museum.

There is another event which neatly links what is happening in Belgium with an extravaganza in London. The New Waterloo Dispatch is a ceremonial interpretation of the original Waterloo Dispatch but encompasses the ideas and values of modern Europe, leadership, cooperation, respect and enterprise. A new and exquisitely produced document will be presented to European Heads of State (meeting in Brussels at this time) and to other dignitaries and Cities as the route to London is traced via Bruges, Ostend, over the channel on HMS Iron Duke (interesting that the Royal Navy pay greater regard to our national hero than the Army does!). The re-enactors of Major Henry Percy, the only unwounded of Wellington’s ADCs and Captain James White, the Captain of HMS Peruvian will row themselves to Broadstairs (on the day the Peruvian was becalmed) and then be picked up by Post Chaise (carriage and four horses for those who think this is a sofa!). They will progress to Canterbury Cathedral; this is now Saturday 20th June where a Commemoration Service will take place before they move to London on the Sunday. Meanwhile over the Saturday and Sunday

in St James's Square a Regency Fair will be taking place with all sorts of strange and long forgotten skills like bare knuckle boxing, rope dancing, sword swallowing, silhouette artists and Grimaldi the clown, mustn't forget him! So after the Post Chaise has visited 10 Downing Street (where the Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, should have been) and 40 Grosvenor Square (where he actually was) it will arrive at 16 St James's Square (where the Prince Regent was dining and now the East India Club) and the two replica eagles, representing one captured by the Royal Dragoons and the other by the

Scots Greys, will be placed at the feet of a member of the Royal Family as they were in 1815. A celebratory ball will follow. It will be a grand close to the commemorations.

Splendid as all this will be it is important perhaps to leave a legacy so it is our earnest hope that more people interested or otherwise will have gained a greater understanding of the importance of the Battle on the future of Europe. It is such good news that the 33rd are returning to the battlefield to pay their own particular homage.

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### Quatre-Bras 16 June 1815

In the last Iron Duke an article described the 33rd (First Yorkshire West Riding) Regiment of Foot's arrival at Willemstadt in Holland on 17 December 1814, and their subsequent engagements at Merxem (Antwerp outskirts) and Bergen-Op-Zoom, culminating in the abdication of Napoleon and the cessation of hostilities. Lt Col Elphinstone, commanding the 33rd throughout this period, was wounded at Bergen and would not return to the Regiment until the following year, devolving command meantime to his Second in Command, Major Parkinson.

The 33rd did not return home, but went into winter

quarters at Menin, so were conveniently on hand for Napoleon's triumphant return to France in March 1814, entering Paris to great acclaim on the 20th of that month. The allies agreed that four armies, one each from Great Britain, Russia, Prussia and Austria, would be formed, each of around 150,000 men. The Anglo-Belgian-Dutch forces, under Wellington and the Prussians under Blücher would invade France from the North, whilst the others came in from the East. These things take time.

Wellington was disturbed at a ball in Brussels with the unwelcome news that Napoleon had stolen a 24 hours march on him and was engaging Blücher at Ligny, who



**The Quatre Bras Memorial**



**The Belgian Memorial**

would shortly have to retire with the French on his heels. The 5th Brigade under General Halkett, comprising the 33rd, 30th, 69th and 73rd Regiments, were ordered with the rest of 1 Corps under the Prince of Orange, to march at

once to seize the strategically important crossroads at Quatre-Bras (“Four Arms”) to relieve a quite small force of Dutch (which at that time included Belgium as we know it today) and Hanoverians. They thus blocked the path of the French in pursuit of the retreating Prussian Army.

There really is nothing of note at Quatre-Bras today, although the monuments to the various nationalities that took part are interesting. It is, quite simply, a busy crossroads, with some buildings of various kinds around it, and a set of traffic lights on the crossing itself. The ground is open, perfect for cavalry, and in this actively agricultural area pressure for land to grow on has got rid of most of the trees that were there in 1815.

As formations and regiments arrived at Quatre-Bras they were deployed piecemeal. The 33rd arrived at 4.00 pm and the battle was in full swing. Lt William Thain, the Adjutant, described their arrival thus;

“We again advanced and at half past 5 o’clock we were in the field of action when the Hanoverian part of the Division immediately left us, and the British Brigade advanced in to line in column of companies at quarter distance. We were placed in this order in rear of the line and were permitted to lie down in the corn but were soon



**The British Memorial, recording the names of all units that took part**



**Memorial to General Friedrich Wilhelm, who was shot and killed during the battle. He, with Wellington, had been at the Duchess of Richmond’s Ball in Brussels the evening before.**

### The British Quatre-Bras Committee



ordered to stand up for the enemy were making an attempt to turn our right by a wood upon which it was approached. We gave them a most beautiful volley and charged but they ran faster than our troops (already fatigued) could do, and we consequently could not touch them with the bayonet.”

The Breton-Savory history also records a description of that moment from the French perspective. The French advanced “...and all the while the red English line, still silent and motionless, even when we were only 300 yards away, seemed to take no notice of the storm that was about to break on it ...at this moment of painful expectation the English line would make a quarter turn – the muskets were going up to the “ready”. An indefinable sensation nailed to the spot many of our men, who halted and began to open a wavering fire. The enemy’s return, a volley of simultaneous precision and deadly effect, crashed upon us like a thunderbolt. Decimated by it we reeled together... then three formidable “hurrahs” terminated the long silence of our adversaries. With the third they were down upon us, pressing us into disorderly retreat”.

Next the French cavalry threatened and the CO ordered the Regiment into square, so the cuirassiers wheeled away from such a formidable target and crashed into the 69th, who had also been forming square when given a direct order by the Prince of Orange get back into line. With the enemy now in sight of his disordered troops the 69th CO tried again to get his regiment into square, but it was too late. Two companies were overwhelmed, and the other two fled in to the squares of the 42nd and 44th, who beat off the charges. The 33rd, somewhat exposed and isolated, next came under heavy artillery fire, with further threat of cavalry assault. Private Hemmingway of the 33rd wrote “the cannon shot from the enemy broke down our square faster than we could form it.....had it not been for the wood on our right every man would have been cut to pieces”. 16 men of the Regiment were killed and 71 wounded. The intervention of the Guards Brigade forced Ney, the French commander, to concede the day.

The next morning, 17th June, Wellington gave the order to fall back to the Mont St Jean ridge, 9 miles north, towards Brussels.

### The crossroads; left to Brussels and right to Charleroi



## OFFICIAL” 200th ANNIVERSARY IN BELGIUM

Readers may be interested to see the official programme of battlefield events in June 2015, taken from a programme published by the Maison du Tourisme, Waterloo.

*Wednesday 17 June 2015: Inauguration of Hougoumont Farm, recently restored with the help of the British Government.*

*Thursday 18 June 2015: Official commemoration: opening of the bivouacs.*

*Friday 19 June 2015: first re-enactment recreating a phase of the Battle.*

*Saturday 20 June: sound and light show on the Lion’s Mound (Butte du Lion).*

*Sunday 21 June: a second re-enactment of another phase of the 1815 fighting.*

No guarantee is given that this time the French won’t win!

The 2015 Dukes’ Officers Dinner will take place in Brussels on 16 June, exactly 200 years after the Duchess of Richmond’s ball attended by the 1st Duke of Wellington, and the following day the party will tour the battlefields of Quatre-Bras and Waterloo, and raise a glass on the spot on the Mont St Jean ridge where the 33rd First Yorkshire West Riding Regiment, later to become the Duke of Wellington’s Regiment, stood in square, endured hours of artillery fire, and eventually saw off Ney’s cavalry and the French advance.

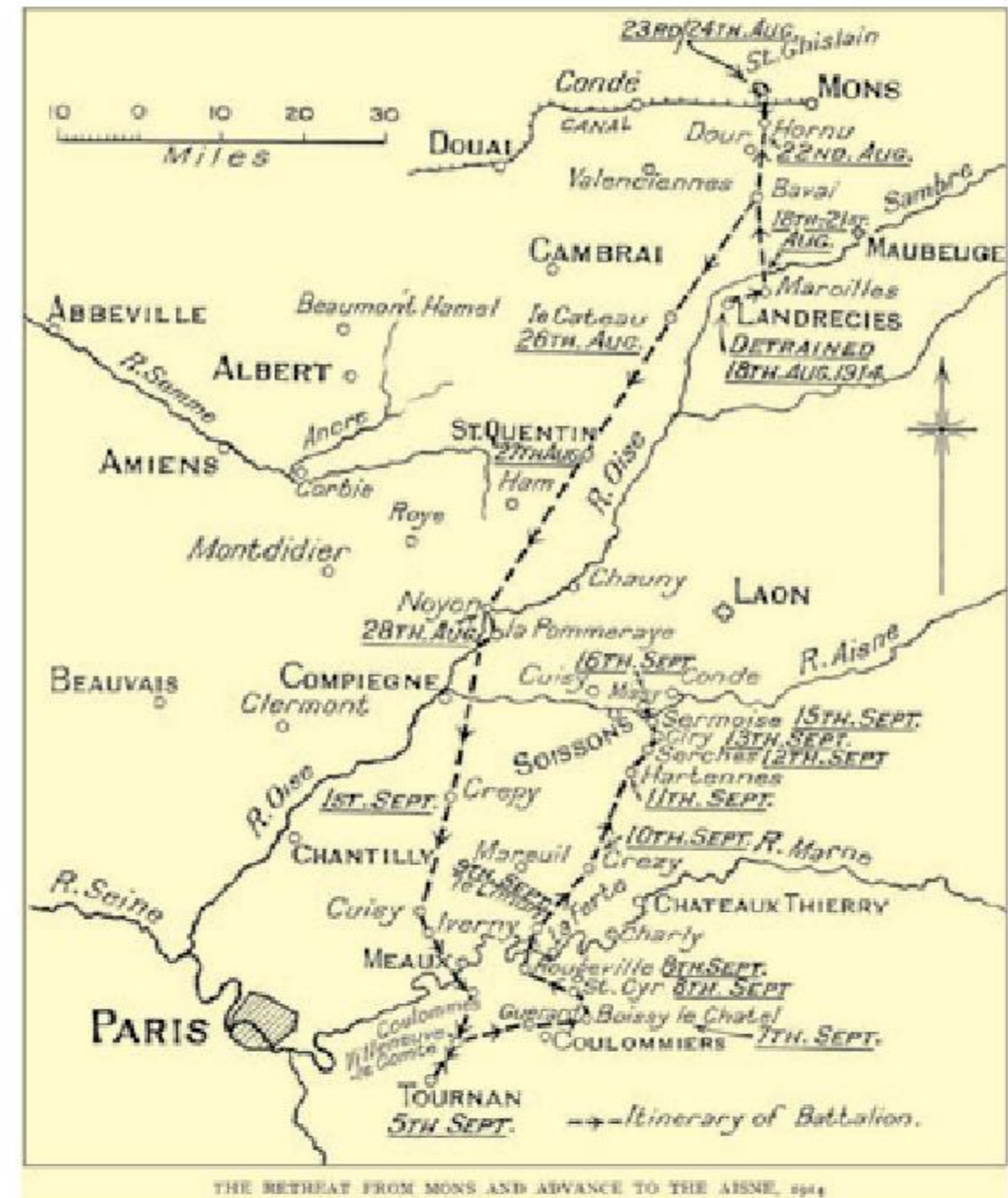
## THE DUKES THE GREAT WAR – MONS AND LE CATEAU

There is a great deal of information and comment about WW1 in the media at present, with the BBC in particular offering many programmes about the origins, events and consequences of this first truly global war. In this and subsequent 100th anniversary articles we look back at the contribution of the Dukes throughout the Great War, and at the places where battles were fought.

The 2nd Battalion the Duke of Wellington’s Regiment was in 13 Brigade, along with 2 KOYLI, 1 RWK, and 2 KOSB, all based in Dublin, Ireland. They sailed to war together in the SS Gloucestershire, a ship of the Bibby Line, from Dublin; “the ladies of Dublin presented every man with a packet of refreshments, an attention that was very much appreciated”, wrote Major CV Moloney of the 1st Battalion the Queen’s Own Royal West Kent Regiment (1 RWK, 50th Foot), whose personal account of the actions at Mons and Le Cateau has been of considerable help in preparing this article. The Dukes and the West Kents fought these early battles practically in each other’s pockets.

Prior to embarkation the Dukes received 345 reservists to bring them up to war strength. There was very little time to train them – a few days only, though of course what time there was, was fully used - or for them to get to know their new comrades. Their destination, other than being somewhere in France, was a secret. The battalion had seen extensive service in the Boer War, which ended in 1902, so the senior officers and WO/SNCO element had some active experience.

They landed at Le Havre on 16 August. Great Britain had declared war on Germany on 4 August, a mere 12 days earlier, but already the French army had launched an assault along its frontier with Germany, determined to recapture Alsace and Lorraine, lost to Germany in the Franco-Prussian War in 1870, and was being repulsed with heavy casualties. Seeking to protect the exposed French northern flank the BEF headed for the area of Charleroi, but events dictated a change of plan and they ended up on a 40 kilometre front around Mons, facing north.



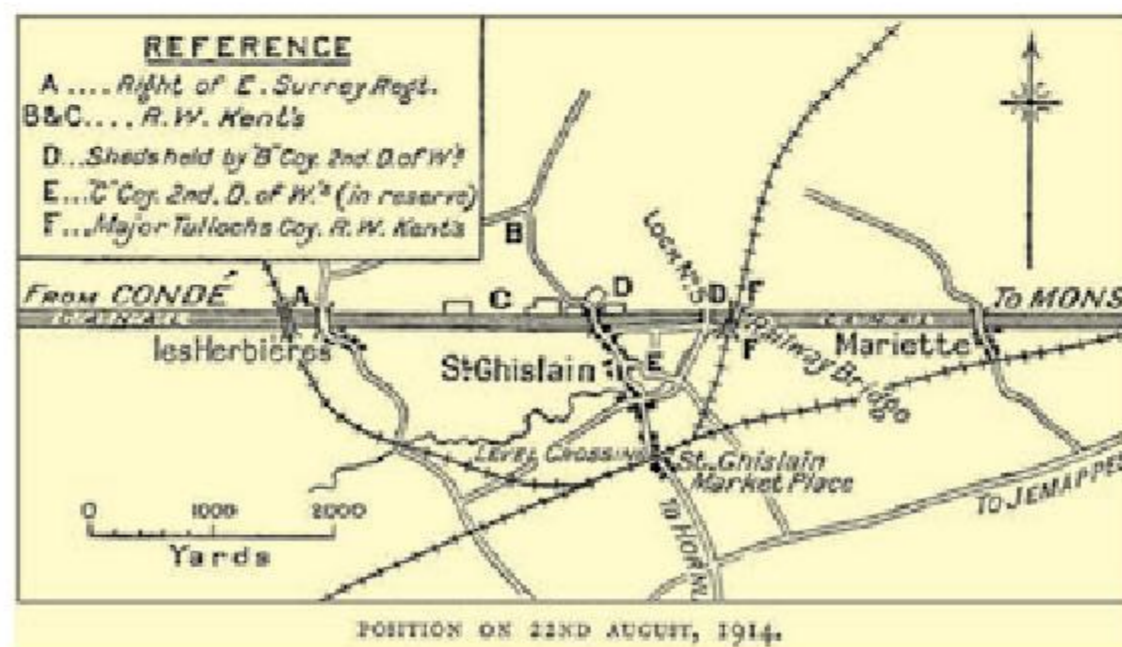
**This map shows the dates and locations of 2 DWR in the battle for, then the retreat from, Mons in August 1914.**

The French did not think that the German Army would ignore Belgium’s neutrality and come that way, and when they did they were too wrapped up in their own plans to respond. It was a parlous situation; the German right (northern) flank formations planned to storm through Belgium, hook either side of Brussels, and advance south, directly threatening Paris and the French left (northern) flank, and unless stopped would have been behind the five French Armies that were deployed all



along the Franco-German border. In practice getting behind Paris was too much for the German lines of communication, but by just coming round Brussels it posed a huge threat to the French flank.

The courage and tenacity of the Belgian Army gave the BEF time to get into position. Facing hugely superior numbers, they held up the German advance from 5 – 23 August; in particular the siege of Liege, from 6 - 16 August showed the scale of their resistance. As the BEF came through Belgium it was greeted with wild acclaim by the civilian population, and offered flowers, food, drinks and billet accommodation. Despite the uncertainty of their own situation, their conduct in treating our wounded, helping many not just to live but also in many cases to escape, was exemplary.



**Diagram of the initial deployment of 2 DWR companies and surrounding units on the evening of 22 August 1914. The remainder of the battalion at that stage were a mile in rear.**

By 22 August, 13, 14 and 15 Brigades (5 Division, in 2nd Army Corps, under command of Major General Smith-Dorrien) were all deployed to hold a part of that line, and in particular the bridges over the canal near St Ghislaine. Ahead of the Dukes 1 RWK were placed to defend six of the bridges and crossings, with one, A, company forward in and around Tertre, to provide protection for the Divisional Cavalry (9th Hussars) and cyclist recce troops when they withdrew.

2 DWR found itself facing north just under the Mons-



**Grande Place, St Ghislaine. The centre of activity for 2 DWR on 22 and early 23 August, with over half the battalion, stores carts, guns on limbers passing through, and crowds of cheering civilians.**



**A stretch of the Mons-Condé Canal, north of St Ghislaine, along the line defended by 1 RWK and forward elements of 2 DWR**

Condé Canal, to the west of Mons. This was an industrial mining area, described in the official war history a “a wilderness of deep ditches, straggling buildings, casual roads, streams and minor waterways, tracks and high slag heaps”. Very difficult terrain to fight in, get good fields of view and fire, and find your way about.



**The old railway bridge, defended by a company of 1 RWK and the machine gun section of 2 DWR**

B and C companies were up on the canal in support of 1 RWK, where the fields of fire were better; most of the remainder were in reserve back in St Ghislaine. Lt RJA Henniker, commanding 2 Pl A Coy 2 DWR then in St Ghislaine, told of the company’s “baptism of fire”. He wrote; “our many reservists had not had practice in loading the comparatively new rifle and also they had forgotten the drill. ...suddenly, as the coy was ordered to load, there was quite an intense fusillade as our men completed the loading of their rifles; shots rang out here there and everywhere, and the crowds of Belgians hanging out of their windows cheering us on hastily withdrew and took cover”. He himself decided at this point to discard his sword and scabbard into the care of an inn-keeper, as it seemed unlikely it would be useful and tripped him up when he ran.



**Recently erected memorial to A Company 1 RWK at Tertre, sitting in the centre of their company position..**

They were hardly in position when the German shelling began, followed by assault by infantry across the entire front. Cpl John Lucy of the Royal Irish Rifles, just along the line, later wrote of the moment the enemy advanced into view - "a great roar of musketry rent the air .... our rapid fire was appalling, even to us ... the worst marksman could not miss as he had only to fire into the brown of the masses of unfortunate enemy...". The British battalions knew their business; despite their numeric and artillery superiority, the Germans were held.

A Coy 1 RWK had come into contact first, certainly in 13 Brigade and possibly in the BEF as a whole other than recon troops, and their positions in Tertre came under some heavy shelling. In front of them, on the northern outskirts of Tertre were the 13th Brandenburg Grenadiers, supported by a machine gun company and a battery of artillery. There had been sporadic contact with German recon troops, but when the British positions were discovered – originally the Brandenburgers had been told the front was clear for 50 miles – they at once assaulted with bayonets fixed in mass. A Coy held its position until the enemy were right in front of it. To quote a Panzer Grenadier officer "the enemy seems to have waited for the moment of general assault...they enticed us to close range ...(when) a hellish fire broke loose and in thick swathes the deadly leaden fire was pumped on our heads, breasts and knees. Wherever I looked to left and right nothing but dead and blood-streaming, sobbing, writhing wounded. The unfortunate remainder is glued to the ground". This first assault was beaten back, but RWK casualties were heavy. And more assaults from fresh troops came over the next few hours. Eventually what was left of A Coy slowly withdrew in contact along prepared and recon routes which would not mask the fire of the men on the canal, through our troops on the bridges. We had little or no artillery that could impact on the battle, although a few guns were brought into action to good effect.

It was never intended that this line should be held for long; its job was to hold long enough for a defensive

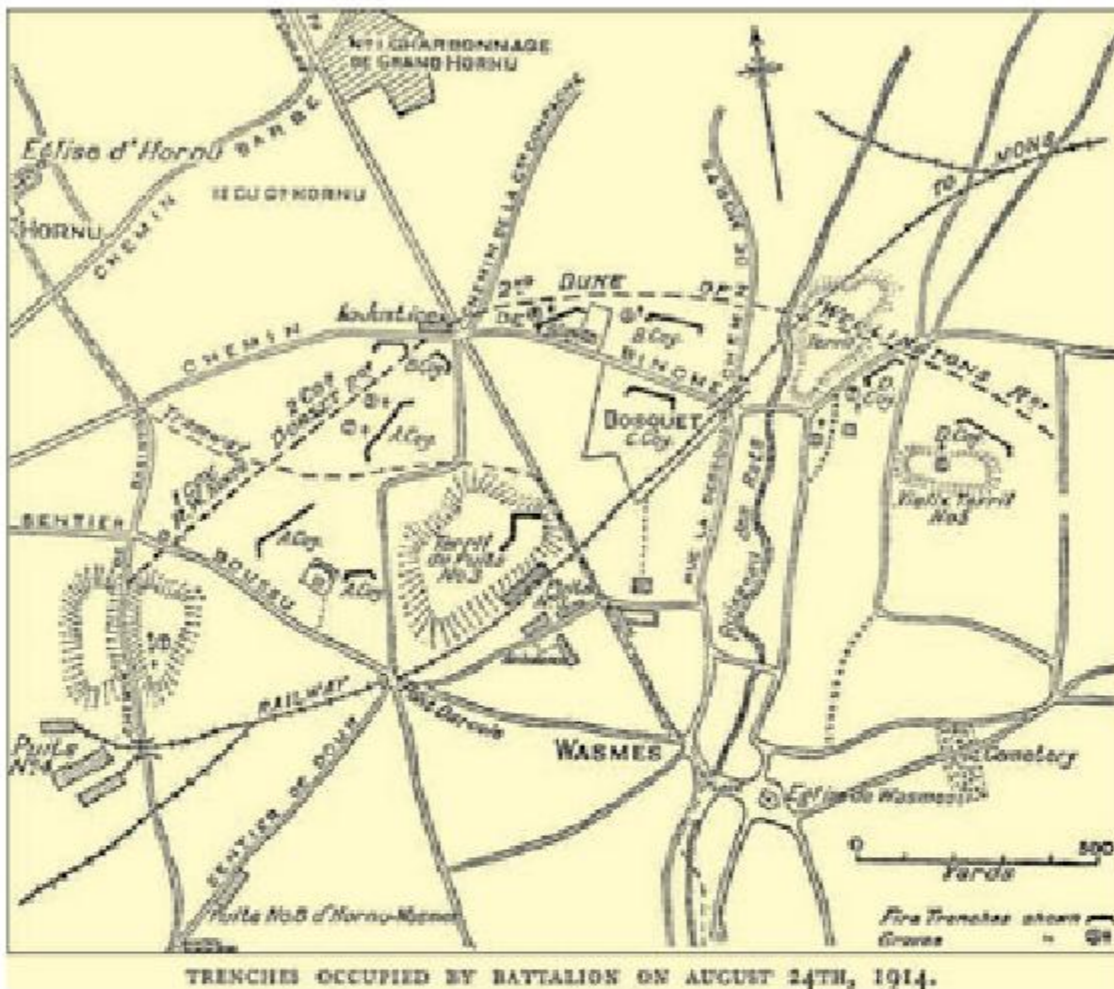
position to be prepared further back. Not all parts of this forward line along this extended front were as successful as 13 Brigade had been in repulsing the enemy's assaults, and the forward battalions were in danger of being outflanked, as indeed some were. German infantry had crossed the canal in places in the small hours. Meantime, the French 5th Army, whose northern flank the BEF was trying to protect, were in disarray and pulling back fast.

But 13 Brigade stuck to its bridges through the day, moving a further company from 2 DWR up to support the forward line. The two Dukes' machine guns were just 50 metres west of the railway bridge over the canal and took a direct hit from a shell; Lt Ozanne, the MG Officer was severely wounded. Eventually, early in the morning of 24 August, the bridges along the line were blown, and the forward battalions pulled back, 1 RWK passing through 2 DWR, which was occupying trenches in the northern fringes of Wasmes. Sub units of the West Kents paused to fight alongside the Dukes, and men of many units found themselves fighting alongside each other, any available officer taking command of those around him. As the Germans advanced through the narrow streets they were met with withering fire from rifles and machine guns from the British positions, suffering heavy casualties. Fresh German units were brought up and the attacks continued.



**Plaque attached to the front of the old town hall in St Ghislaine, in memory of Major Holland of the Field Artillery.**

At 1130 a battery sited with 2 DWR came under heavy artillery fire, and shortly afterwards, at 1300, "the Germans debouched in thick skirmishing formation followed by dense masses ..... on the left front, but were greeted by such a rain of bullets from rifles and machine guns at 800 yards and such a salute from the battery, that they stopped dead. Under cover of this final stroke, the guns limbered up and the battalion withdrew ..... The Dukes suffered heavily, their casualties reaching nearly 400 of all ranks, but they had driven back six battalions" (extract from the official war history). The order to withdraw had been given at 1300 hours, just as the attacks



**The CO's diagram of the defensive positions of 2 DWR 24 August 1914.**

came in, but somehow the Dukes, probably too busy with the action in front of them, did not get the message. Having held the enemy and finding themselves alone, they eventually pulled back. The actual casualties were 36 killed, 43 wounded, but a massive 244 were missing and subsequently reported either killed or taken prisoner. A third of the battalion, including the badly wounded CO (who sent a somewhat laconic message to his Second in Command; "tell MacLeod to carry on"! ) was gone.

Next, almost without pause 13 Brigade marched 14 miles to St Vaast La Vallée, where there were neither water nor other supplies.

The retreat was closely followed by the advancing German army. The British formations were exhausted, had had little sleep and no food for 36 hours, the same or better than the French who had been fighting for 2 weeks and were also retreating at best speed, but along lines of their own devising, which often crossed those of their allies: communications between allies, and indeed amongst our own formations, were poor. By nightfall on 25 August the order to turn at bay and stand and fight was given to II Corps by General Smith-Dorrien, as more time had to be won to reassemble to formation and the men were exhausted. 13 Brigade, with 2 KOSB and 2 KOYLI forward and 2 DWR and 1 RWK in support, by daybreak on 26 August was in position to the west of the old Roman road (now the D932) running south west from Le Cateau, with 14 Brigade ahead of them nearer the town. They dug in. They did not have long to wait. This is wide open country.

Shell fire on the Dukes' position was extremely heavy. By 1600 contact was made with advancing Germans. Captain O'Kelly, commanding a half company of men from several units, saw an enemy party of twelve horses dragging a big gun. They engaged with their only machine gun and shot most of the horses. A second party arrived and got the same treatment, but suddenly shells burst in in the middle of the small position, killing several men. Bloodied, confused and exhausted, they pulled back, to try to find the rest of their unit, and the retreat continued. Or, to put it the official way, "the brigade retired by extended lines of half battalions".

The first leg was a 25 kilometre march along the line of the Roman road to Estrées, "there was a hopeless block of transport, guns and infantry extending for miles.

The headstones of the graves at Hautrage WGC Cemetery of Captain CO Denman-Jubb and Lieutenant LE "Boy" Russell. Jubb was the Adjutant; on 24 August he was sent by the CO to assist B and D Companies to pull back from the canal into a new defensive position. He was killed by artillery watching the Dukes machine gunners in action. Russell was a platoon commander in C Company 2DWR, whose platoon was overwhelmed by the German advance on 24 August. Corporal Williams of that Company wrote "..... Mr Russell's platoon was on the extreme right. I could not see any British troops further to the right..... I came quite close to Mr Russell; he had only 9 men left with him. He was not properly entrenched as he had only just previously been moved further to the right in order to try to get in touch with the brigade on our right. The Germans were all around his front, right and rear, and at very close quarters. More Germans were advancing across the cornfield in which the platoon was situated, carrying stacks of corn as shields in front of them. Mr Russell and his platoon were firing the 'mad minute' with their bayonets fixed. I saw the Germans charge the platoon, who fought to the last, and were all either killed or wounded.



It rained... and everyone was nearly dead with fatigue, lack of sleep and want of food. ... Every wagon was full of wounded men who could not march." They stopped at 2200 and rested for a few hours, then marched again at 0100. Contact with the enemy was broken and over the next few days the retreat continued. The BEF crossed the Aisne on 30 August, by which time general good order and communications between units and formations had been restored.

The Germans got a severe shock at Le Cateau. Their plan was to attack in such strength that nothing could

withstand them, and both at Mons and again at Le Cateau they found determined troops that held their ground long enough to inflict appalling casualties, though a great cost to themselves. By 6 September the British and French were south of the river Marne, faced about and advanced in counter attack, forcing the Germans to retreat to a strong position overlooking the river Aisne. Here the allied advance stopped. The stage was set for the next major action in which 2 DWR was engaged, the first battle of Ypres in November 1914, and something about that will appear in the next edition of the Iron Duke.

### 15 Year Old Boy in 2 DWR

Cyril Ford came across this cutting from the Huddersfield Examiner of 22 May 1915. Private Jack Gibson was serving with C Company in its machine gun section. In his letter from the Casino Hospital at Le Havre he wrote:

*"I am sorry to say that I am not well at present. I am in hospital suffering from gas poisoning. I wish I was better and out of it. It is terrible out here, you cannot explain what it is to see your comrades killed by your side and have to tread over them. It is more*

*like murder than anything else. God knows when it will finish, the sooner the better. I pray that I may live to see the finish. I think I am the youngest boy out here. It is an honour to you to have a son of fifteen years in such a war as this"*.

It seems unlikely that his parents would have agreed with that sentiment. Young Gibson was with the battalion at Hill 60. The 2 DWR Old Comrades register lists a J Gibson, so it is presumed that is he and that he survived the war.

## The Dukes in Korea

*"Topper" Brown finds an article about 20th Field Regiment Royal Artillery with plentiful references to the Dukes in Korea, The author, GK Fawcett Esq, has agreed that we may reproduce extracts.*

When the 20th Field Regiment succeeded the 14th it assumed responsibility for the direct support of the Division's 29th Infantry Brigade, comprising 1st Battalion The King's Regiment, 1st Battalion The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, and 1st Battalion Black Watch. The division held a line of about eight miles stretching from a major hill feature known as Hill 355, or Little Gibraltar, west of the Imjin River (the right of the line) to across and just west of the Samichon River ending in a complex conjunction of ridges known as The Hook (the left of the line)..... On 24 January (1952) the Regiment was involved in a significant initiative against the enemy.

A Duke of Wellington's patrol had sighted work on what appeared to be a new tunnel entrance into, and exit out of, the hub of the enemy's defence works opposite their own position. It was decided that this should be destroyed. The plan called for a dawn bombardment and smoke-screening of the position by artillery fire, as well as from the rest of the divisional artillery, plus tanks and mortars, to demoralise and confuse the enemy. At the same time other enemy positions would come under diversionary bombardment, further to confuse. At 0800 hours the assault party of Dukes crossed the 1000 yards or so under cover of the bombardment and successfully blew up the tunnel with explosives and killed its occupants with grenades. All returned safely.

..... During the month of May 1953 .... The Chinese made their most determined, though not final, effort to take the Hook. On 7/8 May, when the Black Watch were defending it, they came at it again in great numbers. With support from 20th Field the Black

Watch repulsed the swarms of Chinese infantry who crossed to within twenty yards of the Hook's forward trenches where the barbed wire protective apron was spread. In retrospect it can be seen that this was reconnaissance in force prior to the real battle which was to take place on the night of 28 May.....

The Dukes relieved the Black Watch on the night of 12/13 May. Intelligence reports indicated that a major attack was imminent..... The Dukes worked furiously, mainly at night, to prepare to meet the attack. These preparations had to be undertaken whilst an estimated 10,000 artillery and mortar shells were falling on their position in the days prior to the attack..... . The attack when it came was awesome in its intensity. The Dukes were subjected to a series of mass assaults by Chinese infantry (the proverbial "wave after wave"). Hand to hand fighting took place in the forward positions.

During the battle control of the Divisional artillery's 25 Pounders and 4.2 inch mortars was in the hands of CO 20th Field. The CRA controlled the mediums and heavies, having agreed ..... a general line that would divide the spheres of influence. The CRA bombarded the approaches, the forming up areas, the places where radio intercepts showed that the enemy was using to control their attack by radio and pyrotechnic signals, the routes the Chinese were using to move forward.

20th Field, together with the Canadian and New Zealand Field Regiments, provided the close defensive fire in direct support of the Dukes. .... 20th Field fired 13,400 rounds; the other two Field Regiments

combined fired about 10,000 and the mortars of 61 Light Regiment 5000. The CRA had at his disposal 8 batteries of 155 guns and howitzers, one battery each of 8-inch howitzers and 244 howitzers and 3 ripples of rockets – all USA – and 74 Medium Battery RA. Together they fired 5000 rounds. ....

Writing about the battle some 20 years later Maj Gen Sir Douglas Kendrew, Commander 29 Infantry Brigade at the time, said “.....All the battalions

played their full part in this battle; however the main attack fell on the Dukes and their fighting qualities were outstanding.... Artillery played more than a major part in the planning of the defence. Great praise must be given to Lt Col Geoffrey Brennan who, with his counter-bombardment officers, executed the fire plan and so decimated the attacking Chinese that the infantry survived the waves of men who tried to overrun this key position”.

### Still Marching Together

Reuben Holroyd, Dukes Korea veteran and former publisher of this Journal, sent in a recent (December 2013) copy of “The Morning Calm”, the Journal of the British Korea Veterans Association, of which he is editor and publisher, which mentions a number of Dukes, with some photographs which may be of interest to our readers.



**Young Dukes soldiers in pre Korea training in Hong Kong.**



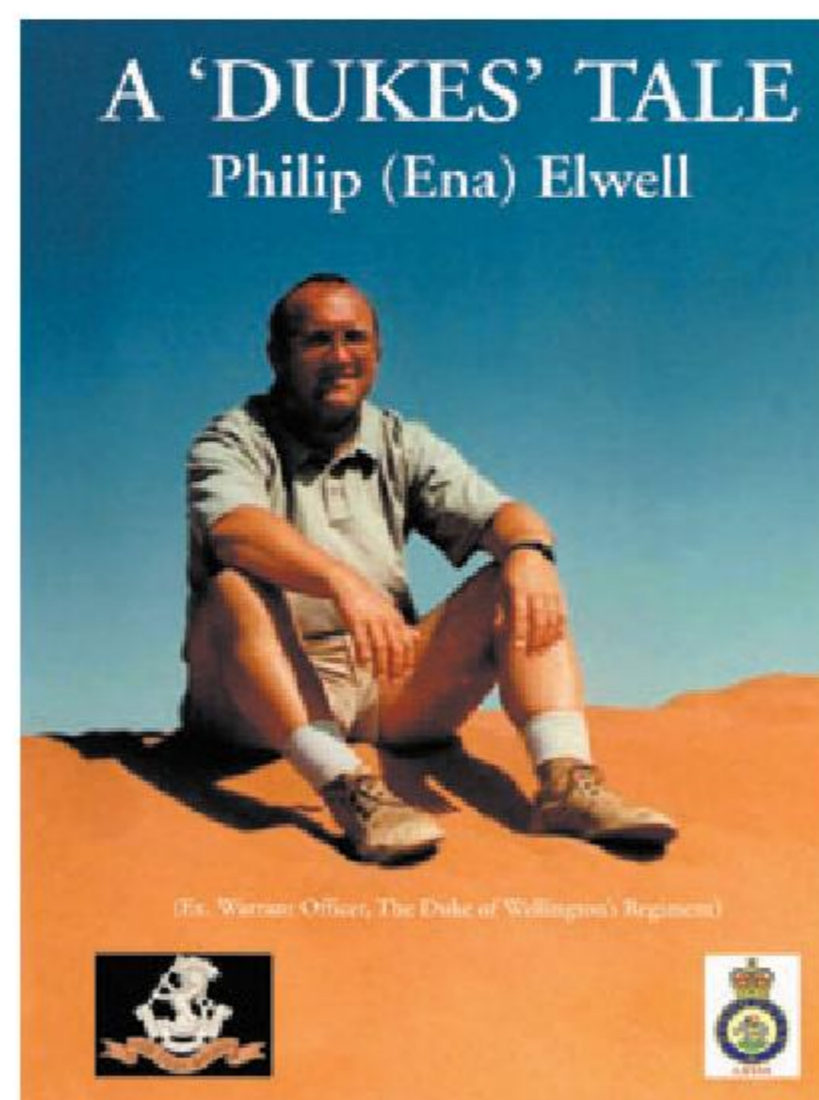
**Reuben Holroyd with Korea Chelsea Pensioner veterans at a reunion at Westminster Abbey.**

## BOOKS

### A “Dukes” Tale, by Ena Elwell

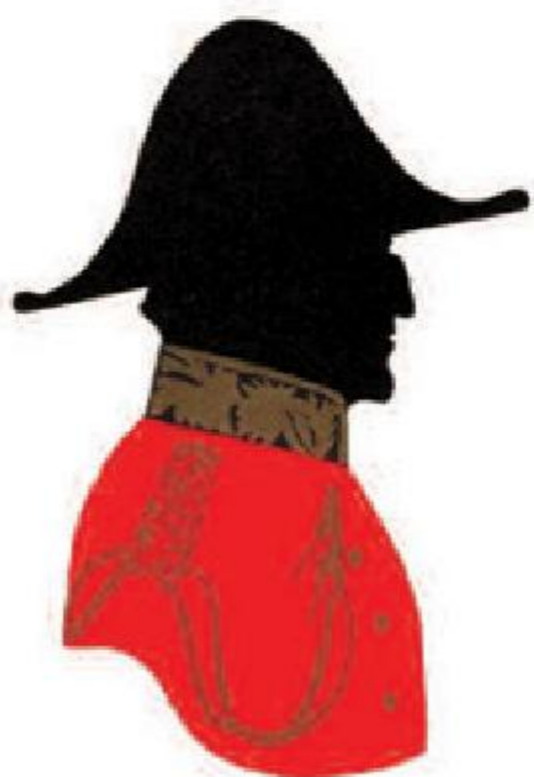
*Review by Scott Flaving*

‘Ena’ Elwell has produced a highly readable, entertaining and quite unusual account of his service in the British Army in peacetime - from his enlistment as a Boy Soldier in 1970, his 22 years with the Duke of Wellington’s Regiment, rising through the ranks to Warrant Officer Class 2, to his discharge from the Territorial Army in 2001, covering postings to such places as Northern Ireland, Germany, Gibraltar, Namibia and Latvia, as well as exercises in Norway, Canada, Cyprus and Belgium. He covers the routine of Battalion life, the training, both as a recruit and, later, as an instructor, and his career courses, punctuated with the many operational tours of Northern Ireland undertaken under Op BANNER in the ‘70s and ‘80s. He also describes some interesting postings to Strensall and Namibia, where the professionalism and resourcefulness of the British Army is highlighted. Sport, in particular Rugby, has been an important element in his career and many hard fought matches and considerable successes on the field are portrayed, not forgetting the post-match socials. The stresses, strains and joys of



family life in a service environment are sensitively covered, the pressure of constantly cleaning and packing up home, moving and taking over another quarter, outweighed by the variety of locations and fantastic opportunities for the whole family to experience a different way of life, now sadly all but lost to the current generation of soldiers' families. The book is well illustrated with some inspiring images, featuring family, colleagues, postings and interests. However, this edition, although well written and an easy read, is marred by the proof reader not having a forces background and many incorrect military phrases and abbreviations will jar with

many readers. There are many humorous anecdotes, which confirm the fact that he was a well-liked and respected Battalion 'character', as much due to his love of fun as his undoubted professionalism, both as a soldier and a sportsman. His love of life, his Regiment and his comrades shines through these pages. Highly recommended. Copies, at £10.00 plus £2.50 for 1st class UK p&p, payable by cheque or bank transfer, are available from Mr. P Elwell, Endcliffe Hall, Endcliffe Vale Road, Sheffield, S10 3EU. philipelwell@yahoo.co.uk, 01904 668233 or Mobile 07787 703070.



## DUKES' DIARY

the Country compare with the city?". I think the only thing to say is that it is different. It has many advantages; the lovely countryside (when you see it through the rain), the fresh air, and the closer approach to normal soldiering. On the other hand we do have fairly long periods when nothing much is happening and it is easy for boredom to set in and for our standards of alertness to drop off."

However, the picture seems to have changed a little soon afterwards, judging by Colonel Huxtable's introduction to DD4. "It is with the deepest regret that we have to record the death of Private George Lee of Alma Company. He was shot whilst on patrol in the Ballymurphy on 6 June 1972.....We have had a busy month since the last edition.....we have unfortunately suffered a number of casualties from gunshot wounds and as a result of an explosion. Those involved were Cpl Dyson, L/Cpl Wright, L/Cpl Foster (REME), and Pte Dales all of Somme Company.....In case this note sounds as if it is all give and no take, since we have been here we have recovered 24 weapons,

The last issue of the Iron Duke published extracts from the first 3 (of 9) Dukes' Diaries, published during our first Northern Ireland tour in 1971, which included the eventful period of the internment of suspects. We can now look at numbers 4 and 5, with the Battalion spread out around the border area of Northern Ireland, with an offshoot company in Ballymurphy, West Belfast, in 1972.

Firstly a correction for which apologies are due and offered. The Commanding Officer for this second NI tour was not Lt Col Bray, as written in error last time, but was still Lt Col Huxtable.

The deployment was as follows – Bn HQ, Command and Admin Companies in Bessbrook Mill; Drums Platoon in Bessbrook RUC Station; Alma Company in the Henry Taggart Hall, Ballymurphy; Burma in Bessbrook Tech School (no pupils to share with!); Corunna in Newry; Somme HQ and the Mortar Platoon in Crossmaglen; the Anti-Tank Platoon in Forkhill; and lastly the Vigilant and Assault Pioneer Platoons in Newtownhamilton.

In his introduction to Dukes' Diary (DD) 3, Colonel Huxtable wrote "One of the questions I find hardest to answer is "How does a tour in



**C Coy, Ptes Watson, Fawcett, Wizzard, Jarman, Savery and Horsfall 56–7 PI members with only one fag between them.**

over 2000 rounds of ammunition and 1878 lbs of explosive, we have effected 38 arrests for various offences and we are all satisfied that we are doing our share of the work”.

If you recognise yourself in any of these photographs, or can add a comment or have a tale to tell, write in.

The following extracts are taken verbatim from DDs 3 and 4.

- The Alma... had a platoon employed in Londonderry City, then two platoons. After a week we were given a piece of real estate to cover in the Sperrin Mountains. ....On Sunday 4th May.....we were put at one hour's standby for Belfast and at 10 o'clock in the evening we walked onto the Maidstone. At 4 o'clock on Monday morning we drove into Ballymurphy.....the locals welcomed us with stones, bricks and petrol bombs.....
- Every day between 4 pm and 10pm the daily ritual of stoning and bottling begins. Paint bombs are a favourite as Cpl Noble will verify (yellow actually, from the head down).
- There are two sorts of fool in this world. Those that have never been to Ireland and those that go there twice!
- The days of the rubber bullet and the baton seem to have left the platoon and in their place comes the peace and quiet of the countryside, the claymore, the elusive stolen car and, when things get really hotted up, some cattle rustling.
- As you can see we are back in Ulster again, but this time we're out in the country. The countryside tests out map



*Ptes. Bromley and Wizzard of Corunna Coy debut from a 'Pig' when patrolling in the Newry area.*



**Capt Mellor, Adjutant at the time, escorts a civilian VIP round the battalion area.**



*Corunna Coy cleaning a weapon. Ptes. Wilkinson, O'Connor, Tointon, L/Cpl Walker, Ptes Daggett, Simpson, Steadman and O'Garro (on top again)*





reading so hard Sgt Robson goes on a “mystery tour” every time he’s out on mobile.

- 5 Platoon’s joke corner: Question – how many Irishmen does it take to clean an upstairs window? Answer – two, one to clean the window and one to hold the ladder. Question – how many does it take to clean a downstairs window? Answer – Fifty two, one to clean the window, one to hold the ladder and fifty to dig the hole to put the ladder in. (Steady lads; I could get done for jokes like that nowadays – Ed).
- Precisely at six minutes after (Corunna Company) officially taking over the UDR Centre a large explosion rent the air, by courtesy of the IRA, which in its timing seemed to be a farewell to our predecessors and a welcome to us. Sunray’s smile vanished as he struggled with his kit with “where’s my vehicles”? Sunray Minor was communing with nature and has now been asked not to use the “little room” at such important times!
- Corunna HQ quote: I am going to count up to five



*Pte Morsfall 28 of Corunna Coy keeps guard on the scene of the car-bomb which exploded ten minutes after 'C' Coy took over in Newry.*

and if you are not out of bed by the time I get to twelve, you're in trouble Boguszewski.

- Hello 1 this is 13 two members of my sub-unit are being chased down New Barnsley by a two year old kid brandishing a hammer. 1, roger, do you require help from the stand-by platoon? 13, no I think I can deal with this myself.

- Heard in passing.

“White, what time is it? Half past Corporal. Half past what? I don't know, I haven't got a little hand on my watch.

Hello 21 this is 2, move to grid I spell 249176, over. 21 wilfred, out.

Ops officer to foot patrols. “A piper Aztec will be flying overhead on an authorised flight this morning. Do not stop and detain”.

RMO to OC C Coy. “Pte ..... has tonsillitis.

OC. Is it infectious? RMO. Not unless you kiss him. Adjutant, refuting accusations that he is never at his desk. “It's not swanning; it's spreading goodwill”.

Hello 3 this is 33D, are you in contact with me, over? 3 no over. 33D roger out.

- If all the ice that formed in the guttering of Bessbrook Mill during the winter was laid end to end in the Mill passages, it would melt.
- Forecast of (unlikely) MT events for July 72. 6th; something goes wrong in MT, Hustwick not blamed. 7th, Hustwick admitted to Belfast Musgrave Park with shock. 8th; Cpl Lambton joins monastery and takes vow of silence. 9th; 86 monks with earache join MT Platoon. 23rd; Jamie comes back with definite proof that the Pope is a welder at 8 Fd Wksps. 28th; Argyle and Bolton Wanderers arrive, MT refuse to leave Mill and stage sit in.

## Museum News

The museum remains in good order with over 18,000 visitors a year - substantially more than our two sister infantry regiment museums in Yorkshire! The major achievement of this year has been the passing of the five yearly re-accreditation of the museum upon which the museum's stature and ability to apply for grants rests. From May till July next year Bankfield Museum will host the the northern exhibition from the National Army Museum to mark the 200th anniversary of the battle of Waterloo. This will draw heavily on our own museum to the benefit of us both. More immediately the major challenge facing the museum is the relocation of the archives once the offices at Wellesley Park close. Calderdale Council have very kindly agreed that the archives can move to Bankfield to join the remainder of our museum collection where they will be housed within the library at Bankfield. Sadly this year also sees the departure of Franne Wills, head of Bankfield and Calderdale Museums to a new job with the Leicestershire Museum Services. She has been our accredited museum curator for the eight years she has been with Calderdale and throughout been an enormously supportive ally, not least through the accreditation process which depended heavily on her expertise and willingness to go the 'extra mile'. Dick Mundell and David Harrap took her out for a farewell 'thank you' lunch at the Shibden Mill Inn together with Richard Macfarlane, who will take over Franne's responsibilities for our museum, and John Spencer the museum military keeper.”



**Farewell lunch for Franne Wills at the Shibden Mill Inn. From left Richard MacFarlane, David Harrap, Franne Wills, Dick Mundell, John Spencer.**

# Association News

President: Brigadier AD Meek CBE.

General Secretary: Major R. Heron, Wellesley Park, Halifax, HX2 0BA.

## BRANCHES

**Halifax/Bradford:** 7.00 for 7.30pm second Tuesday of each month in the Saville Room, North Bridge Leisure Centre, Halifax. *Secretary:* Mr P. R. Taylor, 7 Amy Street, Ovenden, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX3 5QB.

**Huddersfield:** 8.00pm last Friday of each month at WOs & Sgts Mess; TA Centre, St Paul's Street, Huddersfield. *Secretary:* Mrs P. Harley, 11 Wain Park, Berry Brow, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD4 7QX.

**Keighley:** 8.30pm last Thursday of each month at the Keighley TA Centre. *Secretary:* Mr David Connor, 144 Whitehead Lane, Keighley BD22 6LU

**London:** 12 noon at the Union Jack Club; Sunday 16 June; Sunday 15 Sept (AGM). *A/Secretary:* John Greenway, 35 Church Avenue, Farnborough, Hants. GU14 7AT. Tel: 01252 514786. E.mail: jbkbandjpg@aol.com

**Sheffield:** 8.00pm second Tuesday of each month at WOs' & Sergeants' Mess, 38 Signals Regiment, Manor Top, Sheffield. *Secretary:* Mr C. Withers, 18 Wheel Lane, Grenoside, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S35 8RN.

**Skipton:** 8.00pm second Thursday of each month at The White Rose Club, Newmarket Street, Skipton. *Secretary:* Mrs M. Bell, 39 Western Road, Skipton, BD23 2RU.

**York:** 8.00pm first Monday of each month at the Post Office Social Club, Marygate, York.

**TERRITORIAL AND SERVICE BATTALIONS' OCA 5th Battalion.** *Secretary:* Mr J. T. Payne, 101 Bradley Road, Bradley, Huddersfield, HD2 1QU.

**9th Battalion (146 Regiment) RAC.** *Secretary:* Mr T. Moore, The Old Rectory, The Green, Marston Moreteyne, Bedfordshire, MK43 0NF.

## The Garden of Remembrance 2013

On Thursday 7 November 2013 the London Branch was, as usual, represented at Westminster Abbey for the dedication of The Garden of Remembrance at 11.00 am in the presence of HRH Prince Philip. John Kelly, Mac and Bidy Dowdy, Bob Temple and Mavis attended with John Greenway. David Miller was also there with his daughter in law, as was Donald Palmer, who went on to join the Dukes London Group in their poppy collection at Fenchurch Street Station in the City. After paying our respects at the regimental Memorial Plot, within the Yorkshire Regimental Plot, it was a happy posse which moved on for refreshment at a hostelry close to Birdcage Walk.

On Remembrance Sunday itself our numbers were reduced to Bob Temple with Mavis, John and Judith Greenway and John Lobanov-Rostovsky. We were particularly pleased to be joined for our short ceremony of remembrance by Chris Gordon, a great nephew of Private Henry Tandey VC DCM MM. It was a real pleasure to have him with us.

Note - Private Henry Tandey VC, 5 DWR – his citation reads: *“For most conspicuous bravery and initiative during the capture of the village and crossings at Marcoing and the subsequent counter-attack on 28 September 1918. When, during the advance on Marcoing his platoon was held up by machine gun fire, he at once crawled forward, located the machine gun and, with a lewis gun team, knocked it out. On arrival at the crossing he restored the plank bridge under a hail of bullets, thus*



**Chris Gordon and John Lobanov-Rostovsky at the Regimental Plot**



**Bob Temple lowers the Branch Standard, with John Greenway.**

*enabling the first crossing to be made at this vital spot. Later in the evening he with eight comrades was surrounded by an overwhelming number of Germans and though the position was apparently hopeless, he led a*

*bayonet charge through them, fighting so fiercely that 37 of the enemy were driven into the hands of the remainder of his Company. Although twice wounded he refused to leave until the fight was won".*

## **Yorkshire Commemoration Parade**

**The following has been received from Major Pat Ralph.**

### **THE LORD-LIEUTENANT OF WEST YORKSHIRE'S FIRST WORLD WAR COMMEMORATION PARADE LEEDS 26th July 2014 - PARADE INSTRUCTION**

On 26th July 2014, The Lord-Lieutenant's Parade to commemorate West Yorkshire's sacrifice and commitment during the First World War will begin on Millennium Square, Leeds. The Parade is combined with that of the Yorkshire Regiment's commemoration of the Battle of Bligny\*, which will take place at Leeds Minster following a service of commemoration. It is the Lord-Lieutenant's intention to hold a dignified Parade that demonstrates to the people of West Yorkshire the selfless service given to the nation by our forefathers.

This is a fantastic opportunity for the Yorkshire Regiment Associations and independents to dig out their Medals shine the boots and get marching. In particular it is a chance to get as many standards from all our associations on parade on this special day.

I have a very detailed letter in my possession about the

event, so that if you are taking part I will mail out or email direct to participants

This letter is intended to provide participating Units, organisations and individuals with information that will allow them to attend the Parade, be at the correct place, at the correct time, and where necessary, in the correct form of dress. We have been given 45 places, so it will be first come first served.

You can ring me, write to me above, or email as above. Come on let's get out there especially all you standard bearers

Pat

Major Pat Ralph MM  
Assistant Regimental Secretary/Chairman YRA  
The Yorkshire Regiment

\* The Battle of Bligny took place in Spring 1918.

## Joint Meeting of Associations

In April each year the London Associations of the PWO, Green Howards and the Dukes hold a joint meeting, hosted this year by the PWO at the Union Jack Club, Waterloo, London, on Saturday 26 April. There was an excellent turnout of over 30 members. After a reception at which veterans of the three cap-badges mingled freely, all enjoyed lunch in the refurbished dining room.

Major Peter Hoppe made the long journey from the north east to meet up with Colin Aukett. Both boxed for the battalion, (Major Hoppe was Army heavyweight champion) and are seen holding a copy of the Iron Duke in which both featured in the boxing team.



**Peter Hoppe  
(left)  
and  
Colin Aukett**

**Presidents/Chairmen of the Associations and London Branches, with the Dukes London Branch Chairman, Brig John Greenway, on the left and Brig David Santa-Ollala in his Green Howards role on the right.**



## Op Herring Picture

1 YORKS commissioned a painting to commemorate their recent Op Herring tours. A copy is below and it is available to purchase? It is priced at £15 per A3, unframed print and is open to anyone. All enquiries via 1 YORKS RSO/Mess Secretary, Captain Ian Atkins at 1 YORKS, Battlesbury Bks, Warminster, BA12 9DT or 01985 223362.

### Staffing at Association HQ

As Brigadier Meek writes at the front of the Journal, Major Bob Heron, although fully retired, has agreed to volunteer continue to man our HQ, which for the time being is still at Wellesley Park in Halifax. We are extremely grateful to him for this. Please bear in mind that he is on his own and cannot be in the office all the time.

### Burma Company Stepping Out



Brigadier Johnny Walker leads Burma Company at a St George's Day Parade, Mons Barracks, Aldershot 1975. WO2 Dave Hughes, CSM Burma, follows (*see obituaries*).

### The Halifax Depot

From the Iron Duke of 1932, quoting "Annals of Yorkshire" by John Mayhall, and titled "A vain protest". "March 26th 1873 – a deputation said to represent from 4000 to 5000 of the inhabitants of Halifax had an interview with the Duke of Cambridge and Mr Cardwell, and submitted objections to the establishment of a military centre in Halifax or adjacent to it. April 1st, 1873

– a telegram was received in Halifax from Col Akroyd MP, stating that the War Office had decided to form a military centre at the above named borough".

How times and opinions change. The Halifax Courier carried a recent article headed "Last Army link with the Barracks at risk". Former Calderdale councillor Grenville Horsfall of Brighouse said it would be a shame for Halifax to lose its last link with Wellesley Park. "The Headquarters shouldn't be taken out of Halifax" he said. The article also quotes Edgar Gaukroger of Lee Mount, Halifax, who served in the Dukes from 1952 to 1969. "It would be a sad day but no one seems to bother any more. We have good turnouts for reunion dinners but in time they will go. The Army will not get the recruits like it used to get. Youths joined the Dukes because of family connections".

Our old RHQ has the patina of long use, like a well-worn but comfortable and still serviceable favourite armchair, as this photograph shows. It will indeed be a sad day, but one of many over the last few years.



**RHQ Boardroom**



On 3 May 2014 a northern based group of Dukes and their wives and partners, (DOGs and DOLs) met for their annual dinner in Millington (near Pocklington). It was an informal and cheerful occasion, enjoyed by all. The Editor and his wife were honoured to be the Group's guest for the evening.

### Fortune favours the Jihal frezi...

Andy McNeilis reports on a remarkable find

*Question:* What do you get if you combine one Para, an intuitive Dukes London Group convenor, a chicken jihal frezi, a curious French baron and Andy McNeilis' chequebook?

*Answer:* Oddly enough – a wonderful piece of Duke's regimental history – the Inter-Company Rugby Shield. Interested or puzzled? , read on. It all started with a sharp eyed Para- Stephen Cooper, emailing Liam McCormick.

“Liam - Incredible- see photo. Saw this in a market stall, Brick Lane East End London. Regimental rugby shield. Being a Para we don't do regimental history so I thought it had been pinched from London Scottish. Only when I looked up Fortune favours did I realise it was you Crap Hats (ha ha) ...I can't remember exactly where but can give coordinates if rescue mission to be mounted. Stop”

As our readership can imagine Liam was truly amazed- “ a Para that can read AND write...hmm- better get onto this” and immediately pinged the photo and email to Peter Lee – Convenor of the Dukes London Group. Pete Lee “Wow, Liam- that IS amazing- let me get the photo analysed – we lawyers being so forensic these days” Pete carefully scrutinised the evidence. He called Liam back...

“Liam – I think it is a fake.” “Why?” “Liam – it says that Corunna Company won the Inter Co Cup four times...I mean, come on?!”

The shield passing muster, Pete issues an all-points bulletin – DLG- our mission- and you DO choose to accept it- is the recover the Regimental Shield... I repeat...”

As luck would have it, Andy McNeilis, man of the people and never one really to be comfortable with the Chelsea set, happens to live just off Brick Lane. A keen watcher of Dickenson's Bargain Hunter, he rose to the challenge and promised he would salvage the item, and thus, an important piece of regimental history. Just one problem, being an ex Ops Officer, Time and Geography were not his gifts and he reluctantly reminded himself that he was, in fact, working that week in Singapore – not exactly a quick dash to the Aldgate East tube station.

Luckily, Andy Mc's father in law – the imposing Baron de Tourtoulon De Lasalle –( Alain Edouard Charles, and known Bonapartiste ) was visiting Andrew's London home. Desperate – Andy rang Alain and explained the mission. The response was, perhaps predictable. “So let me see. Did I hear you right- the famous Duke of Wellington needs help from a Frenchie to recover lost property in a junk yard? How times HAVE changed!”

Knowing that within every Frenchman lurks a gastronome, Andrew Mc promised the reward of a slap up Brick Lane curry if said item was procured. The deal was cut, et voila la chasse, c'est commence!

Due to the wonders of the Baron's zeal combined with modern technology- the target was acquired quickly. Andrew and Alain confirmed the hooky gear as the real deal (the clue being “Hook” company 1953 winners) on a brisk Sunday afternoon conversing via skype on a crisp



**Andy McNeilis holds the the inter-company rugby shield.**

afternoon from Brick Lane (in E1) to a dark sweaty night in the Fullerton hotel Singapore.

The piece is beautiful and once in Andrew's hands the appreciation deepened. Ranging from 1905, missing out the Great War and WW2, the plagues finally end in the 1970's. Seeing the Alma, Burma, Hook and even Coruna brought back superb memories. I suspect countless gallons of blood, sweat inspiration and perspiration had toiled between wars to settle inter-company rivalry. What a privilege to own such a piece, but surely selfish to keep it to oneself.

What to do with it then. Any ideas?

### Soldiers' Protest

Readers of the Iron Duke would have spluttered into their cornflakes on 10 December 2013 when they read that 16 soldiers of 1 YORKS Recce Platoon protested by sitting down during a parade because they felt “they were not being appreciated” or “well managed”. It seems that their platoon commander and platoon sergeant had not taken part in a 16 mile hike on a training event in Wales because they had been out drinking the night before.

Readers' relief came with the realisation that this took place before Christmas 2012, so the culprits were members of the “old” 1 YORKS (PWO). At any time in the Dukes modern history – and the “new” 1 YORKS has the Dukes DNA whatever it is now called - you could fall the battalion in and find not a saint among them, but a platoon commander shirking – if that indeed is what he did – a bit of physical exercise because he had had a heavy night would be entirely against the ethos of the old 33rd!

# Obituaries

*“We deeply regret to record the following deaths, and on behalf of the Regiment offer our sincere sympathy to those bereaved”*

**From the Editor – As our resources at RHQ diminish we have considerable difficulty in compiling obituaries, other than as a short notice (assuming that we have been informed of the death at all). If a friend or colleague of yours dies, the Dukes’ community would like to know something about him, but they only will if his former friends and colleagues write him, as matter of friendship and respect, an obituary, ideally with a photograph. Please do not leave it to others – don’t hesitate; do it yourself. The Editor will bring submissions together if more than one obituary is received. If you feel that you cannot cover a whole career, then some memories and anecdotes to share will be much appreciated by his other friends and his family.**

## RICHARD DIACON

By Major General Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter



**Richard Diacon  
October 1945**

Richard or ‘Dickie’ Diacon died on the 23rd of January. He had always been fit and healthy so it was good that he merely passed away in his sleep at the great age of 94. A lovely Service of Thanksgiving took place at St Peter and St Paul in Longbridge Deverill and was attended by a good bevy of Dukes. Michael Bray had come over from Sussex and there were Charles Cumberlege, Peter Andrews and Peter Mellor from around the Plain.

Richard was born in Wimbledon in 1919 and later in 1931 his family moved to Walton on Thames. He was educated at King’s College Wimbledon where he excelled at rugby and in 1937 he joined the Metropolitan Police. When the war came he wanted to join straightaway but it was not until 1942 that he joined the East Surreys but soon he was transferred to the Dukes (was it rugby that motivated this move?) and served with the 1st Battalion in North Africa and Italy. I first met Richard at the dinners and later lunches of the 1943-45 Officers Dinner Club which my father established after the War because Territorial Officers were not eligible to join the Officers Dinner Club. But I really got to know him and Elizabeth when he came on the Association’s tour of Italy and Anzio in particular in 2004. We managed to find a way into the infamous wadis at Anzio and I remember Richard and John Young both veterans of the campaign valiantly scrambling down into the subterranean world. Getting out was not so easy and Richard needed a helping hand

on his backside to get him out. The helping hand was a muddy one and the imprint remained on Richard’s trousers for the rest of the day much to our and his amusement. The story of the removal of the Brigade Commander in July 1944 has aroused much speculation. Brigadier Eric Dorman-Smith was a talented soldier but not a popular one and Richard as a watchkeeper in his brigade HQ did not hold him in high esteem. He witnessed the telephone call made by the Divisional Commander to Brigade HQ and finding the Brigadier not there left a message: “tell him to report to Divisional HQ at 0600 tomorrow morning with all his kit”.

After the war he went back to the police and in 1963 he retired to join the Greater London Council to run the traffic control section and as his son Christopher remarked in his address; if we find the traffic in London impossible we can perhaps blame Richard. His first wife, Betty, whom he married in 1942 died in 1994 and in 1997 he married Elizabeth, herself a widow of Freddie Myatt. He leaves 8 grandchildren and 9 great grandchildren. Christopher’s address dwelt on Richard’s personality as being kind, considerate, genuine and humble. I agree wholeheartedly but I would add his good humour. He was a lovely man and I much enjoyed listening to his reminiscences of the Dukes in the war, always related with a twinkle. He will be much missed.

## Sergeant RN (Bob) Bob Kerry

By Brendan Doyle

Sgt Kerry better known as Bob was diagnosed with cancer in 2012. He underwent three operations, chemo and radiotherapy and was doing well but in December had complications and had to have another operation in which it was confirmed the cancer was back and his health deteriorated. He was taken from hospital on the 7th of March to Overgate Hospice and died there the early hours of the 8th with his wife Julie who he married in 1976 and his 3 daughters Sally, Sarah and Stacey by his bedside.

Bob Kerry was born in Brighouse on 5 December 1955. He went to the Cadets in Halifax and joined the Army on the 11th of June 1973 in Huddersfield and was signed up by Frank Lowney. He joined the Royal Irish Regiment as his Dad had served with them but whilst in training he transferred to 1DWR.

Bob joined the battalion in Ballykelly and served in many companies but will be better known as a member of the pioneer platoon in which he became the Pioneer



Sergeant and Explosives Safety Officer. He played a big part in the battalion winning the Wilkinson's sword of peace in Gibraltar for the work they did on cleaning up Moorish Castle. He also was involved with the Royal Armouries opening by doing some pyrotechnics to publicise the start of the building work with Brigadier Mundell.

Bob's last 4 years was spent with the Kings Division Recruiting Team, bringing the Army into the public eye and recruiting future members of the King's Division. He left the Army having done 22 years and 147 days in 1994. He earned in that time the Northern Ireland medal, UN Peace-Keeping medal for the work he did in Cyprus and in 1988 he was presented his L.S.G.C Medal.



**Bob Kerry**

The funeral of Bob Kerry took place in St Joseph's Church Brighthouse and was attended by a vast amount of friends and colleges from the Battalion. Brendan Doyle read the eulogy about Robert's Army life and he was carried out of church to the sound track of The Band Of Brothers by his Army mates; Sean Casey, Hoggie Naylor, Jimmy Kearnen, Ken Greenwood, Jimmy Barraclough, Jim Pagett. He was then buried at Brighthouse Cemetery and as he was laid to rest a lone Bugler and the standards of The British Legion and The Regimental Standard was lowered a fitting tribute to a exemplary soldier, husband, father and granddad and friend to many in the Battalion.

Julie his wife would like to thank everyone involved in making her husband's funeral possible. She said "my husband accumulated many things whilst in the Battalion and our house is like a shrine to the Duke of Wellington's Regiment. Both myself and the girls enjoyed and were proud to be part of the Regiment and have made many friendships that have been a comfort to us in this sad time since my husband's death. I run a group called The Yorkshire Roses which is made up of many wives, mothers and sisters of men who served in the Dukes. We have supported some of our members who have lost loved ones in Afghanistan and at the moment are trying to arrange a trip back to Gibraltar where I am hoping to get permission to erect a plaque at Moorish Castle to celebrate the work done by my husband and the Battalion."

Bob Kerry will be sadly missed by many he was a true gent with an infectious laugh and an ability to always be smiling. He loved life, his family and spent many good

times at reunions catching up with everyone. He was also a private Man and when he became ill he and his close family never let on which made it such a shock to hear the news. Rest in peace, Bob Kerry.

### **David (Dave) Hughes.**

Captain Dave Hughes MBE died on 26 January 2014. He joined the Dukes in the early 60's. He soon joined the mortar platoon and became a MFC with Burma Company in Kenya. His sporting forte was soccer, and he ran the 1st XI for several years.

Promotion followed to the Sergeants' Mess and he became RSM of the 1st Battalion from 1978 to 1980. He was granted a commission in 1980 and eventually moved on to become Quartermaster of the Green Howards. Both his sons, Neil and Mark, joined the Dukes; sadly Neil predeceased his father after a tragic range accident. Dave suffered from health problems in his later years, and on 26 January paramedics were unable to revive him.

His funeral was at York Crematorium on Thursday 6 February 2014. Brigadier Dick Mundell read a lesson and gave an address. Many friends and colleagues were present to support his wife Ruth, Mark and other members of the family.

### **Dennis (Buster) Mitchell**

Ex WO2 Dennis (Buster) Mitchell was the last known survivor from 2DWR to have fought in the Battle at the Sittang River. Notably he took part in the action by C Company, and the remnants of 1/3 Gurkas to push the Japanese off the bridgehead to allow it to then be used as a makeshift route to escape from the advancing Japanese across the river at night. It was this action which is the subject of the picture now hanging in the 1YORKS Officers Mess in Warminster.

Before the war Dennis was also a member of the 2DWR 1st XV which dominated both Army and club rugby across India winning the Army Cup in India every year from 1936 to 39. General Evelyn as Colonel of the Regiment presented a long overdue cup winners cap to him in 2001 – the cap was proudly carried on his coffin at his funeral.



**Maj Gen Webb-Carter presents Dennis Mitchell with his rugby cup-winners' cap.**

Dennis was born in Oxenhope, an only child. On leaving school at fourteen he went to work in the local quarry. He lost his mother when he was fifteen and his father a year later. He stayed on in the family home for a time before going to live with an aunt in Bingley who soon turned him out finding him too wild and rebellious and he was then obliged to sleep for some time in the porter's hut on Bingley Station. His talent for rugby was discovered early and by the age of seventeen he was playing for Keighley seconds in the front row. Finding that his great friend Bill Townend intended to join the Army, Dennis decided to do likewise and they both went to Halifax initially intending to join the West Yorkshire Regiment. However, learning that Dennis had a talent for rugby they were both quickly redirected to the 'Dukes'.

Dennis completed his initial training at the Regimental Depot in Halifax while also playing for Halifax 1st XV, a step up from Keighley. Before his eighteenth birthday he had shown sufficient promise to be selected for the Northern Army XV versus Yorkshire. After completing his training he was posted to the 1st Battalion in Malta where his enjoyment of a good 'bust-up' (hence his nickname) got the better of him and the battalion quickly decided to move him on to the 2nd Battalion in India. He embarked from Malta in manacles as he had not completed his sentence.

Dennis's life in India was defined by his prowess as both a boxer and rugby player where he was a member of the battalion 1st XV winning the Army rugby competition in India every year from 1936 – 39. He was also in the team that won the Calcutta Cup, an all India club competition, and which is now in the Warminster Officers' Mess. Over time he was now also persuaded that he had the ability and talent to make more of himself and he embarked on the education courses which allowed him to start building a career in the Army. The battalion's final posting before the outbreak of war in the Far East was to Peshawar on the North West Frontier.

It was from there in early 1942 that, highly trained in mountain warfare, they were rushed across India by rail and then by sea to Burma to try and check the invading Japanese forces. They arrived in Rangoon on 14th February and were deployed on the border on 20th February. But, heavily outnumbered, they were rapidly pushed back towards the Sittang River, a fast flowing river 1,000 – 2000 yards wide, and the last major defensive obstacle before Rangoon. To try and save Rangoon, the Divisional Commander decided he had no

option but to blow the bridge with 2/3rds of his forces still on the far side including Dennis's company, C Company. It was C Company together with remnants of 1/3 Gurkas who then fought to push the Japanese off the bridgehead so that at night they could rig up ropes across the blown portions of the bridge to escape to the 'home' side. Others made make shift rafts or swam, many drowning in the process, or were taken prisoner. Once on the home side it was for the badly battered British forces the start of the longest retreat in British Army history – 1000 miles in 3 months mostly on foot to the Indian border and having to fight to withdraw.

Dennis was seriously wounded during the withdrawal. He was shot in the chest, carrying the bullet in him for the rest of his days, and was at first given up for dead. Fortunately during the final checks before being abandoned on the road side signs of life were recognised and he was, with all the other wounded, evacuated by river boat up the Irrawaddy River to Mandalay and then flown out to India. Dennis spent considerable time in hospital before being sent to Deolali, better known as the transit camp Doolally, and then to guard Italian POWs near Bhopal. Wanting to do something more than guard prisoners, Dennis volunteered to help with operations to drop supplies to the Chindits operating in the jungle behind Japanese lines.

After the surrender of Japan, Dennis returned home to England and retired from the Army in 1947 with the rank of Company Sergeant Major. It took Dennis some time to settle down, in his own words all he wanted to do was to drink beer, before he found work as a driver operating across the country. Married for the first time to Fay, they had two children, both of whom sadly died. The marriage did not work out and in 1989, after having been together for some years, Dennis married his second wife, Mary. Despite the injuries that he had suffered during the war, Dennis was always in remarkably good health for a man of his age and in his later years was always a regular visitor to RHQ in Halifax where he, Bill Townend and Bill Norman, who too was a 2nd Battalion man and had fought at the Sittang swimming the river to escape the Japanese, used to regularly meet for a pint and Yorkshire pud at the 'Brown Cow' – a watering hole that will be remembered by many 'young' officers as their introduction to Halifax and the West Riding. He was a man who throughout his life reflected the best of the tough, robust, straight forward character that is the hall mark of the 'Dukes'.

## NOTIFICATION OF RECENT DEATHS

### **Geoffrey Baxter**

Geoff Baxter served for 3 years in the 1st Battalion in the early 1950s, serving in Minden, Korea (8 Platoon, C Company) and Gibraltar, died on 29 December 2013. Geoff was a long standing supporter of the Dukes Association Halifax Branch until his death.

### **James Arthur Gay**

Ex Colour Sergeant (more commonly known as 'John' or 'Paddy') Gay, initially as a conscript served from 1945

– 48 with the General Service Corps and Green Howards. John then immediately re-enlisted as a regular soldier and served for the next 10 years with the East Yorks and the Enniskillen Fusiliers, then in East Africa and Kenya, before transferring to the Dukes in October 1958. As well as various UK postings with the 1st Battalion, John served in Kenya (1960), BAOR (1964-67) and Hong Kong (1968). His final postings before his retirement were with Leeds UOTC and finally HQ 12 Infantry Brigade. John died in September 2013 at the age of 86.

### Benjamin Charles Grayson

'Charlie' Grayson, who served in the 1st Battalion, from 1946 – 48, in Palestine, died on 26 January 2014, at the age of 85.

### Robert Turner

Bob Turner joined the army in August 1944, initially serving briefly with the Cameron Highlanders and then the York and Lancaster's, before transferring to the 2nd Battalion of the Dukes in India where he served between August 1945 – 47. Bob Died on 21 November 2013, at the age of 87. Bob remained a keen supporter of the Dukes Association Skipton Branch until his death.

### Wes Higginson

Major Wes Higginson RAPC served with the Dukes in the 1980s, and kept in touch with many members of the

Regiment after that. He was cremated at the West Wiltshire Crematorium at Trowbridge on 31st January 2014.

### Laurie Linskey

Major Lawrence (Laurie) Linskey PWO served with the Dukes as Tech QM in the late 70s and early 80s. He died on 13 January 2014 and was committed on Friday 24 January 2014, at Darton Parish Church.

### Brian Maxfield

Brian Maxfield, described by friends as "a Duke through and through", died on 7 December 2013, aged 79. Peter Holden writes: "Brian was in 10 platoon D Company in Korea. He was a keen footballer who represented the battalion and after his discharge he was offered a trial at Aston Villa where he fractured his ankle and that put paid to a promising career. He always attended the meetings to chat to his old comrades and will be sorely missed".

## LETTERS

*The Editor reserves the right to edit all letters in the interests of clarity and space.*

### From Dixon Pickup

Good to receive and peruse the current edition of the 'Iron Duke'. I can help a little with two of the queries that arise therein.

Firstly, in the article on Colour Sergeant John Gibson 33rd Regiment by Major General Sir E Webb-Carter, first paragraph. He states that Gibson "joined the Militia as a substitute for a man by the name of James Mason who 'had been drawn by the ballot'," and asks for an explanation.

Until the reorganisation of the county Militia regiments in 1852 the rank and file were found by annual parochial ballot, thus a village community would be required to find 3/4 men and larger communities proportionately more. Upon publication of the ballot result any person who could find and AFFORD TO PAY FOR A SUBSTITUTE was permitted to do, the sum was usually £10, a considerable amount for those days. Thus in this case Mason found and paid Gibson to take his place.

Secondly, in 'LETTERS' from ex WO2 Lee Greenwood and the swagger stick purchased at the sale of regimental silver, or by him following the sale. This item was carried by the 'Commanding Officer's Orderly' (commonly the 'CO's Stick Man') usually for the period of a month. It was awarded on the CO's monthly inspection to the smartest man on parade and always a Private. The names of the recipients being engraved on the silver bands. Presumably the recipient had a month off normal duties and training. This particular example is either the one I saw during my National Service (1959-1961) at Brentwood Barracks/Meeanee Barracks Colchester, or an earlier one. The soldiers' numbers would indicate that this example is quite early. On the one I saw, the bulbous top was engraved (albeit very worn) with the regimental crest and the legend, 'C.O's Orderly'. Sadly I did not take note of the hall-mark date. The late WO2 'Bill' Norman provided me with the award details when we met up again in the 1970's.

### From Mr LW Rusby



**Bobbo**

I write with reference to the article by ex WO2 Greenwood about the Dukes' swagger stick. I do not know the origin of it but as he asks in one of his questions I do think it was awarded as an annual "best young soldier" award. I do know that it was used in our time in Gibraltar 53/55 as an incentive towards smartness on mounting guards of 24 hours and other types of duties.

Enclosed is a photograph of my pal Arthur Robinson, known as "Little Bobbo" who was awarded "stickman" on our first Four Corners Spanish Border Guard.

After being picked for the stick, the recipient was then dismissed from the square and became the RSM's runner for the next 24 hours. I can't recall it being used again after we left Gibraltar, maybe it was all down to the whims of the COs and RSMs that followed.

Geoff France did become RSM 65-67 and as I recall he had a couple of WW2 medals so he must have been a young soldier around 1944/45 time when the stick was introduced, as his is the first name on it. Hoping this sheds a bit of light on the subject.



**Mons Town Hall at night in May 2014.**



**A rare photograph of all the battalion's families together. The occasion was the leaving of the battalion by Lt Col FHB Wellesley and Mrs Wellesley on 12th June 1930, the latter being entertained to tea by the families of all ranks after which they were played out of the camp by the band.**