

NEWSLETTER
THE FRIENDS OF
THE SOLDIERS OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE
MUSEUM

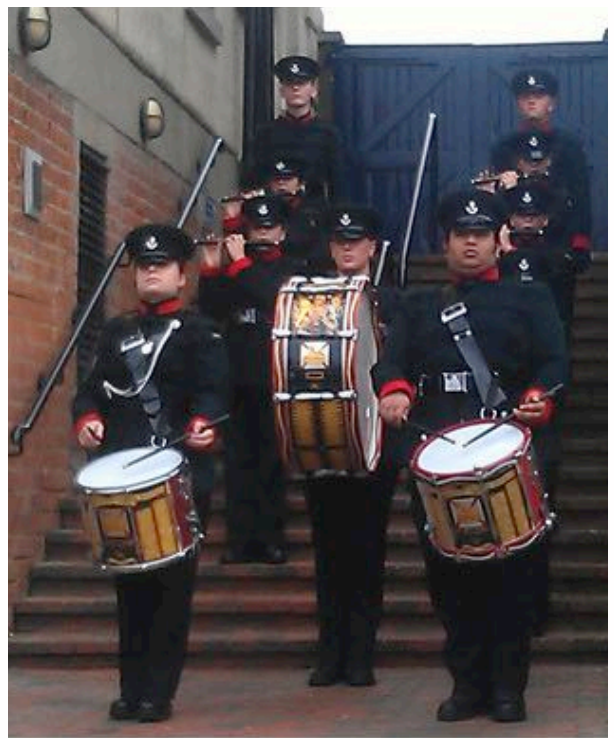


AUTUMN 2014

THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER OPENS THE RE-FURBISHED MUSEUM 30th MAY



TRH The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester at the opening the Museum and below, guests enjoying the evening on the Dockside, music provided by the Corps of Drums of the Gloucestershire ACF The Rifles.



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

A successful party in the museum and on the dockside on May 30th saw the work of re-furbishing the Museum reach its conclusion. Our Patron of the Museum, His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester, declared the new improved galleries open and both he and Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Gloucester spoke to many of the guests. The Friends donated the funds for the event and were well represented. The Lord-Lieutenant and the High Sheriff of Gloucestershire were present, as were members of the Honourable Company of Gloucestershire. Also represented were the Gloucester City Council, the County Council, the Lord Mayor of Bristol and the Merchant Venturers of Bristol. Members of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps from Innsworth, The Rifles, the Royal Wessex Yeomanry and the Gloucestershire ACF represented the county military and we were delighted to greet the Military and Naval Attaches from the South Korean Embassy. The response to the newly designed Museum has been good and, on the next page, the Chairman of Trustees has given the Friends an encouraging report, together with news of the changes of personnel at the Custom House. Do look on TripAdvisor to see what visitors have said about the Museum.

Those present at the Opening will recall that The Canon-in-Residence at Gloucester Cathedral, Canon Heavisides, dedicated the Museum to all those who have served their country as 'Soldiers of Gloucestershire'. Your Committee decided that these words should be placed over the entrance to the Museum as a permanent reminder of the sacrifice made by the many who have worn our county cap badges and those from the county who have served with other formations in the British Army. A plaque is being funded by the Friends and will be in place by the time you receive this Newsletter – so thank you to The Friends.

This Museum is dedicated to the memory of all those who have served their country as Soldiers of Gloucestershire. May 2014.

On the evening before the Official Opening, several Museum Trustees and Friends greeted serving members of 1st Bn. The Rifles and the Reserve Forces; A Coy. 6 Rifles, from Gloucester, and C (RGH) Sqn The Royal Wessex Yeomanry, from Cirencester. As I write this I am aware of how important our Regular and Reserve Forces (formerly the Territorial Army) are as problems increase in Ukraine, challenging the western nations and NATO, and we are shocked by the brutal activities occurring Syria and northern Iraq. These young men and woman viewed the responses to past aggression displayed in the Museum and will, I'm sure, step forward if required, as did the generations before them. We trust the Government will maintain sufficient funding for our armed forces after the 'run-down' that we have witnessed over the last few years.

As I have mentioned, The Friends funded the Official Opening as well as giving the Museum the usual £4.5k to help develop the IT. We have also agreed to pay for the dedication plaque that is currently being prepared. We felt that these extra donations to the Museum will not deplete our funds significantly, but are important to the Museum in this special year of the HLF grant. We feel that marking the Dedication of the Museum is particularly important.

We are delighted to be welcoming Prof. Gary Sheffield as our Autumn Lecturer on Friday 10th October. He is currently Professor of War Studies at the University of Wolverhampton and, on this centennial year of the Great War, will talk on 'Why Britain had to Fight in the First World War'. You should all have received your invitations for this special evening – if not please email (and note the correct spelling) the Secretary on: simoncolbeck@msn.com.

Lt. Col. Ralph Stephenson TD.

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TRUSTEES

It has been an incredibly busy year at our Museum and I am pleased to say that we are going from strength to strength but this is no time for complacency! We reopened in May and I believe everyone who has seen the result of the Heritage Lottery fund grant is thrilled. Our consultants RWDP have done a truly magnificent job and all rooms have been thoroughly refreshed. The inclusion of multi-media screens adds a new dimension and this, together with new story boards and flip-books, allows us to go into much more detail about our people and their campaigns. It also allows us to keep adding and ringing the changes as new research and ideas come to light. We will not be standing still and there is much to add on the Northern Ireland tours and Cold War period that we are currently addressing.

We say farewell to Lavinia Drake who has been our general manager for the last 18 months and thank her for holding the fort so nobly, particularly on the boost she has given to our marketing and developing the tea shop. Chris Chatterton, the former Mayor of Gloucester, has taken over and, as a true citizen of Gloucester, has great ideas for spreading the word and increasing the all-important footfall, shop and internet sales and guiding our modest teashop into the next stage of its development. Janet Hayes has also moved on to the New Forest and we wish her and her husband well in their new life after 20 years at the Museum.

We welcome our new band of volunteers who ably support our activities and are still looking for more. Volunteers are our life blood, so please join in if you can or encourage others to: there are literally roles for everyone, from serving tea to manning the shop or assisting with the research and using IT skills.

The next stage is to get our fund raising kicked off for further development. We cannot rely on long term MOD funding in these difficult times. Plans are moving along well and we should be able to give a full report in the next newsletter.

If you have not yet managed to visit the new Museum please make the effort and encourage your friends to do so. You and they will be impressed.

Lt. Col. Rob Dixon OBE.

INTERNET NEWS

Col. Stephen Oxlade has done a huge amount of work developing a new website. An interim web site has been produced and this is now the home page of the current museum web site.

The web address is now: www.soldiersofglos.com

If you haven't seen this new site then please visit and view it. We have received great feedback on the new look, the next step is for the online shop to be redone, and to include more of the best selling shop stock and books.

Annual General Meeting of The Friends

Notice is given that the 2014 AGM of The Friends of the Soldiers of Gloucestershire will be held in the Long Room, The Custom House, Gloucester Docks on Tuesday 25th November at 1900hrs.

EN-ROUTE TO NORMANDY 70TH EVENT

In June this year the Museum enjoyed the visit of an old soldier travelling from his home on the Isle of Man to take part in the events for Normandy 70th. Hector Duff MM. BEM., known as ‘Mac’, is thought to be the only Royal Gloucestershire Hussar who landed on the Normandy beaches on June 6th 1944, wearing the cap-badge of the RGH. ‘Mac’, now 94 years old, was the Humber scout car driver for the 22nd Armoured Brigade commander, Brig. William ‘Looney’ Hinde. He had fought in the battles of North Africa and, in January 1943 when the 2nd RGH was disbanded, he continued to serve with the brigadier at Bde. HQ.

Landing on Gold Beach at 1pm in the afternoon, his first job on the beach was to remove the waterproofing from his scout car, whilst under fire from the enemy. He explained:

“The Channel crossing was rough. I was below, being ill, and could see nothing until we were ordered, by a Royal Marine officer, to man our vehicles and start them up the engines until thoroughly warm to cut down the chances of being swamped by the sea. My abiding memory, when I could see out, was seeing the hundreds and hundreds of ships and other craft crossing the Channel. I could only see a small part of that armada, but it has made a lasting impression on me. As the doors of the vessel opened and we drove out, I felt back at war. The infantry had gone ahead of us, and we were about six hours after the first wave. The tide was further out and therefore more in our favour. I could see the steel emplacement and traps to avoid as we ran up the beach. My boss, the Brigadier, was after all the intelligence he could gather and we were seeking out the brigade officers who had gone before us. Eventually we joined up with them and the boss was able to learn something of the enemy positions. A lot has been written about the fact that the beaches were defended by remnants of the Germany Army and Hitler Youth. The resistance I encountered was from stiff, battle-hardened troops. I remember being shelled over as we bedded down against some stone walls. On Day 2 the regiments in the brigade began to land. On the third day our tactical HQ arrived and we were able to shake out into battle formations.”



Hector Duff with, left, Maj. Justin Crump, OC C (RGH) Sqn. The Royal Wessex Yeomanry, Lavinia Drake, Museum Manager and Col. John Penley OBE TD, Hon. Col. C (RGH) Sqn. RWxY.

Hector won his Military Medal in North Africa and was awarded the BEM for educating children about the Second World War and for his services to education where he lives, on the Isle Man.

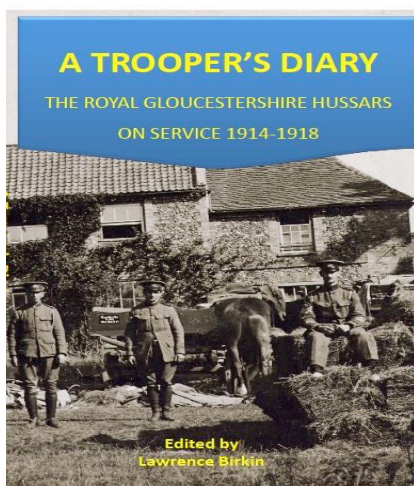
Hector was accompanied by members of his family and met serving members of the Royal Wessex Yeomanry, C (RGH) Squadron from Cirencester.

Editor

SoGM PUBLISHING



The Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum is now a publisher of Military History, using some of the material that is stored on the Museum data base or in the Museum store. The first two books are now on sale in the Museum Bookshop and can be ordered on- line at: www.soldiersofglos.com/shop:

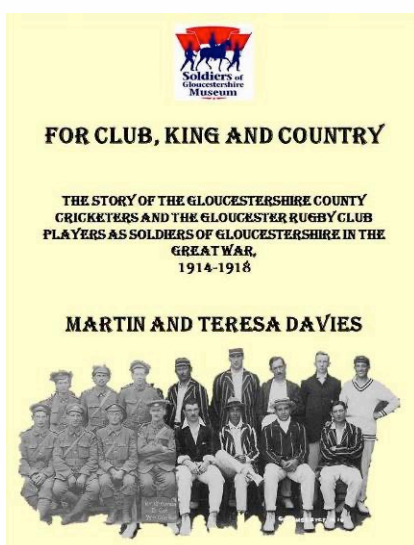


‘A Trooper's Diary - The Royal Gloucestershire Hussars on Service 1914-1918’

Edited by Lawrence Birkin. pp 177, with 12 pages of illustrations.

From 1914 until 1918 the Gloucester Journal published reports from a soldier in the ranks of the RGH. He describes Gallipoli, the battles of Sinai and the great cavalry advance through Palestine. Lawrence Birkin continues the search to indentify the correspondent.

Complete with the 1914 muster list and a list of ‘recruits since mobilisation’.



‘For Club, King and Country – The Story of the Gloucestershire County Cricketers and the Gloucester Rugby Club Players as Soldiers of Gloucestershire in the Great War 1914 – 1918’

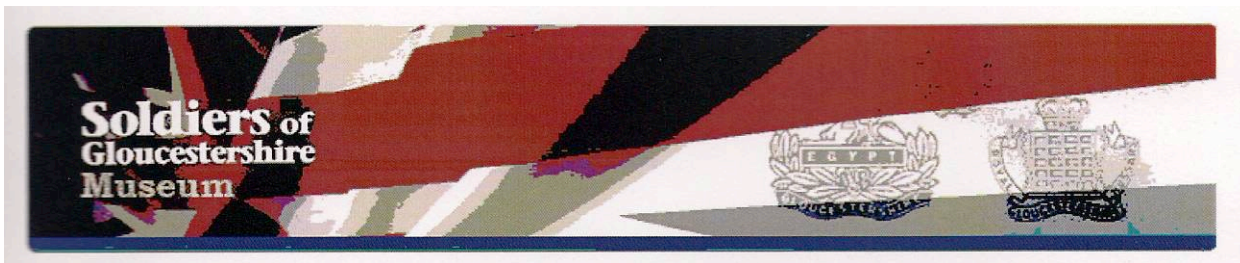
By Martin and Teresa Davies. pp 210, generously illustrated.

This is a comprehensive work of all the players from the county clubs who readily joined up in 1914, the Roll of Honours alone covers 47 profiles, many accompanied by photographs, and describes the battles and the personnel circumstances of the players.

Forward by Jack Russell (County Cricket Club) and Mike Teague (Rugby Club)

Order your copy and support the Museum

Many other books by other publishers are also on sale in the Bookshop
See the Museum web site



MUSEUM MANAGER'S REPORT

The Museum reopened on the 14th April and has received 3163 visitors, to 31st July. Visitor comments are extremely positive, and word of mouth recommendations are starting to come through, including visitors using their gift aid pass to come back with other visitors. Have a look at the Tripadvisor reviews for comments like: "I have seen many military museums in the UK and for a local one, it is one of the best." The Museum was awarded the 'Tripadvisor Certificate of Excellence 2014'.

Since reopening, we have been able to take on new volunteers who help primarily with shop and tea room; this has made a huge difference to staffing of the shop and saving money. We still need more volunteers to help spread the load of the week, luckily some volunteers are happy to help 2 or 3 days a week. Volunteers are also able to do a Food Health and Hygiene or Public Health and Safety certificate. The new till is great for collecting reports and allowing gift aid to be collected, so far £3,000 of gift aid admissions have been collected, which is more than collected in a whole year previously.

Janet, the shop manager, is leaving the Museum at the end of August, after 20 years here and she will be relocating permanently to the New Forest. The tearoom, the fitting of which was donated by the Friends, has generated nearly £2,000, which is a great start. The tearoom is a huge draw for enticing visitors in to buy items from the shop

There were children's workshops organized for the summer holidays, to encourage local families to come into the Museum. Several events have also been planned in conjunction with the Gloucester History Festival, which will provide good free publicity for the Museum. We are also getting involved with the BBC Radio WW1 Roadshow, which will happen on the 10th September in Kings Square, Gloucester.

The special events which have been held since reopening – '1940s day', 'Codebreakers' kids evening, and schools projects which Elizabeth, the Education Officer, has delivered, have all received good publicity in the local news. The Museum will be trialing a joint ticket promotion with the Waterways Museum from the 1st -14th September to co-inside with Gloucester History week. It will offer visitors/locals a discount to visit the two museums.

There was Spitfire and Hurricane fly-past over the Museum on the 21st June 2014, Armed Forces Day, which generated a huge amount of publicity and the day brought a great crowd to the docks. The Museum offered a special £2 entry, which nearly 100 people took advantage of; considering it was such fantastic weather with lots of free entertainment outside, this was a fantastic result. The shop took £1200 (a weeks takings in one day). A very successful day for the museum, just need those days every week!

And finally - Rugby World Cup. Gloucester will be a host city for the World Cup 2015, with a 'fan zone' being situated at the other end of Victoria Basin, where all matches will be screened; a fantastic opportunity for the Museum to take advantage of increased footfall. We plan to put on a special Rugby Exhibition in the Museum.

Lavinia Drake

One Hundred Years Ago

MOBILISATION AUGUST 1914

A hundred years ago the British Army, an entirely professional volunteer force and small by the standards of the conscripted armies of Europe but extremely well equipped and trained, was mobilised to fight a war that shaped the history of Europe for the next century. The army was regarded as a force to maintain stability in Britain's Empire and not to fight a major war in continental Europe; in 1914 half the regular army was serving overseas. Together with the Army Reserve and the recently formed Territorial Force (created in 1908 by the Haldane Reforms, which also saw the origin of the Imperial General Staff and school and university Officer Training Corps) the British Army could field a force of 235,000, compared with Germany's 98 divisions - 850,000 soldiers and 2.9 million reservists. The British Field Force (BEF), when it crossed the Channel in August, consisted of a mere six infantry divisions and five brigades of cavalry,

Although the British Government did not declare war on Germany until 11pm. on August 4th, the War Office was sufficiently alarmed by the German ultimatum to Russia, issued at noon on the 1st August, to cease Russian mobilisation, that it terminated all Regular Army manoeuvres, recalled Territorial Force units from their Annual Camps and ordered troops to return to their depots. On August 3rd Germany declared war on France and entered Belgium. At 4pm. on the 4th August the British Government issued orders for mobilisation, which was received by the 1st Bn. The Gloucestershire Regt., part of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Division at Aldershot, shortly afterwards.



"Back Badge Day". 1st Battalion, The Gloucestershire Regiment. Bordon, 1914.

The battalion was stationed at Bordon, but was training with other units of the 3rd Brigade at Rushmoor Bottom, near Aldershot, when the recall was received and was some what under strength: two captains, seven subalterns and about 600 men short. This was rectified as the reservists responded to the call to report for war (the first to report, Cpl. Minahan, arrived on the afternoon on the 4th). The Bn. was expected to be complete and ready to move by 7th August, and by midnight it was ready and prepared for this. In true army style, 'hurry up and wait', the 3rd Brigade did not leave Bordon until the 12th, but those extra days were used to make the reservists, some who had served many years before, familiar with their rifle, the new short version had by now been issued, and other changes in warfare. In the hours of darkness of the 12th, the battalion marched to Bordon Station and boarded trains to Southampton, where they went aboard the *SS Gloucester Castle* and sailed that day for Le Havre.

The 2nd Bn. The Glosters however, was at Tientsin, in China and had a rather disrupted return to the United Kingdom after being recalled:

'The 61st in Tientsin, shortly after the outbreak of War, had orders for Sialkot, in India, then for Tsing Tau to take part in the siege of that port with the Japs. We actually put our kit on board labelled Sialkot for it. At the last moment we had orders to embark for "destination unknown", which turned out to be England for Flanders'.



Members of the 2nd Bn. the Glosters in Tientsin, China, about 1913 or early 1914

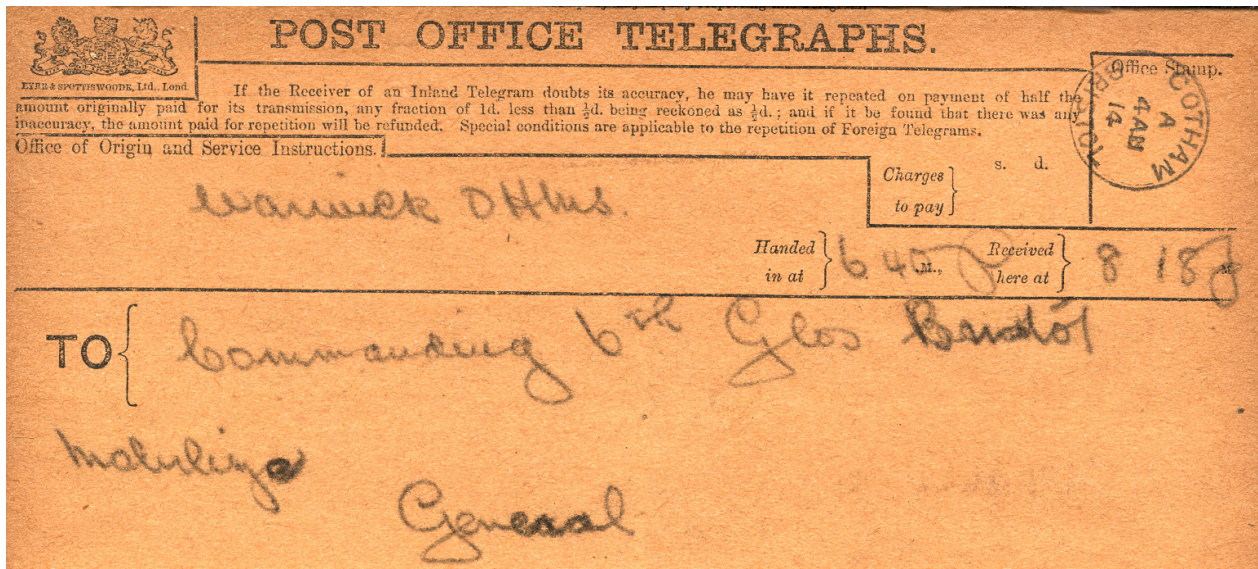
They met their new commanding officer in Port Said at the end of October; he had already travelled to India and back to Port Said before he managed to catch up with his battalion. After a period in England, they arrived in France on December 18th, under command of the 27th Division.

By Saturday August 8th the mobilisation of the 3rd Bn., (Special Reserve) The Glosters, was complete, some 900 men having been absorbed into the battalion and, in the evening, set off by train to its war station at Abbey Wood, on the Thames, to guard the Woolwich Arsenal and the supplies of explosives stored over the Abbey Wood marshes. By September 1914 it was training new drafts of officers and men to be fed to the front line battalions.

For the Territorial Force, the summer weather of July and August was traditionally the time for 'Annual Camp', the fortnight of collective training. Arrangements for the training periods had gone ahead long before the crisis in the Balkans had developed.

Consequently on Sunday 2nd August all the Bristol Territorial units, the Royal Engineers, the Medical unit and the Glosters, crowded into Temple Meads station, to set off for Camp; the 4th (City of Bristol) Bn. and the 6th Bn. The Gloucestershire Regt. travelling to Minehead and, being brigaded together with the 7th and 8th Worcesters, joined them under canvas at North Hill Camp. During the night a telegram was received ordering the battalions to return to their bases, an order that was transmitted to all TF units across the country. The next morning, Monday 3rd, both battalions were paraded and informed that reservists were being called up and the War Office was mustering the Territorial Forces. They immediately returned to their drill halls*, the 4th to Queen's Road, Clifton and the 6th to St Michaels Hill,

Bristol, to disperse to their homes and wait. The one word telegram, 'Mobilise', was received at 6pm. on August 4th, the Territorial Force was now at war.



The one word telegram to the Commanding Officer of the 6th Bn. ordering 'Mobilize' 4 August 1914

Following the mobilisation order all volunteers were told that they were now on active service and the remainder of the week would be used to issue equipment and ammunition.

There was a week of activity, recruiting to the colours was rapid, including many were those whose period of service had expired but wished to re-engage and, by the end of the week, for example, over 200 men had been passed fit by a team of doctors, sworn into the 6th Bn and equipped with what uniforms and kit were available.



Members of the 4th Bn. The Gloucesters outside a public house, late 1914 or early 1915.

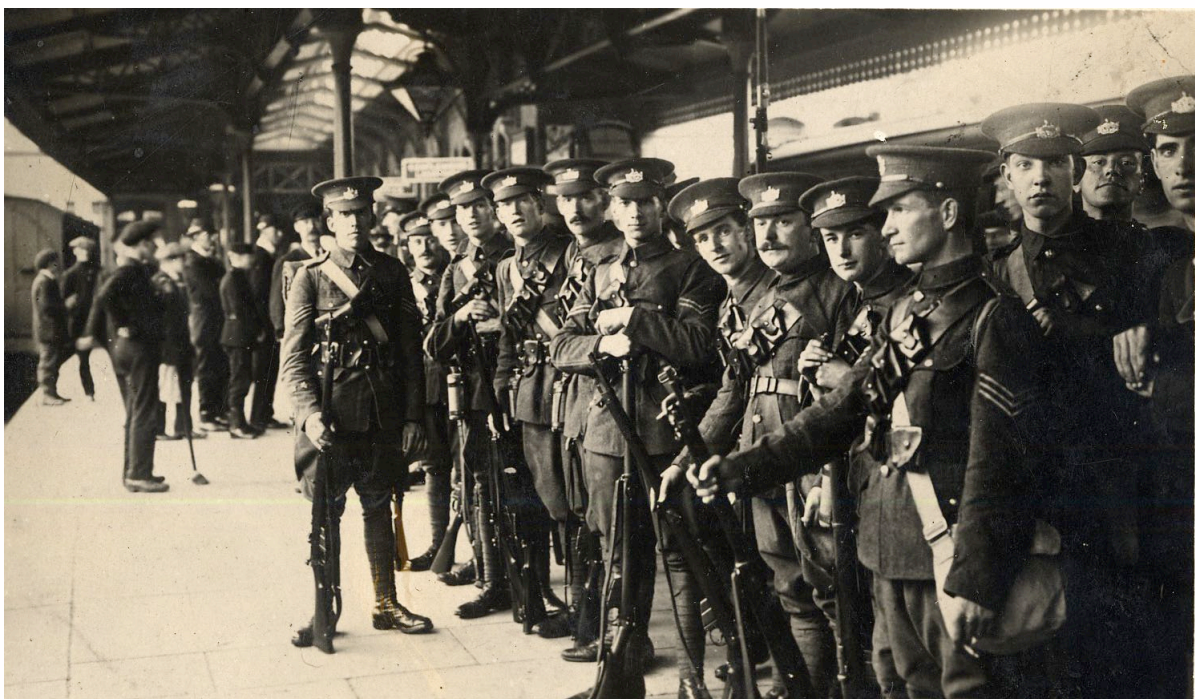
On that Saturday, the 8th August, the Regimental Colours of the 4th and 6th Bns. were marched to the Council House in Corn Street and presented to the Lord Mayor for safekeeping, for as long as the war service would last. On Monday 10th August both

battalions left Bristol by train for their war station, an easy journey to Swindon, where the South Midland Division had begun to concentrate.



The 6th Bn. The Glosters TF. march away from their drill hall on St. Michael's Hill, Bristol 10th Aug.

The 5th Bn. The Gloucesters, based in Gloucester, had likewise departed on that Sunday for camp at Marlow and were similarly returned the following morning, after the recall order had been received. They too left their colours in the care of the city and, after a week of rapidly issuing kit and absorbing new men, were sent off to their war station on the Isle of Wight. Here they were quickly relieved by the 5th Hants and were sent to join the Division at Swindon.



Members of the 5th Bn The Glosters moving by train to the Isle of Wight, August 1914.

The entire South Midland Division (in 1915 renamed the 48th (South Midland) Div.) then moved to Chelmsford to protect the east coast of the kingdom from German invasion.

The order to mobilise also was received by The Royal Gloucestershire Hussars on the evening of Tuesday August 4th and was promptly acted on;

'By first post on that Wednesday morning members of the RGH received their call to arms. The troops flocked in at a few hours notice, some rushing in to obtain more particular information than was printed in the confidential orders and then returning home to put their affairs straight before joining the regiment, others arriving with a pillowcase containing all the articles of necessity and comfort laid down in the schedule of active service kit – ready for service at a moments notice.' - 'A Trooper's Diary'



The first to volunteer for the RGH. Oxlease, Gloucester August 1914.

Packing cases of kit were opened, kit bags, mess tins, haversacks, horse blankets, jack-knives and lanyards, belts and bandoliers were handed out as the troopers filed past and later, the Barrack Square in Gloucester became 'alive with horses brought in from the city and surrounding country for inspection by the Army Remount Officer'. Mounted parties were sent out to outlying towns to purchase more horses and billeting officers visited hotels, inns and private houses in Gloucester to accommodate the troopers.

On Tuesday August 11th the 1st RGH left Gloucester for Warwick Racecourse where the brigade of Worcestershire, Warwick and Gloucestershire Yeomanry assembled, fifteen hundred men and their horses, prior to their dispatch two days later to villages around Bury St Edmonds to assist in the defence of the east coast.

Both the Gloucestershire Regt. TF and the RGH formed 2nd and 3rd line units as the men of the county volunteered for service in August and September that year and Lord Kitchener's call for, at first, one hundred thousand men, created the new Service Battalions that reinforced the BEF in 1916.

In all the Gloucestershire Regiment formed no less than 24 battalions for the Great War – but that's another story.

Editor

** Some interesting film footage has recently been discovered of the two battalions arriving back in Bristol on 3rd August; the Museum has a copy.*

References:

'The Gloucestershire Regiment in the War 1914 -1918'. Everard Wyrall 1931

'A Troopers Diary – the RGH on Service 1914 -1918'. Reports to the Gloucester Journal.

Published by the SoGM 2014.

Two Hundred Years Ago

28th AND 61st FOOT AND THE END OF THE PENINSULAR WAR

In March 1814 the British allies, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, marched on Paris and fought for the capital - the 'Battle of Montmartre'. After a day of fighting in the suburbs the French surrendered on March 31st. Napoleon, who had left his brother Joseph Bonaparte to defend the city, had advanced as far as Fontainebleau when he heard that Paris had surrendered. Outraged, he wanted to march on the capital, but his marshals would not fight for him and repeatedly urged him to surrender. He abdicated in favour of his son on 4th April but the Allies rejected this out of hand, forcing Napoleon to abdicate unconditionally on April 6th. Wellington rode in triumph on a white horse into Paris on 4th May 1814 as Napoleon was sent to reside in Elba.



The 'Battle of Montmartre', left, with Paris in the background and, right, the entry of the Russian Army into Paris 1814

As described in the Spring Newsletter, following the Battle of Toulouse in April 1814, both the 28th and 61st marched to Bordeaux, there to board ship for home. To their surprise they were posted immediately, without leave and to the dismay of their commanding officers, for garrison duties in Ireland. The only mark of gratitude appears to have been a knighthood for both the Colonel and his second-in-command, Col. Belson and Lt. Col. Stovin and a medal, cast thirty-four years later, and given to those still alive and could prove their claim. Twenty-one NCOs' of the 61st were commissioned, as a reward for gallantry during the Peninsular War, but further promotion invariably depended on wealth and influence and most served as junior officers for rest of their careers. The second battalions of the two regiments were disbanded and men transferred to bring the first line battalions up to strength; many impoverished Irishmen were also recruited to the colours. The 61st remained in Newry whilst the 28th was moved frequently.

'In October 1814 the regiment embarked for America, but the orders were countermanded and it went back to Cork. Then fresh orders came and once more it embarked on transports, this time for Bermuda, and the transports put to sea. It was delayed, however by contrary winds and one day a frigate raced up with orders to return, for the startling reason that Napoleon had escaped from Elba and landed in France.'

Napoleon's 'one hundred days' had begun and, in May 1815, the 28th were landed at Ostend and marched to Brussels – to meet Napoleon again, this time at Waterloo.

The Troops of Gloucestershire Yeomanry were similarly wound down as the French threat diminished and, by early 1815, only the Gloucester Troop was maintained, more to act as mounted police as 'riots at that time being both frequent and dangerous at the county capital'.

As the troops disbanded they dined themselves out, the Tewkesbury Troop for a 'handsome dinner at the Plough Inn', and the Winterbourne Troop, 'this spirited Volunteer Corps gave a farewell dinner at the Full Moon Inn, Stokes Croft, The company consisted of about fifty and the festival was enlivened by the band of the Worcester Militia.' The Stow Troop 'assembled in the town and were entertained to a farewell dinner by their officers. The health of the Prince Regent was drunk with acclimation. ... An ox was distributed among the poor of Temple Guiting in honour of the day.' The Grumbalds Ash Troop met at Petty France to 'arrange their pecuniary affairs and terminate their military services..... Mr Goulter of Petty France provided an excellent dinner for the occasion and the Duke of Beaufort, with his accustomed liberality, presented them with a stag as an addition to it'.

This pecuniary settlement, perhaps not the ox and stag, benefited the Gloucester Infirmary; once local expenses had been settled, all the Troops left handsome donations to the hospital; Tewkesbury Troop £300, Stow Troop £1000 and £150 'from the troop funds' settled at the meeting at Petty France – some £90,000 in today's currency.

Social unrest, disturbances and riots would see the Troops of Yeomanry reform in the 1830's and the creation of a single regiment, The Gloucestershire Yeomanry Cavalry, on March 30th 1834. Command was given to the Marquis of Worcester, heir to the 6th Duke of Beaufort, the start of a connection with the Somerset family which remains to this day.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY AND TREASURER'S REPORT

As at 4th September 2014 the Friends have 397 members in all categories: 266 Life and 131 annual members including 25 overseas, with our latest joiners living in Texas. They became 'Friends' after visiting the museum and were so impressed they joined. I did offer to deliver their membership card by hand, however the Chairman said it may be a little excessive. New members continue to join and since April there have been 13 new members.

For those of you who pay annually and have already renewed many thanks, for those of you still to renew, you can do so 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?

Our finances remain healthy and we are well placed to continue our support to the Museum, as mentioned in the Chairman's report. We continue to receive 'one off' donations from members and would like to say many thanks; all donations are most welcome. We would also like to mention that bequests are most welcome; we do have a small number of donors who have remembered us in this way.

In closing I would like thank Chris Campbell for this support during the hand over process. Where he got his '*the job only takes 20 minutes per month*', I would like to know!!

Patrick Smart

New Acquisition

The Museum has recently purchase a miniature of an unidentified field officer of the 28th (North Gloucestershire) Regiment, with a plaited lock of hair on the reverse. The catalogue has it dated as 1808, but our Archivist dates it, by the dress, as earlier than that, about 1790.

It was painted by Frederick Buck, an artist of many portraits of British Army officers. He was born in Cork in 1771 and was, it is thought, admitted as a pupil to the Dublin Society's Drawing School in 1783. He practised in Cork and, during the Peninsula war when Cork was a busy embarkation port, he had so many orders for portraits of officers and others going to the war that he kept a supply of partly-painted ivories to which he added the heads and the regimental facings, etc., when his customers gave him hurried sittings.



THE COLOURS OF THE 28th FOOT

A cutting from the 'County Gentleman' of 1887 has recently been passed to the Editor; it concerns the previous colours of the 1st Bn. The Gloucestershire Regt. and makes interesting reading.

“Some officers of the Gloucestershire Regiment, the first battalion of which is now at York, have found in the shop of a Jew pawnbroker of that city two standards – four flags of the old colours of the regiment. One pair dates from before the Union with Ireland, and may come in useful to the present Premier, if he survives the east winds and the Chamberlain defection. The other pair dates earlier than the Peninsular War. It appears that old colours on being replaced by new presentations were considered the property of the Colonel. The flags passed to the son of that officer and, on his death, a dishonest valet speedily entrusted them to his avuncular relative. The Jew has been persuaded to part with them for a consideration, and great is the joy of the regiment”

The first battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment is that famous fighting regiment once known as the 28th Foot, and more familiarly as “The Slashers”. In 1869, when the regiment

was at Gibraltar, it was presented with new colours by Lady Airey, who, in addressing the officers and men, said – ‘Your regiment has had the privilege of serving under the two greatest generals in English history – Marlborough and Wellington. You have been commanded and led to victory by heroes who have died at your head – Wolfe at Quebec, Abercrombie at Alexandria, Moore at Corunna and Picton at Waterloo.’

Colonel Daniell, the officer who at the time commanded the regiment, sent the tattered fragments of the old colours to the late Dean Law, with a request that they might be preserved in Gloucester Cathedral; they were accordingly placed in the chapter-house, where they will remain so long as any portion of them survives the decay of time, On them can be traced the names of the following battles in which the regiment bore a distinguished part:- Egypt, Maida, Corunna, Talavera, Albuhera, Salamanca, Vittoria, Pyrenees, Nivelles, Nive, Orthes, Toulouse, Peninsula, Punjaub, Chillianwallah, Goojerat and Delhi. But these are not all its honourable record, the following having disappeared with large portions of the standards:- Ramilies, Louisburg, Quebec 1759, Barossa, Waterloo, Alma, Inkerman and Sevastopol. It may be hoped that the older colours now recovered from the Jew pawnbroker in York will also be sent to the chapter-house.’

The colours did not remain at the cathedral for long; they are now familiar to all visitors to the Long Room of the Custom House, who see them framed and hanging at one end of the room. Each is provided with a small silver plaque on which is inscribed:

“These Colours, formally in the possession of Gen. N.H. Prescott, Col. of 28th Regt. July 1786 to 1825, were received by the Regt. when stationed in York in 1885. They were found in a pawnshop and are supposed to have been sold by Gen. Prescott’s valet, to whom he left all his personnel effects.”

