

NEWSLETTER

THE FRIENDS OF
THE SOLDIERS OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE
MUSEUM



SPRING 2017

NEW TO THE MUSEUM



The children's dressing up gallery was redecorated last year in the style of World War I trenches by Hype Street Art. The effect is quite dramatic and adds a unique character to the play and dressing-up area – left.

Below – The Victorian Silver Desk set engraved: 'From the officers Royal Gloucestershire Hussars on the occasion of their Company of the Imperial Yeomanry being mobilized at Horfield Barracks February 1900.'

The gift to the Gloucestershire Regiment from the RGH in 1900 will be displayed with the other Boer War artifacts.



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

A reminder of the relationship that links the two county regiments has recently come to light as the Rifles Office, prior to moving out, begin to clear the cups, trophies and other past RGBW Trustees property from the cupboards and recesses of the third floor of the Custom House. Lt. Col. Mike Motem, the Gloucestershire /Somerset Assistant Regimental Secretary of the Rifles, has handed over to the RGH Trustees a Victorian silver desk set, presented to the Gloucestershire Regiment's Horfield Barracks by the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars Yeomanry in grateful thanks for their assistance in organising the county company of the Imperial Yeomanry in 1900, illustrated opposite. Over a century later this relationship continues, both in the Museum and on the Board of Directors.

We endeavour to provide occasional events outside the Museum and this year, in addition to the Lunch at Badminton Horse Trials, we have been generously invited by the Earl of Wemyss whose grandfather was killed in 1916 serving with the RGH, to hold a Summer Reception in the Gardens of Stanway House, near Cheltenham. The house predates the Civil War and, together with the gatehouse, tithe barn and cottages, is surrounded by an enchanting garden and ancient parkland. The watergarden was created in the 1720's and incorporates a sheet of still water plus cascading water from another pond. The gardens also include the impressive 300ft fountain, the tallest gravity fountain in the world, fed from a reservoir 580ft above the canal. The Friends will be invited to enjoy drinks and canapés and wander freely through the gardens.

Last year's Autumn Lecture was the 25th annual lecture and in recognition of that we presented the BBC illustrated book of the '*Poldark*' series with historical notes and biographies of the characters, signed by all the actors (you will remember that Chavenage has been the setting for the home of Elizabeth and the late Francis Poldark, very close to the rugged Cornish coast!) to Rona and David Lowsley-Williams in recognition of the support they have given us over this quarter of a century. There is great excitement again as I gather the cast will be back in September/October to film the next series.

For the Autumn Lecture this year we are encompassing a contemporary history subject, the resurgence of Russia under the grip of Vladimir Putin and his perception in the West. I am delighted to announce that Edward Lucas, the senior editor of the '*Economist*' has agreed to give this year's talk on 'Putin and the New Cold War'. He is an expert on intelligence and cyber-security issues and has covered the significant changes in Eastern Europe for more than 20 years, witnessing the final years of the last Cold War, the fall of the Iron Curtain, the collapse of the Soviet empire and Vladimir Putin's rise to power. As I write, Russia has seen large protests in over 80 towns and cities against the alleged corruption of the Prime Minister, Dmitry Medvedev, which were ruthlessly subdued by the police and, more recently, the Russians are facing worldwide opposition to their support of Syria. It should be interesting to see what has happened by the autumn and to hear about the current status of Russia and its ex-KGB President.

The Friends will be an essential part of the future development of the Museum. Our grants have helped to enlarge the displays and are available to support further projects. As the Museum expands we would like to see the Friends increase in numbers; ask your 'friends and relations' to join and support this county asset.

Lt. Col. Ralph Stephenson TD.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY AND TREASURER'S REPORT

As at 1st April 2017 the Friends have 317 members in all categories: 294 Life and 111 annual members including 12 overseas.

Our finances remain healthy and we are well placed to continue our support to the Museum. We continue to receive one off donations from members and would like to say many thanks, all donations and bequests are most welcome.

Our main expenditure this term has been a donation to the museum for the sum of £3000 to help with the restoration of the Frampton Colours. Other grants have come from the Honorable Company of Gloucestershire, AMOT and Frampton village itself.

Subscriptions:

Thanks to the frugal nature of your committee I am happy to announce that there is no increase in subscription for the year 2017/2018.

For those of you who pay for your membership annually may I remind you that membership was due in June and can be paid as follows:

By cheque made payable to 'The Friends of the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum' forwarded to the Friends at the Museum address 'Custom House, 31, Commercial Road, Gloucester, GL1 2HE'.

Over the internet through the Museum website at 'www.glost.org.uk' – follow the link to the Friends' page on the Museum's Home page.

By Banker's Standing Order. To save having to write cheques, pay for postage, or remember that you need to renew your subscription annually, why not complete a Banker's Standing Order Mandate? Please contact me at the Museum should you require a blank mandate.

Annual rates are £20 single, £30 couples and £10 for juniors.

Why not become a Life Member and forget the worry of Annual Subscriptions?

Conversion to Life membership is for a single payment of £200.

Patrick Smart

FRAMPTON COUNTRY FAIR

Frampton-on-Severn

Sunday 10th September 2017

*The Friends are manning a stand at Frampton Country Fair again this year and if you feel you are able to help then please contact the Secretary:
simoncolbeck@msn.com*



WORLD WAR I - AWAY FROM FRANCE AND FLANDERS

Although many British generals felt that the war could only be won on the Western Front, it is easy to forget that British and Empire troops were fighting throughout the four years of the Great War in other theatres; East Africa, Egypt and Palestine, Turkey, Macedonia, Italy, Mesopotamia and even into Northern and Southern Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution. The Gloucestershire Regiments were significantly involved on these 'other fronts'.

Turkey

The poorly commanded action and the delayed tactical decisions of the initial landings on Turkish soil are generally known. The laudable intention was to subdue Turkish forces by a naval action in the Dardanelles followed by a swift landing of troops on the Gallipoli Peninsula, with the aim of capturing the Ottoman capital of Constantinople. However the naval attack was repelled, three battleships were sunk and others put out of action by undetected mines and, after eight months' fighting with many casualties on both sides, the land campaign was abandoned and the invasion force was secretly withdrawn, probably the most successful action of the campaign.

In July, the 13th (Western) Division, which included 7th Gloucesters, landed at Gallipoli and by August the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force had swollen to fifteen divisions. The 7th Bn., after some reorganisation, sailed to Anzac Cove to reinforce the ANZACs. It had been decided to launch an offensive against the Sari Bair range of hills and the 7th role was to scale the heights of Chunuk Bair at night. The attack was slow and the ground steep and rocky. The 7th Gloucesters, who had initially been in reserve and were about 1,000 strong, were ordered to reinforce a New Zealand battalion, but the attack petered out with most of the Gloucester officers and senior NCO's being killed or wounded; by 1st September the effective strength was recorded as 8 officers and 263 other ranks, about a quarter of what it had been a month earlier. General Sir Ian Hamilton wrote of the 7th Gloucesters in his Dardanelles Dispatch; *"On they went, ... here is at least one instance where a battalion of the New Army fought right on, from midday to sunset, without any officers."*



Men of the 7th Bn. The Gloucestershire Regt. start their climb, advancing up Chunuk Bair



Troops at Suvla Bay August 1915 by Norman Wilkinson

Meanwhile the 1/1st RGH, having left their beloved horses in Egypt, landed in Suvla Bay on 6th /7th August. It took the Turks completely by surprise and was unopposed, but failure to press forward to Scimitar Hill allowed the Turks time to respond. The push to Scimitar Hill and across the Salt Lake to Chocolate Hill on 21st August, was the largest single-day attack by the Allies during the Gallipoli Campaign and also the last offensive by the Allies. It was a failure, although the Turks had to use all their reserves to prevent defeat. Before withdrawing from the Peninsula the strength of the RGH, by illness or enemy action, had fallen from 300 to 85.



Salt Lake, over which the RGH advanced under fire, to Chocolate Hill, in the centre background.

Macedonia

The Macedonian Front, often known as the Salonika Front, was an attempt by the Allied Powers to aid Serbia, in the autumn of 1915, against the combined attack of the Central Powers; Germany, Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria. It did not prevent the fall of Serbia but the situation was stabilised on a front from the Adriatic coast to the border of Bulgaria, on the River Struma, by the aid of 27 divisions, seven of them British and including troops from France, Serbia, Italy, Greece and Imperial Russia.

In November 1915, 9th Gloucesters disembarked at Salonika and were followed a month later by 2nd Gloucesters. The routine of the battalions for most of 1916 was limited to digging miles of trenches in a barren and inhospitable country where disease was a real threat, and slowly pushing the line into enemy occupied territory. In addition a composite yeomanry regiment was transferred to Macedonia under the command of Major Ralph Yorke of the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars, who had been recalled from the RGH in Gallipoli.

The main fighting in the spring of 1917 took place around Lake Doiran, when the British attacked and gained a considerable amount of ground, although 9th Gloucester's part in this was unsuccessful, being heavily shelled as they assembled. Warmer weather then brought the mosquitoes in considerable numbers and malaria caused many more casualties than fighting.



The Dorian Front 1918 by William T Wood. The hills, ridges and ravines over which the British Divisions fought its two major battles on the Salonika Front.

Meanwhile, in early July 1918, Allied losses during the German Offensive on the Western Front meant that battalions were needed in France and the 9th Gloucesters were moved from Macedonia in July. The 2nd Bn meanwhile took part in the major advance which broke the Bulgarian defences and the Bulgar army was forced into a full retreat. On 29 September 1918 Bulgaria signed an armistice and fighting ceased the following day, providing relief to Serbia.

Italy

In a similar situation to the front in Macedonia, the transfer of British divisions to Italy in 1917 was a response to the concern of the advance of an Austro-Hungarian Army into Northern Italy. In October 1917 the Italians were routed and lost about 300,000 men, 265,000 being taken prisoner. French and British divisions went urgently by train from France and Flanders to assist the Italians. They included 48th (South Midland) Division with 1st/4th (City of Bristol), 1st/5th and 1st/6th Gloucesters, all Territorial battalions, in early November, and the 5th Division, with 12th Gloucesters (Bristol's Own), in December. In January, when the 12th Battalion relieved an Italian Infantry Regiment, it was decided that

every man should wear an Italian helmet to deceive the enemy into thinking that the British had not taken over the line. The result was interesting: *“A very comical effect was produced. It was questionable as to whether the CO or his orderly, produced the most comical effect”*

On 15th June, 23rd and 48th Divisions were attacked by four Austrian divisions and the Austrians penetrated 3,000 yards in the 48th Division sector on the line of the River Piave. After a desperate battle the line was stabilised but not without the loss of over 200 killed or missing from the 1/5th Gloucesters alone. In September 1918 the 1/5th and 12th Bns returned to France to take part in the battles of the ‘last 100 days’ whilst the 1/4th and 1/6th fought their final battle at Vittorio Veneto, in difficult mountainous terrain. The battle marked the end of the First World War on the Italian front and contributed to the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire; an armistice was signed on 3rd November.



Italian troops advance in typical scenery at the battle of Vittorio Veneto. The result was the complete collapse of the Austro- Hungarian Empire. The dissolution of Germany’s chiefly was a key factor in their own surrender just two weeks later

Mesopotamia

After distinguished service in Gallipoli, the 7th Bn, were reorganized in Egypt and then took part in the relief of Kut. It took two months of strenuous fighting to clear the west bank of the River Tigris below Kut, during which 7th Gloucesters suffered severely. Eventually the Turkish trenches were captured and the British prevailed. The capture of Bagdad in April 1917 followed. In May the advance continued towards Kirkuk, starting each day before dawn and halting about 10am to avoid the summer’s heat. The Turks abandoned Kirkuk without a fight and 7th Gloucesters formed part of the garrison, it was the beginning of the end of the Turkish Army in Mesopotamia.

Following the Russian Revolution, the 7th Bn. formed part of a force sent to the Southern Caucasus to replace the Russians, now under the Bolshevik Government who had signed a

separate treaty with Germany, and oppose the Turks. They appear not to have been involved in any fighting but the Battalion was constantly on the move as the small force attempted to dominate the area.



Sir Frederick Stanley Maude, the Commander in Mesopotamia, leads the British and Empire troops into Baghdad

Egypt and Palestine 1917/18

After the successful withdrawal from Gallipoli the 1/1st RGH, reunited with their horses, fought through Sinai, providing a screen to defend the Suez Canal, first at Qatia where a squadron was badly mauled by a superior Turkish force, and then at Romani, where the Egyptian Expeditionary Force won a decisive victory over the German lead Turkish divisions.

The British victory at Romani succeeded in driving the Ottoman Army back across the Sinai Peninsula to southern Palestine. There followed the significant advance, under General Allenby, of the British and Empire troops, through Palestine and the Holy Land into Syria and to Aleppo. Conditions were appalling, much energy being required in locating water supplies and bringing up rations and ammunition supplies to the leading troops.

This phase of the war in the Middle East will be continued in the Autumn Edition.

*

I am grateful to Maj. Gen. Robin Grist for the use of a draft copy of his forthcoming book 'A Gallant County' for providing the basis of this article. When published, it will be in the Museum shop.

The Editor

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 4th May 2017 - Badminton

*Lunch in the RGH Association Marquee at the Badminton Horse Trials 12.30 – 1430 hrs.
Come and rest from the shopping for lunch or a drink.
Ask the Hon Sec for details - simoncolbeck@msn.com*

Saturday to Monday 27th - 29th May 2017 – Gloucester Docks

Historic Gloucester Docks host the Tall Ships Weekend over the Spring Bank Holiday with marauding pirates, including Captain Jack Sparrow, nautical activities, fun and games for children and grown-ups, a food market plus the two museums on the Docks site. There will be live music featuring an selection of local bands and singers as well as the return of the Gloucester Shanty Festival

Saturday 10th June 2017 – Woodchester

*Rededication of the unique World War One Wayside Cross - 1600 hrs
All details in this edition – All welcome to attend, no tickets or booking.*

Wednesday 14th June 2017 - Stanway House Summer Reception

*The Friends Summer Reception (by kind invitation of the Earl of Wemyss)
at Stanway House.*

*Drinks and canapés will be served in the Gardens.
An Invitation Card is in this edition.*

Sunday 10th September 2017 – Frampton Country Fair

*Held in 30 acres of beautiful parkland of Frampton Court Estate, this is one of the last traditional country fairs with over 400 trade stands and three display rings.
- The Living Working Countryside -*

Friday 13th October – The Friends Autumn Lecture – Chavenage House

Edward Lucas - “Putin and the New Cold War”

*This year’s speaker is Edward Lucas, Senior Editor of ‘The Economist’
He is an expert on Vladimir Putin and the relationship between Russia and the West.
An Invitation Card will be in the Autumn Edition of the Friends Newsletter*

Volunteers required for the Tall Ships weekend

As admission to the Museum is included in the entry fee to the Docks we are expecting many visitors over this weekend. We really need your help at reception, supervising in the galleries and serving teas and ice-creams. If you can spare a few hours we would be grateful of your help (and you get to see the other attractions free!), 27th-29th May.

Contact: chris.chatterton@sogm.co.uk



WORLD WAR II - A TROOPERS STORY

One of the rewarding functions of the Museum is to receive the stories or artifacts of families whose fathers and grandfathers had served in one of the county regiments or to provide a historical background to a request about a vague remembered wartime memory.

A very detailed story has recently been received from the daughter of Lionel Wadley, late of the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars. She writes; *'This book has been written from an account that my father Lionel John Wadley wrote down in an old diary. He never talked to anybody about his wartime experiences and when he came to live with us in 1992 I told him if he couldn't talk about it then he should write it down. Fortunately he listened to me and many years after he passed away in 2006 I feel able to type it all out for him....'*

What followed in the book is an extraordinary story of hardship and survival, from the North African desert to captivity in Italy and Germany during WW2.

Lionel Wadley joined F Sqn of the RGH *'...At this time Hitler was stirring up trouble in Germany...Hitler had occupied Rhineland...Neville Chamberlain had returned from a meeting with Hitler with a bit of paper stating "Peace in our time"but I don't think anyone really believed it.... In Gloucester people were being encouraged to join the Territorial Army and my friend and I were very keen to do so. There were two Territorial units, the 5th Gloucester's – an infantry unit which I understand had acquired many honours in the past and the Royal Gloucester Hussars..... We applied to join the Hussars and were duly sworn in to what would in future be a tank or armoured car regiment. One night a week we attended the barracks where we used to practice marching, rifle drills, lectures on machine guns etc.'*



Tpr Lionel Wadley from the photograph of F Sqn in 1941, donated by the niece of Tpr. Hall who is also in the photograph. Tpr. Hall was killed in June 1942. The enemy '..... suffered a considerable set-back. But this was achieved at the cost of devastating losses in F Sqn'.

Eventually, after many moves around England and countless lectures on gunnery, morse code, etc *'we returned from leave, we were all issued with tropical kit and everything was all hush- hush of course, not forgetting the slogan of the time "walls have ears"!* The kit comprised of three tropical shirts, three quarter length tropical shorts and socks etc but the puzzle still remained - where were we going? Orders appeared on the notice board stating the date and time we were moving and battledress will be worn etc. The tanks and equipment left before us and we all paraded late afternoon and then marched to the station accompanied by the resident military band playing " It's a long way to Tipperary " and "Goodbye Dolly I must leave you ". We boarded the awaiting train and that was that..... We travelled all night and between playing cards and sleeping it was evident we were heading for Glasgow. We dismounted the train on the dock side and were marched to a gigantic ship called the Strathmore..... A week into the sailing we all knew we were headed for the Middle East..... We ended up docking at Suez. We had been on board ship for about 6 weeks and couldn't wait to get back on terra firma.'

His part in the desert battle of Sidi-Rezegh, one of the bloodiest battles of World War II, appears to have been brief. It was part of Operation Crusader which was a military operation by the British Eighth Army between 18 November 1941 and 30 December 1941. *'When the big day came to advance we were on the brow of one hill and the Germans on the other, quite a distance away. Quite a battle followed, the German tanks sporting a 88 millimetre gun with a longer range which could pick us off before we even got close enough to them to cause any damage. As the battle raged on we were unfortunate to have our track shot off rendering us immobile. The officer in charge of our troop then instructed us to bail out and climb on the back of his tank. We were hoping he would then take us out of the action, however he was so involved in the battle we had to stay put in the midst of the battle.....Eventually he took us back, but later our tanks had retreated and we were overtaken by the Germans. My lasting memory was of lots of Germans with machine guns mounted on lorries ordering us to throw down our weapons. Our weapons comprised of a revolver in a leg holster and we noted by their expressions that they were not very pleased.It didn't dawn on us for a long while that we were now prisoners of war. We always thought we would be recaptured'*

They were then shipped to Italy, but had the misfortune to be sunk by the Royal Navy. *'As the daylight was going down, suddenly there was an almighty explosion. Everyone jumped to their feet, many scratching around for their boots which they had removed. Many of the men panicked and abandoned all of their belongings with the sole aim of getting out of the hold and on to the upper deck. Guards were blocking the exits and the whole thing was terrifying..... We managed to get on deck only to find that the captain and crew had manned the lifeboats and were conspicuous by their absence. As we were heading for shore we elected to stay on board as long as we could. As the panic died down a little, some of the squaddies decided to make a meal in the galley as we were all hungry.....At daylight we ventured to go to various parts of the ship. To our horror we found a lot of bodies and came to the conclusion that the ship had been torpedoed. In fact we had been torpedoed by a British submarine called HMS Porpoise and the date was 9th December 1941. The ship we were on board had not displayed a flag to say that POWs were on board and that is why we had been hit.'*

He and his fellow prisoners of war were transported through Italy and the Brenner Pass *'where the train was halted and the Italian guards were taken off the train. They were soon*

replaced with German guards', through Germany to Stalag VIII B, in Poland. '...At this camp I was reunited with some of my Gloucester colleagues, I hadn't known them in Civvy Street but they had been captured at Dunkirk and were very well established in the camp, some could speak fluent German.' Here they were divided up for working parties and, 'after managing to avoid several working parties to the mines my mate and I were put on a working party to go to a large factory at a place called Auschwitz. Knowing nothing about this place my mate and I were quite enthusiastic getting out of the mines or "grube" We were marched to the sidings to await freight vans and were duly dispatched to Auschwitz.... On arrival we were assembled and marched up a very long road with the factory on our left and lots of compounds on our right. We then came to our destination..... Everyone seemed happy at first sight. The evening meal was thick pea soup and a piece of black bread and we all seemed quite content with our new billets. The factory we were informed was used for making synthetic rubber (I G Farben) extracted from coal and possibly margarine.

Then the horror of where they had been sent slowly became apparent ' I have to describe what I saw in the factory as I could never forget it. The sight was unbelievable, there were gangs of people dressed in striped pyjama-like suits and looking to all the world like living skeletons. They were Jewish prisoners and the person in charge of them was a large man dressed in the striped pyjama suit but considerably bigger and wearing a beret. I discovered that these people were called "kapos" and were usually political prisoners, German or Polish. They were very cruel to the other prisoners beating and kicking them to impress the German guards that were watching them. Some of the SS men were what the Poles and



IG Farben Factory at Auschwitz. IG Farben was founded in 1925 as a merger of six companies and the giant plant at Auschwitz had a workforce, probably of about 300,000 people, practically for free. The Zyklon B gas, which killed millions of Jews, gypsies and other prisoners, was produced by Degesch a company in which IG Farben owned 42.2 % of the shares.

Ukrainians called 'false deutschs', they were collaborators, usually Poles. They were worse than the Germans. The Jews worked on all the heavy stock, such as laying cables etc, some as young as 14 or 15 and some without shoes.....What annoyed us was the unlimited cruelty dished out to these people and we were powerless to help them. I saw several beaten with picks and rifle butts till they fell to the ground. There was a case where one unfortunate collapsed in the trench where he was working and the German guard just buried him and carried on. Their billets were a lot further down the road to ours. Their desperate hunger was paramount. The Germans would line them up for their midday meal which consisted of a large square canister containing soup. It was not what I would have called soup I can tell you. I saw the Jewish prisoners on their hands and knees licking up any spillages from the canister. Only the young prisoners survived, the old and very young perished very quickly. We later discovered that the very young, women and elderly did not get any further than the railway sidings as they were selected to be gassed. The lucky ones that did survive were marched past our camp as they were housed further up the road.....After a while, at the camp, we had a welcome consignment of Red Cross parcels and by good fortune we managed to pass some of the contents to the Jewish prisoners. This however was extremely difficult and if caught you would be shot on sight.'

Towards the end of the war, as the Russians pushed the Germans back from the East, the prisoners were herded into Czechoslovakia. *'We were assembled in the afternoon into a column of threes and marched out of the camp, heavily guarded by German guards on the start of what we called "the big march". At the head of the column was a horse pulling a cart containing the stores. We trudged off in the snow; those that had managed to get hold of scarves had wrapped them around their heads and ears as the temperature was well below zero... We all looked a pretty sorry motley crew..... About 5 days into the march we came across a lot of bodies in the snow. They had collapsed and frozen to death and were Jewish prisoners. No effort had been made to bury them and it was not a very palatable sight... I'm not sure what route we were taking but I do know that we were heading away from the Russian front rather than towards it because the Germans were terrified of what the Russians would do to them.... We were taken to a railway siding and boarded a freight train which took us to Bavaria. We were reaching a zone where the British and Americans were creating havoc. The train we were in was machine gunned by aircraft and all along the route we travelled were clapped out locomotives that had been stranded in goods yards with bullet holes in their boilers.'*

Eventually they were greeted by the Americans *'All of a sudden an American GI armed with a machine gun appeared at the entrance to the barn. The men near the door were flabbergasted and then the jungle drums moved swiftly around the barn followed by the loudest of cheers as everybody realised they were at last free. It had got dark by then but what a great feeling to know that after 4 years of being bombed, torpedoed, machine gunned and bugged about by the Germans and Italians we were now free.'*

*

Two weeks later the Museum received, from the niece of a Tpr. Hall killed on 1st June 1942 during the battle of 'Knightsbridge Box', a group photograph of F Sqn taken in 1941 and a few items relating to his grave site. Both Troopers Wadley and Hall are in the donated photograph of F Sqn. RGH and are now remembered in the Museum, a memorial to those who served their County.

The Editor

THE MEDITERRANEAN CREED 1915 - 1916

In the 1980s and early 1990s the Royal Wessex Yeomanry was roled as Home Defence Light Reconnaissance. The entire regiment was Land Rover borne and was given a multitude of tasks including reconnaissance, infantry skills, vehicle patrols, vehicle check points and traffic control. Minor engineering tasks were also included, each squadron being issued with two chain saws. Ironically, the guiding principle for our training was neatly summed up in the 1900s in a cartoon of an inspecting officer from the then War Department addressing Imperial Yeomanry, the caption being:

“Now, look here, you yeoman- you must understand you are not cavalry - and you are not mounted infantry - in fact we don't quite know what you are! But you have got to make yourselves efficient whether as mounted foot or dismounted horse and you shall have 14 days to do it in.” Plus ca change!

A perhaps inevitable consequence of this was that each of the District GOCs who had one of the three squadrons attached to them, had different ideas of what they expected of us. The result was that the Regiment received three very different Training Directives each year as well as various instructions from the Royal Armoured Corps Headquarters, who were tasked with producing the skills requirements to train crewman in a role which the very armour orientated RAC struggled to understand.

I remember highlighting this rather bizarre situation with someone outside of the military and was told that this was nothing new and I should read the ‘Mediterranean Creed’. This could be found in the memoirs of Compton Mackenzie. When that name was mentioned I immediately thought of ‘Whiskey Galore!’ and so found the connection hard to make. However Mackenzie, who was in Military Intelligence based in Greece in 1915, had witnessed first-hand the administrative chaos when the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force from the ill-fated Gallipoli Campaign were, with the GOC and his headquarters, brought back to Egypt where there was another GOC complete with his own headquarters and one other headquarters. He says in his First Athenian Memories “...the state of affairs in Egypt was immortally expressed by some profane scribe whose anonymity I have never heard unveiled”

The Mediterranean creed is a parody of what is generally known as the Creed of St Athanasius. If you are familiar with the service of Morning Prayer in the Book of Common Prayer you may be aware of the note which reads “*Then shall be sung or said the Apostles Creed.....; except only on such days as the creed of Saint Athanasius is appointed to be read.*”

It is now generally accepted that Saint Athanasius did not write the creed named after him, as he died in about 382 AD and it was not written until about 450 AD at the earliest. Also it is not considered to be a creed at all as it contains not only statements of belief, but also spells out the consequences of departing from those beliefs. He was considered by some to be wily, brutal and unscrupulous and unforgiving to his opponents and they referred to him as the “Black Dwarf”, on account of both his size and his complexion. For others he is regarded as one of the most influential leaders of the early Christian Church. He is credited with establishing the doctrine of the Trinity and the so called creed seeks to encapsulate this doctrine. It is sometimes known as the “Quincunque vult” being the Latin for the first words.

Creed of St Athanasius

Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic faith;
Which faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.
And the catholic faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity;
Neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit.
But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one, the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.
Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit. The Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, and the Holy Spirit uncreated.
The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Spirit incomprehensible.
The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Spirit eternal. And yet they are not three eternal but one eternal
or three incomprehensible, but one uncreated and one incomprehensible.
So likewise the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Spirit almighty.
And yet they are not three almighties, but one almighty.
So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God; And yet they are not three Gods, but one God.
So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Spirit Lord;
And yet they are not three Lords but one Lord.
For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord;
So are we forbidden by the catholic religion to say;
There are three Gods or three Lords.
The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten.
The Son is of the Father alone; not made nor created, but begotten.
The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.
So there is one Father, not three Fathers;
one Son, not three Sons;
one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits.
And in this Trinity none is afore or after another; none is greater or less than another.
But the whole three persons are coeternal, and coequal.
So that in all things, as aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.
He therefore that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity.
Furthermore it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

‘AFTER MORNING PARADE’

The Mediterranean Creed

Whosoever will be decorated: before all things it is necessary that he hold to the Mediterranean Faith
Which faith, except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall be Stellenbosched everlasting
And the Mediterranean Faith is this: that we worship the G.O.C. in trinity, and trinity in unity.
Both confounding the Generals, and damning their commands. For there is one General of Egypt, another of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, and another of the Levant Base.
But the authority of Egypt, of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, and of the Levant Base is all one; the Glory equal and the Majesty co-eternal.
Such as Egypt is, such is the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, and such is the Levant Base.
Egypt is separate, the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force separate, and the Levant base separate,
Egypt is incomprehensible, the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force incomprehensible, and the Levant Base incomprehensible
Egypt futile, the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force futile and the Levant base futile; and yet there are not three futile but one futile.
And also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three separates; but one inchoate and one incomprehensible.
So likewise is Egypt almighty, the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force almighty, and the Levant Base almighty: and yet there are not three almighties, but one almighty.
So Maxwell is G.O.C, and Murray is G.O.C, and Altham is G.O.C
And yet there are not three G.O.Cs, but one G.O.C
So likewise Maxwell is Boss, Murray is Boss, and Altham is Boss.
And yet there are not three bosses, but one Boss.
For like as we are compelled by Army regulations to acknowledge every General himself to be G.O.C and Boss: so are we forbidden by Lord Kitchener to say there are three G.O.Cs or three Bosses
Egypt is made of none: but separate and misbegotten.
The Mediterranean Expeditionary Force is of the sea alone; not ashore, but separate and misbegotten.
The Levant Base is of Egypt and the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force both ashore and separate, but misbegotten and nor succeeding.
So there is one Egypt not three Egypts:
one Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, not three Mediterranean Expeditionary Forces:
one Levant base, not three Levant Bases.
And in this trinity none is afore or after; none is greater or less than the other.
But the whole three generals are quarrelling together and quibbling.
So that in all things as aforesaid, the unity in trinity and the trinity in unity is to be worshipped.
He therefore who will be decorated: must think of the Trinity.
Furthermore it is necessary to everlasting promotion: that he also believe rightly the appointment of our G.O.C, Sir Archibald Murray.

For the right faith is that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man.

God of the substance of the Father,
begotten before the worlds;
and man of substance of His mother, born in the world.
Perfect God and perfect man,
of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting.
Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead,
and inferior to the Father as touching His manhood.
Who, although He is God and man,
yet He is not two, but one Christ.
One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh,
but by taking of that manhood into God.
One altogether,
not by confusion of substance,
but by unity of person.
For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man,
so God and man is one Christ;
Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell,
rose again the third day from the dead;
He ascended into heaven, He sits on the right hand of the Father,
God, Almighty;
From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies;
And shall give account of their own works.
And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting
and they that have done evil into everlasting fire.
This is the catholic faith,
which except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved.
Amen



*General Sir Archibald Murray (1860 - 1945)
After serving as Deputy Chief of the Imperial General Staff for much of 1915, he was subsequently Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force from January 1916 to June 1917, in which role he laid the foundation for the defeat and destruction of the Ottoman Empire in the Arabian Peninsula*

And the right faith is: that we believe and confess that Sir Archibald Murray is G.O.C. of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force; equal to Maxwell as touching his troops, but inferior to Maxwell as touching his administration. Who although he be G.O.C. of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, yet has not two but one Command. One altogether, not by confusion of Generals: but by complexity of Commands. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man: so should Murray and Altham be one Command. We suffered for this reorganisation, for Murray descended upon Alexandria: rose again the second day and with a disordered brain. He ascended into Cairo, and sitteth on top of Maxwell, G.O.C. almighty: whence he shall come to take the Troops, the quick and the dead. At whose coming all men shall rise again with their brevets: and shall immediately proceed to damn each other's works. And they that have this will shall go into the Honours List everlasting: and they that hath done evil into everlasting retirement. This is the Mediterranean faith: which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be promoted. Glory be to Egypt, and to the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, and to the Levant Base; as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, Chaos without end.
Amen



General Sir John Maxwell (1859 – 1929) He had been General Officer Commanding British Troops in Egypt in 1908 and, reappointed as General Officer Commanding British Troops in Egypt in late 1914. He successfully held the Suez Canal against the Ottoman Raid on the Suez Canal.

In his excellent book 'The Asquiths', Colin Clifford refers to the arrival in October 1916 of Major General Sir Cameron Shute to command the Royal Naval Division. The then Prime Minister's second son, Arthur ("Oo") Asquith served with distinction in the Division until he was seriously wounded in the following year. The General was determined to deal with what he described as "the lamentable discipline" of the Division. On closer analysis it transpired that this extremely efficient fighting force had upset some of the hierarchy of the Army by retaining the Naval rank structure and the Naval salute. Worse still, some ratings and officers continued to wear beards in true naval fashion.

Happily this ridiculous military martinet came unstuck when he ordered Sub-Lieutenant Codner to shave his beard and he refused, successfully invoking King's regulations. This resulted in another member of the Division, A. P. Herbert, writing the celebrated 'Ballad of Codson's Beard' which was eventually published anonymously in Punch in January 1918. It is readily available on the internet if you search under the author's name and some similarities with 'The Creed' are self-evident. Herbert's first novel, 'The Secret Battle', was published in 1919. It was one of the earliest novels to contain a detailed description of Gallipoli and the mental suffering generally sustained by troops in the front line and also one of the first to challenge the Army's execution of soldiers for desertion. It points to his dislike of 'the Establishment' which also manifests itself in his more widely known 'Misleading Cases', which recounts the legal adventures of the inventive Mr Haddock, who won the right to pay his tax on a cheque written on the back of a cow, hence 'The Negotiable Cow'. This had its drawbacks as he then had to pay the revenue's cost for feeding and stabling 'the cheque' and the damage caused when 'the cheque' ran amok whilst being negotiated!

It makes Herbert a strong candidate for the authorships of 'The Creed'. Fortunately, if it was him, he was able to remain anonymous as, to misquote Lady Bracknell, to mock one general is unfortunate, to mock three risks a firing squad!

**Col. John F Penley OBE TD.
Commanding Officer RWxY 1989-1991**

SUMMER RECEPTION – Stanway House

Wednesday June 14th 2017

This year's Summer Reception will be held in the Gardens of Stanway House, near Cheltenham, by kind invitation of the Earl of Wemyss.

The Water Garden, one of the finest in Britain, was created in the 1720s and the Natural Fountain, which rises to a height of 300 ft, is the tallest gravity fountain in the world, fed from a reservoir above the gardens.

The Earl's grandfather, Lord Elcho, a lieutenant in the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars, was killed in the fighting at Katia on Easter Sunday 1916.

*

Invitations are included in this edition.



THE WOODCHESTER WAYSIDE CROSS

The Soldiers of Gloucestershire and The Friends of the Museum have been invited to a Service of Rededication of the unique World War I Wayside Cross at Woodchester, a village south of Stroud, at 4pm on Saturday 10th June 2017.

The history of this wooden cross is extraordinary; it is the only memorial commenced and completed during WWI, most memorials to the fallen of World War I were not commissioned until after November 1918. There had been private plaques in chapels to mark those serving in the Crimean and Boer Wars and, indeed, Cheltenham has a war memorial to those who died in the 'South African War 1899 -1902', but this was a result of an individual taking action to mark the deaths of those in the village around him as the stalemate of the trench warfare continued and he felt compassion for the fate of his parishioners.

The idea of the Cross first came to Father Pope, the Prior of the Dominican Priory in Woodchester, in 1915 and initially was intended for those of the congregation to mark the loss of sons and husbands. But he realised that this would be too exclusive as he had sympathy for the many grieving relatives in the district of 'all classes and creeds'.



The cross soon after construction 1917. The Church in the background was consecrated in 1849 and the Priory was added in 1853.



The cross after restoration 2014. The figure of Christ has long since disappeared and has been replaced by a ceramic wreath.

The cross, with a crucifix reminiscent of wayside crosses in Northern France where the men were fighting, and a stone memorial is situated in the field below the Priory on land given by the Dominican fathers and brothers beside the Bath Road, now the busy A46. Work was started in July 1916 and it was dedicated on June 3rd 1917, by the Rt. Revd. Dr Burton, the Catholic Bishop of Clifton. Schoolchildren from all the local schools, local bands and members of the Stroud and Nailsworth Companies of the 4th Gloucesters attended and in all about 3000 people came to the ceremony.

The Bath Road had been widened, and still is at this point, by Messrs Newman and Hender, the mill owners on the other side of the road, to accommodate the expected crowd.



Dedication Service June 1917 (left) and Remembrance Service August 1918

The following year, August 4th ‘Remembrance Sunday’ (the date of the Declaration of War in 1914 was known during the conflict as ‘Remembrance Day’), the Service was led by Cardinal Bourne, the English prelate of the Roman Catholic Church (the *Stroud News* had explained to those who asked what a Cardinal was) and he gave a moving sermon on the ‘Debt to the Dead’. If the crowds were large in 1917, this year some 10,000 people were said to be present and it was claimed that ‘there were crowds as far as the eye could reach’.

Originally 74 names were on the stone work by May 1918 but more names were added until 1920, when towns and villages were dedicating their own memorials. There are now 140 names on the Roll of Honour, of which 59 are from various battalions of the Gloucestershire Regiment.

Gradually, during the next few years when Remembrance Day was recognised as November 11th, the numbers attending the August 4th services dwindled and the Cross gradually became overgrown with weeds and saplings. After years of neglect the memorial was extensively restored in 2014 and this service marks the Rededication of the monument.

The timings on Saturday 10th June 2017 to which you and your friends are invited, joining the congregation on the edge of the A46, before the Inchbrook bend, will be:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1500 to 1545 hrs | Assembly of schoolchildren and service personnel. |
| 1555 hrs | Arrival of invited guests. |
| 1600 to 1645 hrs | Service of Rededication. |
| 1645 to 1730 hrs | Reception for descendants of those recorded on the Memorial |

The service will be led by the current Bishop of Clifton, Bishop Declan, who will be assisted by the Priest of the Annunciation Church, Woodchester and the Anglican Vicar of St Mary’s, Woodchester.

Lt. Col. Ralph Stephenson TD.