



SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM

Newsletter

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The 6th (1st Royal Warwickshire) Regiment of Foot on exercise whilst stationed at Portsmouth, 1843' by Daniel Cunliffe

AN EXERCISE IN MILITARY ART

2008 proved to be a year of interesting acquisitions for the Department of Fine and Decorative Art, including most notably JSC Schaak's portrait of Major-General James Wolfe, from 1759. However, the arrival of 'Wolfe' nearly overshadowed some of the other fine acquisitions. In August, the Museum acquired an original oil on canvas, entitled 'The 6th (The Royal 1st Warwickshire) Regiment of Foot on exercise whilst stationed at Portsmouth, 1843'. Although it is unsigned, this work has been attributed to Daniel Cunliffe (1826-55) based on stylistic similarities to other known works by the artist.

Daniel Cunliffe, whose first name has often been erroneously given as David, lived in Portsmouth for most of his short career. He is best known for his military subjects, some of which are regarded as amongst the best military paintings of the mid-nineteenth century. It is also no coincidence that in early 1843 the 6th Regiment of Foot that had recently returned from service in India, were stationed in Portsmouth. A well-known work by Cunliffe from

1843, 'The Colours of the 6th Foot', also relates to that regiment. One of Cunliffe's sketchbooks, now in the City Museum, Portsmouth, has the 6th Foot as its primary subject matter. The stylistic similarities between some of the figures in this work, and those in the sketchbook are unmistakable.

The collection of the National Army Museum already includes two works by Cunliffe. One is of an unidentified officer of the 6th Foot also from 1843 and the second, a portrait of Lieutenant-Colonel Philip McPherson of the 17th (The Leicestershire) Regiment of Foot, was completed in 1855 shortly before Cunliffe's early death.

The new acquisition features soldiers of the 6th Regiment of Foot on exercise, or manoeuvres. The portrayal of troops on exercise is a rare subject for a nineteenth century painting. The soldiers are depicted advancing across a narrow bridge in an orderly fashion, whilst supported by covering fire from their colleagues on the river bank to the lower left. They kneel for stability and to create a lower profile, whilst working in

double ranks of two in order to sustain a regular pattern of fire. The second rank can be seen re-loading in time with each other, whilst the front rank are firing. This work gives a clear indication of the military tactics used at the time for such a dangerous procedure, as well as showing a technique that the army used for much of the next century.

The richly-detailed uniforms and equipment are shown with excellent accuracy, and the figure of the commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel John Mitchell, who can be seen mounted in the centre, can be positively identified. Mitchell enjoyed a long and successful career that included service in the Crimean War (1854-56), the Indian Mutiny (1857-59) and the Second China War (1857-60), before becoming a Field Marshal in 1885. Many of the men, and especially the officers in the foreground appear to be portraits that may be identifiable with further research.

A conservation report commissioned by the Museum has identified cleaning and minor conservation that is required to prepare the painting for public display. It is hoped this work will be carried out in the near future. Once again, members of the Society of Friends are to be thanked for their contributions towards these conservation costs.

Robert Fleming
Curator of Fine & Decorative Art

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN



It was a great honour and a privilege to have been elected as your Chairman at last year's AGM. I have enjoyed being a member of the Society for a number of years and believe that its work in support of the National Army Museum has been outstanding, both in terms of the funds raised and the interest engendered.

The Museum were, I know, delighted with the donation for the painting of the 6th Foot by Daniel Cunliffe. I believe it is a splendid addition to the collection and an excellent example of the Society's work on behalf of the Museum. May I, in turn, say how much we appreciate all the facilities and help from the museum's staff in connection with our meetings and events.

I am only too well aware that your previous Chairman will be a hard act to follow. Brigadier Ken Timbers has given much time and effort in the role over the last six years and we have been lucky to have had the benefit of his experience and knowledge, particularly of the museum world. I am glad he will continue to be involved as a member.

As Ken stated in his last article in the Autumn Newsletter, we are lucky to have such a strong and dedicated team of volunteers serving as officers of our council. I am very glad to have such a supportive and enthusiastic group helping and guiding me. I am looking forward to serving the Society and to meeting more of you, the members, over the next year.

Tony Verey

STILL CALLING FOR HELP!

The NAM's Access Group wants to start a consultation group of 'informed friends', to give them the benefit of their thoughts on improving physical and intellectual access to the Museum's displays and services. They want anyone with experience or expertise in these issues (registered disabled especially welcome) to come and meet the group. All contributors will be offered lunch with the group afterwards. For further details please contact Jenny Spencer-Smith (jspencer-smith@national-army-museum.ac.uk).

EVENTS NEWS

2008 went out with something less than a bang when the Naomi Games talk about her father was somewhat reduced in content by technical problems. However, with great aplomb and spirit, together with her brother, they performed a splendid double act telling of Abram's life and work illustrated by books and illustrations rather than projection. In fact everybody seemed to enjoy the informality of the event.

The Christmas Party produced not only quite a crowd, but for the first time ever a raid on the local Tesco to top up the wine, which not only went well, but sent everybody off in a true Christmas spirit.

This year's programme is boding quite well. Booking forms for Colonels Parade and Beating Retreat are enclosed. So we hope a full and enjoyable year yet again, and thank you to those who have filled up their diaries and sent not only bookings, but donations.

Finally, Anne-Marie's walk on Wednesday June 10th will start at 2 p.m. Meeting point The Booking Hall, St. Paul's Tube Station.

SMILE PLEASE

In these days one is besieged by advertisements for dental treatment. TV adverts for products to whiten, cleanse, protect etc. proliferate and the numbers of cosmetic dentists grow – all in the cause of a nice smile! How different it was in the 19th century, those rich enough to afford new teeth boasted molars carved from ivory and bone and in some cases wood – all of which deteriorated with the attack of food, wine and sugar and had to be replaced.

The only answer – real teeth – but how? The answer by the thousand lay on the battlefield especially after 18 June 1815 and the Battle of Waterloo.

Whereas previously scavengers had roamed the scenes of carnage to gather valuables and equipment a new breed appeared armed with pliers to collect the teeth of the fallen of both sides which they did by the barrel load.

The result was what became known in circles as 'The Waterloo Smile' often comprised teeth from both warring sides. The custom continued until the invention of the porcelain replacement but even up until 1860 those who preferred a "real smile" could acquire an American version from the battlefields of the Civil War.

From the Editor

Although a little late, I would like to extend my best wishes for the New Year to our readers. Prosperous I am a little wary of at the moment, but happiness I hope will be found in the year to come.

Could I ask you to note my new address which became effective from November when I moved from Sydney Close and now work from home. Needless to say the physical move of books, papers etc. after several years was somewhat disruptive with the discovery of things long since lost or presumed so. However, the Christmas break enabled order to be regained and things are now back to normal without the trials and tribulations of tube and train. Also I have rediscovered various items that had been put to one side for future publication, which will now be able to appear.

Thank you to the various readers who continue to write in with comments etc. and you will be interested to know that the newsletter is now posted up in the Friends Room at Les Invalides and they have also asked for permission to translate one or two articles to appear in their own journal, which is encouraging.

Renewed thanks also to staff members for their contributions and those behind the scene who help in its production and despatch.

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ADVERTISEMENT

Artificial Teeth, in the most exact Manner, are so fitted and set in, that they may be taken out and put in again by the persons themselves, and are not to be discern'd from the natural; they not only prescribe [sic] the speech, but also secure the teeth next to them from loosening or taking out; but those who have stumps to set them on, may with the greatest security, depend upon it, that they will answer the ends of natural teeth.

By GAMALIEL VOYCE, in Whalebone-Court, at the lower end of Bartholomew-Lane in Lothbury, near the Royal Exchange. N.B. Any persons may have whole sets at the same place.



IN THE SHADOWS OF HISTORY No.7

An occasional series in which we profile those who played a major role in historical events but have now faded into the background.

Walter Tull 1888-1918

The first black infantry officer in the British Army

Walter Daniel John Tull was born at Folkestone in 1888 the son of a journeyman carpenter who had come from Barbados twelve years earlier and married a local girl.

His early life following the death of both parents was spent in a Wesleyan Methodist orphanage in Bethnal Green.

After finishing schooling he served as an apprentice printer, but whilst playing football for the orphanage team he was spotted by a talent scout and invited to join Clapton F.C. (later to become Leyton Orient) where his skills on the pitch attracted other clubs, amongst them Tottenham Hotspur who in 1908 signed him up for a £7 fee – not quite in to-day's league of payments.

With them he toured Argentina and Uruguay and drew quite a lot of attention, both good and bad being only the second black footballer in Britain.

In 1911 he was sold to Northampton Town for what was then described as a heavy transfer fee completing 98 out of 114 games prior to 1914.

With the outbreak of war it was not surprising that with his background of muscular Christianity Walter made a swift transition from the football field to the battlefield and in December 1914 enlisted in the 17th (1st Football) Battalion of The Middlesex Regiment.

November 1915 saw him posted to France as part of the

33rd Division 100th Brigade. Needless to say his football skills were much in demand at times to alleviate the boredom of inactivity in reserve. Football was good for creating a team atmosphere and galvanising men into action.

As we know there are references to men being led into battle by officers kicking footballs. Most famous perhaps was at Montauban Ridge where Capt. Nevill of the Surreys was killed doing this.

Tull's leadership qualities and control on the football field were transferred to that of the battlefield, and as a result he received rapid promotion. Lance Corporal by February 1915, Corporal May 1915 then three days later Lance Sgt. However, his experiences in the field took its toll and in May 1916 he returned home with shell shock, but by September was fit enough to return to France.

By the end of the year, however, he was back in England with trench fever and in hospital until January 1917. Then something extraordinary happened, with the ever increasing casualties amongst officers, promising NCOs were earmarked as potential officer material with the result that Walter entered OCTU at Gales in Scotland on February 6th. This was unprecedented, impossible in fact. The 1914 Manual of Military Law specifically excluded "negroes" from exercising actual command especially over white troops.

It was Tull's character, bravery in the field, that had so impressed his superiors that he was eventually commissioned in May 1917 as a 2nd Lieutenant with the 23rd (2nd Football Bn.) Middlesex Regt. And posted with



Walter the footballer



Walter Tull (left) in France

them to Italy where his bravery under fire on the Piave earned him a mention in despatches.

1918 saw him back in France fighting on the Somme and later in March of that year still only 29 he was killed near Favreuil whilst leading a counter attack against the Germans. His body was never recovered and so his name joined the many thousands of those with no known grave, and over the years he passed from public mind. However, this omission has now been rectified and in Northampton near his old football ground an 8 foot high memorial has been raised and the approach road to the stadium named Walter Tull Way – and recently he was the subject of a travelling exhibition that was displayed at the Museum. Although he was not the first black officer, there were two at least serving in the Medical Corps – he does merit recognition as the first black Infantry officer.

Kit Layout – a continuing story

Following the article on the subject of Kit Layouts, we have received several examples of the art. Amongst them have been several from Les Invalides of the Garde Republicanes layouts of 1874 which are works of art in their own right whilst the description ‘Trousse garnie’ sounds more like something from a menu. Other layouts have included American of World War II and the Rhodesian Police – so grateful thanks for all concerned and please keep them coming.



Hannah Snell



Frederick the Great

HANNAH SNELL

Very much in the style of Private Eye’s ‘Are they related’ the Director has written about the portrait of Hannah Snell that appeared in our last issue.

He comments on the resemblance of her depiction with that of the portrait of Frederick the Great of Prussia by the Kings Court painter Antoine Pesne. He wonders whether Hannah’s picture was derived from this portrait, or if she in fact consciously imitated the King’s appearance as images of the portraits were widely circulated at the time.

AGM 2000

Despite the change of day to Monday, there was a good turn out for the AGM on November 17th. This was preceded by a fascinating talk by Brigadier Allan Mallinson entitled "Is the past a foreign country?" which dealt with exploits of soldiers in battle and the current situation in the armed forces. He touched on how he had used these to develop aspects of his fictional hero Matthew Hervey during the Napoleonic Wars.

The business side of the AGM went smoothly during which thanks were given to the various officers involved in the running of the Society.

The Chairman reported that the Director had asked if the Society would be willing to contribute funds this year to the purchase of another painting. As it has the discretion to offer up to 50% of the available funds in one year he announced that the Council had offered £25,000, the purchase price of the work.

The Hon. Secretary reported that membership stood at 930, a considerable drop on the previous year and encouraged members to do what they could to promote new members and the advantages of membership.

As this was the last AGM to be chaired by Ken Timbers the President thanked him for his efforts over the past six years and on behalf of Council members past and present made a presentation to him to acknowledge this work.

The new occupant of the Chair was then proposed by the Chairman, namely Brigadier Tony Verey to which he was elected.

Other elections then took place namely the re-election of Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter as Deputy Chairman, also the re-elections of the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer. New Council members all of whom have served previously, namely, Bill Featherstone, Stephen Macey and Derek Mumford were then re-elected.

The Director then took the floor, and in doing so firstly thanked members for their invitation to the meeting and then referred to Clause 2 of the Museum's Royal Charter in which he drew attention to the fact that the Museum's collecting remit reached out to the East India Company's Armies, the Indian Army and the Land Forces of Her Majesty The Queen's Predecessors' possessions beyond the Seas, making the Museum's mission a truly worldwide one – celebrating the World's Army in fact. In this connection he told members about the launch on 25th October 2008, of the Museum's on-line interactive website exhibition on the Black and Asian British Army, generously funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund to the tune of £50,000.

It had been another successful year at the Museum, with full details in the Annual Report & Accounts, now posted on-line for anyone who wished to consult them.

The rise in visitors had been maintained – a total of 201,000 to the year ending 31 March 2008 with numbers rising month on month since. Well over a million users had spent measurable time on the NAM website. The Helmand exhibition continued to be very popular, which was a definite sign of the revival of public interest in the Armed Forces. With the recent return of 16 Air Assault Brigade from Afghanistan with new material, Helmand would shortly be updated for the second time. Meanwhile, The Faces of Battle Special Exhibition, featuring the pioneering facial reconstruction work of Dr. Harold Gillies and his team during and after the First World War, although uncompromising in its approach, had been very well received. Both these exhibitions served as a reminder to visitors that warfare was a dangerous, often desperate, business. Alan Guy saw this as an essential part of the Museum's mission.

He then reported on the purchase last year of the portrait of Major General James Wolfe by JSC Schaak c1759 for over £300,000. The Friends' initial gift of £25,000 had been the key to bringing in other funds for this important national acquisition. It also complemented the Friends' purchase for the NAM of other important "Wolfiana" in 2005. A list of Friends' gifts to the Museum since 1988 will be circulated in the next Newsletter.

He then introduced Jenny Spencer-Smith, Head of the Department of Fine & Decorative Art, who spoke to members about the painting on display during the AGM, recently purchased in short order by the Museum to secure it at auction. The picture, by Daniel Cunliffe, depicted the 6th Regiment of Foot on exercise at Portsmouth, where Cunliffe was a practising artist, c1842-3. The purchase price had been £25,000 and the Director asked if the Friends were happy to cover that amount. The Chairman put this suggestion to the vote, which was passed nem con and Dr. Guy thanked the Friends for their kind offices.

He concluded his report by thanking David Smurthwaite, Assistant Director (Museum Services) and a member of the Friends, present in the meeting, on his recent retirement from the staff after nearly 36 years of service and at least 12 years in attendance on behalf of the Director NAM at Friends' Council Meetings. To general acclaim, Dr. Guy told the meeting that David would shortly be taking up a new role helping set up the Museum's new trading company, National Army Museum Trading Limited (NAMTL).

The Chairman concluded the meeting thanking the Director and all his staff for their help with the AGM and also those Friends who had attended. Everybody adjourned to the Art Gallery for lunch during which Denise Wallace ably assisted by Celia Lewis managed to charm wee over £300 out of members for the raffle in aid of Society funds, for which we are very grateful.

If the cap fits...

In view of the recent controversy over the culling of bears to provide bearskins for the Guards Regiments, readers might be interested in the actual history of this headgear.

We are indebted to Capt. D.D. Horn late Curator of The Guards Museum for this article.



THE HISTORY OF THE BEARSKIN CAP

A warrant was issued on 19 May 1697 ordering that two soldiers of each Company of Guards serving at that time in the Tower of London should be trained as *Grenadiers*. The Grenadier was to be a *special man to go forward in the attack and to be able to use his hatchet for breaking down obstacles and to use his grenade* (from the Spanish Grenada a pomegranate) boldly to clear away the enemy - possibly the earliest commandos. In April 1698 this training experiment having been successful, it was decided that a complete Grenadier Company should be added to the *Eight Eldest Regiments of Foot*. These were the Three Regiments of Guards and the Five Senior Regiments of the Line.

At Hounslow Camp in June 1678 a diarist noted that he had seen the “*new sort of soldiers, who had a pouch full of hand grenades and were skilful at throwing them at the enemy*”. Their equipment was to be a *fuzee* flintlock with a sling, cartridge boxes on girdles (this was a departure from the common practice of having the pouch on a shoulder belt) grenade pouches, as well as hatchet and bayonet. There is no doubt that the dress of the Grenadier was something special, seventy Grenadiers of His Majesty’s own Regiment of Guards had special cravats of *fox-tails*, no doubt made with fancy lace or pointed ends which were tied with scarlet ribbons.

At this time infantry soldiers wore the three cornered tricorne hat. In order for a Grenadier to prepare himself to throw his grenade, he had to *sling his firelock* across his back, which invariably resulted in his hat being

knocked off, a very unmilitary state of affairs. Very quickly the tricorne hat had its sides *cocked up*, to avoid this dilemma, this in turn caused the evolution of another form of hat, the *cocked hat*, worn much later by officers, and still worn to this day by some appointments in the Household Division.

By 1712 these alterations had evolved into the *Bishop’s Mitre* cap so often seen in early prints. Unfortunately, the shape of this headgear lent itself to a great deal of elaborate regimental embroidery and metal embellishment. This eventually led to the height becoming so great that it was just as impossible to sling a firelock as it had been with the tricorne. The ultimate Grenadier Cap had its main *bag* or head covering of scarlet cloth, and the small front and back turn up, as well as the front plaque, were in the regimental facing colour. The small turn up at the front was used to display the Swords, Muskets, Grenades, Laurels and the like, whilst the front plaque displayed the devices of the Colonel of the Regiment. Also at this time the Grenadiers were allowed, as another mark of privilege, to wear their hair in an elaborate turned up plait, and not in a queue like the other soldiers. It must be remembered that “Grenadiers” had become the elite soldiers, the tallest, strongest, and most specialised men in the regiment, in other words the show piece of the regiment.

These Grenadier Mitre Caps, so long a distinction, were superseded by Royal Warrant of 1768; this warrant ordered the cap to be of black bearskin. On the front, The King’s Crest, in Silver plated metal on a black background with the motto *Nec Aspera Terrent*, (the translation being: Not even difficulties deter us.) and usually including, somewhere, the White Horse of Hanover. A Grenade shaped Badge was worn on the back of the cap, with the number of the Regiment on it. This did not apply to The Foot Guards. The body of the cap to be twelve inches high, Regiments of Fusiliers were to have a similar cap, but not so high and without the Grenade Badge. Much later, these Regiments adopted in their smaller bearskin cap, the Grenade Badge worn centrally at the front.

Between 1768 and 1830, the Bearskin Cap continued to grow both in size and elaboration. After the battle of Waterloo, in 1815, The First Regiment of Foot Guards, having defeated the Grenadiers of Napoleon’s Guard, were awarded the title, or honorary distinction of The First, or *Grenadier Regiment* of Foot Guards and the privilege of having the whole Regiment wearing the Bearskin Cap. The Coldstream and Third Guards, as they were then called, continuing to wear the *Shako* retaining the bearskin only in the Grenadier Company. King William IV decided that he wanted all his Guards

to be dressed in similar fashion, however, the 1st or Grenadier Regiment, who were, and remain the only regiment in the British Army to have received their title as a result of an action (Waterloo), considered this an erosion of their privilege. Therefore in 1831 a submission was made that the other two regiments of Guards should be renamed. They were to become The Coldstream and Third Fusilier Guards. This option would enable the authorities to dress these Regiments in *Fusilier Caps*, which it will be remembered were very similar, but slightly smaller than the Grenadier bearskin, **without taking away the prestige of The First Regiment, whose particular privilege it was.** Both Coldstream and Third Guards were ordered to be known, as "Coldstream" and "Scots" Fusilier Guards, though only the Scots Guards actually adopted the word in their regiment title. This remained until after the Crimean War.

Bearskin caps were deprived of their two little peaks, which had been introduced in 1802, around 1830. This loss was followed gradually by the cap lines, tassels or *flounders*, and front plates. The bearskin cap which we now know is the direct descendant of this pattern. Briefly, at the end of the Crimean War, a reduction was made in the height of the bearskin cap; however, this was so unpopular that it was quickly discontinued.

It may be seen from the many photographs and pictures of Guardsmen in Victorian times that bearskin caps appear to be much larger and finer than now, this was certainly the case. In order to sell skins for the manufacture of the caps, hunters and trappers in Canada and Russia were obliged to kill the animals when in prime condition. This would have been just before the bears went into hibernation when they were at their fattest and sleekest. Since the end of the Second World War and the stricter observance of animal conservation (one pelt only makes two, perhaps three bearskin caps), the skins now available are taken from bears culled because of age, infirmity or over population. This inevitably means that the standard of skin is not usually so high.

The shape of the bearskin differs, in many cases, for Officers and Other Ranks. Viewed from the front, a soldier's should look rather like an apple, whilst an officer's appears more pear shaped, with a slightly concave front. Bearskins of recent manufacture seem to have lost this difference. The depth of the officer's caps is eleven and a half inches in front and sixteen inches at

the back, whilst the soldier's is nine inches in front and thirteen and a half inches at the back. The cap itself is fashioned from two pieces of fur, a front and a back, stitched from side to side over a bamboo cage. It has an inner leather adjustable head lining and is retained on the head by the use of a brass, leather backed chin chain known as the curb chain, the links of which are graduated from the centre. This chain is worn under the lower lip, not under the chin. Sockets are fitted on both sides to take the relevant regimental plume. The cap weights approximately 2lbs, though as one can imagine, under certain conditions feels even heavier, but nevertheless, worn with pride.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS (Free admission)

Helmand: The Soldiers' Story

Extended due to popular demand closing date TBC

Task Force Falklands

EVENTS

Battlefields Trust Conference, 14 – 15 March

This year's conference looks at battlefields at risk.

Modern Army Conference

Conference cancelled, due to be re-scheduled.

FAMILY EVENTS (Free admission)

NAM Big Spring Clean half term, 14 – 22 February

Learn how a museum goes about its spring clean.

Fighting Fit Easter Weekend, 11 – 13 April

Discover how sport has helped the Army.

Victorian Soldier Action Zone

Find out about life as a Victorian Soldier in the Museums Active Zone

World at War Action Zone

Empire, Dominions and Commonwealth at War, 1914 -1945

Explore the huge diversity of those involved in the First and Second World War.

Kids Zone

The Kid's Zone is a free interactive learning and play space tailored for under 10's, including a soft play area for babies.

The Newsletter is published by the Council of the Friends of the National Army Museum, Royal Hospital Road, London SW3 4HT. Tel: 020 7730 0717

The Museum's website is: www.national-army-museum.ac.uk This includes details of forthcoming Museum events. The Society's Officers are:

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