



Newsletter

No. 17, January 2019

From the Curator's Desk

In its wider community role, the Museum has continued to play a leading part not only in, the Heritage Lottery Funded partnership, Worcestershire World War 100 but also in the wider centenary commemorations in the county. We participated in the **Lord Lieutenant's County drumhead celebration** on the 15th September 2018 in Gheluveld Park, to mark the end of WWI. Our centenary activities were rounded off by responding to a request from the Vicar of the former garrison church of The Worcestershire Regiment, St James, Norton for a loan of World War I displays to mark the Armistice.



We have continued to receive enquiries from the general public about their ancestors who served with the Regiment in the First World War. Last year there were 78 research enquiries which generated £1430 income for the Museum. Most of the research for this and other areas of museum work are undertaken by our dedicated team of volunteers, to whom, as always I would like to express my deep gratitude.

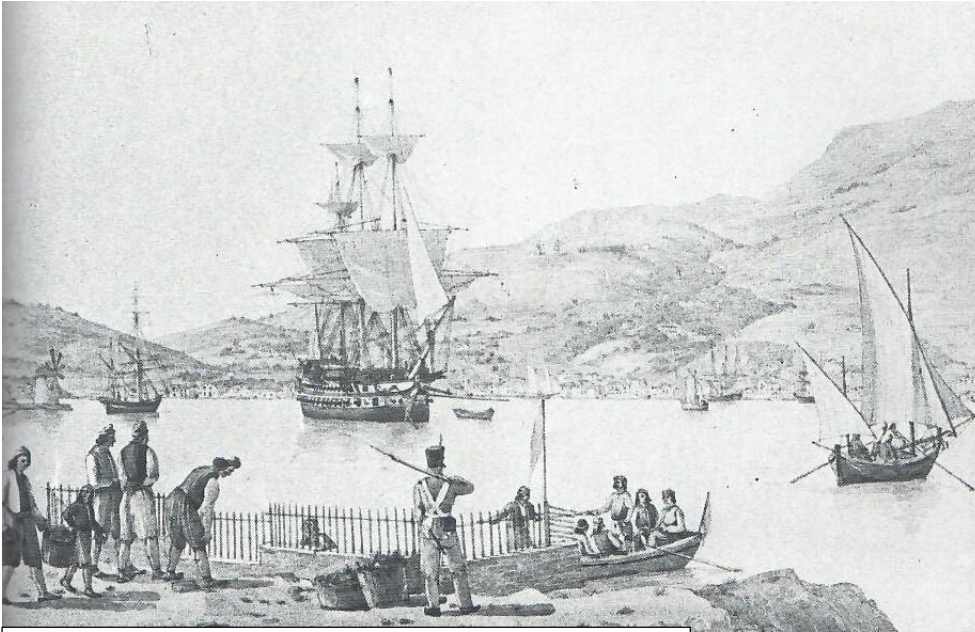


There are currently 27 volunteers (including the seven Trustees) and during the year they and the staff have catalogued and photographed over 331 objects from our backlog. An additional 741 new objects have been added to the collection meaning the overall collection now stands at 13053 items. Perhaps the most significant of these new acquisitions are a number of important WWI archives of material including the letters of Sgt E. A. Spinks, Pte W. R. Radbourne and the interwar archive of Sgt. A Deakin, as well as the gift of an officer's silver gilt belt plate of **the Loyal Worcestershire Volunteers**, presented by Lt. Col Pat Love TD. I would like to thank all those who have donated items to us in the past year and we would also like to thank everyone for their continued support. Should you wish to donate anything to the museum, or indeed volunteer, please get in touch with the Curator on 01905 721982 or email museummercian@btconnect.com.

Looking forward to this year's exhibition programme we will be commemorating the 7th Battalion's role in the Battle of Kohima April to June 1944 where the fighting was so intense it has been described as the Stalingrad of the East. In one sector, only the width of the town's tennis court separated the two sides. When on 18 April the relief forces of the British 2nd Division arrived, the defensive perimeter was reduced to a shell-shattered area only 350 metres square. Finally, we will also be celebrating the 1st Battalion's advance into north-west Europe in 1944, in particular Hill 112 and the crossing of the Seine at Vernon.

The 36th in the Ionian Islands

The Ionian Islands consist of seven islands off the west coast of Greece of which Corfu and Cephalonia are the principal ones. They had been controlled by Greece, Rome, Venice, the Ottoman Empire, Russia and France over the centuries, but by 1815, following occupation by British Forces in 1809 and the defeat of Napoleon, they became a British Protectorate. The 36th Regiment formed part of the garrison there on two occasions, in 1820-25 and 1847-51.



A British sentry at the harbour in Cerigo c.1820

The regiment landed in Zante in December 1820 and moved to Cephalonia in the following July leaving two companies on Zante. At one stage it also had a company on Cerigo. Because of the prevalence of sickness caused by the position of the barracks in Cephalonia on a marsh and the overcrowded accommodation it was moved to Corfu in November 1821.

Sickness in due course also broke out there, but was eventually brought under control by the efforts of the medical staff and the removal of some of the sick to Malta. By the time the regiment embarked for England in December 1825 it had the least number of sick amongst all the troops on the Ionian Islands.

After a long struggle Greece became independent of the Ottoman Empire in 1833 and before the 36th returned for their second tour the islanders had become frustrated by the slow pace of constitutional reform and Britain's unwillingness to cede the islands to Greece because of their perceived strategic value, particularly as a base for naval vessels. This resulted in much unrest which required the garrison to deploy to counter.

The 36th returned to the islands in 1847 at an increased strength of 67 sergeants, 25 drummers and 1200 rank and file split into two battalions. The second or reserve battalion commanded by Lt Col Charles Trollope landed in Corfu in January and the 1st under Lt Col Charles Ashmore disembarked at Argostoli in Cephalonia in December. Thereafter detachments were sent to four of the other islands either to garrison them or in pursuit of rebels.

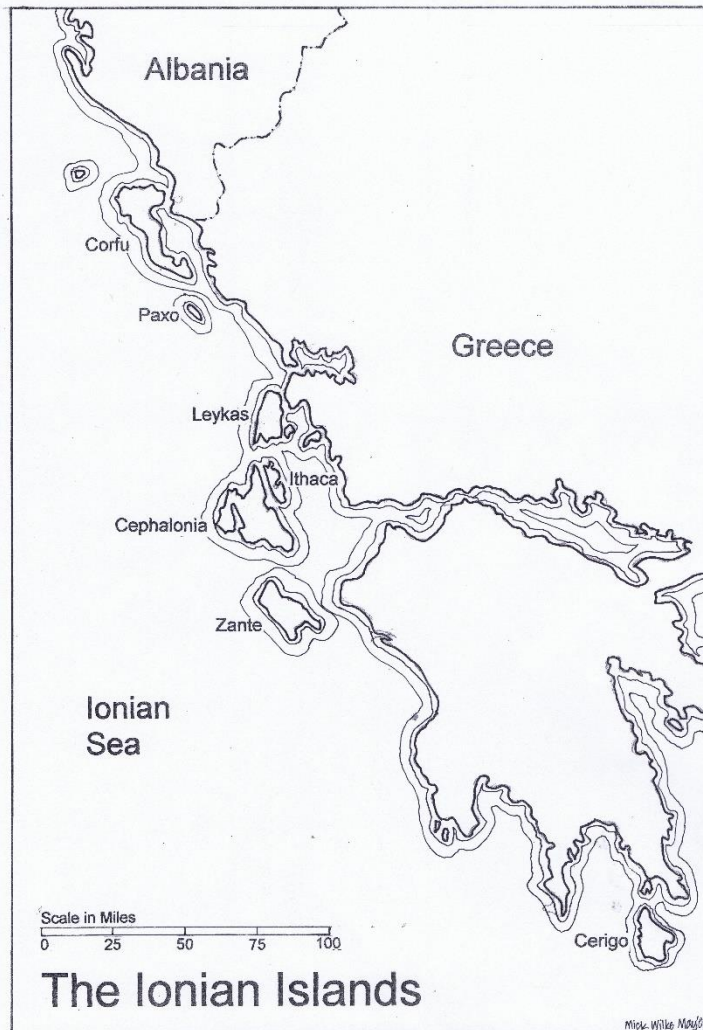
The two most serious incidents occurred on Cephalonia on 26 September 1848. In the first a detachment of 50 men under Major Lorenzo Rothe saved the public records at Lixouri from destruction by insurgents who fired on and slightly wounded two soldiers. The detachment returned fire wounding several of the insurgents and driving them from the town.

In the second incident an armed mob opened fire on the Resident's guard commanded by Sgt Luke Dunn at Argostoli. In his report Dunn wrote:

“ ---I there, of my own accord retired my guard in all eighteen men and myself till I came back to the Bridge when faced my men about. The mob fired and wounded Ptes Fox and Elsom. I then ordered my men to fire by files which they did bringing down five or six of the mob. The mob this time divided some on the Mole, some on the Bridge, and some up the street facing the Bridge. But then reinforced by the new guards of the Residency I called on those on the Bridge to endeavour, with the police to take the prisoner. All this time the mob kept firing at us and us at them. A man seized my bayonet while I was at the present and while scuffling with him he was shot by one of my men. About this period, I saw Pte Daniel McNamara shot dead and James

Liddell badly wounded. Pte James Madden had balls sent through his cap, his trousers and the arm of his coatee, his arm was slightly grazed. A ball passed through the arm of Lance Corporal Roberts. A few minutes after the arrival of the reinforcements the people retired carrying off their killed and wounded”.

In forwarding this account his Commanding Officer, Lt Col Trollope, noted that Pte William Elsom had died of his wounds and stated that *“the conduct of Sgt Dunn and of his men displayed the utmost coolness and courage”*.



But prior to the institution of the Distinguished Conduct Medal during the Crimean War in 1856 there was no means of rewarding soldiers for acts of gallantry. In 1829 the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal had been instituted for soldiers for meritorious conduct on discharge after twenty-one years' service, and in 1845 the Meritorious Service Medal (MSM) had been instituted for sergeants for 'distinguished or meritorious service'. So Major General Lord Seaton, the Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, proposed that Sgt Dunn should be awarded the MSM, and this was approved by the Queen on the recommendation of the Commander-in-Chief in November that year, together with an annuity of £20.

Sgt Dunn, who had been born in Kilkenny and enlisted in Dublin in 1837, was discharged in July 1849 *'in consequence of his gallant conduct in defending his post at Argostoli against a large body of armed insurgents and by the authority of the Commander-in-Chief'*. He died in Ireland in 1865.

Both battalions continued to act against the insurgents and for two months from August 1849 the tempo of operations increased when martial law was declared. This was controlled by Lt Col Trollope who subsequently received the thanks of Queen Victoria and the Legislature of the Islands and was voted a sword of honour by the inhabitants of Cephalonia.

Ptes McNamara and William Elsom were the only two men to die at the hands of the insurgents, but the islands remained an unhealthy place for the troops. A total of 91 soldiers died during the tour, most from cholera or fever, 47 of whom were born in Ireland. The memorials or graves of some of them and a few of their children are still visible in the British Cemetery outside Argostoli including that of Captain Arthur Onslow Creighton *'erected by his brother officers as a testimony of their esteem and regard'* and of Pte William Mills aged 19 *'taken by a shark while bathing at Corfu'*.

In April 1850 the regimental strength was reduced and the battalions were amalgamated and stationed in Corfu. In March 1851 four companies left for England to form the Depot under the command of Lt Col Trollope and the service companies left for the West Indies under Lt Col Ashmore.

Postscript. In May 1864 Britain, having concluded that the strategic and commercial value of the Islands no longer outweighed the disadvantages of staying, transferred the Islands to Greece but retained the use of the port at Corfu.

When the Guns Fell Silent (by Alan Cowpe)

When the fighting finally ended on the Western Front, most soldiers expected to go home at an early date; their job was finished, and they expected a return to normality. Demobilisation indeed began soon, but it was an enormous undertaking, which was too slow to satisfy many; and there was fierce resentment about the priority initially allocated to those with a job to go back to, who were usually those who had been the last to join. Discontent reached its peak with a riot by Canadian soldiers in which people actually died. The only Allied army which endured the war without mutiny or collapse came closest to it in peace time.

But there remained much for the armed forces to do, even as they reconstituted themselves. The armistice terms committed the Allies to occupy the Rhineland; there was the possibility (admittedly unlikely) of a German resurgence; there was the recovery of POWs in Germany; the Navy had to take possession of the best part of the German Navy and maintain the blockade until the peace terms were finalised; almost all of the Middle East, conquered during the war, now had to be governed; and there was political and social upheaval on a heroic scale in central and eastern Europe, from which it was not possible for the victors to be insulated.

In the event, revolutionary activity in Germany removed the threat from there; the POWs were released speedily by a country which was no longer capable of looking after them; the German Navy scuttled itself; and there was at least for a time employment for the soldiers who were soon being demobilised on a “first out first back” basis. The international issues were more problematic. The Great War had resulted in the disintegration of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires which transformed



German and Russian soldiers dancing on hearing of the Armistice. The euphoria did not last.

the map. Poland, Czechoslovakia, Finland, the Baltic States and Yugoslavia emerged from the chaos, and national borders were drawn and redrawn by force long before they were agreed at the Versailles peace conference. In the east, Poland and the Russian revolutionary regime fought a sustained and vicious war in 1919-1921 to determine their respective jurisdictions.

This latter conflict was also one element of a civil war from 1917 to about 1922/3 to decide the outcome of the Russian revolution, where the Bolsheviks were fighting a counter movement by the so-called White Russians. At various times and locations, US, British, French, Canadian and Japanese contingents were sent by their governments to support the White cause, and men died doing so, including some 500 British. The British sent a force to Murmansk and Archangel in 1918-1919, and the navy operated against the Bolshevik navy in the Baltic. The servicemen involved were war-weary and reluctant (the sailors at one point mutinied), the commitment was insufficient to make a difference, and the force was withdrawn when the cause was clearly lost. The intervention achieved nothing positive, but it provided the Bolsheviks with proof (if proof were needed) of the irredeemable hostility of the western powers. That legacy is probably still with us today.

The expansion of the empire in the Middle East appeared to mark a new zenith in British imperial power; in fact the defeat of the Ottoman Turks presented a new set of problems, and the legacy of that is certainly still with us today. Britain had two great national and imperial interests in the region. The first was the security of the Suez Canal; the second was access to oil, which it was now clear existed not just in Persia (which was the belief in 1914), but in northern Iraq too. In pursuit of these

objectives it had waged war between 1914 and 1918 against Turkey in Mesopotamia (Iraq) and in Palestine; it had agreed an allocation of spheres of interest in the region with France; it had encouraged an Arab uprising against Turkey with generous political promises for the Arab future which cut across some elements of the agreement with the French; and it had promised a Jewish state in Palestine in the belief that the new settlers would support British interests and that any resulting difficulties with the Arab population could be managed just like any other native problem in the empire.

In practice all these undertakings (mostly given with caveats which were soon forgotten) were too difficult to sustain. Given a choice between French and Arab interests, the British handed Syria to France in the hope of renegotiating access to the oil in the French sphere of interest in northern Iraq. The political price of this was minimal because the Arabs had no negotiating power. But other Arab interests were less easy to resolve. The wartime British regime in Egypt had undermined goodwill there, and widespread nationalist disorder there in 1919-20 led to Egyptian "independence", Britain retaining control of the canal, and security throughout the country; Arab concerns in Palestine simply became worse with time; and in Iraq the arrogance and insensitivity of the British regime led to an insurrection in 1922 which had to be suppressed with serious force. British hold on the country remained tenuous.



Britain also suffered a major rebuff in her dealings with Turkey which led inter alia to the end of David Lloyd George's political career. In 1918 Turkey showed every sign of disintegration after her defeat in the war and Britain backed Greece in her ambitions to dismember the corpse. But Kemal Attaturk's national revival destroyed Greece's hopes, its army in Anatolia, and Greek settlements including Smyrna (now Izmir) along the Mediterranean shore. Lloyd George threatened war when Attaturk's army approached the Dardanelles in 1922. But the country was in a mood to fight another war for an ill-defined cause in the Aegean, and the Prime Minister was deposed. The limits of imperial power had clearly been reached.

And they had been reached economically too. The war had transformed Britain from the world's banker to a debtor nation, and in the 1920's some 40% of public expenditure was devoted simply to paying the war debt. The country was also caught up in the international economic backwash from the war, as overcapacity in world productive capacity adjusted to peacetime requirements. The consequences of the restoration of the gold standard in 1925 demonstrated that the British economic dominance of the pre-1914 period was no more. A land fit for heroes was postponed indefinitely.

Stretcher Bearer – A Soldier’s WW1 Notebook

This is the title of a book based on a notebook which Drummer George Howard kept during his service in the First World War. It was presented to the museum last year by the editor, his grandson Geoffrey Howard, together with some personal documents, photographs and his pre-WW1 drummer’s jacket which is in excellent condition.



George Howard was born in Birmingham in 1888, enlisted aged 15 in 1904 and served in India with the 2nd Battalion, then in France from August 1914. His service records do not appear to have survived, but his medal index card shows he also served in the 10th and 1/8th battalions during the war.

In a letter to his uncle published in the Worcester Daily Times he describes the death of

George Howard, Centre, Bottom Row.

Lieut FGO Curtler in the Battle of Langemarck in October 1914:

“I cannot see in the papers any mention of one very brave young officer...We were ordered to advance across some open country in face of the enemy’s guns. Then came the bullets like a heavy downpour of rain.....It was while holding a ridge that Mr Curtler, my platoon officer got killed. We had the order to dig ourselves in, so I dug head cover for two – myself and Mr Curtler as he was running from place to place with orders. He came to lie beside me, laughing and joking. The last time he came he asked me for one of the cigarettes which had been sent out to me two days before. I gave him one, the pick of what I had, and he gave me some chocolate, saying, “When we get to the next village remind me to give you some Turkish cigarettes; the mail’s sure to be in and I am getting some”. I thanked him and said “Keep down sir or you won’t reach the next village”. He laughed and said “Oh that’s alright but I must go to see the Captain”. He went back about 12 yards when a bullet hit him in the stomach. I wriggled like a snake from my head-cover (for to stand up and run meant death) to where Mr Curtler had fallen, but it could do no good, for he had passed away.”

The notebook contains a diary which runs from December 1914, after he had presumably taken part in the Battle of Gheluvelt, until March 1917, as well as some miscellaneous notes including details of his promotions.

The diary has brief notes for most days many of which record events of interest in the trenches, in reserve and when he was back in England in hospital or convalescing. Many of the entries record the weather, obviously a major concern in the trenches. He received frequent letters and parcels from home and answered them promptly.

31 Dec 1914 *“...we have only had 5 men hit since Sunday, our major hit by a sniper yesterday. Very slight, we had a man hit today, I was taking one to the dressing station and got another bullet through my hat. Making 2 narrow escapes in as many days, one poor fellow died soon after”*

17 Jan in billets. *“Had a walk to firing line for the purpose of finding boots and clothes for refugees, found quite a nice few. Had a letter from Mrs Thompson and parcel, all answered”*

10 Feb. *“Quiet morning, snowed about an hour, had one officer killed, shot through the head, four of us carried him to the dressing station, risky job, had to be done”*

17 May "Me and Cartwright recommended. Expect it will fall through" (It did. Though two other stretcher bearers were awarded the DCM he had to be content with the gift of a wrist watch from an officer.)

21 May to 1 June "still alive and well, never in our lives shall we ever forget this terrible fortnight (at Festubert) or three week....we are out of the trenches, thank God, for a bit of rest, but perhaps for a few days only, but thank God if it is for ten minutes only, lost one of my stretcher squad, Williams (Ginger), we had nearly 400 killed and wounded in two days. Our old col has resigned and joined as a private and is with us now, it seems funny for our col to be a pte but still it's true" (This is a reference to Lt Col Hovell who had commanded the battalion before the war but who enlisted as a soldier when war broke out and served briefly until evacuated sick.)



Stretcher bearers struggle in mud up to their knees to carry a wounded man to safety near Boesinghe on 1 August. The look of agonised desperation on the men's faces has made this image a favourite choice to indicate the appalling conditions on the Western Front.

He records standing up to his knees in water in the trenches during the cold wet winter weather, notes that Christmas dinner in 1914 consisted only of cheese and jam, and that he did not receive his Christmas Queen Mary gift box until April 1915. On consecutive days in March he records being promoted to corporal then sergeant, no doubt as a result of his good work but also possibly reflecting that he was one of a dwindling band of pre-war regulars left in the battalion. At one point he clearly thinks his luck is running out because he writes 'in case I curl up please forward this book to Miss E Cannon' at a Birmingham address; presumably his girlfriend at the time. In June 1915 he is sent to hospital with a fever and in July is sent back to England. His recovery takes some time and what he describes is probably trench fever, a recurring influenza-like ailment, later in the war to be diagnosed as being caused by the bites of body lice that infested soldiers' clothing. More sophisticated de-lousing procedures virtually eliminated this problem by 1918. In August he was released from hospital and posted to the 5th Special Reserve battalion at Devonport before being returned to the Infantry Base Depot at Rouen in December and the 2nd Battalion in January 1916, which was then in the Bethune area. Here the battalion was subjected to enemy mines exploding, shelling and bombing, and he confided in his diary that he had reached his 'last day' perhaps an indication that the strain of the war was getting to him. He was wounded on 1st February and a photograph in the Leicester Chronicle of 20th May shows him in a line of wounded soldiers taking part in a Flag Day event which suggests he was convalescing in that area. On recovery he returned to Devonport and the last entry in his diary records his return to France in March 1917 where he presumably then joined the 10th Battalion. A later note mentions that he is serving in the 1/8th Battalion.

The notebook had originally belonged to a German soldier which George Howard had somehow acquired, and the editor set out to discover something about him as he explains in an appendix to the book. This is a precis of his search. When my grandfather's notebook came to light in 2013, I became aware of traces of German, the clearest of which is on its inside cover. I wondered if he had taken the notebook from a dead German soldier. I felt I owed it to the dead soldier's memory to find any relatives. A friend translated his name as *Pritzmann and Ernst Lebus*. I spent two years trying

to find these people. In March 2015 I took a closer look at the inside cover. I could make out G.J. Batt Potsdam. After I had tried several different spellings of *Battalion* Google came up with *Garde-Jager Battaillon, Potsdam*. I sent the scans to the Bundeswehr Centre for Military history, Potsdam and received a reply two weeks later. They read the soldier's name as *Puhlmann. Ernst Lebus* as a misreading of *Kreis Lebus* – Lebus County. They read the soldier's town as *Briegen* but this does not exist.



On parade, probably August 1914.

I then contacted the German War Graves Commission. They replied that Pte *Puhlmann* had gone missing in September 1914. They sent card index scans from the German Red Cross. In transcribing them they referred to his town as *Riegen*, but this does not exist either. In desperation in April 2015 I used Google to search *Martin Puhlmann 1914*. To my astonishment the search revealed the war memorial in *Biegen* where his death is recorded as at 8 September 1914.

During the remainder of 2015 I tried to find any surviving relatives. I wrote to the church minister in Biegen, with no reply. I wrote to all Puhlmans within a 20-mile radius of the town and to the town hall archivist. No luck, so I decided to go to Biegen and wrote to the church minister to tell him. No reply. I arrived on 7 October 2016, but the church was locked. At lunch in the next village my wife mentioned to the waitress that we wanted to contact the minister and she told us he lived across the road. She rang him and he came over.

Next morning, he showed us the parish records and we found the records of Martin Puhlmann's birth and the names of his parents and twelve other relatives. The next day we went to the service at Biegen church. After the service a member of the congregation took us to meet the oldest man in the village. He alerted us to a man named Puhlmann and a woman, Mandy

who had been born a Puhlmann. We phoned Herr Puhlmann but he did not know even the name of his grandfather or great uncles. Biegen was almost on the Polish border and had been devastated during the second world war.

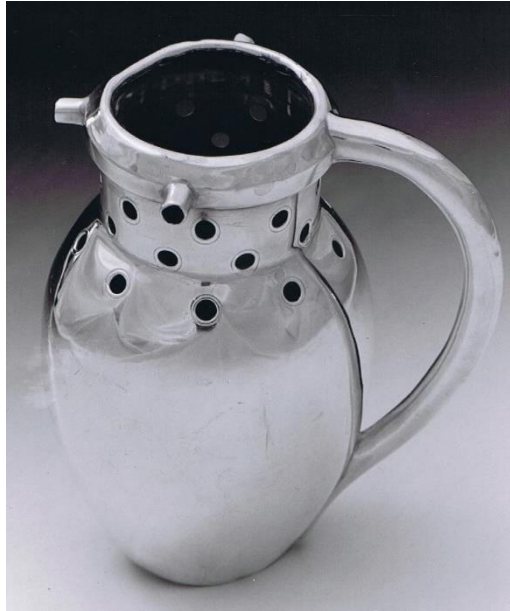
We also phoned Mandy and she came to meet us but did not know the names of her great grandparents, but took us to her family burial plot which had eight graves, each capable of holding several bodies. All grave stones had been destroyed in the last war except those of her grandparents. However, as Biegen is tiny, and the only Puhlmans in the church records at the turn of the 20th century were those of Martin and his 14 relatives, the only conclusion I could draw is that such a large grave plot could only be for Martin Puhlmann's extended family. I do not know what relative Mandy is to Martin but without doubt she is a blood relative.

In retrospect, it was optimistic to have found someone who still wondered what had happened to Martin. How many of us know about the siblings of our ancestors 102 years ago? Add to that Biegen was flattened by the Russians in the last war, and many who might have known their family history were killed or fled. Furthermore, Germans do not want to remember details of wars.

My grandfather might be criticised for taking a dead German's possession. If he had buried Martin with the book, his memory would have been buried with him. I thought that Martin Puhlmann had no one to remember him but.... he does now.

The Puzzle Jug

Many WFR officers, and Sherwood Foresters before them, will no doubt remember being drenched while trying to drink out of this silver jug without spilling the beer all over themselves. It is possible to drink without spilling any of its contents if certain holes are covered, but the feat is seldom accomplished.



But how many bothered to read the inscription on it which was quite faint forty years ago and may by now have been erased entirely by years of polishing? It reads:

*Presented to Colonel Bulpett and the Officers of the Derbyshire Regiment
by Major Bowman on promotion 1901*

*"From rocks and sand, and barren lands
Good fortune set me free
And from great guns, and women's tongues
Good Lord, deliver me!"*

Henry James Bowman was commissioned in 1882 and had his fair share of "rocks and sand" while on active service in the Egyptian campaign in 1882 and the Tirah expedition in 1897-8, in which he was severely wounded. He retired in 1904 but was recalled during the First World War, promoted lieutenant colonel and appointed commandant of a prisoner of war camp.

In the 18th and 19th centuries many inns, in which soldiers were frequently billeted, had puzzle jugs from which strangers were challenged to drink without spilling the ale over themselves. They usually had inscriptions on them. Popular ones were:

*"Come gentlemen try your skill
I'll hold you sixpence if you will
That you don't drink this liquor all
Unless you spill or let some fall"*

Or

*"Within this jug there is good liquor
'Tis fit for parson or for vicar
But how to drink and not to spill
Will try the utmost of your skill"*

'The Green 'Un' Malaya Editions

Meriel Pearson, one of our volunteers, has recently completed cataloguing and summarising the content of these newsletters produced by the 1st Battalion in Malaya 1950-53. (The Green 'Un was the title of the 1st Battalion newsletter prior to amalgamation in 1970).

The newsletters make interesting reading with contributors covering a variety of topics including the climate, patrols in the difficult jungle conditions, larger scale operations, the living conditions in the various bases they occupied and inter-platoon, -company and -battalion sporting competitions. There is plenty of humorous content including some excellent cartoons, some of which I am told featuring officers are brilliant likenesses, and also poems which would be worth publishing in an anthology. The best cartoons are reproduced here. Anyone who knew those featured would recognise them immediately. There are also many in-jokes which I did not begin to understand. Inevitably there are some more sombre items featuring men killed or wounded and it is humbling to compare these to the names on the Malaya memorial in St George's Chapel in Worcester Cathedral.



One of the more bizarre reports was in A Company's notes from Segamat in November 1950 which reported:

"Our first op was remarkable in that we discovered –

The Adjt and RSM with us at the start of the op

A dead bandit (very)

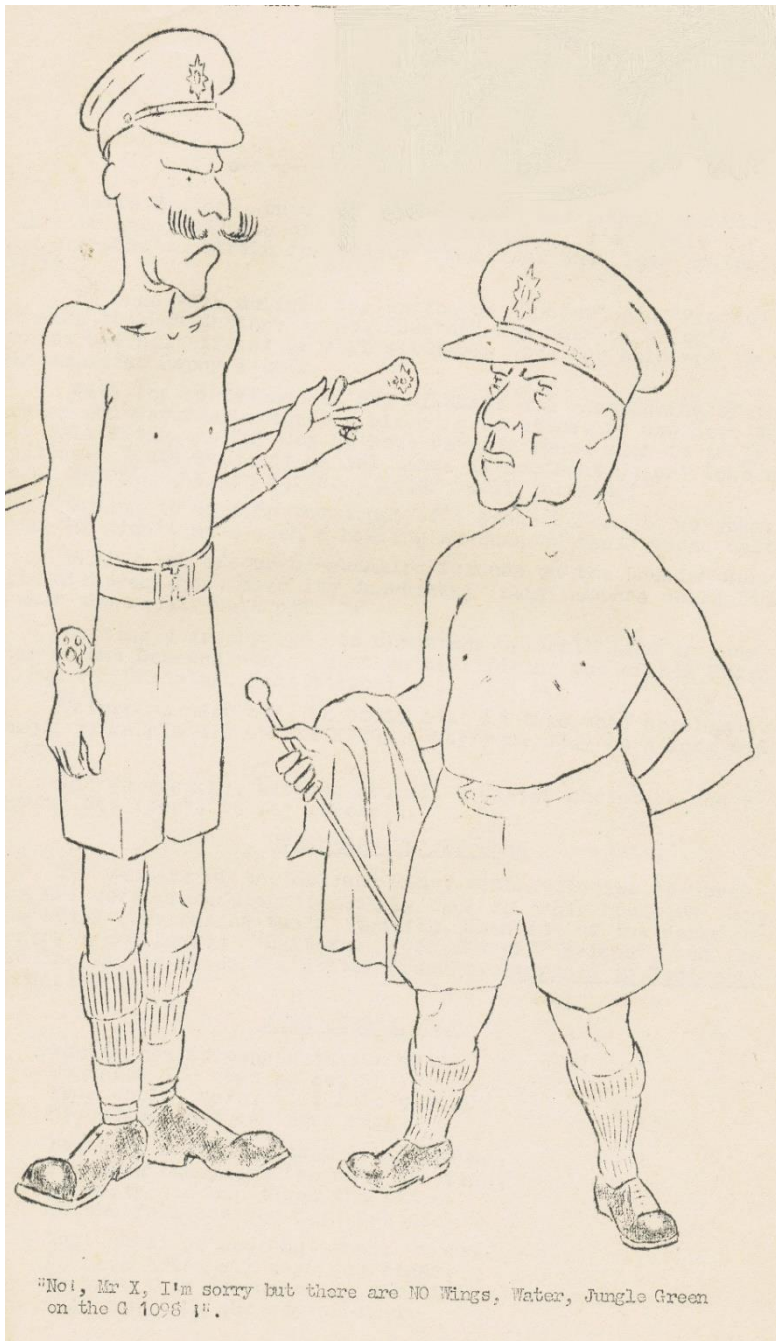
A newborn bandit (very)

The Adjt and RSM with us at the end of the op.

The baby bandit the MO estimates to have been on "Stalin's" strength for approximately twenty minutes when Major Peace captured her single-handedly in a Bandit Camp. She was then wrapped in 4x2 and a housewife and taken to the rear in Cpl Kane's pack.

She is to be named Tara Kane in honour of one of our guest performers (in an ENSA show?) and of her transporter."

The only other mention of this baby in the newsletters is that she won a pair of boots in the Christmas raffle.



Further research revealed the following article in the January edition of Firm, possibly from Army PR sources in Malaya:

“A 21 month-old girl in Malaya, who is now being well cared-for in an institution, owes her life to a patrol of the 1st Battalion the Worcestershire Regiment who discovered her abandoned in a Communist terrorist camp near Segamat in January 1951. She was then only a few hours old. The story can now be told how the patrol had gone out on an ambush mission, and on the way back in the afternoon a baby’s cry suddenly pierced the silence. The patrol was moving in an area of scrub and tree stumps, where logging had been carried out in pre-war years.

The patrol advanced cautiously – in these days squatters had not been re-housed in new villages. The place was deserted and after a search the baby was found lying on the ground. The mother had fled with the terrorists when they shifted camp.

First and overriding priority was to get the infant to hospital. RSM H Knox administered after-birth treatment with rifle-cleaning flannelette, and the baby was tenderly placed in a soldier’s haversack.



RSM H Knox

The patrol stopped many times on the way home as the burly RSM and the Major (*Peace*) who commanded the patrol dipped their fingers in a tin of milk and placed the moisture in the infant’s mouth. The patrol’s speed on the homeward journey was dictated by the speed with which the soldier could safely carry his precious burden.

All the patrol members were keenly interested in the baby’s welfare, and constant enquiries were made at the Segamat Hospital until it was known she was progressing normally.”

There is also anecdotal evidence that the RSM helped to fund her subsequent stay in a home for a time after she left hospital.

Editorial

After the euphoria generated by the commemoration of the end of the First World War it is salutary to be reminded by Alan Cowpe's thoughtful article that across much of Europe and the Middle East the violence continued, and in many cases intensified, after November 1918, and that even for the victors it stored up problems for the future, some of which remain to this day.

After the conclusion of the First World War commemorations the Dean of Worcester Cathedral wrote in his New Year message that "Cathedrals are good at commemorating, but there's much to be said for attending to the present and the future as well". Perhaps the museum too should draw breath and give attention to our present and future. The Friends urgently need new local members in order to sustain a varied event programme, and perhaps the museum should be starting to adjust to how it will operate when the Mercian Regiment grant ceases.

Finally, a plea. If anyone planning to visit Corfu for their summer holidays can spare the time to visit the British cemetery there, which is well recommended by TripAdvisor, we would be grateful for any photographs and inscriptions of 36th Regiment graves or memorials to complement the information already held on its equivalent in Cephalonia.

Events & Activities

The Friends enjoyed a fascinating talk in September by **Bill Temminck** on his challenging tour with **Brixmis behind the Iron Curtain** which involved extended three man patrols in vehicles in East Germany. Brixmis started off in 1945 as a liaison mission with Russian forces but soon evolved into an intelligence gathering organisation tasked to identify new equipment introduced into service with Warsaw Pact armies and air forces and to monitor troop movements to ensure they were not deploying with a view to invading the West.

Forthcoming Events

To mark the 75th Anniversary of The Worcestershire Regiment's role in the Second World War the Museum will be holding the following events:

4th April – 31st May Temporary Display, 'The 7th Battalion at Kohima, 1944'. Worcestershire Soldier Gallery, Worcester City Museum & Art Gallery Foregate St, Worcester, Worcestershire WR1 1DT. Open Monday to Saturday 10.30am - 4.30am and there is no charge for admission.

Saturday 15th June – Activity Day, 'The Worcesters Push for Victory', talks and displays at St. Helen's Church, Fish Street (off High Street), Worcester WR1 2HN.

From 22nd June - Temporary Display, 'The 1st Battalion in North-West Europe, 1944'. Worcestershire Soldier Gallery, Worcester City Museum & Art Gallery Foregate St, Worcester, Worcestershire WR1 1DT. Open Monday to Saturday 10.30am - 4.30am and there is no charge for admission.

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 25371. 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.