



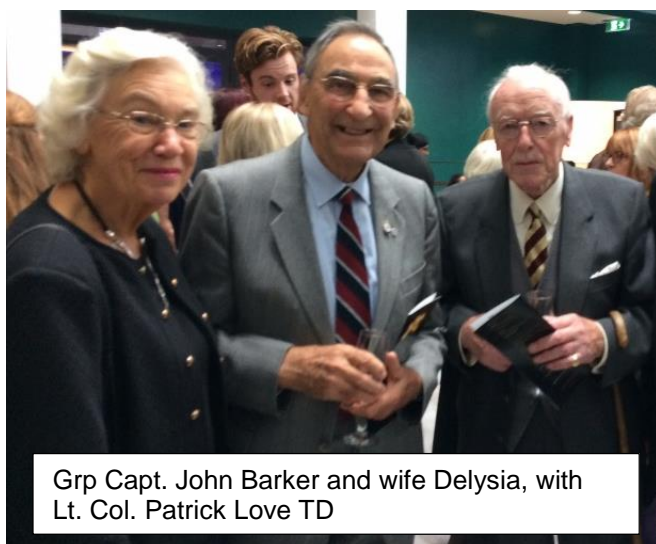
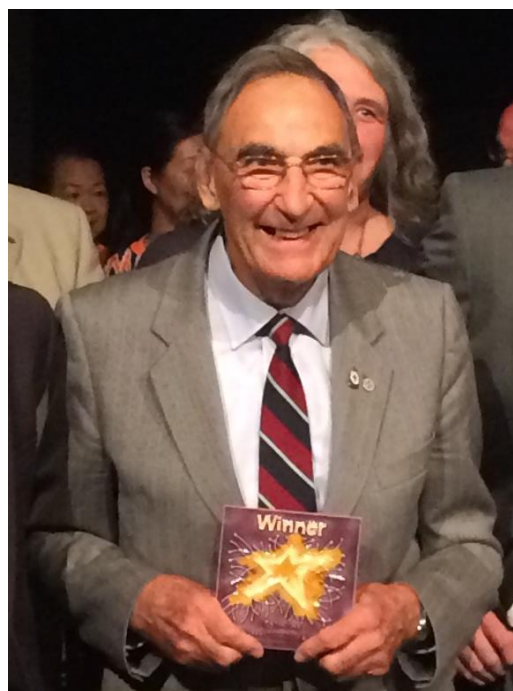
Newsletter

No. 16, September 2018

A Worthy Winner

The Mercian Regiment Museum is celebrating after one of its longest-serving volunteers won the Collections Award at last night's West Midlands Volunteer Awards. Group Captain (Ret'd) John Barker, of Malvern, has shown tremendous commitment and achievement in his research into the Museum's medals collection, having started on the project an incredible 31 years ago!

The West Midlands Volunteer Awards were established to recognise and reward the invaluable work and significant contribution made by volunteers to the museum sector. The Mercian Regiment Museum, based in Worcester, was thrilled at the opportunity to shine a light on two of its amazing team of volunteers. Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Patrick Love was also nominated for his astounding volume of research and long-service to the Museum. The Awards ceremony took place in the Birmingham Hippodrome, where guests from across the region, were treated to dinner, drinks and entertainment.



Grp Capt. John Barker and wife Delysia, with Lt. Col. Patrick Love TD

John Barker is an extremely worthy winner – his incredible dedication amounting to 31 years of service to the Museum, has ensured that there is now a comprehensive record of all 3005 medals in the Museum's collection. His research has enabled biographical information and pictures to be added to the display of the medals, greatly improving the experience and understanding of our visitors. This resource is of incalculable value to the museum staff but also to the wider public.

The Museum relies heavily on the significant contribution of its volunteers. We are so very pleased to highlight, not only the achievements of John and Pat, but the work of all our volunteers in striving towards making the Museum as successful as it can be.

It was a hugely successful evening for the Museum and we welcome the opportunity again to say a big thank you!

From the Curator's Desk



Volunteers are the lifeblood of most, small, museums and the Mercian Regiment Museum (Worcestershire) is no exception. Once more, I would like to say a big thank you to our administrator Pamela and our dedicated team of volunteers for all their hard work and support. They are currently working across the full spectrum of museum activities, including research, collections care and learning. So far this year, we have catalogued and photographed over 546 objects. The overall collection now stands at 12730 items. Thanks to the dedication of our volunteers the majority of the loose photographic prints have been sorted, boxed, listed and scanned.

This work contributed towards the completion of our retrospective documentation action plan which led to the award of Full accreditation status for the Museum by Arts Council England on 10th May 2018.

The Museum has continued to play its part in the Worcestershire World War 100 commemorations. Our summer exhibition in the Worcestershire Soldier Gallery entitled: "The Kaiserschlacht: The German Spring Offensive of 1918", ran from 21st March to 20th July 2018 and was well received being seen by over 6000 visitors. The museum has also taken part in "Worcestershire Remembers" - a showcase of activity commemorating the Centenary of the First World War held in the Guildhall, Worcester, on 4th August, 2018 on the 104th anniversary of the outbreak of War. It was opened by Sir Peter Luff, Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund. Our final exhibition to mark the centenary of the end of the War will be: "One man's war" - the service Private William Hadley of Dudley.

Editorial



We apologise for the late arrival of this issue but we wished to await the results of the West Midlands Volunteer Awards in case our two nominees were featured. We were delighted to learn that both were shortlisted and one came out as winner of the Collections category. We offer our warmest congratulations to them both.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift and we thought it was time to recognise the contribution to regimental life by those who 'follow the drum'. We therefore include an article written fifty years after the event by Mrs Ruth Durrant BEM, describing domestic aspects of life in Belize in 1948.

Also featured is an extract from a letter we were fortunate to receive recently written in 1917 by Harry Ash describing his experience during a battle in France. This is one of the best personal accounts we have of an incident on active service.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue. BUT we are very aware that the articles in our newsletters are based almost exclusively on material from the archives. To give variety and to contribute new material to the archives, without which it will be impossible to mount displays on more recent activities, we need personal accounts by those who served on operations and deployments in more recent periods, N Ireland, Bosnia and, in particular, Afghanistan. Can you help?

My Grandfather's Story

Mark Rogers recently won a prize in a Sunday Times competition to write this article of no more than 500 words on a relative's WW1 experience.

Its August 1914, and Lewis Rogers, together with his brother Bertie, enlists in the Worcestershire Regiment and they are posted to France in March 1915. The two of them try to look out for each other in the trenches. August comes and Bertie is dead. The hardest part for Lewis is telling his mother; it is bad enough looking after yourself let alone your brother.

The war grinds on. Lewis becomes a Lewis gunner, maybe captivated by a gun that bore his own name, and is promoted to corporal. The Battle of the Somme begins and Lewis is led in an attack on Contalmaison by Lt James who had won the VC in Gallipoli. After bitter fighting Lt James says *"Come on boys, we'll have one more go"*. But to no avail as they had to retire. 350 men were lost that day. Another day and Lewis is up in a salient when a Major from the engineers comes forward wanting to look over the parapet *"We told him not to look. I told him I shouldn't look over there sir, you'll be a big target. He said I shan't be a second. He was a second too long though"*. He was shot through the head and killed.

Now it is April 1917. An attack on the German front line. *"There was 84 of us went up along with the gunners and there was 16 of us come back. It was the first time that even the gunners got a clout"*. 280 men were casualties that day. 21st March 1918 and the German army launch their Spring Offensive. The Worcesters are hastily thrown into the line to stem their advance and are defending a river crossing. Lewis watches

Captain Roberts *"He was throwing bombs over a canal bridge into Old Jerry and there was so many surrendered to him. He got the VC."*

May 1918 and the battle of the Aisne. Finally, Lewis' luck runs out and he is shot in the ankle. He ends up in a French hospital where the doctor is obliged to remove the bullet without anaesthetic. Lewis is held down by 4 strong men whilst the job is done.

So now he is back in England having made the promise to himself *"The boat hasn't been built yet that will get me back across the channel to France"*. When passed fit to return he goes out to play football and kicks the ball hard enough to reopen his wound. He never goes back.

Lewis was my grandfather. The words are his own from a recording I made the year before he died. I asked him whether he ever thought about the many men he must have killed. His reply *"I suppose I did. You couldn't miss 'em. It was like shooting into a wall of cattle"*.

He was always reluctant to tell the story of his war. As he once said to my father, *"If you were there, you wouldn't want to talk about it."*



17973 Pte.
Bertie Rogers,
1st Btn. Worc.
Regt. KIA
29/08/15



17975 Cpl Lewis Rogers
1st Btn. Worc. Regt.

The Berlin Airlift

Mrs Ruth Durrant BEM, who died recently a few weeks short of her 100th birthday, wrote this in 1998, 50 years after the event.

In January 1948 the Battalion moved up to Berlin from Lüneburg. Everyone had to go by rail as the Russians had already closed the roads. The barracks were in Berlin/Kladow and we were housed nearby (next door to the Tuckeys) in a large, rather grand house whose gardens stretched down to the lake (Wann See – where we sailed with Chota Horton and Desmond Haslehurst). Somewhere in this area was the site of the Wannsee Conference on the Final Solution of the Jewish Question. This was chaired by Herdrich on 20 Jan 1942. We were not aware of this piece of Nazi history at the time. It may have been quite ironic that this was the chosen site for the conference, if it is true, and I think it is, that these beautiful imposing houses on the lakeside belonged to rich Jews.

Bob and I had the ground-floor flat of our house and the Jefferies were on the first floor, both the batmen being at the top of the house. We had a field telephone fixed up in our kitchen to connect us with Bob's batman (Victor Lloyd who later, on Bob's recommendation was the major domo in General Gale's household in Rhine Army). Our household, besides Victor, consisted of Gerda Haf Franke, our German maid who had insisted on coming up from Lüneburg with us, ourselves and our baby, Peter, born 8 weeks before the airlift started on 26 June 1948.



Field Marshall Montgomery inspecting Band C/Sgt Morgan MM in Berlin.

Bob was adjutant, a very busy and responsible position in such a situation and our flat was often the scene of small conferences during the night and of the issuing of orders, some of which I typed. All our supplies were flown in to Gatow airport, which was nearby. It was difficult to comprehend that everything, every morsel of food, every drop of gin, every knob of coke could only reach us in this way. To say that we were impressed is somewhat of an understatement! Planes came in every 1½ minutes. They were, I

think, mostly Dakotas and Yorks, and Sunderland sea planes. General Montgomery came to visit the Battalion and at the parade in his honour, orders had to be timed to fit in with the noise of the planes.

We did shopping in the Naafi to supplement the rations we received from the Quartermaster. Despite rationing, these included much more white bread than needed, so I used to give the surplus to our gardener, Herr Lange. He was part of the civilian labour employed as gardeners, stokers and similar. Part of their pay was a meal in the barracks and when they

left there was often a spot check to see if they were carrying any contraband – black marketeering was rife: there was literally nothing you couldn't obtain in exchange for cigarettes, chocolate or cocoa. One day when Herr Lange was thus checked, he was found to be carrying a couple of white loaves. He said he had been given them by me (correct) in a deal for a watch (not correct). I had to tell him I couldn't give him any more.

As we were on the ground floor of the house, we kept the key to the cellar and the boilerman picked it up from us. (The boiler was vast). One evening when he came to stoke, this man asked me why we British bothered to share food and fuel with the Berliners. He assured me that if the position were reversed and the victorious Germans were beleaguered in London, they would not let us have any of their supplies. I felt that if he needed to ask such a question, he certainly would not understand the answer.



Aircraft lined up at Gatow Airport, Berlin.

I don't remember if it was done formally, or indeed how it was done, but we wives knew we did not have to stay in Berlin but that our continued presence, apparently leading normal lives, might make some sort of impression on the Russians and show our morale was good.

I asked Tuke Tuckey what arrangements existed to get the women and children out in the event of, as we said, the balloon going up. (We knew of course that all military personnel would assemble in the barracks). He seemed quite shocked and asked didn't I know we were "but pawns in the game"? At this stage Bob and I decided to consult with those of our friends who had been POWs to see what advice they might have for me. This was: not to try to get out of Berlin for at least a week, but to lie low until the Russians had – inevitably – reduced their initial vigilance. But where? Then the German woman who worked for the Jeffs and was a friend of Gerda, offered to put Peter and me up for a week. She (Frau Schiffer) said my German could fool a Russian and the baby could be relied on not to speak! But I would have to be sure to remove all labels from our clothing. My plan after this was to thumb a lift on one of the coal barges which plied between Hamburg and our lake. Fortunately, all these rather melodramatic plans were never necessary and we all three flew out to Bückeburg on 11 February 1949.

We went to the Officers' Club every Saturday and had a great time. Thanks to the awful Pomme dried potatoes, Bob said he suffered from the sort of indigestion which made the application of brandy quite essential! We were young and (possibly) mentally healthy so we were able not to dwell on our situation. It was really rather like living in London during the Blitz: we didn't analyse things then either.

Food & Drink in the 1890s

This is the third and final extract from articles written by Colonel FP Dunlop CBE DSO based on his experiences as a soldier in Malta, and originally published in FIRM in 1937-8.

When you had drawn your four bob a week, or even your five bob, the question arose how were you to make it last seven days? This depended on whether you were a thirsty old soldier or a hungry recruit.

The army drank hard, chiefly because it wasn't very well fed, and those who had a thirst the night before pay day often 'flamped their kit' at bargain prices. As you sat pipeclaying your straps and thinking of Mother, a furtive figure with an expensive nose would slink in from the verandah. From under his greatcoat he would produce a pair of trousers, a pair of boots, a shirt, a pair of socks. *"Give me summat for this; the price of a can (a gallon), a half can, a pot, a pint."* So the fellow whose company had been paid that day might acquire a pair of socks for the price of a pink, and that was twopence. The store price was eightpence halfpenny.

In order not to overcrowd the canteen or the guardroom, the eight companies were paid on different days. Old soldiers made up 'boozing schools' of men from different companies, so that there was always someone to pay for a gallon. They sat around and drank from the same can, with all the solemnity of passing a loving cup at a Lord Mayor's banquet. First you wiped your 'Old Bill' moustaches then you took the can in both hands and drank deep, but not too deep.



Then you put it down, wiped your moustaches again, and pushed it round clockwise to the next fellow. A pause when the can got back to the purchaser, and then, after a little lurid conversation, round it went again.

Now that beer is sold by the glass, and nobody drinks from another's pot, you may not twig the point of Kipling's lines:

*"I've drunk his beer a score of times' said files-on-parade,
'E's drinking bitter beer alone,' the Colour Serjeant said."*

For this is the tale of Danny Deever, who was to hang; and to drink alone was the sign of an outcast, in the old Queen's days.

Each company ran its own messing and each barrack room formed a separate mess. The ration was a pound of bread and three-quarters of a pound of meat. The married families' ration was cut off the company's ration and carried round by the company orderly man. The ration was three quarters for a wife, half for a child over nine, quarter for a child over two and nothing for an infant. Families were large, so by the time you had cut three or four pounds off the juicy end, the bachelors' portion of scrag had gone up. The principal ration in

Malta was goat, which smelt rather worse dead than alive. There was also a very frequent turnover of bully and biscuit from the siege rations stored in the vaults under Floriana parade ground. The bully was in seven pound tins, and the biscuit came out of casks - round biscuits as hard as flints, which had to be broken by a boot heel or bed leg. The modern biscuit is a sponge cake by comparison.

Messing by small companies, sub-divided into messes of twelve to fourteen men, was not economical. Work it out for yourself, say eighty threepences a day equals one-pound sterling. That does not cover the cost of tea, sugar and milk, of potatoes and vegetables, and of an ounce of butter a head. I never heard of margarine in those days, but perhaps we were eating it without knowing. However, a canteen grant of eighteen pence a man a month, and swill money, made up the deficit and left enough for "duff" two days a week, a rice pudding on Thursday and spotted dog on Sunday. Swill, or 'mungy', was collected by Maltees after dinner and emptied into an old Soyer stove at the barrack gate, brown stew, curried stew, beef bone, goat bones, lobsouse of bully and biscuit. They stirred it well and hotted it up; and then passing workmen paid a penny to scoop out as much as one hand would hold. The larger the hand, the more you got; it did not seem to matter that the hands were dirty and that most of the mungy had already been in somebody else's mouth.

The system of small messes had other difficulties. Ration strengths would be made up on Monday to reach the ASC on Tuesday, for rations to be drawn on Wednesday and issued at 7 am on Thursday. At breakfast time each man collared his own half loaf, ate most of it and put the rest on his shelf until tea time. But suppose a man had been marked for discharge from hospital on Tuesday, and had rejoined his company on Wednesday evening, there would be no bread for him. If he had enough service to make a noise, the orderly corporal might discover a pound ordered for someone who had gone to hospital the day before, or the orderly officer might tell the orderly corporal to buy a pound at the canteen and charge it to the mess book. If he was a quiet sort of chap, he would be told it was his own fault for having been in hospital; but most messmates would cut a corner off their precious pound and give it to him. Twelve ounces of butter were easily divided into thirteen and everybody would get rather less than half a bowl of tea. Bowls got to be scarce, and then a man drank from his mess tin, unless he was clever enough to share somebody else's and keep his own for kit inspection. Mugs were unknown outside hospitals. There was one plate a man, but you did not use them at breakfast, or what would be the good of scrubbing tables after every meal?

So there you were. Bread and scrape for breakfast, dry bread for tea. How were you going to improve matters, with your four or five bob to last seven days?

There was the regimental canteen – a large beer bar and a small grocery bar. Some people ran it themselves; others let it to a contractor. Then there was a supper bar, let to a Maltee. Two fried eggs from the supper bar for breakfast – twopence; a pennyworth of jam on a piece of brown paper for tea; a pennorth of bread, a pennorth of cheese and a pint of beer for supper. Total eightpence which didn't leave much for brass paste, blanco, replacement of necessaries, and a joy ride to Valetta. So it could not be done every day. You could save fourpence by having tea and a wad at the Soldiers' Home for supper; that would let you buy a helmetfull of grapes or oranges – price one penny – on a route march. But generally speaking you lived for four days and starved for three, unless you sold your kit or borrowed "two for three" till pay day, and that only made it worse later on.

"Join the army and see life" indeed! When the milk in your tea came straight from a dusty goat, and your fruit came from the fly-blown basket of a wayside hawker, it wasn't always life that stared you in the face.

Might He Have Progressed Further?

We are grateful to David Hallmark for providing this article which, though the subject was widely reported in the national press at the time, is not recorded in the museum archive.

Philip Graves Morris was commissioned from Sandhurst into the Worcestershire Regiment in 1927. He spent the next ten years in the 2nd Battalion in BAOR, Malta where he acted as ADC to the Governor and China where he was adjutant of the Legation Guard in Peking. He then joined the 1st Battalion in Aldershot. From there he went to Palestine as Intelligence Officer, where he was Mentioned in Despatches, before moving to Sudan on the outbreak of war, and into Eritrea in January 1941 where he was awarded the MC as a company commander at the battle of Gogni, before being wounded at the battle of Keren in May. After recovering and being posted to Ceylon he was in 1944 appointed CO of the 7th York and Lancaster Regiment which formed Column 84 in the second Chindit expedition in Burma.



Brigadier P H Graves Morris DSO MC

Major General Orde Wingate, an unconventional soldier, had formed the Chindits to operate behind Japanese lines in Burma and, after the success of the first expedition, the Chindits were expanded and a second expedition planned. During the briefing of column commanders for this Wingate left them in no doubt that in the remote and isolated places they would be, it was they and they alone, who would be responsible for their men and their discipline, and that in these circumstances the Army Act and Kings Regulations could not prevail, that commanders had absolute discretion to decide what punishments should be awarded, and that he would support them in whatever they decided.

During the expedition Column 84 endured difficult terrain, appalling weather, the hazards of mosquitos, typhus and leeches, while crossing rivers, demolishing an important railway bridge and capturing a pivotal hill, both of which were strongly defended. During these operations the columns relied heavily on parachute drops of rations and supplies and, because these were often irregular and sometimes the men were short of food, one of the standing orders stipulated that anyone recovering a load dropped by parachute should deliver it unopened to those responsible for opening it and distributing the contents. This was designed to prevent individuals helping themselves to food which should have been shared with their comrades.

Following one of these drops a soldier, Private Dexter, was charged and pleaded guilty to opening one of the loads dropped and taking some chocolate and oranges from it. He should have been sentenced to 28 days field punishment but this was impractical in the circumstances, so the column commander, with Dexter's written permission, ordered the regimental sergeant major to administer twelve strokes on his clothed buttocks with a bamboo cane.

Acting Lieutenant Colonel Graves-Morris was awarded the DSO on successful completion of the operation: the citation stressed the high quality of his leadership and personal example. He reverted to his substantive rank of major at the end of the war.

After the war Dexter, by now a civilian, idly mentioned he had been beaten while recounting his wartime experiences in a pub. One of his listeners told him such a punishment was contrary to the Army Act, and undertook to report the matter to his local MP. The MP duly tabled a question in the House of Commons and the Secretary of State for War responded by initiating an inquiry into the matter. As a result Major Graves Morris was court-martialled charged with ordering an illegal punishment. He pleaded not guilty and, although he could not call Wingate as a witness because he had been killed in a plane crash during the war, several of his fellow Chindit column commanders agreed to support him by confirming the orders they had received.



Formation sign of the 3rd Indian Infantry Division, the Chindits.

While the court martial was taking place the international war crime tribunals prosecuting German and Japanese officers were also being held, and most of the defendants were pleading that they were merely following the orders of their superiors. This was therefore a sensitive time for a British army officer to be entering a similar plea. He was nevertheless acquitted.

This verdict therefore presented the War Secretary with the difficult problem of how to respond to the question raised by Dexter's MP, particularly as the House of Commons contained many lawyers. His statement to the House read:

"No further action is to be taken on the allegation and court martial proceedings of the commanding officer in Burma. General Wingate had authorised the imposition of

flogging and other punishments not sanctioned by Parliament. General Wingate undoubtedly exceeded his powers.... but in so far as the punishments could be applied at all they would have been less exacting than the hardships suffered daily by all members of the column. The system of summary punishment that was devised was known throughout the Force, was generally accepted by the men under command, and was inflicted only with the consent of the culprit. Communications were such that in any event it would have been impractical for detailed orders on discipline to have been issued if the Campaign was to proceed. I have, therefore, concluded that no useful purpose will be served in pursuing the questions of the responsibility of the individuals for what took place. War is desperate and that is the only excuse I have to offer for a departure from the literal interpretation of King's Regulations".

Major Graves Morris' career suffered no early setback as a result of this case. He was duly promoted to lieutenant colonel, commanded the 1st Battalion during the Malaya Emergency and was subsequently promoted to colonel and then to brigadier. Nevertheless, he was left to wonder in retirement whether, if he had not been court-martialled, he might have progressed further.

A Letter from Harry Ash

Mrs Taylor of Fernhill Heath, Worcester recently found a letter written by a soldier in WW1 and took it to BBC Hereford and Worcester who contacted the museum. After establishing that it had been written by a Harry Ash, our administrator, Pamela Langford, checked the archives and found that his record had been researched. In the meantime, BBC TV Midlands Today had also expressed interest in the story so Mrs Taylor was invited to the museum where the BBC filmed and recorded a member of the museum telling her about the author of the letter who it transpired was her uncle. The letter, together with two postcards and a photograph of Ash's daughter were subsequently donated to the museum.



Medals of WO2 Henry 'Harry' Ash

The letter, dated 6th March 1917, from the then Sgt Ash to his sister described in graphic terms his experience during an attack by his battalion. It reads in part:

"For once in a while, I think I can fill a letter with news.

The reason, is that we paid Fritz an early morning visit a day or two ago, and I'm going to tell you all about it.

At a certain signal on the eventful morning, our artillery opened a terrible bombardment on the German trenches and our battalion advanced, myself and the Signallers following with the telephone.

In a very few minutes we'd taken the first line, and moving onto the next which was also taken the battalion advanced towards the third, not with the intention of taking it, but keeping Fritz busy while the second and first lines were consolidated. When I got to the second line I moved towards a dugout, with the intention of going down and fixing up the telephone.

When I was within 10 yards of the dugout, a German surprised me by popping up and firing a revolver at me. He fired five shots before I could get under cover. Fortunately for me, he missed each time. He made a dash for it but one of the Signallers shot him before he got many yards.

By this time, other Germans were coming out of other dugouts, they were full of fight and we were now ready for them. For about half an hour we had a

jolly good scrap, and managed to shoot the 14 who had rushed out of the dugouts.

We then made another attempt to get in the dugout but still Fritz objected; meeting us with another revolver shot. By this time, we'd got some hand grenades, fine arguments in a scrap! But still, Fritz would not surrender.

When we had thrown four bombs down the dugout we made another attempt, this time there was no opposition and we got in. We were surprised to find it was a German telephone dugout, so the English and German signallers had a nice little scrap all on our own. We found four dead, and one the corporal had wounded.

I had a good look around to see how my men had fared, and was surprised to find we had not had a casualty. Of course we found plenty of souvenirs, most of which I have handed in as they may prove useful to the powers that be. This is a bit of German note paper, the Germans had a couple of tries to get the trenches back, but he didn't manage it.

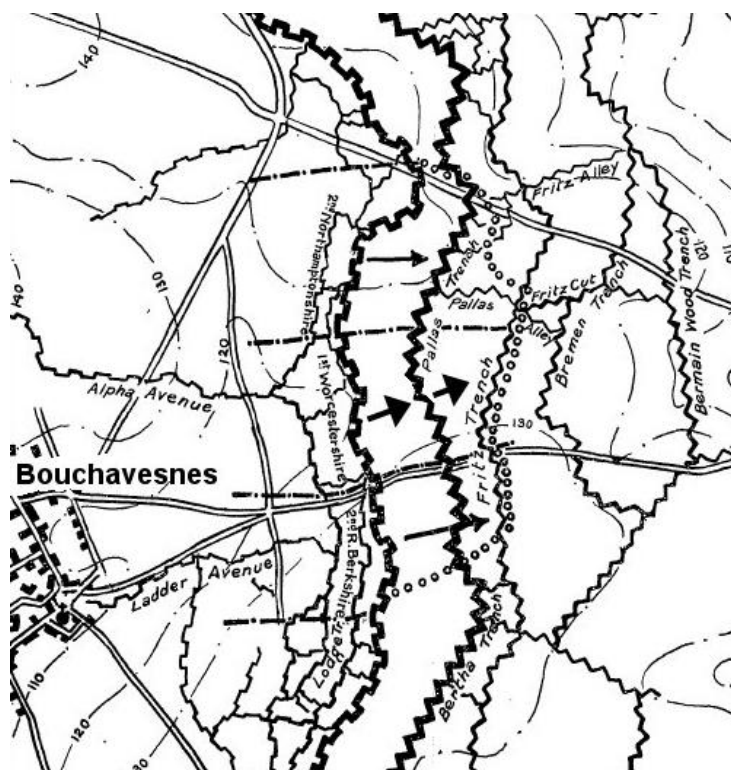
We're now back in reserve, I can safely say that was the most exciting half hour I have had! If anyone ever tells you Germans are cowards and won't fight back, you send them to me.

These were Saxons- and I will give them their due, they were brave men.

Once more I have come out of action without a scratch. I feel sure I shall see the finish of this war and still be going strong”.

Stacke's history indicates this was almost certainly an attack by the 1st Battalion at Bouchavesnes on 4th March 1917 where the CO, Lt Col Grogan, earned his first DSO. It was a hard-fought battle in which the battalion suffered 240 casualties mainly from artillery fire.

Harry Ash, a native of Worcester, enlisted in 1909 and served in Egypt with the 1st Battalion before landing in France in November 1914. He was a sergeant when he wrote the letter, was awarded the MM in 1918 and served after the war in India and China. He was in the battalion pistol team which won the Connaught Cup in 1931 shortly before his discharge in 1931 as a WO2. He served in the Home Guard in WW2.



Recent Events

21 Friends and others visited the newly refurbished National Army Museum on 12 September. We were briefed on arrival on the new thematic layout and then had time to tour the galleries before lunch. In the afternoon a conducted tour was arranged of the temporary Special Forces exhibition while some of the ladies took the opportunity to do some shopping. It was voted a success and several people suggested more such visits should be arranged.

As part of Heritage Month in September the Friends conducted a series of free tours of the Regimental Gallery in Worcester City Museum, Foregate Street.

Forthcoming Events, September 2018 – January 2019

Further general talks in the gallery lasting 45 minutes are scheduled for **1130 hours on Thursdays 18 October and 15 November***. Cost £2 per head, minimum charge £15, free for Friends.

Gallery tours can also be arranged on other days for groups of up to 12 on request*, either general tours or the following specialist subjects, **Silver, medals or pictures**. Cost as above.

1900 hours Wednesday 24 October* Friends talk by Lt Col Bill Temminck BEM on his tour with BRIXMIS. This organisation, based in Berlin during the Cold War, was tasked with patrolling East Germany to monitor Warsaw Pact troop movements to ensure they were not preparing to attack the West. It was a dangerous assignment which one commander told new arrivals "When you cross that bridge (into East Germany) you are at war".

1200 hours Wednesday 30 January Friends talk followed by buffet lunch at Dancox House. Further details to follow.

*To book these please email admin-mercianregimentmuseum@btconnect.com or ring 01905 721982 The talk on BRIXMIS is free to Friends but others are requested to give a donation on arrival. Entry to Dancox House for the BRIXMIS lecture is through the front door opposite ASDA, not through the gate to the car park. This door will be open at 1830 hours.

Other local events of potential interest

1900-2030 hours Monday 29 October lecture in the Guildhall, Worcester by the author Charles Spencer about his book 'To Catch a King' about the escape of the future King Charles II following the Battle of Worcester in 1651 using a network of local hiding places. Tickets £20 at the door include drinks and nibbles.

1130 hours Thursday 8 November lecture in St Martin's Church, the Cornmarket, Worcester by Justin Maclejewski, Director of the National Army Museum, "Let's talk about war". Entry is free and there is no need to book.

This newsletter is published by the Friends of *The Mercian Regiment Museum (Worcestershire)*, registered charity no. 276510. Neither the whole newsletter nor extracts from it may be published or posted on the internet without permission.

'The Worcestershire Soldier', The Mercian Regiment Museum (Worcestershire)

Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum, 40 Foregate St, Worcester, WR1 1DT.

Tel. 01905 25381. 10.30am – 4.30pm Mon-Sat (closed Sun and Bank Holidays)

"The Friends exists to help the museum to record, preserve and display the history and traditions of The Worcestershire Regiment, its predecessors and successors from 1694 to the present day including the deeds and sacrifices of those who have and are serving in it", to join, or for further information please email museummercian@btconnec.com or 01905 721982.