



Redcoats Review

138th Anniversary of the Battle of Maiwand

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

In May we held another successful AGM in the DERR Regimental Room at the Wardrobe and 29 members attended. On show were the new museum drop-down mobile display boards, which the Redcoats Society of Friends have recently funded. (a separate note is included in this Newsletter) These are a great addition to the museum marketing activities and have already been used to great success. It is through the generosity of the Redcoats Society that the museum is able to prosper and we can be proud of our achievements over these past few years.

Membership numbers continue to grow slowly and the Society's accounts are in a healthy state. As always, I as Chairman am grateful to all the committee members who work hard and give much of their time to supporting our excellent museum.

In September the Society Battlefield Tour will set off for the week to Belgium and France and a report on this event will appear in the next Newsletter edition. We will be laying a Royal Berkshire Regiment and a Wiltshire Regiment wreath at the Menin Gate Ypres on Monday evening, 10th September. This will be a wonderful moment to treasure.

Suffice to say that with the help of many volunteers at the museum operating under the direction of the Curator and Assistant Curator, the building, the gardens and the exhibits are in excellent order. Salisbury has taken a recent big hit on numbers of visitors for the very obvious reason, but hopefully for the rest of the summer we will see improvements and accept many more people to our premises.

I hope you enjoy receiving and reading this Newsletter and any articles or letters are always gratefully received should you find time.

Our best wishes to you all. Nigel Walker



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FUTURE EVENTS

- WW 1 Battlefield Tour 10-14
Sep

GOOD FIND IN CANADA

49th Regiment 1813 Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment (Berkshire and Wiltshire) 1962

Due to the fact that we are now part of THE RIFLES and no longer carry colours it was decided to carry out an investigation into the whereabouts, state, and where possible uncover previously unknown facts regarding the Colours, with a view to publishing a book. We are at this time concentrating on The Wiltshire Regiment, but at the same time collating information on the other threads of our Regimental family for a future publication. It was whilst investigating the link with the 49th Regiment and Chrysler's Farm in Canada that we uncovered some first rate information about the early days of the Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment.

In 1961 1 DERR was the first British Infantry Regiment to go to Canada to carry out training. This deployment coincided with the opening of the Chrysler Farm Battlefield Park, and Upper Canada Village which was held on the 24th June, 1961, and opened by the then Prime Minister of Canada The Hon. Leslie M. Frost, Q.C. L.L.D., D.C.L.

Because one of the DERR previous forming units was the 49th Regiment, who played a major part in the Battle it was decided to present the Park with a replica Colour of the 49th Regiment. To facilitate this a contingent from the battalion, Colours and Band and Drums attended and played a big part in the proceedings.



The first contingent of 1 DERR Soldiers

The Regimental archives has no record of this event, bar one entry in the Regimental Journal, with one rather hazy image. The Chrysler Farm Battlefield Park were contacted and asked for an up to date image of the Colour and they were asked if they had any further information that would assist us, in particular images of the event, and any research material that would help us in ascertaining what our Colours during the period of 1812 would have looked like.

They came back to us straight away informing us that they were intending to contact us to arrange the return of the replica colour as they have now replaced it due to age during a refurbishment of the park. In addition they said they had about 20 images of 1 DERR soldiers during the event, plus two extracts from Television reports of the event, and some research material regarding the colours. This was far more than we could ever have expected and they duly sent the material over and it is now safely in the Museum archives.



Lieutenant Colonel Lieutenant Colonel D.E. Ballantine OBE, MC presents the replica colour of the 49th Regiment to the Chairman of the Chrysler Farm Battlefield Centre, 1962



1 DERR Corps of Drums perform during the presentation ceremony



**The Replica Colour presented to the
Battlefield Park in 1962, and returned to the museum**



**The replacement 49th Col-
ours now on display in the
Chrysler Farm**

**Battlefield Centre. [If in
Canada, well worth a visit]**



**After arrival in Canada, four
young soldiers, possibly some
of the last National
Servicemen [Who are they ?]**

**Editor's Comment, Please let us know if
you can identify anyone in any of the**

THE UGANDA REVOLT

Position saved

Lubwas, Usoga, December, 1st, 1898.

The position in Uganda has been saved, temporarily, if not permanently. This has been mainly due to the rapid action of Sir Arthur Hardinge, Commissioner of the other protectorate, and Captain Harrison of the Duke of Wellingtons Regiment, commanding the Military Division of Ukamba, on the frontier. Directly the news of the revolt and the fierce fighting on October, 19th reached him, he made a series of forced marches from Machokos, his levies being animated by the best spirits, and covering the ground in brilliant fashion. Some sickening details are now forthcoming of the devilish brutality of the enemy after their defeat in October. The Rebels then made a supreme effort, as is shown by the fact that besides Lieutenant Fielding of the Wiltshire Regiment, killed at Fort Lubwas, no fewer than fifty of the Sikhs and Suahile troops were killed. But they were driven back to the fort, and then in cold blood they murdered their white prisoners. These consisted of Major Thurston of the Oxfordshire Light Infantry, Mr Scott, in charge of the lake steamer, and Mr Williamson the official in charge of the station. They were brought out from their dark hut into the light of day, and then slaughtered before a fiendish mob of howling rebels. The Englishmen stood with their prison irons hanging heavily from them, and faced their foes until they sunk before the hail of bullets poured into them.



Lieutenant Fielding Wiltshire
Regiment

AFGHANISTAN—BURIAL OF THE DEAD AFTER MAIWAND.

(As reported in the Newspapers at the time)

General Daubeny's Brigade, which was lately detailed from the Kandahar Garrison to bury the slain in Maiwand, appear to have buried over 100 before reaching the field. The first thing that met the eye was the long line of dead horses which marked the position of Blackwood's Battery. Opposite was another long line of dead horses, showing the execution done by Blackwood upon Ayoub's guns. On the field of battle was a large grave, showing where the poor fellows were buried, who fell in the fight itself. At some distance, and across a deep area of water, which the troops had crossed in their retreat, was another large grave. Both of them recently opened, and the bodies as far as possible, identified and reinterred. But the most interesting reminiscence of the fight was the enclosure on the Kandahar side of a village upon which the troops retreated, and in which were found the bodies of 33 men of the 66th, and 10 of the 1st Bombay Grenadiers. A rough burial had been given to these poor fellows, by throwing down a wall upon their remains. Fragments of the wall having been removed, the remains, which were in various stages of decomposition, were collected and placed in a deep grave, over which funeral services for both Protestants and Catholics were read by the chaplain and the priest. The bodies of the enemy's men who fell had been buried by their friends in a very sacred enclosure, and their loss must have been enormous, as the sepulchre was only completed in eight days.

400, total 666. Besides these the late Sidar of Khelati-i-Ghilzai reports that he buried 100 on the line of retreat.

Death in the Jungle

A Cannanore correspondent of the Bombay Telegraph, July, 1861 writes :-

A young officer, Lieutenant HUGHES, of the 66th (Berkshire) Regiment, was lately killed in the Wynaad jungle in a contretemps with an elephant. He was a steady shot, with plenty of nerve, and, having rolled the animal over with the first shot, he went up to him, thinking him dead when the beast rose up and charged. Lieutenant J.W. HUGHES put up his rifle to fire, but the cap missed, and the animal absolutely crushed him to death with his weight. He was found in the mire dreadfully mangled. Lieutenant HUGHES was a very skilful instructor in musketry. General HAY, Commandant and Inspector General of the School of Musketry, in announcing this calamity to the Rev. T.C. HUGHES, father of the deceased wrote :- "He is a great loss to my staff, as he was the best instructor in India, and had sent in more first class men than any other"

Colonel St John has buried 650 bodies of Afghans who were found on the direct line of the infantry advance on the 1st inst.

The force has now completed its melancholy duty of burying the dead, and identifying, as far as possible, their remains - as a painful task as ever fell to the lot of soldiers to perform. The following are the details of the distribution of the dead and throw some light on the obstinacy of the fighting, and of the comparative loss in the battle itself and upon the dreadful retreat to Kandahar.

"Upon the march up we buried 52 Europeans, and 94 natives, showing the sufferings of the retreat told with about equal severity upon Englishmen and Natives. In the enclosed gardens where the last stand was made, and the Colours of the 66th lost, were found the bodies of 85 Europeans, and 37 Natives. This is significant of the fact that the British Regiments held together till the last. The villagers had already buried those who fell on the field of battle, and although the graves were opened for purposes of identification, and the bodies reburied according to their nationality, some of the graves may have been overlooked. The numbers however, approximate to

The following officers were identified and buried in the gardens, Major Blackwood, Royal Artillery, Colonel Galbraith, Major Oliver, Captain McMath, and Lieutenants Rayner, and Chute of the 66th Regiment, Captain Smith, of Jacobs Rifles, and an officer who could not be identified. Seven officers are known to have been killed on the Battlefield before the retreat began, and three were not accounted for. Representatives of all the regiments present were engaged in the work of identification, under Lieutenant Beresford-Pierce of the 66th. Of the number of bodies still missing and unaccounted for many were, no doubt, buried by the villagers, and others straggled away from the line of retreat were murdered. This while the loss on the battlefield seems to have been a little above 400, nearly twice that number must have fallen after the retreat began, although by 360 bodies have been found .

NOTE - Major OLIVER was mistakenly identified. He in fact made it back to Kandahar and subsequently died there

Friends Spring Talk
The Recovery and Identification Unit
Royal Netherlands Army

On 26th April approximately 30 members of the Society sat down to listen to a fascinating talk, given by David Chilton (former Curator of the Museum) about the very small dedicated unit of the Royal Netherland Army. By way of introduction David had asked the Officer Commanding the Recovery and Identification Unit (RIU) if they would provide a photograph of themselves for his presentation. True to their word and with a great sense of humour they did, you find it below at the end of this article.

The Regiment has been the beneficiaries of the team's work ; they being able to identify four Wiltshire Regiment fallen from World War 2 close to Oosterbeek, Holland. Due to their dedicated professionalism and perseverance of this team the identity of the previous unknown remains enabled the reinterment with full military honours.

David gave a fascinating insight to the unit's work and how, in his words, he has been able to assist them in process. Utilising his interest in family history David provided examples of how he researched those likely contenders as provide by the RUI. Once David had been able to identify a prime candidate the RUI come across from Holland, meet the family and ask them to provide DNA samples. thereby producing final evidence.

Once the identification has been confirmed arrangements are made with the Ministry of Defence of the soldier's country for the reinterment to be planned and then carried out.

David's talk brought to life the extraordinary work of this fascinating team whose work is appreciated by every nation's soldiers, sailors and airmen they are able to recover and identify



Capt Geert Jonker: WO 2 Liz Schiltmans: Lt Patric van Aalderen; Wo 2 Sandor Verkerk

Grateful thanks to the Friends from the Museum Volunteers

For those members of the Society who were not able to attend the AGM this short article is to thanks to the Friends for the “H” Stands that show the each of the founding Regiments from Berkshire and Wiltshire that have become part of the Rifles. Having individual Regimental Stands will allow us to choose which ones to use so we can play to the bias of the location where the talk is being given.

Hopefully the image below will give you an idea of how we use them. The occasion was the South West Region’s Family History Society Annual meeting, held this year at the Steam Museum in Swindon. Although the meeting was in Wiltshire, we take all five stands because the events was attracting people from across the Region. This photograph was taken whilst Martin McIntyre and Chris Bacon were in deep conversation with a family who had been inspired by the Museum’s production of the First World War Diaries to write a book on a family member who served in the Royal Berkshires,



BUDDING SUBSCRIBERS?

Anyone who has a particular topic that they would like to have included or a story that they wish to recount please get in touch with either Mac or me.

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Museum's Facebook :

See the foot of this main page.

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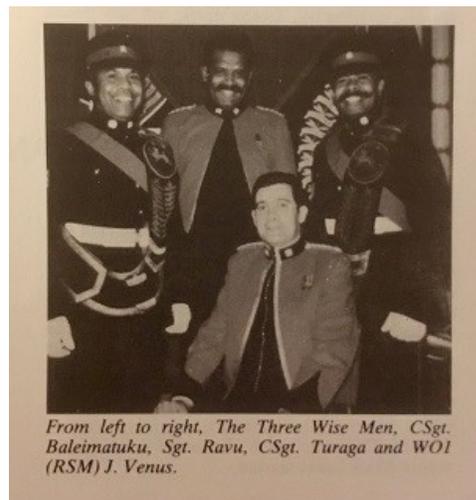


LATE NEWS

Whilst we do not often use the Newsletter for publishing the passing of Regimental members I am sure that on this occasion the editorial team may be forgiven. In 1961 200 men and 12 women for the Fijian Islands enlisted into the British Army and became known as the "212". The Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment (Berkshire and Wiltshire) were privileged to receive 6 of them into our ranks. Three of them completed their service with the Regiment, each of them ending up as members of the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess. They being Saisai Baliematuku, Joe Ravu and Les Turaga.

Sadly in the very early hours of Sunday 22 July 2018 Saisai Baliematuk passed away. He will be remembered by many of his contemporaries for being that gentle giant who played rugby, boxed, was thoroughly open and honest individual who gave you his all. And whilst he was a gentle giant you would not wish to be on the wrong side of him in the ring.

Saisai Baliematuku bore his final fight with the fortitude of his native islands and is now at peace. Saisai Baliematuku thank you for the privilege of knowing you and having served alongside with you is the message from former regimental comrades..



From left to right, The Three Wise Men, CSgt. Baleimatuku, Sgt. Ravu, CSgt. Turaga and WO1 (RSM) J. Venus.

CAN YOU RECRUIT ANOTHER MEMBER?

We are always looking to recruit new members, and a good method of advertising is by each of us spreading the good word ourselves. So please think about passing this Newsletter one to friends relations etc. Application forms to become members can be found on :

www.thewardrobe.org.uk

Your web page on the Museum web site is:

<http://www.thewardrobe.org.uk/museum/contact-us/support-us/friends-events-and-publications>

If you want to join us on Facebook the link is:

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Rifles-Berkshire-and-Wiltshire-Museum-500832510060892/>