



Redcoats Review

172nd Anniversary of the Battle of Ferozeshah

THE 62ND [WILTSHIRE] REGIMENT AT THE BATTLE
OF FEROZESHAH 21ST DECEMBER 1845

‘SOME OF THOSE WHO FOUGHT’

During this year, the research team at the Regimental Museum at Salisbury dealt with several enquiries regarding soldiers who fought in the battle. One came from the DRING family in Australia who were attempting to find a photo of Sergeant William DRING who was the centre Sergeant in the 62nd Regiments Colour Party at the battle and who survived. Despite many hours of research an image of him was not located in the museum, but clues were established from records that he later went to the 33rd Regiment [Duke of Wellingtons] it transpired that they had a copy of him in a group image taken years later. Not only were the family over the moon, this prompted us to further ask the question, who were the men who fought at Ferozeshah, what could we find about them, and importantly could we locate any more images of any of the survivors of the battle and Sikh Campaign.

THE LEAD UP TO THE BATTLE

In December 1844 the 62nd were relieved by the 39th Foot, and started their march to the Punjab. In February 1845 they reached Delhi, and they arrived at Ferozepore, in March. The 62nd's barracks were still in the process of being built, as a British Regiment was not normally stationed there; the aggressive attitude of the Sikhs beyond the River Sutlej determining the change in policy. For two months the Regiment camped out, and when they moved into ten barrack blocks in May,



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FUTURE EVENTS

- AGM June 2018
- Battlefield Tour Sep 2018

ORDERLY ROOM BOOK OF
THE 66TH WHILST STA-
TIONED IN HAITI—1796

During the Expedition against the French in the West Indies from the 16th February to the 10th October, 1796.

.....It was with the greatest satisfaction His Excellence the Governor saw yesterday the complete execution of the plan that had been concerted to possess the height and drive the enemy the other side of the mountain.....No....Negro houses shall be burn't.....No officer shall be allowed to keep a white soldier as a servant in this country.....any soldier found guilty of the latter crime [Plunder] will be punished with immediate death.....He likewise forbids in the strongest manner the inhuman practice of putting prisoners to death in cool [Cold] Blood.....Private McLabe.....guilty of the crime laid to his charge.....sentence him to receive 1000 lashes in the usual manner.....sentence him to receive 600 lashes neck to heel.....

Editor's comment—We do not know if this private survived this punishment.

there were still no doors to the buildings and no officers' quarters. By now the hot weather had come, and once again cholera struck the Regiment. They always seem fated to be in a part of India rife with the disease, and there was much of it in the Punjab during that month of June. In this Asiatic variety the victims turned black and suffered cramp in the limbs, but stood every chance of recovery if they survived the first forty-eight hours. The Regimental hospital was not ready till July, and the sick had to be accommodated in one belonging to the Native Infantry. In September there were 170 men in hospital, and, by the outbreak of the First Sikh War in December, 126 men had died from cholera and apoplexy. Ferozepore was just South-East of the River Sutlej, which formed the boundary between that part of the Punjab ruled by the Sikhs and the territory governed by the British. The 62nd's barracks lay in a great sandy plain without a tree or a blade of grass. A mile away was the old city, with the Frontier Treasury and Military Headquarters. It was against this background that the 62nd approached the forthcoming battle.

THE BATTLE OF FEROZESHAH (CONQUEST OF THE PUNJAB, 1ST SIKH WAR)

At eight o'clock on the morning of 21st December Littler's Division marched. The 62nd, in full kit, red coats and stocks, numbered just under 600, including many convalescents from cholera and fever just out of hospital. By 12.30 p.m. they had covered the twelve miles without incident, and joined the other British force about five miles South-west of Ferozeshah. General Gough's total force was now about 18,000 with sixty-three guns, mostly of small calibre, and a preponderance of native troops. The exact position of the enemy was not discovered until three in the afternoon, when they were found strongly entrenched around Ferozeshah village. This Sikh force was the one commanded by Lal Singh; reinforced since fighting at Moodkee, it now totalled over 30,000 men with more than 100 guns, many of large calibre. Tej Singh, with at least an equivalent force, was still encamped some ten miles away near the Sutlej. The village of Ferozeshah lay behind a high embankment, along which the Sikhs were positioned. In front of them the ground was flat and completely open for 300 yards, then came brushwood and jungle through which the British advanced to the attack at four in the afternoon. On the British left flank Major-General Littler ordered Acting Brigadier Reed's Brigade to take station next to the main body, with Acting-Brigadier Ashburnham's Brigade on his left. Deployment was from the right, which meant that Ashburnham's three Regiments needed longer to get into position than Reed's. However, once Reed's Brigade was deployed, Littler placed himself behind them and ordered the advance. As a result, Reed's left flank was exposed, as Ashburnham had not had time to get into position, and his right flank was equally unprotected, as a gap of a quarter of a mile was opened between his Brigade and the main body.

It also brought Reed's men under fire well before anyone else, and the Sikh artillery could concentrate on them alone. The 62nd, led by Major Shortt, were on the right, the 12th Native Infantry on their left, and the 14th Native Infantry in support. Under tremendous fire the two Native Regiments hung back except for a few files. Ashburnham was having similar trouble on the left, only managing to get one-third of his men into action. The 62nd, having advanced through the trees and brushwood with round shot and shell dropping among them, came into the open entirely unsupported opposite the strongest part of the Sikh fieldworks. A storm of grape-shot and canister met them at short range, and masses of enemy cavalry threatened their left flank.



For twenty minutes they struggled slowly forward, by which time half of them were casualties. The Regiment then halted and commenced firing. Reed, seeing them exposed to certain destruction right under the muzzles of the Sikh guns, ordered a charge. A number moved forward and made contact with the enemy but in the main they were quite unable to charge, having been on the move for nine hours in the sun without food or water, and having advanced rapidly through jungle and over heavy ground. Many of the convalescents among them had doubled throughout most of the attack in order to keep up, and the survivors were exhausted. In Reed's own words, *"Unable to urge them on, they declaring they would stay there as long as I wished but had not the strength to charge, which was true, seeing the fire to which they were exposed, I took the responsibility of ordering them to retire, which they did in good order."* The regiment suffered heavy casualties, including 18 out of 23 officers and 281 out of 580 other ranks.

THE EXECUTION OF
PRIVATE GEORGE LAY

1ST BATTALION THE ROYAL
BERKSHIRE REGIMENT

28TH APRIL 1915

He was shot on 28th April 1915, A poster was issued by the German military authorities in French and German, which translated states: *'The soldier Georges Delaye who formerly belonged to the English army has been shot this morning at Etreux, because he did not present himself to the German authority in spite of repeated orders by it. Etreux 28th April 1915. The Area Commandant'*. The German military authorities in this area appear to have taken the view that, to be a legitimate combatant, it was necessary to be with a formed military unit and that once separated from his unit and in an area under German military rule, a British soldier became susceptible to German military law and was required to obey German military orders, even if he had not been captured and was in British military uniform.



German Poster relating to
Private Lay

BY DAVID STONE

At page 91 of Colonel NCE Kendrick's well-known 1968 history of the Wiltshire Regiment, the author states that 'In 1857 the Indian Mutiny broke out, but neither the 62nd nor the 99th were in India at that time.' This is quite correct, but something that I came across in a particular exhibition at a museum in Budleigh Salterton, Devon the other day indicates that not only were the soldiers of the 62nd apparently earmarked to reinforce the troops engaged in suppressing the Indian Mutiny in 1858 (or to replace an-England based British army unit sent to India to do so), but also had it not been for a technological innovation in telegraphic communications that August the regiment would almost certainly have set sail from Halifax, Nova Scotia to England; only to find on their arrival in England that the mutiny had already been effectively suppressed and that the regiment was therefore no longer required either in England or in India.

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SOME WHO FOUGHT

COLOUR SERGEANT SANDERSON

He had a function that many would have not volunteered for, that of 'Directing Sergeant'. He took up a position 20 paces to the front of the Colour Party [known at that time as the Colour Division] where he was required to dictate the direction of travel, and the speed with which the Regiment advanced. He remembered later that as he advanced he was aware of being 'cussed' by the Adjutant Lieutenant Sims who was positioned behind the Colour Party for advancing too fast, and if he survived he would be in trouble. As the Regiment approached the Sikh cannons he survived what followed and was recorded as being the first soldier to make contact with the enemy. He later recollected that during the battle that followed he never discharged his weapon, although he made a lot of use of his bayonet. After the withdrawal that followed he took command of a Company.

He later became the Regiment's Sergeant Major [Modern equivalent RSM], presented with a meritorious Medal for gallantry, promoted to ensign in 1849, retired at the age of 66 and became a Military Knight of Windsor. [In the event Lieutenant Sims was killed]

Colour Party

LIEUTENANT HEWETT

REGIMENTAL COLOUR



Lt Hewett, taken later as Adjutant Buckinghamshire Militia 1854

He joined the Regiment in India as an Ensign in 1845 and went into battle carrying the Regimental Colour. He was wounded taking no further part. He was appointed Adjutant in 1848 and was based in Bury at the time of his marriage in the following year. A posting to the 62nd's depot in Mullingar, Ireland, followed. In late 1854 He was appointed Captain Adjutant in the Royal Bucks Kings Own Militia until 1871, retiring with the rank of Major.

LIEUTENANT ROBERTS

QUEENS COLOUR

He also joined the Regiment in 1845 and went into battle carrying the Queens Colour. He was wounded. Very little is known of this officer who left the Army List in 1848. We believe after both officers were wounded others as yet unidentified took up the colours and were also wounded. Sergeant Major Rudman eventually took one of the colours from the battlefield and was promoted Ensign the following day.

SERGEANT WILLIAM DRING

He was the centre Sergeant of the Colour Party. Unusually for this period he was only 19 years old, but was considered to be good material as he was the Orderly Room Sergeant and by all accounts highly rated by the Regiment. He followed his father into the Regiment who was also present at the Battle as the Hospital Sergeant. As he advanced towards the Sikh guns he was shot through both knees with grape shot and suffered terribly when he was hit. He remained



Sergeant William Dring, taken later in life whilst serving in the 33rd Regiment

on the battlefield until recovered after nightfall. He spent the next two years recovering from his wounds, but retained his function in the Orderly Room. He was so highly rated that in 1847 when the Regiment returned to England and after he attempted to volunteer to remain in India he was in effect 'Kidnapped' by the Regiment to keep him with them. It was later recorded that 'Sergeant Dring was made a prisoner while the volunteering was going on, and becoming obstreperous was pegged out until he became quiet. During the march down country it was given out, that he was not quite right in the head and he was kept under careful surveillance, so he remained a 62nd man'

These however were the good old days when the COs and adjutant, often added improvised paragraphs to the existing rules and regulations of Military law. As a result, Sgt Dring returned to England with the 62nd but later got his wish to return to India joining the 49th Regiment as their paymaster, when the 49th left India he repeated this and then joined the 33rd Regiment.

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LIEUTENANT GEORGE SIMS

He was the Adjutant during the battle and took up his position together with Sergeant Major Rudman behind the Colour Party. He was responsible for ensuring the Regiment advanced in good order and at the right speed. In order to assist him he required the Directing Sergeant [Colour Sergeant Sanderson] to ensure that the speed and direction were as ordered. He was heard to 'Cuss' the directing Sergeant for going too fast. In the event he was not able to take issue with Colour Sergeant Sanderson as he was killed in action shortly after. Lieutenant Sims joined the 62nd in 1838, remaining with them until the day of the battle.

From Page 4

The exhibition at Budleigh Salterton museum focused upon the life and achievements of Admiral George William Preedy CB (1817-94), a celebrated Royal Navy commander and local resident of that coastal town. However, among his many maritime accomplishments was his captaincy of HMS Agamemnon in 1858, when that RN ship in concert with the American navy ship USS Niagara, laid the first trans-Atlantic cable between Trinity Bay, Newfoundland, in Canada and Knightstown at Valentia Island, on the east coast of Ireland. Admiral Preedy oversaw this technically very challenging operation, one of the outcomes of its eventual success being what was almost certainly the first use of international telegraphy to affect an operational deployment by a regiment of the British army: in this case the 62nd Regiment of Foot.

The cable laying operation conducted in 1858 succeeded what had been an unsuccessful attempt to lay a cable the previous summer, followed by a series of abortive attempts to do so in June 1858. Then, on 17 July that year, the two cable-laying ships set out yet again, with the cable at last being successfully spliced at the trans-Atlantic midpoint on 29 July.

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Thereafter, the Niagara landed the end of its section of cable at Trinity Bay, Newfoundland on 4 August, while the Agamemnon landed its end at Valentia Island, Ireland on 5 August. So it was that by 16 August 1858 a viable if somewhat intermittent trans-Atlantic telegraphic communications link connected Great Britain, Canada and the Americas. The first two significant messages sent that day (apart from the various technical transmissions sent by the telegraphic engineers establishing the link) were well documented. The first sent from the British end stated 'Europe and America are united by telegraphy. Glory to God in the highest; on earth, peace and good will towards men'. This was followed by a 98-word telegram of congratulation from Queen Victoria to US President James Buchanan in Pennsylvania, which in fact took some sixteen hours to send and decipher; nevertheless, this was still a considerable improvement upon the six to ten weeks that a letter might have taken to reach the US President from Queen Victoria!

And it was at this point that the 62nd Regiment of Foot entered the story, as the next message sent on 16 August 1858 directly affected the subsequent history of that regiment.

SERGEANT MAJOR RUDMAN

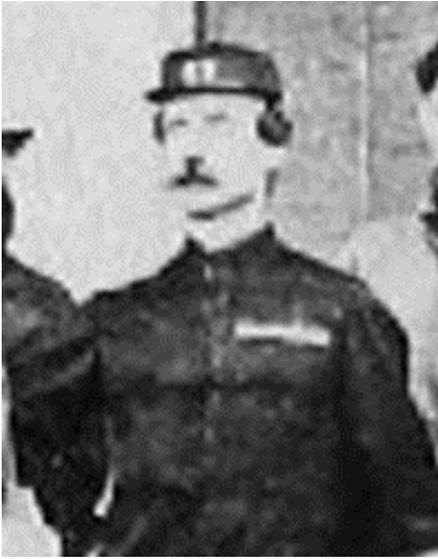
He was the senior Sergeant Major [Modern equivalent is a WO1 RSM]. He was positioned behind the colour party together with the Adjutant Lieutenant SIMS. He later remembered

"The 62nd advanced with the 12thN.I. on its right, the 14thN.I. in reserve & in rear, no Corps on its left flank, the ground was heavy & thickly covered with brushwood. The line had gained only a few paces to the front, when it came under fire, (it was about this time that Brig. Reed was ordered from the front of the line to place himself in rear of the two Corps; the order was delivered by Capt. Graves from General Littler) the round shot fell fast & a few minutes brought us under the range of the enemy's guns, when about every shot told in the ranks. This caused the men to increase their pace & brought them quickly on the open space, with a full view of the Enemy's camp, the fire now resembled a shower of hail, but the Regt continued to advance rapidly, led by Major Shortt in front of the line & mounted, waving his sword & cheering on the men. The men & officers were now falling fast, but the Enemy's batteries were invisible; suddenly a round shout passed along the front & right of the line supposing a masked battery had been passed & its guns had now been turned to enfilade the line, a momentous check took place in the advance, but finding that it was only a shot from our battery on the right (& in my opinion, the first fired in this direction) the men quickly moved on again to within a short distance of the battery. This is variously stated –the officers of the Colour Division state not more than 15 or 20 yards, the men who had received sabre wounds state they received them at the guns & from the position of the bodies as they lay some close to the entrenchments. I should say the whole line was within 30 yards of the batteries."

"The bugle having sounded the "Retire", the line went about & retired in an orderly manner, but at a much slower pace than In the advance for the men were now unable to drag themselves along & when they had arrived in rear of the 9th Regiment, so completely exhausted were they that on a square being formed to resist cavalry, many of them were compelled to lie down, where they might rest"

He came out of the battle with one of the Regiments colours and was promoted to a Temporary Ensign the following day.

COLOUR SERGEANT GAMBLE



Lieutenant (Quartermaster)
GAMBLE

He joined the 62nd as a Private in 1842 from the 21st Fusiliers. The following year he was promoted to Corporal and later Sergeant in 1845. By the time of the battle he was a Colour Sergeant. By the end of the action he was in command of his company, the officers having been killed or wounded. He was severely wounded himself, having been hit with a bullet, which entered high up his thigh coming out of his back. He however did not go to hospital, but was attended in his tent by Lance Corporal MORRIS of the Light Company. Both GAMBLE and MORRIS came from Bath and knew each other very well. He went on to take part in the Regiment's next action at Sobraon. GAMBLE remained with the Regiment taking part in the Crimean War.

By the late summer of 1858 it had become clear to the government in London that the Indian Mutiny had been effectively suppressed and that no further reinforcements by British units from England or elsewhere were therefore needed to deal with that conflict. But by that stage the 62nd Regiment of Foot had apparently been earmarked to be involved directly or indirectly with the reinforcement of the army in India, with that regiment's preparations for its seaborne deployment from Nova Scotia to England already fairly well advanced. In any event, mindful of the fact that a letter dispatched by sea ordering the cancellation of this deployment was unlikely to reach the unit before it embarked for England, the army's commander-in-chief availed himself of the brand-new trans-Atlantic cable link to create a little piece of regimental history. So it was that the third message sent via the cable stated:

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SERGEANT WILLIAM HUMPHRIES



Sergeant William Humphries pictured above on one of his visits to the 1st Battalion, wearing his campaign medals

Sergeant William HUMPHRIES fought and was wounded at the Battle of Ferozeshah. He was born in Essex and joined the 62nd in 1834, serving for a total of 14 years, of which 13 years 132 days were spent abroad in the East Indies. He was granted a bounty of 6d per day for his gallant conduct at Ferozeshah. Later in life he became a regular visitor to the 1st Battalion. It was reported

'The enemy's force increased to a storm of grape and canister and within that space seven officers were killed and eleven wounded, many other ranks killed and wounded. Lieutenant GUBBINS fell from Sabre cuts in advance of his company, Lieutenant KELLY fell from Sabre cuts close to the entrenchment at the same place. Sergeant HUMPHRIES received a sabre cut, Lance Corporal FLOVERITT wounded on his left hand, Private SHORT, across the head, and Private WESTCOTT across the back'.

'The Military Secretary to Commander-in-Chief Horse Guards, London. To General Trollope, Halifax, Nova Scotia. The Sixty-Second Regiment is not to return to England.'

From this one can only surmise that the regiment had indeed been warned for this deployment and that its departure from Nova Scotia was probably imminent. It is conceivable that without this message being sent the regiment might well have sailed to England and then – having found its presence there was no longer required – been ordered to return to Nova Scotia. Alternatively it might have remained in England or have been sent elsewhere; but all this is of course speculative. However, there can be no doubt that the message from the army commander-in-chief at Horse Guards on 16 August 1858 forestalled any such deployment and certainly saved the 62nd from the potential vagaries, perils and discomfort of what had become an unnecessary trans-Atlantic crossing.

LIEUTENANT WILLAM LENNOX INGALL



Lieutenant Colonel William Lennox Ingall CB, pictured here in Canada whilst in command of the 1st Battalion

Lieutenant William Lennox Ingall, joined the 62nd Foot at Dinapore in India in 1843. In 1844 the regiment was ordered to Umballa and en route were diverted to Ferozepore because of the possible hostilities with the Sikh nation. This entailed a journey by road and river of a thousand miles; during this trek Ingall carried the Regimental Colour for the complete journey. He was wounded by grapeshot on the first day of the battle of Ferozeshah, 21 December 1845, but remained at his post and fought the following day. Later he commanded a company at Sobraon. He went with the Regiment to the Crimea where in June 1855 part of his thigh was carried away by the round shot that killed the Commanding Officer Lt-Col. Shearman and killed or wounded eighteen of the 62nd's rank and file. In October a second Commanding Officer was killed giving Maj.

Ingall his Lieutenant-Colonelcy and command of the regiment. He was invalided home but returned to the Crimea as soon as he could. In 1856 he took command of the regiment in Canada where this picture was taken, commanding it for the next fourteen years in Nova Scotia, Aldershot, Ireland and India. In 1870 he was promoted Brigadier General in Bengal, and in 1873 a Major General in command of the Allahabad Division. He retired in 1882 and died in 1888. During his service he was awarded the CB.

LIEUTENANT MICHAEL KELLY

He enlisted in the 13th Foot and was soon promoted through the ranks to Colour Sergeant. He served in India and Afghanistan, 1838 - 42. He was wounded at the storming of Ghuznie He marched with the Regiment to Cabul and then across Afghanistan to Peshawar. In August of 1842 he returned to Cabul for a third time. His services were rewarded by a medal for the action at Ghuznie, a second for Jellalabad, and a third for the recapture of Cabul. In 1842 he was promoted to Ensign in the 62nd Regiment and three years later to Lieutenant. He fought at the Battle of Ferozeshah. The following morning, close to the guns, searchers found the mangled remains of Kelly, who had led the attack. He died at the age of 32.

PRIVATE GELLARD

Private Geldard enlisted into the 62nd Regiment in 1844. He later remembered

“We marched under the heat of the day, Sun and a plain of land. We came to an halt at 12 o’clock at a village, we got some water, we waited for orders to join the main army. About 2 o’clock, we got the order to fall in and to move forward. After marching one or two miles, we got the order to load, we came in sight of the Cavalry belonging to the main army. At last we came in sight of the enemy. We formed a line and came to an halt. We was pretty tired for we marched all day, we did not rest above twenty minutes. When we got the order to advance towards the enemy. They commenced firing, as soon as they seen us advance, it done very little mischief until we came within 300 yards, the ground was soft, when the balls began to take effect upon us. When we came about 100 yards, they fell very fast. We kept up a good and steady file, firing when we came about 80 paces. The men fell very fast, it was at this time I got wounded by a musket ball shot, in the left groin, which caused me to fall. I was carried to the rear by a man and a boy of the Band belonging to the regiment. I passed through the 9th foots line, advancing to our assistance. I got out of range of shot. I stopped there all night, the night was cold, no water could be got for any money, the blood stopped running about 12 o’clock that night. All around me lay the wounded men, all crying for water. Next day the whole of the wounded men was sent to Ferozepur, but to the fight, the regiment went close up to the guns, it was here they got a cutting up, lost a great number of men. They had to retire by order of the Brigadier, they remained on the field that night. They went into the field next day, the 22nd (Dec.), the enemy was reinforced by 30,000 men, they kept firing the whole night long and during the day, when the Cavalry and Infantry charged they drove them off the field, the mines kept going off. They remained in the field till next day, when they buried the dead. 91 Guns was taken, besides stores, ammunition and camels.

The Regiment came in the same day, the main army remained in the field. The Regiment looked a skeleton.”

REDCOATS RAISE OVER £7,500 FOR THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

BY JOHN MARSH

Four Redcoats, Mike Cornwell, John Marsh, Farren Drury and Farren’s step-daughter, Sophie Milligan, have raised over £7,500.00 for the Royal British Legion by cycling from London to Paris. The 4 day, 307 mile trip culminated in a moving memorial service at the Arc de Triomphe on Sunday 3rd September 2017 where wreaths were laid at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

“It was a fantastic experience” says John. “Everything about the trip was memorable – the camaraderie from a shared activity that required a bit of effort, the beautiful countryside, the warm welcome in every village and town, the many services of remembrance, the rolling road closures and in particular cycling through Paris with no traffic and all brilliantly pulled together by the Legion’s cheerful support crew”.

“We are delighted to have raised so much and am very grateful to everyone for all their support”, says Mike, “and it was a real morale booster on the steep hills”, says Sophie.

“I had a rewarding Army career, serving alongside some amazing servicemen and women and came out unscathed, but many aren’t so lucky and they need support. Cycling 307 miles was my own personal challenge and was inspired by the fact that I was be doing my bit to help those who risk their lives for us”, says Farren.

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The money raised will go towards the Legion's vital welfare work which covers a range of services such as comforting the bereaved, supporting the injured, grants for home adaptations to help veterans live independently in their own house, benefits and money advice, employment and retraining support, hospital visits and the provision of full nursing care.

PRIVATE WILLIAM SHORE

He wrote a letter describing his experience at Ferozeshah to a relation in 1850 from Mullingar, Ireland [Transcribed by Debra Tasker]

"I was wounded three times by Shots in the one battle for which I received and wares (wear) a Silver Medle (Medal). I thought I should have been discharged on a count of my wounds but I was not disabled and therefore thay (they) have not let me go. I have a good Character in the Regiment and that is the rason (reason) thay (they) whould not discharge me. I have seen men pentioned of (pensioned off) that was not wounded half as bad as my self because (because) thay (they) wanted to get rid of them thay had to(o) much trouble with them."

"I might sometime or other see some of you but I have 10 long years to serve yet. But God knows where I might be then. I might be in the grave before half that time. I see many men die after braven (braving) the blood stained feild (field) and enduring all the (hardships?) a man could bare (bear). But it is Gods will when he calls us we must go. When I was engaged in the feild (field) I saw 10 - 20 and 30 men swept away into Eternity at the one time. Both on my right and left. But he was merciful to spare me"

Words in Red are the original spelling by William Shore

MRS LOUISA TURNER

She was the wife of Sergeant James TURNER and being placed on the strength of the Regiment a few months after he enlisted and proceeded at once to India. During the Battle of Ferozeshah she together with several other wives, and children were shut up in a mud hut fort with only a few natives to guard them. She afterwards assisted in attending to the wounded, having the honour of riding back to camp on one of the captured guns. She was later involved on the wreck of the Regiments boats on the Ganges, having given birth to their son William only three days before. She was saved by her husband swimming to her rescue. On returning from India on board the 'Himalaya' her daughter narrowly escaped burial at sea, having actually been wrapped up in the winding sheet.

When interviewed in later years she recalled *"One morning the woman and children were driven like sheep into a great mud fort, where they waited, with the wounded and dying, every woman weeping for her 'Man' and the stores of ammunition all buried under their feet. they would clamour for news of the fighting till the colonel cried 'Oh women, go in and go to bed' and they would meet the batches of wounded and ask 'how is the 62nd getting on'. There was Corporal HOLLINGSWORTH, who said 'Oh they be all dead by this' and 'Oh, didn't that upset me' cries Mrs Turner*

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Successful Farmer's Boys Team at the Finish



MRS LOUISA TURNER CONTINUED

and 'here I be still, thanks god' says her husband. Corporal NEWPORT says 'there's Mrs TURNER looking for her husband, and I see him lying dead' and I took on dreadful, but somebody says 'Don't fret, there's your husband', and there he was a-serving out the grog'

'And a lot we poor women died just with the shock and the fright'

Editors' Note- We believe the women were working together with the Hospital Sergeant, Sergeant Simon DRING, the father of William DRING. (*see page 5*)

PRIVATE JOESPH HEWITT

He was a member of the Grenadier Company and states that when they commenced the battle they numbered 31 file, after no more than 15. He later recalled

"We got the order to load with ball cartridge, and moved off and formed up in line opposite the side of the enemy's camp facing towards Ferozepore, and at once moved forward and did not get far before we had round shot flying amongst us from the enemy guns. Then we received the word double, and soon had grape shot and musket balls flying about us (A grape shot struck my left arm and took a piece of my coat, shirt and skin away just above the elbow). It was now getting very hot for us. Many were falling. We got the word, Charge. Away we ran shouting, and when up to their earthworks discharged our muskets point blank at them. The enemy were in overwhelming numbers. We passed many lying on the ground, as I thought dead, that jumped up behind us. The bugles were sounding 'retire' as Lieutenant GUBBINS, I and four other men were rushing towards a gun a short distance in front of us. We were completely cut off from the remainder and surrounded. The officer and four men were soon on the ground, and I pulling my bayonet out of a Sikh, swung round to bolt, when I found a Sikh behind me with his Tulwar up going to cut me down. I drew my musket to my chest and shot it out at him. With the whole weight of my body, I caught him just under the chin and toppled him over like a nine pin. I jumped over him then cleared the breast work, and ran my best for about 50 yards or so when I was complete done up."

He goes on to explain that he was expecting to be cut down and could see no one from the Regiment except the dead. He finally located what was left of the Regiment in a square as they prepared to resist cavalry. He described the night without any water and later described the dead of the 3rd Light Dragoons in the Sikh Camp after its capture all of whom had their right hand cut off [Their Sword Hand].

His wife and family were also present in the mud hut to the rear assisting in treating the wounded. He later fought at Sobraon.

INTERN TO ARCHIVIST IN 3 YEARS

In August 2014 a young graduate approached Simon Cook, our Manager Curator hoping to gain employment or experience in a military museum. That person concerned was Richard Joyner, a First Class Honours graduate in War Studies from Kings College London University. At the time of Richard joining the team as an unpaid intern the level of enquiries the museum were receiving was on the increase, due en to the forthcoming centenary commemoration of the First World War. Chris Bacon was becoming slightly overwhelmed by the quantity of enquiries coming into the museum. Under Chris' guidance Richard learnt where to search for information to begin putting together answers to enquiries.

Whilst doing this type of research, Richard discovered information within the Regimental Archives of an ancestor who served with the Home Guard during the Second World War. This personal association created a further incentive, if one was needed, to broaden his expertise. Linked with his outstanding IT skills, Richard rapidly became an resolute and determined researcher providing enquirers with excellent results, largely because he was prepared to go that extra mile.

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On the last two Who Do You Think You Are? Exhibitions, held at the National Exhibition Centre, Richard formed a key element of the Museum's team in the AMOT's Military Checkpoint stand.

In gaining experience Richard was proving to himself that his chosen profession was definitely one linked to War Studies and Military Museums. His foray into applying for paid employment seemed to be initially unsuccessful, but nothing daunted he kept applying and in November this year, I sad to report we, as a museum lost the regular services of our intern, as he was successful in becoming the Archivist for The Royal Logistic Museum, in Deepcut.

Thank you Richard you have been a true Friend of the Museum



Richard beavering away on an enquiry at the Who Do You Think You Are Exhibition in 2016

SGT MCCULLOCH

He entered the battle together with his officer Lieutenant McNAIR, the only son of General McNAIR. Lieutenant McNAIR fell at the head of his company as they advanced. It was reported in a local paper the following year *"He knelt down beside his body under the hottest of the enemy's fire, and deliberately cut of a lock of hair, which he preserved to console the sorrowing relatives - an affecting proof of intrepidity and thoughtful tenderness of feeling, as well as of the estimation in which our lamented young townsman was held by the soldiers under his command"* - Galloway Advertiser.

NOTE. It was highly unlikely that the Sergeant had time to conduct this act whilst under fire. We believe it was carried out when the bodies were later recovered and then buried.

DISCOVERY OF PORTION OF 62ND COLOUR CARRIED AT FEROZESHAH

Recently enquiries were dealt with by the archive team at the Wardrobe in relation to a Sergeant DRING, who was part of the 62nd [Wiltshire] Regiments colour party at the Battle of Ferozeshah, 1845. This triggered off a sequence of events that led to three Redcoats/Volunteer members Richard Joyner, Michael Cornwell and Martin McIntyre going to visit Sir William HANHAM at his country house in Dorset. As a result of the enquiries carried out it was ascertained that Sir William HANHAM was a descendant of Lieutenant John HANHAM who fought in the Battle of Ferozeshah. He fought on the 1st day with the 9th Regiment and was transferred to the 62nd the following day due to the loss of officers in the 62nd. There-

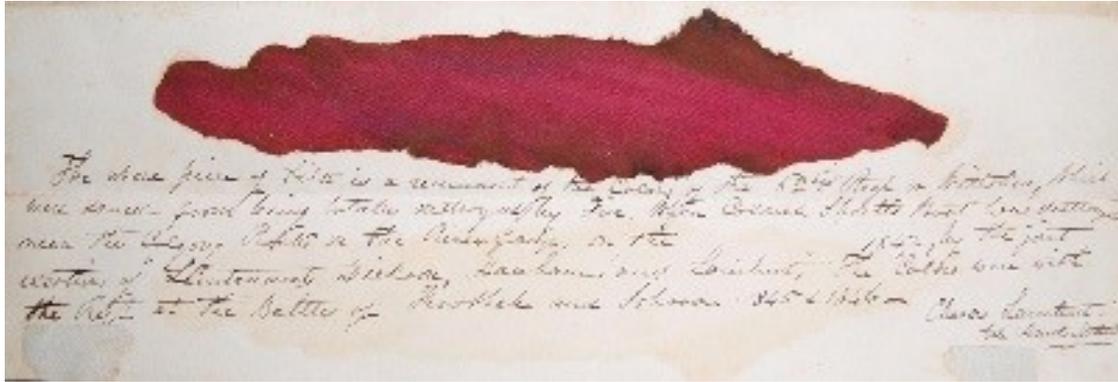


after he remained in the 62nd, fighting at Sobraon. He was present on the Regimental boats that travelled along the Ganges in 1847 when the boats they were travelling in caught fire and the Colours ended up damaged by fire and lost in the river. He was one of two officers who dived into the river in an attempt to save them. To all intents and purposes the Colours were lost. He remained with the Regiment and on its return to England was one of the ten Junior Officers placed on half pay as the Battalion was on a reduced strength on return to the UK. After petitioning the Duke Of Wellington, as Commander in Chief, he was granted full pay as Adjutant of the 11th Training Depot in Preston. Unfortunately he came to an untimely end as he was murdered together with the CO, by a Private Patrick McCaffrey, who was later hanged.

During the visit to Dorset it was clear Sir William HANHAM had unearthed from a family trunk a goldmine of material of major interest in our Regiments history.

Continued on next page

He laid out items relating to and collected by Lieutenant HANHAM, such as Sikh weapons, medals, campaign items, documentation, paintings and most importantly a slip of red silk attached to a hand written note that read.....



'The above piece of silk is a [portion] of the Colours of the 62nd Regt, or Wiltshire which were saved from being totally destroyed by fire, after Colonel Shortt's boat was destroyed near the..... on the River Ganges on the1847, by the joint exertions of Lieutenants Dickson, Hanham.....The Colours were with the Regt at the Battles of Ferozeshah and Sobraon, 1845 & 1846'.

Charles Lieutenant Late Hants Militia [Formerly 62nd Regt



Captain John Hanham's Medal depicting the Bars for Sobraon and Ferozeshuhur and his tomb in the cemetery at Dean Court, Dorset

POSSIBLE FUTURE BOOK PUBLICATION CONCERNING THE COLOURS OF THE REGIMENTS

Now that the our antecedent Regiments are part of the Rifles, Colours are no longer carried. Whereas our antecedent Regiments carried their Battle Honours on their Colours, the Rifles carry their Battle Honours (which include many of ours) on the Belt badge, be that the belt worn by the Riflemen or the Cross Belt badge worn by the Officers, Warrant Officers and Senior Non Commissioned Officers.

The Trustees have therefore decided to produce a small publication regarding the history, whereabouts and condition of our antecedent Regiments' Colours. The task of finding the evidence is diligently being pursued by that ever faithful sleuth Martin McIntyre. One Colour of the 66th has already been located, and we are aware of a number being 'missing'. We hope to provide a fuller picture in the next issue. But in the meantime readers may be able to help, whereas 1 Wessex Colours are in Warminster (Hythe Mess), where are 2 Wessex Colours? Does anyone with an intimate knowledge of Brock Barracks recall seeing the Colours of the Royal Berkshire Militia? Please contact Mac if you have any information.

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 Martin McIntyre or Michael Cornwell.

Mac's email address is

Researcher2@thewardrobe.org.uk

Michael's email address is

Researcher3@thewardrobe.org.uk

Museum's Facebook :

See the foot of this main page.

The Society of Friends of
The Rifles, Berkshire &
Wiltshire Museum,

The Wardrobe

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Members will be aware that to commemorate the 100 year of the last year of the Great War, as the First World War was originally known, our Chairman, Nigel Walker had been seeking to undertake a Battlefield tour of the Western Front, concentrating on those areas pertinent to the Royal Berkshire Regiment and the Wiltshire Regiment.

We are glad to announce that sufficient interest has been secured for the tour to go ahead and will take place during the week 10—14 September 2018.

Those of us who have had the opportunity of talking to Andy Steele are confident that we have a guide who will ensure that we have an enjoyable and fruitful tour as well as having a convivial time.

There is still plenty of time to register interest to attend this Battlefield Tour event, so if you would like to enquire please do so by early February and we will be able to include you on the tour.

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 on to friends relations etc. Application forms to become members can be found on :

www.thewardrobe.org.uk

VOLUNTEERS

Rita Venus is the latest Regimental member to join Nigel Walker and John Simmons, on the Front of House desk and they add the Regimental flavour when greeting visitors. They all enjoy the chance to interact with customers and to show off our marvellous museum. However if you would prefer to work behind the scene there are opportunities to provide volunteer assistance for however long you wish to give. So why not follow their example and become a Museum Volunteer. If you live within commuting distance of Salisbury, have a skill or interest in militaria or archive or conservation try contacting Carina Taylor our Assistant Curator on 01722 419419.

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/>