

The Newsletter of the Patrons,
Society of Friends and Volunteers
of The Rifles, Berkshire and
Wiltshire Museum



March 2023
Volume 5, Issue 1

Redcoats Review (Tofrek Issue)

Editorial Remarks:

We mentioned in the last Redcoats Review newsletter that we intended to expand the readership of the newsletter to include the Patrons and the Museum Volunteers as well as the members of The Friends. Whatever part of the support team you may be in, and there are some who are Patrons, Friends and Volunteers it was felt if we are a team then we should take the opportunity to share the good news of the venue and the activities that we collectively generate.

So part of the regeneration is to celebrate our past heritage as Redcoats and to reflect on the future as part of The Rifles family. So the dividers between each article show Red and Green lines.

I should personally apologize for missing the Tofrek deadline for this issue, being somewhat regimental in that my birthday is Ferozeshah Day and our daughter's birthday in March 22 it isn't one I am likely to forget. It was simply a case of being struck down with this persistent and heavy chest infection that is doing the rounds.

Members of the Society of Friends should have by now received an informative communication from Jeremy Tozer, the new Chairman of The Friends encapsulating what the Society has achieved in the past, has provided an update on what has been happening on the museum front and gives an insight as to what he sees as the Friends objectives for the future. The Society of Friends have their AGM on Thursday 15 June starting at 15:00 hours in the Regimental Room in the Wardrobe.

Thus working on the basis of the newfound role of this newsletter the first article is the Chairman Society of Friends letter to the Society's membership.



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AGM 15 June 2023

CHAIRMAN OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS LETTER TO THE MEMBERS

Dear Friends,

This letter has been a long time in coming; but we've all had Covid 19 and lockdowns to deal with among many other things; and I hope this finds you in fine fettle!

There are several things to update you on starting with me introducing myself. I was recently invited to join the committee and take over as chairman; something which I am both honoured and delighted to do. For those of you who don't know me, I served in 1 DERR in the 1980's/start of the 1990's - in Aldergrove, Hong Kong and Catterick.

THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (SOF)

Our membership currently stands at 191 (plus 10 Regimental ladies who are not asked to subscribe) with approximately £10,500 in the bank. Let me remind you of our Charity's objects which are "the education of the public by the promotion, support, assistance and improvement of the Regimental Museum, through the activity of a group of Friends." To that end, over the last few years, we have made grants of almost £42,000 to the following worthy activities:

Brandywine Showcase	£11,896.00
Museum Website	£ 3,500.00
Purchase of Mannequins	£ 856.00
Purchase of fitting Oak Bookcases in the Library	£ 3,400.00
Purchase of Computer System	£ 2,884.00
Purchase of Kiosk	£ 3,000.00
Purchase of Medal Kiosk	£ 1,014.00
Purchase of Silver Pocket Watch	£ 2,500.00
Purchase of Computer	£ 801.00
Purchase of New Till System	£ 1,273.00
Payment for New Signage for Museum	£ 1,690.00
Purchase of Regimental Banners	£ 428.00
Refurbishment of Brass Plaques	£ 216.00
Payment for Children & Family Days	£ 1,197.00
Payment for Audio Visual equipment for Museum	<u>£ 7,262.00</u>
	<u>£41917.00</u>

THE WARDROBE

There have been some changes at The Wardrobe, both with respect to people and Wardrobe activities. The Rifles Wardrobe and Museum Trust (RWMT) has Nigel Walker as its Chairman and the RWMT has two objects:

1. The administration and maintenance of the property belonging to the charity and known as The Wardrobe; and

You may be aware of the Patrons scheme at The Wardrobe. This is essentially a mechanism to raise funds for the RWMT by offering various tiers of membership at increasing fee levels, with different ‘packages’ of benefits attached (see www.thewardrobe.org.uk/patrons). There is clearly an overlap with us in respect of the museum; but the RWMT has a much larger remit which includes maintenance of the Wardrobe building and its staffing which Patrons’ funds assists. We remain dedicated to the museum collection and its presentation.

THE MUSEUM TEAM

In September 2022, Chris Gale took over as the RWMT Trust Manager, and until assuming his post with us, he was the Curator and Museum Manager of the Rifles Museum in Winchester. Chris gained a Masters Degree in Engineering, at the University of Bath before going onto gain a Masters Degree in Museum and Galleries, Culture, Collections and Communications. Not to sit on his laurels, he is now completing a Doctorate in Museum Display Techniques. His previous posts include Curator of Artefacts at the Royal Marines Museum, and Curator of Medals, Textiles and Badges and then Collections Team Manager and Senior Curator at the National Royal Navy Museum.

Bethany Joyce our Museum Curator continues to produce new and invigorating ideas to attract, challenge and interest visitors of all persuasion. With her encouragement and the hard work of Tom Sharp, a serving Sapper in the Royal Engineers, they have devised several weekends when re-enactors provide ‘entertainment’: part of Beth’s aim of drawing more visitors into the Museum.

And of course, Alistair Riggs, whom you all know is still in place as our Museum Assistant.

REDCOATS REVIEW

Up until now, Martin McIntyre and Michael Cornwell have produced and edited the Redcoats Review, on behalf of the SoF. I am pleased to tell you that there will be a logical evolution of this. They will continue to edit the newsletter and the newsletter will become representative of the entire ‘Wardrobe Enterprise’ (SoF, Wardrobe staff, RWMT) — covering people, activities, and events and so on.

ONLINE PODCASTS

An initiative of the trust Managers has been the creation of online podcasts the subjects of which are the history of the regiments. Two such podcasts have been created so far and were available to be watched live at the time of recording. They are still available to be watched on the following link. (<https://www.thewardrobe.org.uk/online-lectures>) These were ably supported by Jon Wort and Martin McIntyre who fronted up the ‘question and answer’ sessions at the conclusion of the lectures/interviews.

A while ago, it was decided to produce online podcasts. The aim being to highlight the Regimental Museum in this digital era. Jon Wort, a former DERR Officer, battlefield guide and military history expert (he would say enthusiast) was volunteered to take part!

Contact was made with the Army Flying Museum who are the leaders in this field, with both expertise and the relevant equipment. After a number of meetings, the decision was made to produce three podcasts, the first being The Battle of Maiwand. This was duly researched, and Jon carried out the pre-live presentation section at the Wardrobe (In effect a form of lecture). On Tuesday 17th May at p.m. this was broadcast from the Army Flying with Jon.

The second presentation was called DAD'S WAR WITH CHRIS TARRANT which was broadcast on Wednesday 15th June at p.m. Chris Tarrant the well-known television presenter who was very proud of his father's war service first with the Royal Berkshire Regiment at Normandy, and later with the Wiltshires (he was awarded the Military Cross and wounded while serving with the Regiment). In the pre-live broadcast session Chris came to the Wardrobe and was interviewed by Jon. This was later followed up at the Army Flying Museum at Middle Wallop with a live question and answer session.

The third podcast was carried out with a well-known author, Robert Lyman, who wrote 'A War of Empires' covering the Burma Campaign during the 2nd World War. This book cited the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the Royal Berkshire Regiment and the 1st Battalion Wiltshire Regiment.

The idea behind the pod casts (All still available to view on the Museum website) is to highlight the museum using this medium. The results are yet to be fully understood, but it is thought that further podcasts should take place to raise the Museum's profile.

MUSEUM SHOP

The shop remains a source of revenue for the museum. Please tell us what you would like to see sold in it and please visit the online shop from time to time and encourage your friends to do the same!

FUNDRAISING

I shall be asking the organisers of 'Farmer's Boys activities' (Such as golf and the Hungerford reunion, lunch, and dinner clubs) to consider raising funds for us at one of their events each year. If you know anyone who participates in such activities, please suggest that they might do this.

CROWDFUNDING

We are exploring online crowdfunding as a means to support activities and events. We will let you know how this progresses.

AGM

Our AGM has been set for 15.00 hrs, 15 June 2023 at the Wardrobe. I encouraged as many of you to attend as possible. One agenda item will be proposed amendments to our constitution. This will be the subject of a separate letter; but in outline, our constitution needs to be brought up to date as it reflects names, titles and appointments that no longer exist.

Lastly may I ask that if you do not yet subscribe to the email version of the newsletter and Redcoats Review, that you do so (providing you have email!). It really does help maximise the money we can use to support the museum.

With best wishes to you and yours,

Yours aye,
Jeremy Tozer

IRISH EVICTIONS 1888

2nd Battalion The Royal Berkshire Regiment

The Royal Berkshire Regiment like most regiments had a long association in Ireland both operationally and with many soldiers in the ranks coming from the emerald island. During the Victorian age a posting to Ireland was a regular event, with the battalions normally serving in various outposts outside the major towns. During the 1880's evictions of tenants on estates were a regular occurrence and dealt with by the then Royal Irish Constabulary. On a number of occasions soldiers from the isolated outposts were required to provide support to the RIC. We would describe that as '*Aid to the civil power*'. Our regimental records make virtually no reference about these events and the museum holds no photographic record of these times, until now.

At the end of last year the museum had a visitor called Mr Ed O' Shaughnessy, an ex American military officer who served from 1971 to 1998, mainly with Armoured Cavalry units. His initial mission was to ascertain what the museum held about these events.

His reason was covered with the following communication :-

Hello,

I am an American hobby historian interested in the Vandeleur estate evictions. My interest was initiated upon learning that my great grandparents were American witnesses.

Since that discovery I have written widely about these evictions, emphasizing the photographs taken of them. Some 50 photographs were taken, making these the most photographed of the late Victorian Irish evictions. The Royal Berkshires supported these evictions, and likely were photographed.

Captain Hyacinth Lynch was the commander of a 50-man detachment that supported these evictions. The 2nd Bn, Royal Berkshire Regiment was stationed in Cappa Barracks, near Kilrush, an easy marching distance to the Vandeleur estate. Other regular Army detachments were also detailed to supporting the Vandeleur evictions, 70 from the Sherwood Foresters and 50 from the 3rd Hussars, but they were garrisoned in Limerick and elsewhere. Given the distance from their garrison barracks, the other detachments were billeted at the Kilrush House, or encamped on the grounds. Whereas the Royal Berks returned to Cappa at the end of each eviction day.

Of the 50+ photographs taken, some 35 have been located and authenticated. Now and then others are found, adding to the inventory of extant photographs. I am assisting in the effort to locate long unseen photographs. I am contacting you in the hopes that you will have some Vandeleur estate eviction photographs in your archives, and if not, to learn if you have any photos of the 2nd Bn, Royal Berks during their tour of duty in County Clare, IR. For a time they were garrisoned at Cappa Barracks, near Kilrush, County Clare. Captain Lynch was reassigned in November 1889.

I have selected some photographs from the National Library of Ireland's archives to give you a feel for what the missing photographs may look like. The action repeats itself over the 8-day eviction operation. Soldiers formed a perimeter around the homesite where the eviction was to take place. The sheriff, bailiffs, Royal Irish Constabulary, and various others went inside the perimeter to affect the eviction. In most cases the battering ram was brought to bear. The noncommissioned officers kept the troops at their duty, while the commissioned officers mingled with the various observers and hangers-on.

Although we were not able to provide any photographic evidence we were able to provide further images of officers of that period for identification purposes (Including Captain Lynch), and small extracts from the

digest of service showing the locations of the outposts in Ireland and who commanded them at that time (no images were located about evictions), We did locate one reference from Ex Sergeant Major Bestley in a later recollection about this type of deployment who was a young soldier at that time.

Bestley remembered "The shift (1888) was not a very agreeable one as our new station was a very quiet place, everything was monotonous and time hung on our hands. Towards the latter part of the year, my company or rather 50 of us, were sent to County Clare. At that time Ireland was in an unsettled state and the agrarian movement was in force. We were sent to assist the Royal Irish Constabulary in preserving the peace, and were quartered in a gentleman's residence on the Bodyke estate, near the village of Tulla, and were 10 miles away from the nearest railway station. We, when required, used to attend evictions in the district - The Police did the work whilst we simply formed a cordon around the place to prevent unauthorized people from interfering with the civil authorities. The Officer in command of the company, Bruce —known to the men under the sobriquet of 'Daddy'. He was a kind and affectionate gentleman, beloved by all"

Ed O' Shaughnessy has kindly made the results of his many years of research available for the Regimental archives. This helps us expand the information about the Regiments peacetime deployments in Ireland which hitherto is scarce.



Sergeant Major Bestley, pictured here in the 1890's. After retirement he presented to the Regiment a comprehensive record of his service with the Regiment, which included his service in Ireland. (These records are still held in the Archive Section of the Museum)

Photographs that appear below provide illustrations of the events of the Trish Evictions.



Officers of the units deployed meet with the eviction officials and the RIC. Just hidden behind the 3rd Hussar officer Captain Pirie is Captain H. Lynch, the only officer from the Regiment to have fought at Maiwand and Tofrek. (He is wearing his campaign medals). The officers facing the camera could be Lieutenant Wooldridge (Unconfirmed at this stage)



Soldiers of the Royal Berkshire Regiment look on as the eviction takes place. In their ranks would be survivors of the Maiwand battle, and also some who fought the dervishes in the Sudan. [On standby as many soldiers from 1 DERR who carried out operations in Ulster during Operation Banner would remember.

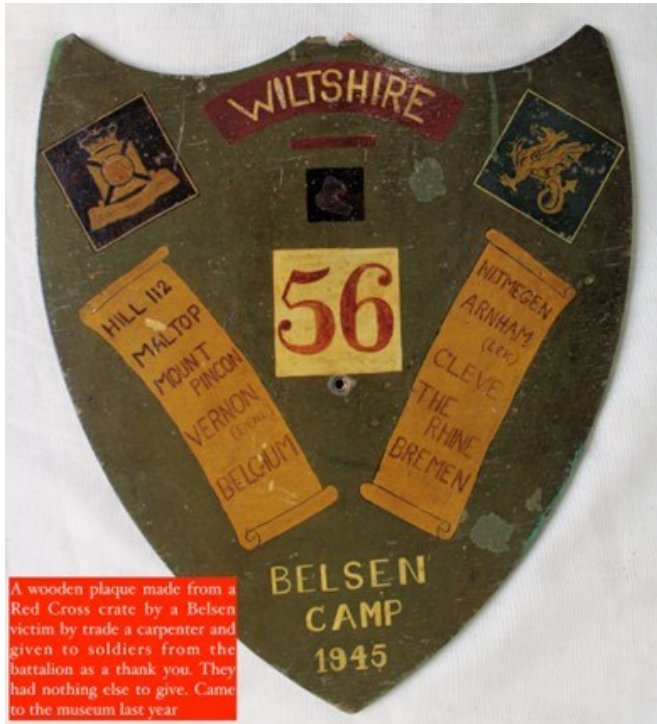


The reality of an eviction the aftermath after a battering ram had been used. Many of the occupants did not give up easily.

RECENT ACCESSION TO THE MUSEUM

It never amazes us how much material is still 'out there' This was illustrated recently with the addition of the following two items.....

4th Bn, Wiltshire Regiment - A wooden plaque made by one of the surviving victims at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany from a packing case after liberation at the end of the Second World War. Those that were able to worked together with members of the battalion who were based next door. This individual was so grateful he had nothing to give expect his skills as a carpenter



A wooden plaque made from a Red Cross crate by a Belsen victim by trade a carpenter and given to soldiers from the battalion as a thank you. They had nothing else to give. Came to the museum last year

The plaque with the Regiments and 43rd Division insignia on was all he could provide. This came to the museum last year. Full story on the Museum Facebook page

Which bring us to another point. How many of you visit the Museum's Facebook page for regular news items. Your will find it at

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/718687579487437>

10th Bn, Royal Berkshire Regiment – A part of a tea set obtained by Regimental Sergeant Major Jack Lewis from the officers mess at Mussolini's headquarters in Rome. On the table in the mess, he saw peach coloured porcelain coffee cups where Mussolini had left them. He obtained four cups and saucers along with a milk jug and sugar bowl. These became wartime souvenirs. He returned to England with them and they were later passed down his family. All that remains and presented to the museum are two saucers, one cup, one sugar bowl (with lid) and a milk jug. [RSM Lewis was a pre-war soldier who served in India).



23842367 SERGEANT ERNEST BRIAN POTTER

1 DERR FIRST GALLANTRY AWARD IN NORTHERN IRELAND

QUEEN'S COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

LONDON GAZETTE 5th March, 1971, page 1993

INCIDENT 3rd July, 1970, The Falls, West Belfast.

1 DERR IN WEST BELFAST 29TH JUNE TO 19TH JULY 1970.

With the deteriorating situation in Northern Ireland, the government decided to reinforce the Army in readiness for the Orange Order parades commemorating the 12th July. Reinforcements came from across the army, even including a battalion flown in from Malta. 1st Bn Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment (1 DERR) was tasked to provide one company. However, as manpower was extremely stretched due to A Company being in British Honduras and C Company in the process of relieving them, B Company was cobbled together with whatever manpower was available. The Company consisted of a Company Headquarters, 5 Platoon, the Corps of Drums acting as 6 Platoon, and a Troop of Gunners from 5 (Gibraltar) Battery, Royal Artillery. 5 Platoon consisted of spare men from across the Battalion including clerks, storemen and Junior leaders who had just arrived in Catterick. The Platoon Commander was from the Royal Corps of Transport (RCT).

The Company deployed to West Belfast on Monday 29th June and came under the command of 1st Bn Royal Scots (1 R S). They started patrolling the streets that evening. Tensions were high and a great deal of CS gas had already been used. Patrolling continued on the 1st and 2nd July, but on the 3rd, the bubble burst.

Support Company, 1 Royal Scots were searching areas of The Falls and once arms caches started to be found, the rioting started. It was highly likely that this was orchestrated to cover the movement of other arms caches from the area. The size and intensity of the rioting increased and soon spread to the whole Lower Falls area.



The rioting at the Raglan Street/Albert Street Junction 3rd July 1970

B Company (less the Drums who were undertaking guard duties at HMS Maidstone) was deployed to the junction of Albert Street/Raglan Road as a reserve should they be required. Waiting in their vehicles the mob arrived almost without warning. Dismounting their vehicle whilst under attack, they donned their respirators and faced the rioters alone for almost an hour when they were reinforced by troops from A Company, 1 Glosters .

After approximately another 45 minutes they were able to withdraw. The next stage of the operation was to contain the rioters and the company, along with other units, formed a cordon along the Falls Road covering all the road and alleys that entered onto it.

A decision was made to search the area as a Brigade operation and B Company then became part of the cordon. Troops were stretched so thin that sections or half-sections were all that was available to control road junctions and it was not uncommon to find six men confronting 100 or more rioters and consequently much CS gas was used. As darkness fell at around 2200 hrs snipers began to operate. The search, led by 1 Devon & Dorsets, progressed and large quantities of arms and ammunition were discovered. As dawn broke at 4.30 am on Saturday morning, the troops received their first meal since deploying.

In the early hours of the Sunday morning the company was finally withdrawn from the streets now that both battalions were firmly established in The Falls area and a form of calm restored. For the remainder of the tour the area was patrolled in support of 1 RS and the actual Orange Marches passed off almost without incident. B Company, 1 DERR returned to Catterick on 19th July.

SERGEANT POTTER'S INVOLVEMENT.

On 3rd July, B Company, 1 DERR were operating in support of 1st Bn Royal Scots (1 RS) in West Belfast. In the late afternoon, Support Company, 1 RS were conducting a search operation and the two platoons of B Company were parked in lorries

in a nearby street at the junction of Albert Street/Raglan Road ready to deploy if required. A large quantity of arms and ammunition were found and once they were removed a large crowd gathered and started to stone the cordon troops who fired CS gas in an attempt to disperse them. The first inkling that anything was amiss was when a Royal Scots Landrover came tearing around the corner followed by a cloud of CS gas. The Platoons were trapped. They couldn't go forward and there was no room to turn the vehicles around.



Sgt Brian Potter

The troops quickly dismounted and a deal of confusion resulted as they put on respirators and commanders found it difficult to make themselves heard. 5 Platoon quickly formed a baseline and faced the rioters. At this time, only the front rank had short shields and wore flak jackets. Not everybody had visors for their helmets. They then faced a hail of missiles; paving slabs, bottles, stones, broken manhole covers, iron bars and steel ball bearings fired from catapults. The ball bearings passed easily through the steel shields and a number of men were injured. Very early on Sergeant Potter's rifle stock was shattered by a ball bearing which also broke a finger on his left hand, leaving it virtually hanging off. Despite this, he wrapped it up in a piece of "Four by Two" (a roll of flannelette carried by troops for cleaning their weapons) and he remained at duty controlling and encouraging his men.

However, the Platoon Commander and several other men were badly injured by lumps of paving slabs and were carried off. CS grenades were thrown but as the wind was against them they had little effect. Several baton charges into the crowd were also carried out.

At this stage, the Company Commander had intended to use the attached Gunner Troop to out-flank the rioters by moving them down a parallel street, but due to the number of casualties he decided to leave them where they were to reinforce 5 Platoon, and called for reinforcements.

Soon reinforcements arrived in the form of A Company, 1st Bn Gloucestershire Regiment (1 Glosters) who formed up to the side and behind the 1 DERR troops. Then some Saracen armoured vehicles manned by men from 3 Queens arrived and drove through the rioters who dispersed but then reformed again behind them. Several more runs were carried out by the Saracens, during one in which their troops dismounted and chased the rioters, but it ended with the same results.

They had been stoned for nearly an hour by now when they received orders to withdraw, however this was easier said than done. At this point a double decker bus appeared which was driven by rioters. It headed up the road and was parked across the street about 30 yards in front of the base line. Very soon after this there were a number of explosions and at least seven gelignite bombs were thrown from nearby buildings. Three Glosters and a DERR received serious injuries to their legs and face they were carried off.

Once the grenades went off the soldiers scattered and took up tactical positions against the buildings and the rioters were suddenly more subdued. Taking advantage of the lull, 1 DERR withdrew through 1 Glosters and headed to a rendezvous with their transport which then joined them.

The Company then formed part of the larger cordon in place in the area and remained on the streets for the rest of the night and into the following day, being fed on the streets. Once they had disengaged from the riot Brian Potter had his hand wounds treated but then rejoined his men and remained on the streets until they were finally withdrawn in the early hours of Sunday morning.

SERGEANT ERNEST BRIAN POTTER.

Brian Potter was born in Imber village on Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire in June 1942. In November 1943, Imber was taken over by the army as a training area for troops preparing for the Normandy invasion, and it is still retained today by the MoD for use of training soldiers for operations in built-up areas (OBUA). The Potter family moved to Corsley where Brian and his three younger brothers grew up. He was educated at The Avenue School in Warminster and was a keen member of the Wiltshire Army Cadet Force (ACF). In 1960 he attended a garden party at Buckingham Palace to celebrate the centenary of the ACF and he was also the winner of the Kynoch Cup for small bore shooting. On leaving school he trained as a motor mechanic.

In 1960 he joined the Territorial Army, serving with B Company, 4th Bn Wiltshire Regiment at Warminster. He had visions of joining the Royal Marines but was persuaded that his future lay with the Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment (DERR)! He enlisted into the Regular Army on 11th May 1961 and did his recruit training at the Wessex Brigade Depot at Exeter. On passing out he remained at the Depot and completed a Potential Junior NCO's Cadre.



LCpl Potter on board HMS Stubbington, a Royal Navy Minesweeper, Malta 1963

He joined the Battalion at Tidworth and was immediately placed into the Battalion's Duke of Edinburgh's Trophy Team, and after the competition he joined A Company. In February 1962, A Company deployed at short notice to British Guiana to assist in quelling disturbances there. After stopover in Jamaica where they changed from combats into khaki drill uniforms, they flew on to the Colony which was situated on the mainland of South America. On arrival in Georgetown the Company was billeted at the Georgetown Golf Club. He was promoted to Lance Corporal and undertook patrols in the area, but after a week he and several other soldiers contracted amoebic dysentery after being given juice made from infected water. He was admitted to hospital where he remained for the rest of the tour, and even for a short period after the Company departed.

He returned to Tidworth a short while later having flown into Heathrow on a civilian airliner. He then made his way back to Tidworth through London on the London Underground and then British Rail carrying his kit and his rifle! Whilst on disembarkation leave, he was called down to Middle Wallop to do a helicopter pilot aptitude test with the Army Air Corps, but unfortunately his maths wasn't quite up to speed so he returned to Tidworth.

In December 1962 he moved with the Battalion for a three-year tour of Malta, where their time was taken up with guards, duties and training, and he undertook a six-week exercise with the rest of the Battalion in Libya. He was a good shot and gained the highest score in the annual rifle classification shoot, and his prize was a two-week cruise to Venice and Split in Yugoslavia on board HMS Stubbington, part of the Royal Navy Minesweeper Squadron in Malta. He was promoted to Corporal in 1963. That year also saw his brother, Nelson, visit Malta on HMS Lion, so along with his other brother Bill, who was also serving with 1 DERR, they were able to organise a brief get together with a few pints down town!

In February 1964, 1 DERR deployed to Cyprus in a peace-keeping role following inter-communal fighting between the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots. Both Greece and Turkey were threatening to intervene with their own

own troops. Serving with A Company, their initial role was to dig-in around Nicosia airport. After a couple of weeks 2 Platoon was moved to guard the Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ) which was based in a hotel in Nicosia itself. Unfortunately, the hotel was between the prison which housed the Greek militia, and the golf course which housed the Turkish militia, and each night they would open fire on each other, with JFHQ in the middle. After a short while they moved to a tented company location in a Nicosia orchard, and while here they carried out long range patrols in stripped down Landrovers, driving up to the RAF Station on Mount Olympus, over to the west coast and then back to Nicosia. The Battalion returned to Malta in April 1964.

Later in 1964 he was posted to the Depot in Exeter as a training corporal and whilst there he attended a skill at arms (SAA) instructors' course, on completion of which he was given the opportunity transfer to the Small Arms School Corps (SASC) which he declined. He married in Exeter in 1967 and then he re-joined 1 DERR in Minden, West Germany with his new wife. He then completed an Armoured Fighting Vehicle (AFV) 432 driver and maintenance instructors' course and spent much of his time in Germany teaching members of A Company to drive armoured vehicles. He was promoted to Sergeant in 1968 and took over 7 Platoon, B Company. He then returned to the UK to complete the Platoon Sergeants' Battle Course in Brecon.

He re-joined the Battalion in Catterick but was very soon in British Honduras with B Company where they spent four months patrolling the Guatemalan border and training for jungle warfare. Whilst there, British Honduras suffered a hurricane strike which did much damage in the south of the country and the Company undertook hurricane relief duties in support of the local police. He was also one of a small number of soldiers who attended a United States Jungle Warfare Course in Panama.

On return to Catterick the barracks were sparsely populated due to A Company being in on exercise in Malaysia followed by a tour of British Honduras, and C Company in preparing to relieve them in July 1970. Therefore, when the call came to deploy a company to Belfast in June 1970, he found himself the Platoon Sergeant of a platoon that was put together with any manpower available, such as storemen, clerks and newly-arrived Junior Leaders. It was during this deployment that he was awarded the Queen's Commendation.

He returned to Northern Ireland less than a year later in April 1971 when 1 DERR deployed to Londonderry on a six-week Spearhead deployment. Still with 7 Platoon, he predominantly undertook helicopter patrols in the surrounding area.



In the autumn of 1971, he moved to Berlin to join the Battalion after completing and advanced SAA course, but just before Christmas he was posted to Maidenhead in Berkshire as a Permanent Staff Instructor (PSI) to C (Royal Berkshires) Company, 2nd Bn The Wessex Regiment. Despite having been promoted to Colour

Sergeant, he decided to leave the army and move with his family to Australia. He was discharged on 28th May 1973.

On arrival in Australia they were housed in temporary accommodation until a permanent home could be found. Brian started his working life with CAT, a company providing/servicing heavy machinery. The family moved into a permanent home in Para Hills West, a Suburb of Adelaide. Their daughters Annabelle and Madeleine went to a local school nearby.

At some point Brian changed employment and started work servicing fork-lift trucks. He decided that this work was his future and set up his own company, Brian Potter Fork Lift Trucks and continued so until his retirement. Also at some time the family moved to Glamis Avenue, Tranmere, another suburb of Adelaide.

Brian kept a keen interest in the British Military and when he visited UK would pay a visit to The Wardrobe. He would regularly walk Mount Lofty and Morialta, taking an interest in the countryside and wildlife.

Sadly Brian Potter died on 14 April 2022 and on 30th December 2022 his wife Carolyn planted a gum-tree sapling as a memorial to Brian. The sapling was planted in a re-vegetation area of Waterfall Gully, Mount Lofty in the Adelaide Hills; a favourite walk for Brian.

Carolyn was accompanied by Brian's younger brother Robin, Niece Michelle and husband Jamie, and Great Niece Dani.



HANDING BACK THE COLOURS OF THE 62ND (WILTSHIRE)

REGIMENT OF FOOT

After an Evensong Service in Salisbury Cathedral an unusual ceremony was held which may not have been enacted for many years and in the case of our regiments it has never been enacted

The fourth stand of Colours for the 62nd (Wiltshire) Regiment of Foot came into service in 1805 and if one visited the museums website you would find the following information:

The 62nd were presented with new colours in Ireland, subsequently carried in the campaigns in Egypt, Sicily and Italy between 1806 and 1813, and later in action in America in 1814. In 1842 the Regiment was going by boat on the River Ganges from Calcutta to Dinapore. The Colours were in the commanding officer's boat (Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Reed) when a storm blew up, the boat capsized and the Colours were lost. They were recovered from the river, badly damaged, seven months later, by a party from the Regiment. They are now in Salisbury Cathedral.

Having lain at the bottom of the River Ganges for seven months before being recovered and eventually “Laid Up”, it seems inevitable that these Colours would deteriorate rather more quickly than Colours That hadn’t been submerged. Be that as it may it did become somewhat of a surprise when Salisbury Cathedral asked that they be considered “Disintegrated”. Our understanding had always been that Colours once laid up would remain in place until “Dust to Dust”.

However to ensure that the proper procedures were being followed we, being the Rifles Wardrobe and Museum Trust and the Rifles and RGBW Regimental Trust agreed to meet with the SO2 Head of Ceremony MoD (Major Andrew Greenwood) the Association Chaplain and the Cathedral hierarchy.

The outcome of the meeting was an education. For example we learnt that once Colours are laid up the responsibility for the Colours devolves to the place in which they are laid up. If the Cathedral considered the state of the Colours to be a threat then they were within their rights to seek a judgement to declare the Colours disintegrated.

A major reason for the Cathedral request is based on the fact that the whole collection of Colours, Guidons and Banners are at a lower level than would find in a parish church. In some ways determined by how high the vaulted roof of the Cathedral is; to hang Colours at the top of the vaulted roofs would mean no-one would be able to see them.

Hanging them so that they are literally a hand span above an extended arm does bring them within range of Cathedral visitors. And this actually happened when an overseas visitor tried to jump up and grab a piece of the 62nd (Wiltshire) Regiment’s Sovereign Colour.

Canon Kenneth Padley (Canon Treasurer) removing the Regimental Colour to hand over to the Regiment representatives of Nigel Walker and David Chilton. Note the difference between the finials on these Colours and those still hanging. Those with crowns surmounted by lions are all post 1881.





The Colours of the 62nd (Wiltshire) Regiment on their final journey home to the Museum ;having been laid up in the Cathedral for over 175 years. Colours carried by Steven Bowkett and David Chilton. The finials will be removed and become artefacts for the museum. The Pikes and what material is left of the

Colours will be cremated and the ashes scattered in the Regimental Garden of Remembrance on Wednesday 17 May 2023. That ceremony will follow after a Service in the Cathedral on the same day in which the Book of Remembrance for the RGBW is dedicated.

PLEA TO READERSHIP

There is an aspiration from the Chairman of the Society of Friends and the Chairman of the Trustees that this newsletter becomes an avenue for Patrons, Friends and Volunteers to benefit from this publication. Whilst the editorial team are more than happy to continue putting the newsletter together at the same time as providing articles of military history interest we will be looking to the Patrons, Friends and Volunteers to produce the basis of articles that cover their area of interest. These needn't be the finished article, they could be the gem of an idea which the publishing team can take forward. At the end of the day we are producing the newsletter to keep you all informed as to what is going on at The Wardrobe and to possibly use the newsletter as a publicity brochure by mailshotting it to individuals or groups who might be tempted to join the ranks of supporting The Wardrobe and all that it entails. For those of you who do not mind using Facebook just a reminder the Museum has its own page on which is posts new items of news or events.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/718687579487437>



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

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