

**NEWSLETTER**

**THE FRIENDS OF**

**THE SOLDIERS OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

**MUSEUM**



**AUTUMN 2011**

## 'IMJIN 60' EVENTS - APRIL TO JUNE 2011



*The Duke of Gloucester visits the Imjin display at the Museum in April, talks to Korean veterans and names the quay in front of the Museum – Back Badge Square (below)*



*The Lord-Lieutenant, Dame Janet Trotter, the Lord-Lieutenant's Cadet and the Chairman of the Friends at the Friends Museum Reception, June 2011.*



*Soldiers of The Rifles parade through Gloucester, in April 2011, after being granted the Freedom of the City. Following the parade a Service of Commemoration for the 60th anniversary of the Battle of Imjin took place at Gloucester Cathedral. The small stone cross, carved by Colonel Carne of the Glosters while he was a prisoner of war after the Battle of the Imjin, was carried to the alter by 81-year-old Sam Mercer, a veteran of the Korean War*

- Photographs courtesy of Gloucestershire Media.

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

'Imjin 60' has been an important year for the Korean veterans of the Gloucestershire Regiment who fought on the Imjin River and the Friends were delighted to donate to the appeal for the renovation of the Korean Room and its new exhibits in the Museum. Members of the Committee of the Friends were introduced to HRH The Duke of Gloucester when he visited the exhibition, in April, and unveiled a plaque to mark 'Back Badge Square', to honour the 'Glorious Glosters'.

The Friends held a Summer Reception at the Museum to mark the opening of the Imjin Room and were pleased to entertain the Lord-Lieutenant of Gloucestershire, Dame Janet Trotter DBE, as well as guests from the City Council. Representative of the Head Quarters of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC), now permanently located at Imjin Barracks, Innsworth, were also invited and welcomed to the county. All were entertained to canapés and drinks on the Museum terrace and a musical performance by The Corps of Drums of the Gloucestershire ACF (The Rifles) on the dockside.

It has long been considered that the summer event of the Friends should be something of a 'thank you' to all the members who have helped to keep the accounts healthy throughout the year, but, such was the generosity of our Friends this summer, we have been able to cover the Reception and bank a profit for future donations to the curator's projects.

Our main fund raising event, the Autumn Lecture at Chavenage, this year will be given by Dr. Peter Caddick-Adams, TD. BA. PhD. who is a noted military historian, author and battle-field guide and is a Lecturer at the UK Defence Academy, Cranfield University, Shrivenham. The talk, entitled 'Monty and Rommel: Parallel Lives' will be given on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2011 and we look forward to seeing you there.

The financial support that the Friends give to the Museum has never been more important than now, in this time of austerity and reduced spending, so please support our fundraising events.

**Lt.Col. Ralph Stephenson TD.**

## THE CHARLES LOVELL MEDALS

Recently, the medals of Maj. Charles Lovell, MBE. were acquired at auction and have been lent to the Museum, for display, by the purchaser.

Charles joined the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars as a trooper in 1911, before he was 18. As a sergeant he survived the RGH battles in Gallipoli and took part in the Sinai desert campaign. On 23 April 1916, he was a member of about 100 Gloucestershire Yeoman who were attacked by a Turkish force of some 5,000 at Qatia. The RGH defended the position all day but were eventually over-run for lack of ammunition. Sergeant Lovell was severely wounded and left for dead. Some three days later he was discovered by some friendly Arabs amongst a pile of bodies, slung across a camel and carried for many miles to an Australian Light Horse squadron. He was passed on to a medical unit and his right leg was amputated above the knee. After the War he fostered the Yeomanry Old Comrades Association, which he ran for over 60 years. He was commissioned into the Home Guard, during the Second World War and received the MBE in 1964. He was also interested in collecting medals and built up a considerable collection, especially of Second Boer War medals, many of which were sold after his death in 1977.



## CURATORS REPORT

The museum had a relatively quiet summer until the Tall Ships Event over the August bank holiday, when we had the busiest weekend the museum has ever had, with over 1250 visitors in the three days. As a result our attendance figures are marginally ahead of the target set and while the income is a little below The Museum is in a much better position than we expected at the beginning of August.

We are most grateful for the support that the Friends have given for the Imjin 60 display, which is attracting very favourable comments as can be seen by the remarks in the Visitors Book. One spin off of the project is that it shows that we need, over the longer term, to update and re-vamp the displays in the rest of the museum to bring it up to modern standards.

Meanwhile there is concern about the long term viability of the Docks as a result of the potential re-classification of the Sharpness canal by DeFRA. They are considering declassifying the canal from a commercial to a leisure waterway. This would mean they don't have to maintain the depths that allow commercial shipping. This will stop events such as the Tall Ships and threaten ship repairers like Tommy Neilson, a major employer in the docks. There are also implications for flooding and the water supply for Bristol. Therefore the museum is supporting the campaign to maintain the status quo and I would urge you to do the same.

It goes without saying that we continue to be extremely grateful for all the support that The Friends give us, without which we would struggle to maintain the quality of the exhibitions. We look forward to seeing you here, where there is always some thing new to see.

**Mr. George Streatfeild**

### AUTUMN EVENTS

**The Chavenage Autumn Lecture 2011**

**Friday 21 October at Chavenage House.**

**The speaker will be Dr. Peter Caddick-Adams TD. BA. PhD.**

***'Monty and Rommel: Parallel Lives'***

*An Invitation accompanies this Newsletter.*

**The Friends Annual General Meeting 2011**

**Wednesday 23 November 2011 at 1830hrs.**

**in the Long Room, Custom House, Gloucester.**

*An Agenda accompanies this Newsletter.*

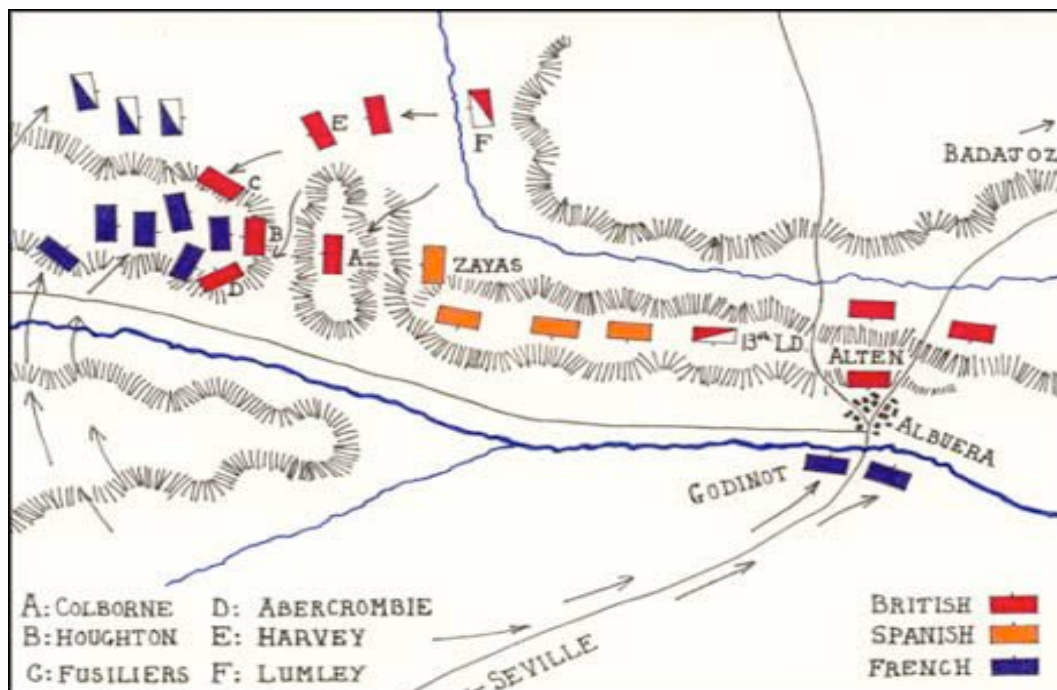
## Two hundred years ago – No.6

## THE PENINSULAR WAR 1811

After the 61<sup>st</sup> Regt of Foot had fought, under Wellington, at Fuentes de Oñoro, close to the Spanish –Portuguese border near Almeda, from May 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup>, the 2/28<sup>th</sup> fought their next battle, under Lieut-Gen. Sir William Beresford, further south at Albuera, on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1811.

Beresford and the Spanish general, Joachim Blake\* had been cooperating, albeit uneasily, in the siege of Badajos, when news reached them that Marshall Soult was marching from Seville with the Army of Andalusia. Both agreed to confront Soult at Albuera, a classic defensive ridge position previously selected by Wellington, that screened the Badajoz siege works. Beresford, with his British and Portuguese troops and a small contingent of Spanish, was in position at Albuera by 15<sup>th</sup> May 1811. Blake's Spanish marched up from Almendrad, arriving during the night.

Soult, an able general, did not proceed as expected. He sent a small force, General Godinot's brigade, towards the village as a diversionary attack whilst concealing the bulk of his army behind the hill on the far side of the Albuera River, facing the Spanish.



Once the French cavalry appeared over the hill and moved to take the flank of the allied positions, Beresford directed Blake to meet the French advance. The Spanish were slow to respond, apart from General Zayas, whose brigade alone initially resisted the French attack, until Beresford brought the 2<sup>nd</sup> Div. forward to support Zayas's right flank. The first brigade to climb the hill, Colbourne's, was nearly destroyed, with many taken prisoner, but the remains of Colbourne's and the newly arrived Houghton's Brigade, faced a storm of artillery and musket fire, but held the ridge.

\*1759 – 1827, of Irish descent, his mother was from Galicia and his father an Irishman, Blake was born at Málaga to an aristocratic family. In his youth, he saw action as a lieutenant of the grenadiers in the American Revolutionary War, taking part in the abortive siege of Gibraltar and the 1783 reconquest of Minorca from the British.

When Beresford saw Colborne's brigade (1/3<sup>rd</sup> Foot, 2/48<sup>th</sup> Foot and 2/66<sup>th</sup> Foot), blinded by a hailstorm, mown down and then almost annihilated by Polish lancers, he lost his nerve and had ordered a retreat, when a young Henry Hardinge\*, attached to the Portuguese troops, urged the remainder of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Div., 'orders or no orders' to block the French advantage. The Fusilier Brigade (1/7<sup>th</sup> Royal Fusiliers, 2/7<sup>th</sup> Royal Fusiliers, 1/23<sup>rd</sup> Royal Welch Fusiliers) ascended the ridge and attacked the French with the Portuguese battalions of the 4th Division, while 3rd Brigade of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Div., commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Abercrombie of the 28<sup>th</sup>, (2/28<sup>th</sup> Foot, 2/34<sup>th</sup> Foot, 2/39<sup>th</sup> Foot), came up on Houghton's left. Lumley's Cavalry moved to the extreme flank to block any French move against the British rear.

Soult realised that he had lost the opportunity to win the battle and abandoned the attack, withdrawing over the Albuera River. He also failed to relieve Badajos and pulled back as far as Seville, taking his British prisoners with him.

The losses on both sides were significant, the Allies lost some 7,000 whilst the French suffered 8,000; in some regiments there were not enough men left to collect their dead. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Div. took the brunt of the casualties; the 28<sup>th</sup> lost 6 officers and 158 soldiers killed and wounded, whilst the 57<sup>th</sup> Foot, in Houghton's brigade, lost 23 officers and 405 soldiers killed and wounded.



*The Drums of the 57<sup>th</sup> Foot, the 'Diehards', in Houghton's Brigade of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Div. – by Lady Butler*

In October 1811 a French division, under the command of General Girard, crossed the River Gardiana and Maj.-Gen. Rowland 'Daddy' Hill received permission to pursue Girard with his 2<sup>nd</sup> Div., still including the 28<sup>th</sup> Foot. Upon learning that the French had halted at the village of Arroyo dos Molinos, Hill marched his troops for three days, in poor weather, so as to catch the French at the village and was able to take them by surprise.

\*Sir Henry Hardinge (1785-1856) later 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Hardinge of Lahore, Gov.-Gen. of India 1844; Commander-in-Chief 1852.

By the evening of the 27 October, Hill's forces had closed on the French. During the night there was a violent hail-storm and, at dawn the following morning, the weather was still so bad that the French pickets had their back to the weather – as well as to Hill's vanguard. The French 34th and 40th Regiments suffered heavy losses during the battle but, to Gen. Girard's relief, the eagle standards of the two regiments were not lost to the British.

On 5 November a jubilant Hill wrote to his sister - *I have time merely to inform you that on the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup> at daybreak I succeeded in surprising, attacking and annihilating the French corps under General Girade at Arroyo dos Molinos. The enemy's forces, when attacked, consisted of about 3000 infantry, 1600 cavalry and artillery. The result is the capture of one general, one colonel, 35 lieutenant-colonels and inferior officers, 1400 prisoners and probably 500 killed. The others dispersed, having thrown away their arms; we have also got all the enemy's artillery, baggage and magazines - in short everything that belonged to the corps.*

The British and Portuguese losses were less than 80; General Girard was subsequently relieved of his command by Marshal Soult and returned to France in disgrace.

Hill's corps, with the 28<sup>th</sup> present, acted as a flank guard while Wellington captured the fortresses of Ciudad Rodrigo (January 1812) and Badajoz (April 1812), allowing Wellington to begin his offensive into central Spain. The 61<sup>st</sup> were present when the allied army met Marshall Marmont at Salamanca, in July 1812 – where Wellington showed himself to be ‘a great and able master of manoeuvres’, as described by Gen. Foy, ‘the only French commander to survive with his corps intact’ – *Wellington- The Years of the Sword* – Elizabeth Longford.

## **Book Review I**

### **“Trenches to Trams – The Life of a Bristol Tommy”**

A new book about the life and times of a First World War Gloucestershire Regiment soldier, CSM George Pine, DCM., is based on 44,000 words of memories he jotted down just before he died in 1972. Clive Burlton, related to George through his wife's family, has painstakingly filled-in the gaps in George's recollections, following extensive research in the UK and overseas over the last 10 years.

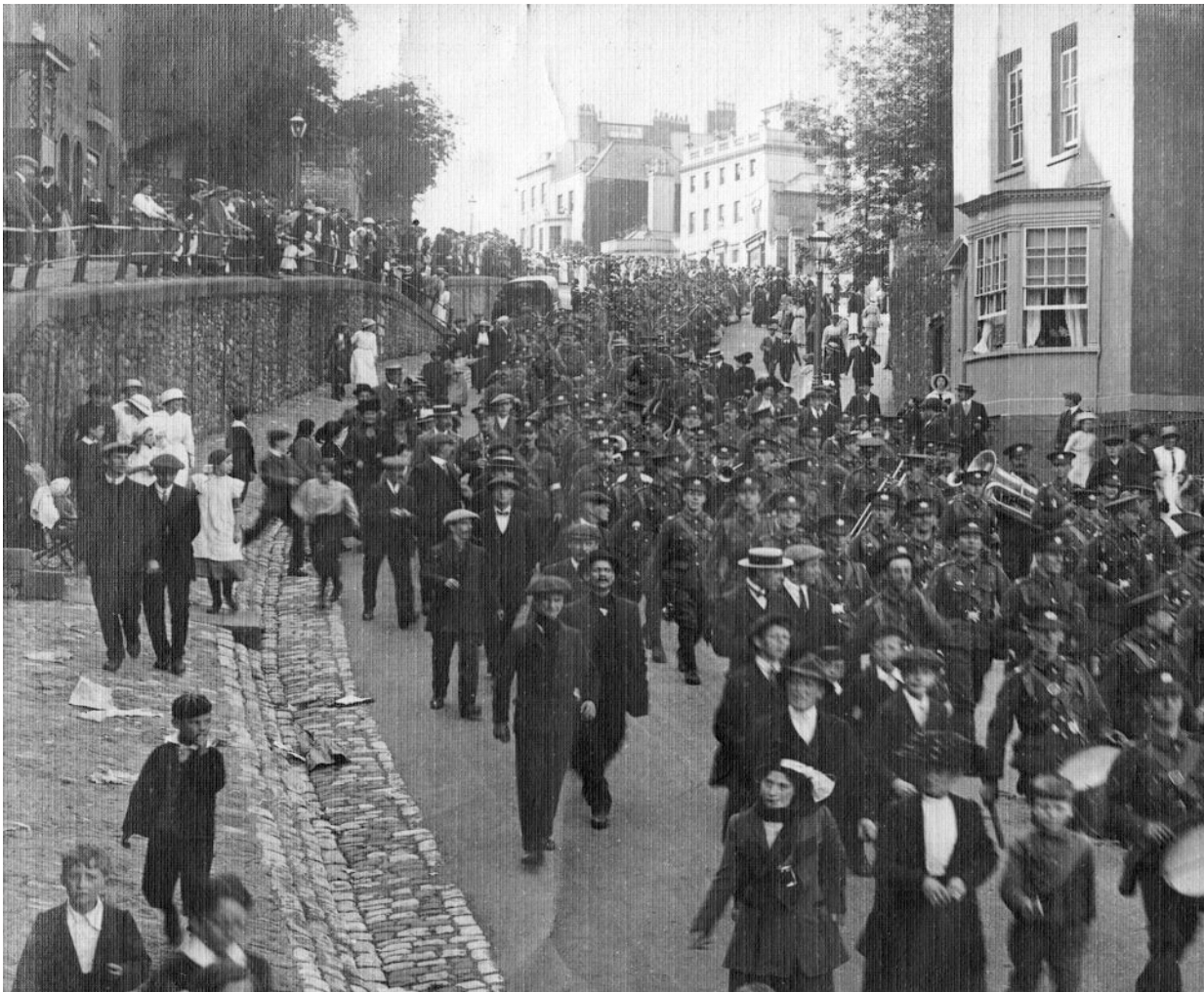


*George Pine with bugle at 6<sup>th</sup> Bn Gloucestershire Regt Annual Camp 1912*

George was wounded three times whilst serving with the Gloucesters and, despite a nasty head wound that finished his army career, he managed to work as a Conductor on Bristol's Trams from 1920 until he retired in 1956.

Aged 16, George joined the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment (Territorial Force) as a bugle-boy in June 1908 – just two months after the 'Territorial Force' came into existence under the Haldane Reforms. As well as band practice at the HQ on St Michael's Hill, Bristol and manoeuvres and exercises at Camp, George attended parades and other events. He played the bugle during two Royal visits, the opening of the Royal Edward Dock at Avonmouth in 1908 and the Bristol Royal Infirmary in 1912.

George had just arrived at the summer camp at Minehead on 3rd August 1914, when war was declared; across the country all the summer camps were abandoned and the 'Terries' returned to their bases. Within a week the 1/6<sup>th</sup> Battalion had mobilised and on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1914 it left Bristol for its war station in Essex. As well as the 1/6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, two other Gloucestershire Territorial Battalions; the 1/4<sup>th</sup> and the 1/5<sup>th</sup> were also in Essex. There followed seven months of intensive training before George and the 1/6<sup>th</sup> left for the Western Front on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1915.



*The 1/6<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Gloucestershire Regt. leaving their St. Michael's Hill Drill Hall, Bristol, on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> August 1914. Bugler George Pine has been identified in this photograph from the Museum's collection.*

The Battalion went into the trenches for the first time at Ploegsteert Wood, Belgium in April 1915. In his memoirs, George described his 'first baptism of rifle fire and field guns' and what it was like to dodge snipers bullets; to don ineffective gas masks and to tend to a wounded comrade.



Although viewed as a relatively safe spot for Territorial units, the Battalion lost 23 killed and 73 wounded while it was in the sector. George came home on leave in November 1915 and found out that his brother Tom had been killed at Gallipoli, serving with the Border Regt. since 1911, just a day after Lord Kitchener ordered the evacuation of the peninsula. Tom was buried at sea.



*The German trenches in 'Plugstreet' Wood, where the 48<sup>th</sup> (South Midland) Div. first had responsibility for the front line. Battalions of the Division, including the 1/4<sup>th</sup>, 1/5<sup>th</sup>, and 1/6<sup>th</sup> Gloucestershire Regiment rotated through front and reserve lines for six weeks from April 1915.*

On his return to France, George described what it was like during the harsh winter of 1915-16; exchanging Christmas greetings with the Prussians across no-man's land and the disappointment of having a nice hot stew ruined when the cooker was shelled. In June 1916, as the 1/6<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters made their way to the Somme area, George returned home. Having served for eight years he was granted four weeks furlough. He took the opportunity to marry Violet, his childhood sweetheart. Around 5<sup>th</sup> July, he returned to the Somme Battlefield, near Serre, where the Battalion had relieved the decimated 'Accrington Pals'. George described the sights he witnessed on rejoining his platoon. Communication trenches were full of bodies and it wasn't long before George himself became a casualty. Whilst standing at the entrance to a sap near Mark Copse, George, an officer and a messenger were caught by the blast from an exploding shell.

With shrapnel imbedded in his back, George was back in Blighty again by the end of July 1916. He spent four months at the Lady Forester VAD hospital in Much Wenlock and its sister convalescent home in Llandudno. When he was well enough, he returned to France in February 1917. He wanted to stay with the 1/6<sup>th</sup>, but the 12<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters – ‘Bristol’s Own’ – were so short of men that he was drafted into their ranks instead. With the battalion undergoing reconstruction between June and September 1917, there was time for other activities. The divisional concert party, the ‘Whizz Bangs’ entertained the men and there were platoon boxing and football competitions. George was sent on a musketry course and passed with the following comments.... “A good instructor, keen, intelligent, should do well with practice”. Early October 1917 saw ‘Bristol’s Own’ in a supporting role during the Third Battle of Ypres, or Passchendaele. George described the mud and grime and the effect gas inhalation had on the men. In only 11 days, ‘Bristol’s Own’ had lost a further 360 killed, wounded or missing. The battalion re-grouped again and in December 1917 left France for a relatively peaceful four months in Italy. George saw little action as he was struck down with trench fever.

The battalion was hastily brought back to France in April 1918 to help stem the German Spring Offensive. On 12<sup>th</sup> April, ‘Bristol’s Own’ found itself in Nieppe Forest. The day before George arrived in the Forest, his brother Fred was killed a few miles away when the 2<sup>nd</sup> South Wales Borderers were completely overwhelmed. Fred, who had joined the Regt. in 1906, has no known grave.

The area around Nieppe Forest was fiercely contested with many raids and counter-attacks. George described in detail the capture of Le Vert Bois, or ‘Gloucester Farm’ as it was known. When officers leading the assault became casualties, George took over and led his company in the attack – successfully consolidating the captured ground. George received the DCM for his part in the capture of the farm on 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> April 1918.

With the German advance halted, it was the turn of the Allies to counter-attack. ‘Bristol’s Own’ were heavily engaged during the Battle of the Ancre that opened on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1918.

The battalion helped to capture Achiet le Petit and Irlles but sustained heavy losses. By 23<sup>rd</sup> August, ‘Bristol’s Own’ had lost another 320 killed, missing or injured. The following day, George was promoted to Company Sergeant Major. George’s and the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion’s final action of the war took place during the assault on the Hindenburg Line, near Cambrai, at the end of September 1918. Whilst checking to see how far the Germans had retreated, George received a gunshot wound to the back of the head. Trying to bandage the wound, he was shot in the shoulder and he slumped into a shell-hole, where he remained semi-conscious for around 18 hours. When he managed to crawl back to British Lines, ‘Bristol’s Own’ had withdrawn from the battlefield and it never fought again; the 12<sup>th</sup> Btn. was disbanded in early October 1918.

The bullet in George’s shoulder was removed at the Australian Military Hospital in Rouen. George partially recovered from his wounds at Beaufort War Hospital, Bristol from where he was honourably discharged and classified as 50% disabled. Although George’s war was over, his battle to adjust to civilian life was about to begin.....

**Mr. Clive Burlton**

## **Book Review II**

### **“Rogue Male – Death and Seduction in World War II with Mister Major Geoff”**

By a strange coincidence I was invited to review this book just after I had been listening to ‘Rogue Male’ by Geoffrey Household on the radio. Household’s book, written some seventy years earlier has long been a favorite thriller of mine and Roger Fields biography I found just as exciting and just as well written.

Geoffrey (Geoff) Gordon-Creed DSO. MC., was born in 1920, in Cape Town and served throughout the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, finally returning as a lieutenant-colonel, aged 28. He died in 2002, in South Carolina.

His first contact with the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars was as an officer cadet when he met up with two young RGH officers in the old Cavendish Hotel, in Jermyn Street, run by the wildly eccentric Rosa Lewis (those who know their RGH history well can probably guess at the identity of one of those officers!). Charles Birley had just been appointed in command of 2<sup>nd</sup> RGH, coming from the 17/21<sup>st</sup> Lancers in which Geoff’s father had also served. Geoff therefore, on being commissioned, was press-ganged by Charles into 2<sup>nd</sup> RGH. After home training (allocation one tank per squadron) 2<sup>nd</sup> RGH was posted to Egypt, arriving on 1<sup>st</sup> Oct. 1941. There they were equipped with Crusader Mark VI tanks and the regiment went into battle for the first time at Bir el Gubi, over the Libyan border, on November 19<sup>th</sup> 1941. On the first day of that eleven day engagement 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Gordon-Creed gained an ‘immediate’ Military Cross. His tank lost a track early on that day, having been broken by a shell. In Geoff’s words ‘we roared around in a circle with two wops chasing us’. Both enemy tanks and their crews were nevertheless knocked out at point blank range, Geoff’s tank was hit in the turret and his driver and wireless operator were injured. Afterwards Geoff dealt skillfully with their wounds.



*Geoffrey G-C, leaning on the car door, with fellow 2<sup>nd</sup> RGH officers in Cairo or Alexandria, back from desert fighting, 1942*

By June 1942, following the disbandment of the regiment as a result of the horrendous fighting on the retreat to El Alamein, Gordon-Creed had had his fill of tank warfare. As the result of a chance meeting with an old friend in a Cairo brothel he transferred to the newly formed SAS under Col. Stirling. With them, he took part in the abortive raid on Benghazi. Following this SOE (Special Operations Executive) head hunted him for themselves. SOE parachuted him into Greece in 1943 and this became the high light of his war.

He had a virtually independent command which suited his nature well. Taking charge of local partisans must have been a lonely job and was certainly highly dangerous. These 'Andartes'\* worked chiefly by sabotage, using explosives either stolen from the German's or dropped in by the Allies, and assassination. Geoff's greatest achievement was the demolition of the Asopos railway viaduct, high in the mountains, by his Greeks, which successfully held up the movement of two German divisions. For this was awarded the DSO and received the commendation from Churchill himself. At the end of the war he took charge of capturing senior Nazis. By his own account it ended for him with corporal's finger stuck up the rectum of Admiral Doenitz, searching for cyanide pills.



*Maj. Geoffrey Gordon-Creed DSO. MC., in RGH Blues, 'in action'.*

His non-military activities were equally impressive; he was a highly successful womanizer in every theatre of war and, indeed, before and afterwards. In 1952 he was in Kenya whilst the film 'Mogambo' was being made. Its star was Ava Gardner and, as his current girl-friend was working on the film-set, he met the great beauty; with the usual result – 'she laid it on the line. If I so wished she would be my woman, and only mine for a week. After that I would never hear from her again, nor would she expect to hear from me. No calls, no whining, nothing. Finito!' He managed to get eight days.

*\* from the Greek word 'andartiko', meaning 'guerrilla warfare' - Ed.*

Brave, good-looking, ruthless, insubordinate but charming, with a huge capacity for having fun, no wonder women fell for him. He even managed to marry four of them.

He is lucky with his biographer. Roger Field is ex-Blues and Royals so gets inside Geoff's mind perfectly. His writing style is easy to read and anything but pedestrian. So much so, I consumed this book at one sitting. I urge people to read it. Somewhat to my own surprise I found myself thinking that if I had been offered a week alone with Geoffrey Gordon-Creed or Ava Gardner I know which I would have chosen!

**Maj. Mervyn Humphries TD.**

Both these books

*'Trenches to Trams – The Life of a Bristol Tommy'* by Clive Burlton,  
pub. by Tangent Books  
and

*'Rogue Male – Death and Seduction in World War II with Mister Major Geoff'* by Roger Field  
pub. by Hodder & Stoughton

are available at the Museum Bookshop or [www.glosters.org.uk/shopHome](http://www.glosters.org.uk/shopHome)

## MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY AND TREASURER'S REPORT

As at 1 September 2011 the Friends have 349 members on the books in all categories of membership. New memberships this year stand at 19 (15 through the Museum Internet site and 4 from visitors to the Museum) but overall membership has dropped slightly as we lost 27 members in the year to June 2011.

Here is a reminder of the ways to pay for membership for the current year if you are not a Life member or already signed up to the Standing Order scheme. Annual rates are £5 for junior, £10 for single and £15 for couples. Conversion to Life membership is a one off charge of £100:

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.glosters.org.uk](http://www.glosters.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? Receipt of your payment directly into the Friends' bank account will trigger action on my part to issue your new membership card. You can of course cancel a standing order with your bank at any stage so if you would like a Standing Order form please contact me at the Museum.

The finances of the Friends remain healthy as at 31 August 2011 with funds valued at £31,683.05. With over £7,000 in the main Treasurer's Account we already have sufficient funds to make our annual grant to the Museum of £4,500 to support the on going IT project.

**Wng. Cdr. Chris Campbell**

## New Acquisition

### Major Godley's Pistol

**Recently the Museum has been able to purchase a pistol formerly belonging to an officer of the 28<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot, who served in the Crimean War. It failed to reach its reserve at auction but the museum was able to come to an agreement with the vendor and secure its future with other artifacts belonging to Maj. Godley.**

Henry Robert Crew Godley was born on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1827. He transferred from the 64<sup>th</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup> Staffordshire) Regiment and was gazetted as an Ensign in the 28<sup>th</sup> (North Gloucestershire) Regiment on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1846. The 28<sup>th</sup> were based at Deesa in India in 1846; in December 1847 they were recalled and left for Bombay, whence they sailed for England.. Henry Godley became a Lieutenant on 21<sup>st</sup> July 1848, although he does not appear in the Regimental Digest of Services' list of officers present on 1<sup>st</sup> September, presumably being absent on leave. On 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1850, where they were presented with new Colours at Portsmouth and from 1850 until February 1854, when the Regiment was ordered to hold itself in readiness to embark for Turkey, detachments of the 28<sup>th</sup> were on garrison duties throughout the north of England. On 13<sup>th</sup> February an Assistant Adjutant General wrote from Manchester to Henry Godley directing him to rejoin the Regiment for active service. A copy of this letter\* exists in the Museum archives, including its envelope, and Henry Godley's address is shown as 5 Lower Terrace, Torquay. As he was not there the letter was forwarded to another address at 25 Hollis [Holles] Street, Dublin.

Henry Godley received a Captaincy, and thus command of a Company of the 28<sup>th</sup>, on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1854, and he was certainly with the Regiment when it left Liverpool on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1854 aboard HM Steam Ship 'Niagara'. After a journey stopping at Malta, Gallipoli and Varna, they arrived on the Crimean peninsular. Although Henry Godley, like the rest of the 28<sup>th</sup>, received clasps for Alma and Inkerman on his Crimea Medal, the 28<sup>th</sup> took very little part in the fighting of these two battles. He also received a clasp for Sebastopol, as well as the Turkish Crimea Medal (Sardinia), Turkish Order of Medjidie. His medals are on display in the Museum.



*The interior of the Redan after the Russian withdrawal, where Capt H. Godley was injured on June 18<sup>th</sup> 1855.*

*\*This letter and some other material relating to Henry Godley were donated to the Museum by Brigadier Sir F.W.C. Featherstone-Godley in the 1930s.*

Ensign James Williams described the role of the 28th at Alma and Inkerman in letters home. Firstly, the battle of the Alma:-

*. . . I shall enter into all the details, but so well did the Light Division and second, who were in front of us, do their work that nothing was left for us. We (that is the 28<sup>th</sup> in this case) might have given a finish to the day by checking the retreat of two columns of Russians, had Sir R. England\* allowed us to continue our advance up the hill. But perhaps it was all for the best that we did not. Lord Raglan does not think so, neither do we – Old England's a regular woman. . . .*



*The .31 calibre Colt model 1849 five-shot London percussion pocket revolver with walnut handler, carried throughout the Crimean War by Captain H.R.C. Godley,*

And the battle of Inkerman:-

*We were left alas in reserve because so many of the men being away in the trenches the regiment mustered but few, and being on the extreme left of the lines we were not called on until late in the day, and Sir R. England is not a hurrying man.*

On the 18<sup>th</sup> June 1855 the assault on the Redan and Battle of the Cemeteries outside Sebastopol began. Sixty years later, Private Thomas Miller recalled:-

*The day before Sebastopol, after nearly a fortnight of heavy seiging, we then had to make an attack upon the town to take it by force. The 28<sup>th</sup> had to be the reserve while the other regiments of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division under the command of General Eyre. On the morrow, we – the 28<sup>th</sup> – had to become the storming party. We lay under arms all day waiting for orders; during the day the French took Malakoff and a round tower called the Crow's Nest. Then the English was able to take the Redan, a very strong fort, indeed the key to the whole town. The Russians spiked all the guns before they retreated from the Redan. The fore-mentioned forts, belonging to the French Lines, had to be retaken before the English could hold our position. When that was done the Russians had to vacate the town, which they did during the night.*

Henry Godley was severely wounded at the Redan on 18th June, and a War Office letter written to him, dated 24th July 1855, shows that he was awarded a gratuity of £52 16s 11d in consideration of this wound. A second letter of 25th August 1855 increased the gratuity by a further £158 11s for the same wound.

*\*Sir Richard England, commanding the 3<sup>rd</sup> Div, described as 'a man of meagre talent and reputation'. Christopher Hibbert's *The Destruction of Lord Raglan* (Longmans, 1961),*

Whilst in the Crimea, Henry Godley adopted a pet dog, described as a “sort of wolfhound”, perhaps a Borzoi. He named it Bragg, after a well-known Colonel of the 28th in the 18th Century, (one regimental nickname for the 28th being “The Old Braggs”) and brought it back to England. Here he had a magnificent silver collar\* made for the dog, engraved with the badge and battle honours of the 28th, as well as his own name and family coat of arms with its motto “Sans Dieu Rien”.

The 28<sup>th</sup> left the Crimea on 24th May 1856 on board the steamship “Adelaide” and returned to Malta, landing there on 1st June. Here they were based at St Elmo Barracks and Henry Godley was promoted to Major on 6th June 1856. He was almost certainly not with the Regiment at the time, and he might well have been invalided home after his wound as the Museum has a copy of a book owned by him, ‘*Observations on Firearms*’ by Colonel F.R. Chesney. The book has Henry Godley’s personal library plate gummed inside as well as an inscription and date in his own hand - ‘*Major Godley, 28th Regiment, 15th September ’56. Fermoy*’.

The 28th remained in Malta until 26th October 1858 when they left for India to assist in the aftermath of the Indian Mutiny, but too late to receive the Mutiny Medal. They returned to England in 1865 and there is no evidence that Henry Godley spent any time with the Regiment after being wounded at Sebastopol; he retired in 1860. Henry Robert Crewe Godley still appears in the 1889 edition of the Army List as a retired Major of the 28th Regiment.



*The Museum’s collection of Maj. Henry Robert Crewe Godley’s letter of recall, his Crimean medals, the Service Medal with three clasps, pistol and his dog’s collar.*

*The engraving of Maj. Godley dates from circa 1856-1860.*

*\*This was donated to the Regimental Museum by his daughter, seemingly shortly before the Second World War*