



# Redcoats Review

## Celebrating the 136th Anniversary of the Battle of Tofrek

### Editorial Team's Introduction

Many of the subscribers to the Redcoats Review will not have been able to visit the Museum during the past 17 months due to the pandemic, so the Editorial team felt that we ought to spend some time explaining to you how the Trust and Museum Management team have been very dynamic in placing the Trust on a sound footing and the exciting direction in which the Museum is going.

### Copying with the Pandemic

Although the museum closed to visitors from March to July 2020 and again from November 2020 to May 2021, much was going on behind the scenes, by way of home working and some low level presence in the building and garden. The Governments COVID Business Support grant scheme was fully utilised, as was the ability to place staff on furlough when possible. As a result, the finances are pretty healthy which is welcoming news as without those additions we might have been financially less secure. Several volunteers who assist the museum in placing items into the Regimental photographic and document archive were able to continue their work remotely from home which has assisted greatly in keeping the records up to date. During the lockdown period Beth the curator set up a Facebook page to keep the Wardrobe name alive, and again assistance was provided remotely.

### Building Renovations

In recent months the Wardrobe building has been clad in Scaffolding to the front sides and rear to enable repairs to be carried out to the chimney breastwork on the rear wall facing the garden, whilst the external window frames of the Landmark flat have been replaced and in the front the plaster work under the eaves of the gables have been completely overhauled. (Continued inside on page 10)



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### FUTURE EVENTS

To be announced later

## 5<sup>TH</sup> (HACKNEY) BATTALION, THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE REGIMENT (PRINCESS CHARLOTTE OF WALES'S). 1945

In the last issue of the Redcoats review we had left the 5th (Hackney) Battalion The Royal Berkshire Regiment (Princess Charlotte of Wales's) in Normandy with successive tranches of drafts being posted to the 4th and 5th Battalions the Wiltshire Regiment as Battle Casualty Replacements (BCRs).

For some time the future of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion remained uncertain, but the drafting away of two platoons from each rifles company, was probably indicative of what was to come. A second draft left on 26 August reducing the battalion to a cadre of 16 officers and 136 men. Many of those who were drafted away went to 43 Wessex Division, which include 4<sup>th</sup> Dorsets, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Battalions The Wiltshire regiment to fight valiantly at Caen, Hill 112, Maltot, and Mont Picon, into Belgium and up to Nijmegen.

The reduced battalion left Bernières, where later a street was named by the French 'Rue du Royal Berkshire Regiment', and moved to Hermanville, undertaking guard duties. A week later they arrived in Rouen, to become the garrison of the Base Sub-Area. Being Garrison troops remained their role as the Allies advanced eastward, on reaching St Riquier, near Abbeville, it was proposed to bring them up to full strength 'with men of low medical category'. It would seem the purpose was the battalion would be used as a garrison unit, with the saving grace that they were to retain a trained cadre for 'beach group' work. In early December 1944, a draft of men arrived bringing the strength to 380 men. Specialised courses for NCOs were instituted and general intensive training began for the rest.

Towards the end of February 1945 the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion left St Riquier and arrived at Waterscheide, in Belgium, after a cold train journey of 36 hours. This was their concentration area for a new task in which they would 'assist a division to cross a river'. During the next month the battalion was built up with men of A1 category and organised for work similar to that performed on the beaches of Normandy. A squadron of Royal Dragoons, a detachment of Royal Engineers, a beach recovery section (REME), a traffic control company (CMP), a signal unit, and a light field ambulance, with the addition of some fifty officers were placed under command for the operation. Special equipment was issued, and full -scale exercises were carried out on the Maas both by day and night. With the completion of their training the battalion and their attached troops - now known as a 'Bank Group' - moved at short notice to the Roman town of Xanten on the Rhine. On arrival the Bank Group came under the operational command of 12<sup>th</sup> Corps, and learnt they were to assist the assaulting troops of the 15<sup>th</sup> Scottish Division to cross the Rhine a week later.

Briefly stated their task was to arrange for men, weapons, transport, and a vast range of war material, to move in an ordered sequence forward to the Bank, cross the river and finally disperse to their correct areas of the far side. That it would occur at night, and that severe fighting was likely made it a hazardous operation. Bank Control Headquarters, and those with duties on the near side of the river, moved immediately into their battle positions.



Men of the 5th Battalion, seen here digging in on the Home Bank side of the River Rhine . They earned for the Regiment the battle honour 'Rhine Crossing'

The others, who would operate of the far bank, remained hidden in areas where they would embark in amphibious motor vehicles when the time came. From the start all positions were under spasmodic artillery, mortar and machine-gun fire. Everyone dug in quickly to escape attention. A smoke screen forming part of the deception plan- cloaked the entire front from dawn to dusk, blinding the German artillery, and undoubtedly saving casualties

H-Hour was finally fixed for 0200 hours (02:00 am) on 24 March 1945. Two companies were to cross with the assault waves of the 44<sup>th</sup> and 227<sup>th</sup> Brigades, covering the divisional front. The rest of the Bank Group were to remain in control of all movement on the west bank for some time after.

At 5 pm, in the evening before H-Hour, a force of heavy bombers delivered a 'saturation attack' on the town of Wesel, across the river to the right of the divisional sector. An hour later an intense artillery bombardment opened along the entire front and continued except for one short break until H-Hour.

Shortly after dusk, troops began to move into the marshalling areas. From then onwards, in timed progression, columns of men and vehicles moved down the roads and tracks to the forward 'waiting areas'. Here, in the flickering light of gun fire, they halted for a long while.

By H-Hour all communications were working smoothly and all routes leading to the river were lit by lamps, shaded from the enemy, and set down at every 100 yards. Above the sound of the gun-fire began the characteristic clatter of the tracks and the roar of the engines of the first wave of 'buffaloes' - the amphibious vehicles—passed, in line ahead, on their way to the river. As they approached the bank they checked momentarily, and then in a perfect drill movement fanned into line abreast, and again moved forward. At 02:00 precisely the first wave, containing the assault companies of the 15<sup>th</sup> Division and parties of 'A' and 'B' companies of the battalion, dipped into the Rhine and became waterborne.



An original sketch, 24th March 1945, by Private E Earnshaw [Int section] entitled "Crossing the Rhine, early morning". [After the war he became an illustrator for the soldier magazine]

Suddenly, almost before they realised it, they reached the far bank. The first troops moved swiftly up the bank into action. Across the front 200 yards back from the river, ran an embankment constructed to hold back flood water. It was roughly twelve to fifteen feet high, with room enough on top to drive a cart. From here, in isolated patches came the first signs of resistance. Weak and unplanned at first, it grew as the enemy recovered from their ordeal. The assaulting 15<sup>th</sup> Division were not to be stopped, they swept between and through the posts and went on to their main objectives.

Once on the far bank 'B' Company moved quickly to their posts. Lamps were placed to mark the various landing points. Wireless communication was established between them and company headquarters, who were linked with Bank Control across the water on the 'Home Bank'. Soon, a ferry service of returning 'buffaloes' arrived.

These were joined by fat little 'storm-boats', previously hidden at the water's edge. Within a short time amphibious vehicles, equipped with landing ramps, nosed their way across. Here in this sector, they were lucky, and all was going well.

From the outset, 'A' Company had been faced with more determined opposition. The boats of the first two parties came under machine-gun fire, so that they were compelled to turn downstream and seek other landing places. On reaching the shore, they worked their way back to their own area, where they found the Germans holding strong positions dug in on the reverse side of the embankment. As they approached, a machine-gun opened up, signaling for further machine-gun and rifle fire from the flanks coupled with the throwing of grenades over the bank. The men returned the fire, and taking what cover they could, attempted to carry out their task. The situation was unpleasant, and they began taking casualties

Collecting a few men, Company Sergeant Major B. Arnold worked his way along a curve in the bank, from where fire was brought to bear on the enemy post. It was clearly effective and the Germans began to surrender, with the exception of one troublesome pocket. Its location was difficult to establish in the system of trenches and tunnels built into the bank. In the first light of the early morning, a German paratrooper appeared, and began to direct bursts of machine-gun fire into the vehicles below him on the shore. There was no longer any doubt as to where they were. CSM Arnold<sup>3</sup> at once led a bayonet charge against the post. Firing from his hip as he ran, he hit the paratrooper, who fell. As the German rose again to fire the CSM sprang at him and killed him with his bayonet. There was no further resistance; but it was only by such acts, carried out by small parties of troops through the night that the enemy failed to hold up the timed crossings in the sector. Later 34 enemy dead were counted here and more than forty prisoners were captured.



A black and white photograph of HM the King on his arrival at Brock Barracks on the occasion of him becoming the Colonel in Chief of the Regiment. He is seen here shaking hands with the Depot Regimental Sergeant Major B.S. Arnold MM.

Progress on the home bank had gone steadily forward throughout the night. Now, heavier material that included armoured vehicles, began to appear in the company areas. Most of these were ferried across on rafts until bridges were constructed. Class 9 rafts, propelled by a motor at each corner, took the lighter vehicles. Class 50/60 rafts drawn by wire hawsers on winch lorries, were used for the heavier traffic. Soon a light-vehicle bridge, borne on folding-boat equipment, eased the strain. It was followed by other bridges of various sorts, and before long it was said that the allies possessed more bridges across the Rhine than the Germans ever had.

Incidents, some heroic, others not without humour, continually occurred. Corporal J. E. F. Parker <sup>4</sup>, accompanied by Private Bowles <sup>5</sup>, both battalion stretcher bearers, unhesitatingly walked into a minefield to rescue a man who lay bleeding to death. Another time, the Second-in-Command, operating the battalion forward control centre, became unjustifiably annoyed by fire directed from a nearby wood.

With only a handful of men he sought help to deal with the troublesome snipers. Presently flame-throwers and rocket-firing weapons evicted 1,500 enemy from this fruitful little copse.

By the end of March the rapid advance of 2<sup>nd</sup> Army brought an end to the need of the Bank Group's existence. The attached units dispersed, and the battalion reverted to less spectacular duties in the 115<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade.

The battalion remained in Xanten until peace was declared, where they were fully employed, tending refugees of many nations- including 6,000 Russian, and 4,000 Italians- guarding the Rhine bridges and controlling a sector of the frontier. Later, at Dinslaken, north of the Ruhr, they helped clear battlefield, conducted house checks and maintained security patrols.

The significance of the 5th Battalion contribution in the Second World War can best be summed up by the Commander 2<sup>nd</sup> Army Group, who in a letter to the Commanding Officer records:

*"The Battle of the Rhine has been won, and the breakout from the bridge-head is now under way. You and your Battalion played a very important part in that operations, and a great part of that success is due to the work you did. I got your Battalion back into the Second Army for the battle because I knew from experience that you would produce the results that were wanted....."*

General Sir Miles C. Dempsey K.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O., M.C., A.D.C.

Foot Notes

- 1. Warrant Officer Class II B. S. Arnold awarded the MM 23 March 1944
- 2. Corporal J. E. F. Parker awarded the MM 12 July 1945
- 3 Private W. A. Bowles Mentioned in Despatches 8 November 1945

POSTSCRIPTS FROM FOLLOW UP STUDIES

As a result of correspondence from David Thomas we have been privileged to have access to his fathers memoirs and photograph album. His father served with the 5th (Hackney) Battalion of the Royal Berkshire Regiment, reaching the rank of Major by the end of the war. He too was Mentioned in Despatches for his role at the Crossing of the River Rhine. As a result of David Thomas's information we located and extracted the following newspaper entries from the Territorial units scrapbook within the museum's archives.

Berks CSM wins MM

THE Royal Berkshires had fought on the D-day beaches of Normandy, had stayed through the Low Countries in the late half of 1944, and now were at the Rhine crossing into Germany itself.

Heavy machine gun fire spat at the boats of the Berkshires. A company as they headed out in the river. They were forced to turn downstream to find better landing places.

Reaching the shore they worked their way back to encounter the enemy in strong positions behind the embankment.

Casualties

A machine-gun opened up, and that was the signal for a barrage of small arm fire and grenades at the Berkshires men.

"They began to suffer casualties," records the regiment history.

"Collecting a few men, Company Sergeant Major Arnold, walked his way along a curve in the bank, where fire was brought to bear on the enemy posts.

"It was clearly effective, and the Germans began to surrender, with the exception of one troublesome pocket. Its location was difficult to establish in the system of trenches and bunkers built into the bank."

But at first light of morning, a German paratrooper appeared and began directing bursts of machine-gun fire at the attackers. And now "There was no longer any doubt where they were. CSM Arnold at once led a bayonet charge against the post.

"Firing from the hip as he ran, he hit the paratrooper, who fell. As the German once again to fire, the CSM

spring at him and killed him with his bayonet."

Sergeant Major Bert Arnold, now 82 and living in Kithley Road, Reading, was awarded the Military Medal for that action, with the tribute "It was only by such acts, carried out by small parties of troops through the night, that the enemy failed to hold up the timed crossings in this sector.

"Later 34 enemy dead were counted here, and more than 40 prisoners taken."

Bert Arnold had seen that river long before, as a young soldier among the troops occupying the Rhineland after the Great War and before Hitler's rise to power.

A lad from the Berkshire

market town of Wantage, he had joined the Royal Berkshire Regiment in 1927, and later served in Jerusalem, Alexandria and Tunisia.

Next posted to India and transferred to the Military Police, Mr Arnold was one of the men sent to arrest Mahatma Gandhi when that future hero of the Indian people was being trouble some to the Empire authorities.

He was still in India at the outbreak of war in 1939, and when the Japanese invaded Burma he went in to help the evacuees.

In 1942, Bert Arnold returned to Britain and to the Berkshires as their Regimental Sergeant Major, but framing others for war was not a satisfactory occupation for him. He volunteered for the 5th Battalion of the Berkshires who were mobilising for D day, and he took a drop in rank to CSM so that he could get in.

He led his men on to Jun Beach, Normandy, on the second wave to go on 4 Operation Overlord on June 6.

"What does he now remember of the red-hot receptio waiting for them that day?"

"You've got to keep going," said Mr Arnold.

Relief

"If you look around and see a couple of blokes fall the urge is to stop and help them — which you must do. You've got to carry on."

"When you get up on the beach under shelling, the feeling of relief was something you can't describe."

"They talk about the thro hairs of your neck going up but to golly, it does feel like that. A cold feeling, at the back of the neck, but underneath you're too hot with the exertion to worry about it."

"Anyone who says they're not been afraid, I don't believe them."

"Yes, I lost friends. I had who I been my company clerk was killed on the bayonet attack."

Discipline

"He was lying there wounded, but I couldn't do anything about it. We had to go on. That's the reason I discipline, but the close order drill, because you obey the order that is given without any question."

Later, with the Germans defeated, Bert Arnold at the dreadful aftermath the concentration camp, Belzec, and that rank among the memories who he says "I'd rather not think about it."

Among his souvenirs is swastika armband taken from a young Nazi in Germany "Only 16 or 17, if that. I refused to take it off — but took it off him."



RSM Arnold, Royal Berkshires, pictured at a memorial service shortly after the war.



Former RSM Bert Arnold MM with an unusual memento from WW2. He is holding an allied notice in written in German directed at the German Soldiers advising them on how to get demobilised from the German Army

Maj J E Thomas



Last words we leave to General Sir Miles Dempsey

FROM: General Sir Miles Dempsey,  
 The Royal Berkshire Regiment,  
 Brook Barracks,  
 Reading.  
 21st October, 1947.

My dear Taylor -

Now that we have parted - The Royal Berkshire Regiment from its 5th Battalion - I want to tell you what a great loss it is to all of us. Since the day you joined us you had played your part so well, and became such a keen and intimate member of the Family that we never contemplated losing you. It is indeed a sad day in our history, but I can promise you, on behalf of the Regiment, that we will not forget you, and I send you our best wishes for the success, which I know will be yours in the future.

As regards myself I can hardly express my feelings at losing you.

You took part in Second Army's assault on the Normandy beaches: the only Battalion of the Regiment to do so. You acquitted yourselves so outstandingly well that I deliberately brought you forward to carry out an all important role in the Battle of the Rhine. And there again you shone. So much so that I selected you as the Battalion to enter and occupy Copenhagen on Second Army's behalf. But the speed with which this operation had to be put into effect prevented your doing so, and Copenhagen was occupied by a Cavalry Regiment, The Royals.

I mention these facts in order that you may realise how great was my regard for the 5th Battalion, The Royal Berkshire Regiment, and how much I deplore your departure.

Yours sincerely  
 M. Dempsey

Lieut.-Colonel F.E.A. Taylor, T.D.,  
 648 H.A.A. Regt. R.A. (R. Berks) T.A.,  
 The Drill Hall,  
 Hillman Street,  
 Hackney.



AN INTERESTING SNIPPET FROM THE PRESS ON SOMEONE WHO MIGHT HAVE ALSO SERVED WITH 5TH (HACKNEY) BATTALION

# The boy who killed a Nazi guard at 13

Emma Yeomans

The remarkable story of a Jewish boy who killed a Nazi guard and escaped the Holocaust aged 13 to start a new life in Britain has been revealed in a book by his son.

In 1940, Henry Carr used a knife to take the life of a guard in the Lodz ghetto in Poland, fearing that his brother was about to be shot for stealing food.

Henry, born Chaim Herzman, escaped Poland in a German troop train then fled Germany in a jeep. He made it to the Spanish border before he was arrested. A British diplomat vouched for him and helped him reach Gibraltar and safety.

He went on to fight for the Royal Berkshire Regiment during its advance on Berlin in 1945, and settled in Britain after the war but kept his wartime heroism a secret until he died in 1995.

His son, John, has told his father's extraordinary story in a book, *Escape from the Ghetto*. Mr Carr, a former Labour politician who now works as an internet security expert, wrote the book to better understand his father, with whom he had a difficult relationship.

He said: "My dad has one hell of a story. Most of the time he was very much flying by the seat of his pants, he showed brilliant resourcefulness."

Mr Carr was 11 or 12 when he found out about his father's Jewish heritage but said it was not until decades later

that Henry's wartime story and heroics were unearthed. He spent more than 30 years researching his father's life, beginning when the two sat down to record Henry's memories on tape.

"On a personal level I wanted to get to know my dad better because we had a terrible relationship when I was growing up," Mr Carr said. "I also wanted to tell my children who their grandfather was and show them what he did. In a broader sense I think it's vitally important that what happened in the 1930s and 1940s is not forgotten. We need to remember or else it may happen again."

"As the child of a survivor I felt some responsibility to tell my dad's story."

In the book's epilogue, Mr Carr says he was frightened of his "unpredictable" and "irascible" father who was "quick to strike with his hand or a belt".

*Escape from the Ghetto* begins with an account from Henry's cousin, Heniek, who saw him kill the guard. His brother, Srulek, had got trapped on barbed wire and was going to be shot dead. Srulek is thought to have been killed later in a death camp.

Following his escape to Gibraltar Henry spent a brief time with the Polish Free Army, which he left because of antisemitic feeling in the ranks.

After the war Henry moved to Glasgow where, in 1949, he met Angela Cassidy. He pretended to be a fellow Catholic and was later secretly baptised so they could marry.

## CONTINUING WITH UPDATE ON MUSEUM MATTERS

### WARDROBE GARDEN IMPROVEMENTS

The garden is tended by Alistair the museum attendant, who is also a horticulturist by training. He carries out this work in all weathers together with several volunteers who come in to assist.



Alistair sat on the ride on lawn mower the trustees recently purchased which enables him to complete his work in hours, as opposed to days. The mower is kept in a newly constructed shed at the bottom of the garden. Much of the construction work was carried out by Tony Field, Nigel Walker and Alistair during the second lockdown. Making full use of the garden the museum has started the production of honey working in partnership with the Salisbury and District Bee keepers Association who were looking for more space for their hives and a place to carry out training courses.

In return they have trained Alistair and the museum gets 50% share of honey sales. [The intention is to sell through the museum shop]. However, we must not expect a bumper yield this year as the cold spring caused deaths in the colonies (Meaning the bees, not Australia !!), and the late onset of honey production.



The Hives safely positioned at the bottom of the Wardrobe Garden



Bookings for weddings are starting to materialise after the lockdown, a number postponed from before the lockdown. The marquee shown has just been erected for the next one. 'Hope the weather stays fine !!'. Just visible is a new plaque that has been placed next to the old tree, planted to commemorate Waterloo.

A better image of that plaque is shown below.



A close up of the plaque referred to above referring to the tree being planted in 1815 to commemorate the battle of Waterloo. It highlights the 95th Rifles one of the fore-runner units of the present day RIFLES that participated in the battle.

(Editorial Team's Comment: Also present from The Rifles antecedent regiments at the Battle of Waterloo were 28th (Gloucestershire) Regiment; 32nd (Duke of Cornwall's) Light Infantry; 43rd (Oxford and Buckinghamshire) Light Infantry; 51st (Kings Own Yorkshire) Light Infantry.)

## FORTHCOMING EXHIBITIONS

### 2021 Exhibition

Still running at the museum is the special exhibition about medals and the stories attached to them. Great use is made of the interactive display system donated by the Society of Friends. This has significantly enhanced the display and the ability to 'tell a story'.

### 2022 Next Year's Exhibition

In the light of the passing of the Colonel in Chief , HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, the Exhibition will be about The Prince Phillip, and the Regiment that held his name. It is intended to cover the numerous contacts and visits HRH made to the battalion. We will make full use of the interactive display system, in particular the films that exist of the Colours Parades. We are hoping that any old 'Farmers-boy' who served during this period will pop along and visit the exhibition, and museum.

## WARDROBE BUILDING REPAIRS

The building is inspected every 5 years and from that the maintenance for the following five years is identified and prioritised. Most of the 2020 maintenance season was lost but we managed to gain approval from HQ Army to catch up in 2021; as a result the building was scaffolded from late March to end of June, which allowed the roof and upper areas to be attended to. It was a major piece of maintenance work which will hold us in good stead for some time. The next 5-year inspection is due in autumn 2023, at which point, in theory, the process starts all over again.

A brief description of the work carried out has already been given on the front page of this Redcoats Review, but to provide the reader with an ideal of the quantity of scaffolding used pictures of the front and rear of the house are shown below.





## THE OGILBY TRUST WORLD WAR 1 ARCHIVE DIGITISATION

### PROJECT THE OGILBY MUSTER

A large quantity of our WW1 records (less photographs), along with many other military museum, have been digitised by AMOT and placed on a central repository website. This project will, in due course, be extended to cover most of the 19th and 20th Centuries including WW2 of course. The website set up by AMOT is called The 'Ogilby Muster' but at the moment it is not launched for public access. All the work for this is carried out by Chris Bacon and his wife Sian and Simon Cook, all volunteers.

### THE MUSEUM'S COLLECTION

The Museum's MODES database currently houses 50565 items in total [With several thousand yet to add.]

Total for the Royal Berkshire - 14,449

Wiltshires - 19,742

DERR - 7,136

RGBW - 2,637

Rifles - 656

Plus many more covering the previous numbered regiments, the 49th; 62nd; 66th and 99th

The collection has been worked on by volunteers for a number of years and consists primarily of photographic images, some going back to the mid 1800's. When each image is processed and described, a caption is constructed, original rephotographed then placed into the digital archives visible on the Museum Website. Particular attention is placed on Who/when/where if known.

Sometimes the volunteers get it wrong because they are working with the information immediately available [Which is not always correct]. Once something is raised as being correct it can be immediately rectified. [All this work gets uploaded onto the website at the end of each year.

We believe we have the largest regimental collections of this type of any similar regimental museum in the country. [Unless you know differently.]

We are always on the lookout for new additions, in particular the DERR and RGBW.

[www.thewardobe.org.uk](http://www.thewardobe.org.uk).....Collection

## ARCHIVE ENQUIRIES

As a result of having an active website enquires of all types come into the museum [Some via the front desk]. These are dealt with by volunteers Chris and Will who put a lot of effort into each and every one so the enquirer gets their monies worth. There are other more low level enquiries that are dealt with elsewhere all of which are potentially attracting income generation. The workload continues to be heavy with the output of formal responses being:

2019 - 54

2020 - 60

2021 [first half] - 36

## MOVE OF THE ARCHIVE ROOM

We can be a bit more generic and say that there has been a step forward in volunteer workspaces. AMOT reduced their footprint from 3 offices to one, we have no chance in the present climate of renting out the other two offices, so we have converted one to an archive (with at least twice the floor area of the old archive room) and the other to a Volunteer project room which is where the audit of the reserve collection is being done. Its also Bob's photography room – plus Bob Hambling has been supported by purchase of a new camera, and there are 4 new PCs for volunteers to use.

Finally, the old archive room is being converted to a second volunteers' work room, but also double hatted as a break-out room, a place where they can sit and relax, enjoying views of the garden.



The new Archive room, now located in what used to be the Registry Office of the Regimental Headquarters.



New room for Reserve Collection and Photography room, still to be completely reorganised. Used to be the Regimental Secretary Office and later the Director of AMOT office.



Former Archives Room now the Volunteers Transcribing/Rest Room

## NEW ACCESSIONS

New items are always being donated to the museum, all of which must be accessioned according to the rules. The two referred to below are good examples of what still becomes available.

**1st/4th Bn, Royal Berkshire Regiment** - A file of letters either sent to or received by Lieutenant Colonel Robert Joyce Clarke CMG, DSO, Croce de Guerra (Italy), four times mentioned in dispatches. These letters were accumulated between the 14th February 1916 to 13th April 1918 during which time the battalion served on the Western Front in France and later Italy. The file of papers is split into two sections, the first and main section are letters from soldiers or their relatives, relating to the death in action or wounds received, and commendations for various awards. Colonel Clarke personally arranged for Vellum parchments describing the service of various soldiers to be sent to the families. Section 2 is small but with interesting and related correspondence. [He joined the Volunteer Battalion in 1897, served in the Boer War. In Italy he took command of the South Midland Division Machine Gun [48th] Battalion, followed by service in North Russia commanding a MGC Battalion. [These letters have now been individually logged and are in the process of being placed into the archives]. It is clear from a reading of the letters that Lt Col Clarke was very highly rated by the soldiers in his battalion. Officers from other regiments who were wounded when seconded to the battalion were very quick to request a return to Clarke's battalion.]

**MINTY PHOTOGRAPHS** The Minty family has a long history of service with the 62nd of Foot and The Wiltshire Regiment. A recently discovered photograph album by Norman Minty that belonged to his father who served for many years in the Wiltshire Regiment. Norman retained the album but very expertly copied 107 images that are now in the Regimental photographic archive. Once again it shows that the information is still out there and in many cases untapped.

If any of our readers become aware of any interesting items, in particular images please let us know. Also when viewing the collection you see any glaring mistakes just let us know and we will update the record.

## VISITS TO THE MUSEUM

We have hosted several groups from the RIFLES, with the latest from 5 RIFLES. This gives us the opportunity to brief young soldiers on the Berkshire and Wiltshire portion of their Regiments past, plus two groups from the REME LAD OF 1 RLC. After the latest lockdown was eased a major school visit of 245 children from a Salisbury School, took place in groups of about 25 at a time, over three days, which was conducted by the Curator Beth, Alistair and several volunteers. [After three days Beth had to lie down in a darkened room to recover !!!].



Other group visits are in the pipeline. Most of these are conducted by volunteers, after an official welcome and briefing by the curator.

The museum also hosts other 'visitors' such as Ghost hunts of which there were none at the start of this year for the obvious reasons, but there are 12 scheduled for the remainder of the year, with a further 2 for 2022.

There are four weddings scheduled for the remainder of the year, with two 2 more booked for 2022. [We have no doubt these numbers will increase].

## OUTREACH WORK

Beth and some volunteers attended over a two day period the Festival of Archaeology at the Salisbury Museum. On these occasions Beth was supported by Ross a young intern who is carrying out work experience at the Wardrobe, and Michael Cornwell. The focus was on 100 years of uniform and they will be in costume [The mind boggles !!]

Two further outreach sessions are planned at another location in the Close in Salisbury directed at those with memory problems, and the stroke group. These community based exercises highlight the museum.

## EVENTS IN THE WARDROBE GARDEN

The Spirit of Woodstock. An open air, poignant, funny and semi immersive theatre collage of the words and era around Woodstock, 1969. Written and performed by Jonathan Brown was on at the Wardrobe recently on 29th & 30 July .

A Midsummers Night Dream, by Quantum theatre

There are currently 44 volunteers operating at the museum carrying out all types of functions to assist the museum. Beth's intention is to try and get young people involved.

## RIFLEMAN'S TABLE

It is well established now with a growing number of regulars. Quality is excellent and the staff very friendly and efficient.

Two Trip Advisor comments of many tell the story.....

Excellent food and brilliant service

*"This is a wonderful little cafe. Great menu and incredibly helpful staff. The cakes are gorgeous. We went three times over a few days and this is definitely our cafe of choice. It opens at 8:30 for breakfast and we enjoyed a bacon muffin and an English breakfast which were really delicious. Its prices are good and we most certainly recommend it."*

## Outstanding

*A little gem of perfection. Superb cookery with no fuss. Emphasis firmly on great food. It is more like dining at your aunty's place (if your aunty is a stunning cook) My recent Chicken Pie was a case of pie worshipper meets Pie expert. Shame on anyone who gives this little endeavour anything other than 5 stars. England has always needed places like this - and less of the 'top twenty'.*



The courtyard at the rear of the museum is now used by the Rifleman's Table. [weather permitting]

## WARDROBE WEDNESDAY IS COMING

A collection of activities for children from 4 years old to experience and learn history Every Wednesday from 28th July to 25th August. No extra fee. Just museum entry fee (£3)

Editor: Michael Cornwell

Researcher3@thewardrobe.org.uk

Mobile: 07388224129



## Wardrobe Wednesday's

London in the Blitz  
Lego building  
Every Wednesday

Come, have fun and learn about history!  
Location: The Rifles Berkshire and Wiltshire museum (next to the Cathedral)  
Time: every Wednesday from 28th July to 25th August  
Pop in from 11:30am to 3pm

LIFE IN THE TRENCHES  
28TH JULY

SURVIVAL!  
4TH AUGUST

WW2 - 11TH AUGUST

MEDAL MAKING - 18TH AUGUST

LIFE ON THE HOMEFRONT - 25TH AUGUST

Your web page on the Museum web site is:

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