

The Newton in Makerfield Volunteers

Contributed by Steven Dowd

Volunteers were enrolled in England for the American War in 1778. They were again enrolled, in 1793-4, in consequence of the threatened invasion of revolutionary France.

In presenting the colours to St. Peters Church on July 19th 1862 the right Rev. Piers Calveley Claughton, Bishop of Colombo, said, "These colours formerly belonged to the old Newton Volunteers, when that corps was absorbed in the Wigan Local Militia. They were deposited with my father as colonel of the regiment when that service ceased."

In 1803, when there commenced a period of twelve years of imminent danger of invasion, and a force of volunteers, stated to amount to 463,134 men, was raised for local service.

At this time a corps was formed in Newton with Thomas Claughton, Esq., of Haydock Lodge, as colonel, from the Orderly Book of which corps (now in the Warrington museum) we give a few extracts:-

Newton, Octr. 2nd, 1803

R.O.

Mercury, 10 die Augusti, 1803

Resolved, nemine contradicente

Ordered... That a copy of the resolution of the House of Commons, relative to Volunteer and Yeomanry Corps, transmitted by the Lord Lieutenant of the County to the Lieutenant Colonel Commandant, be inserted at length in the Orderly Book of the Corps.

That the Thanks of this House be given to the Volunteer and Yeomanry Corps of the United Kingdom for the Promptitude and Zeal with which, at a Crisis the most momentous to their Country, they have associated for its defence.

Nov. 13th 1803.

His Royal Highness Prince William Frederick having recommended to the Lord Lieutenant of the County that each Volunteer Corps, when called out for the service, should be furnished with a proportion of Working Tools to enable them to break up the roads if necessary and impede the Progress of an Enemy, the commanding officer directs that the Captains of Companies do report to him such Persons as may be willing to provide Pick Axes, Felling Axes, Saws and Spades or Shovels, to be paid for by Government when used. The services of persons to act as Pioneers to the Number of Two to each company will be acceptable from persons not at present in the Ranks.

6th May, 1804

Presentation and Consideration of Colors

It is the Commanding Officers Order that the Corps parade at Nine o'clock on the morning of the 11th May (Friday next), on the Sandy Mains, and be drawn up with the Village of Newton in its Rear, flanked on the Right and Left by the Troops

of Ashton and Norton Cavalry.

Previous to the Colors arriving on the Ground (which will be about Half-past Ten), Three Sub-divisions on the Right and Left of the Newton Battalion will wheel forwards so as to form Three Sides of a Square, the Troops of Cavalry at the same time wheeling outwards to preserve the Ground necessary for the Ceremony of presenting the Colors and Evolutions. The Front of the Square will be left open for the Accomodation of such Spectators as may honour the Ceremony with their Presence. In the Square will be placed a Camp Color as the point where Mrs. Gwilym and the Commanding Officer (accompanied by Two Ensigns and their Covering Sergeants) meet. Here the Colors will be presented to the Commanding Officer by Mrs Gwilym, and by him to the Ensigns, when the Major will order the Battalion to present Arms, during which the Musick will play, and afterwards to Shoulder Arms. The Commanding Officer will then address the Corps. The Colors will then be consecrated, after which they will march for their Post in the Centre of the Battalion, when Arms will again be presented and the Musick play. At Twelve, after the Performance of such Evolutions as may be ordered, the Newton Battalion will form on its Original Ground flanked as before by the Cavalry - one Troop of which will be in Front and the other in the Rear, the Newton Battalion being in the centre, in which order the whole will march to Haydock Lodge. The Colors will be lodged in the Hall, and at One the Newton Battalion with the Troops of Cavalry will sit down to Dinner. At Three the whole will again form Line and march in Front of the House in their former Order, the Ashton Cavalry turning to Ashton, the Newton Battalion halting at the Lodges, where it will be dismissed, and the Norton Cavalry proceeding Home.

Newton, June 17th, 1803

Brigade Review by his Royal Highness, Prince William Frederick

His Royal Highness Prince Wm. Frederick having commanded a Brigade Review of the Voir. Corps in this Neighbourhood and District, upon the Newton Race Ground, on Friday, the 21st instant, It is the Commanding Officer's Order that the Corps of Newton Associated Volunteers do assemble at Three o'clock precisely on the Morning of that Day, with their Accoutrements and Appointments in all Respects, and with Flints fixed prepared for a Field Day. It is the Commanding Officer's further Order and most earnest Desire that no Member of the Corps do absent himself upon that occasion on any account or pretext whatever, And as the Exercise of the Day will make it necessary to provide Refreshment for the Corps upon the Ground, every Member of the Corps will furnish himself with a Clasp or Pocket Knife that as little time as possible may be lost in the distribution and partaking of the Refreshment provided.

A review of all the volunteers in the district was also held by H.R.H. Prince William Frederick of Gloucester, on the Newton Racecourse, on Tuesday, August 7th, 1804, when the following regiments took up position in line-the senior being on the right: Light Horse, 48; Rifle, 60; Warrington, 500; Newton, 240; Ashton, Bold, and Winwick, 240; Wigan, 460; Rifle, 60. After the inspection, His Royal Highness expressed his great satisfaction in inspecting the troops, and congratulated each regiment on their smartness under arms. The Newton regiment then consisted of five companies of sixty each, with Lieut-Colonel Claughton as commandant, and including two field-officers, five captains, ten subalterns, four staff-officers, fifteen sergeants, and eight drummers, a total of 300 effective rank and file.

A few years later, through the recommendation of H.M. King George III.'s ministers, volunteer corps were induced to form themselves into militia regiments, subject to conditions laid down by Lord Derby, the Lord Lieutenant of the County. The Newton corps then became absorbed in the Wigan Local Militia.

After the battle of Waterloo, the infantry volunteers fell almost entirely into abeyance; but the successes of the French in North Italy, in 1859, gave fresh impetus to the volunteer movement, and under the auspices of the Government many thousand volunteers were enrolled in all parts of the kingdom by the end of the year. Newton was not slow to follow the rest of the kingdom in forming a corps, for we find (to quote from a local newspaper) that "while every town, hamlet, and

large public works is having its 'local' rifle corps, the extensive printing works of Messrs. McCorquodale & Co, are not to be left without ; and already preparatory meetings have been held. The numerous able-bodied men there are accustomed to do duty whatever may be the state of the 'case'; and without '?' they will, if called into the field, secure '!', and bring the enemy to a '.' with a '----' worthy of Newton-le-Willows. At fighting enemies with the 'stick' or the '+' printers have always shone as '* *' A meeting was held in assembly room of the Legh Arms Hotel, on the 12th December, 1859, for the purpose of organizing a corps. There were present J. S. T. Greene, Esq., chairman ; the Revs, G. Walker and H. Newsham, George McCorquodale, Esq., J. Thomson, Esq., Dr. J. W. Watkins, R Houghton, Esq., Dr. Pennington, J. Worsley, Esq., and Mr. Maury, secretary pro tem. At this meeting Mr. Geo. McCorquodale, in the course of a lengthy speech, said :-

Were he to consult his own personal inclination and feeling, he would much rather be a member of a peace society than a volunteer; but that peace society must be one, not confined to this country alone, but general throughout Europe, for were they to lay down their arms and take up the views of a peace society whilst the rest of Europe was arming, they might well be compared to the ostrich, which, when it saw danger approaching, hid its head under the sand in fancied security.

The chairman, the Rev. H. Newsham, and Mr. William Mercer also made eloquent speeches in favour of the formation of a corps; and from this meeting arose the formation of two volunteer rifle corps in Newton - the 73rd and the 49th, known familiarly as "McCorquodale's" and "Birley's"

"McCorquodale's" Volunteers.

This company was first named "The Makerfield Volunteer Rifle Corps," which name was successively altered to the 73rd Lancashire Rifle Volunteers, the 80th Lancashire Rifle Volunteers (Liverpool Press Guard), the 19th Lancashire Rifle Volunteers, the 6th Volunteer Battalion of the King's Liverpool Regiment, and the 9th Territorial Battalion of the King's Liverpool Regiment. The first members were enrolled in January, and the swearing-in took place on May 5th, 1860, at Myddleton Hall, before J. S. T. Greene, Esq., J.P. For an account of this function we are indebted to the columns of the Warrington Guardian of that month and year:-

Newton Rifle Volunteers

The interesting ceremony of swearing in the Newton Volunteer Rifleman took place on the 5th instant. The company met in the large room of the Legh Arms, where each man signed his paper. They then defiled to the street, fell into two ranks of upwards of thirty each, formed into sections of four, and, preceded by the band, marched in regimental order to Myddleton Hall, the residence of J. S. T. Greene, Esq., J.P. A speech was delivered by that gentleman, and responded to by another justice who was present. The men took the oath in sections of twelve. They then marched to Winwick, where they halted to obtain refreshments. After reassembling to the "call" of the bugle, they resumed their march to the inspiring strains of "Rule, Britannia," and left Winwick amid the hearty cheers of the villagers. On the arrival at Newton, the volunteers marched direct to the Parsonage, where the drill-sergeant, in presence of Mrs. McCorquodale and other ladies, put them through sundry evolutions. Other addresses were then given by Mr. George McCorquodale and Mr. T. J. Gillispie, the latter, in allusion to the wish of the volunteers that he should become their lieutenant, begging a short time for consideration. Three cheers were given for the gallant Captain (Mr. Blacklock), Mrs. McCorquodale, and others. The Queen's anthem was then struck up, and, the band playing a march, the company marched back to quarters, and were shortly after dismissed. We heard that 72 members took the oath of allegiance on this occasion, and that an additional number, some of whom were necessarily absent, will be sworn in at a future period.

This has been and is a thoroughly self-supporting corps, the whole of the large sum subscribed for their outfit, by the neighbouring gentry, having been entirely appropriated by the rival company. Promises of support, however, have been made; and, though the individual members are quite ready and willing to bear the outlay, it must materially impinge on their earnings, the whole of them being working-men. Great credit is due to the Newton Volunteers for their zeal and perseverance thus far ; they expect to have their uniform in about three weeks, where there is little doubt they will make a gay and gallant appearance ; and, to judge of their permanent efficiency by their present progress, and the hearty goodwill with which they attend drill, we prophesy that they will be the "crack" corps in the village to which they belong, and will easily stand comparison with any who may have had the privilege of being better supported and longer in existence. They number above 80 members, and others from the more respectable families in the parish are expected immediately to join.-A PLAIN SPEAKER

Through the kindness of Colonel J. L. Wood we are able to give, in alphabetical order, the names of most of those enrolled during the first nine years :-

John Adams
William Ainsworth
William Aitken, jun.
-Aldridge
Joseph Appleton
Thomas Ashton
Samuel Atkins
John Ball (comp.)
John Ball (binder)
Charles Beloe
William Berry
James Birch
William Birch
W.T. Blacklock
Richard Briggs
J. Brown (mechanic)
John Brown (comp.)
Duncan Bryce
William D. Burdis
Peter M. Campbell
George Cartwright
Alexander Chisholm
John Clemson
Thomas Collard
Edmund C. Cooper
William Critchley
Michael Denning
John Devereux
Joseph Devereux
William Devereux
Richard Dinsdale
Fergus Dobbie
Thomas Dudgeon
George Eaves
James Egan
William Ellam
Peter Fairclough
Richard Fairclough
Thos. S. Fairclough

William Fairclough
James Fazakerley
Fred. A. Frost
James Gibson
Thomas J. Gillespie
Abram Gleave
Robert Gleave
James Glover
Thomas Gorse
Thomas Gowdy
Patrick Grace
Alfred Gregson
Frederick Griffith
Thomas Griffith
William Hall
Robert Harrison
Peter Haseldon
Peter Heaton
Wm. Hicklenton
Ellis Hill
Thomas Hill
William Hill
George Hilton
Robert Hindley
Henry Houghton
Thomas Howarth
John Irving
- Jago
Hancock Johnson
John Jones
John Kean
Thomas Kitson
John Lawson
Gilbert Lennox
Henry Liddell
James Macawley
George MayneThomas Mayor
James Maypothor
Hugh McCorquodale
Robert Melville
William Nuttall
James Ogden
George Olley
- Parker
John Parkinson
Edward Pedder
James Pendlebury
James Pennington
Peter Percival
James Pickup
William Price
Christopher Revelle
Nathaniel Rigby
John Roberts
John Roden
Thomas Roughley
Thomas Ryan
John Simpson
John Sinclair
Henry Singleton
John Singleton
Henry Tayleur
James Thompson
James Toft
William Travis

William Vaudrey
 James Walker
 John Wareing
 James Welsby
 Charles Whittle
 James Williamson
 James Wilson
 John Wilson
 William Worrall

The weekly contribution was one shilling for men and sixpence for apprentices. The first uniform was grey with forage cap. When the company became the 80th Lancashire Volunteers (Liverpool Press Guard), the uniform was changed to dark trousers with red band down the seam, scarlet tunic with pipeclayed belt, and large bearskin head-dress (the same uniform as that of the Grenadier Guards). This company was privileged to march with fixed bayonets until 1880, when the practice was stopped, and also to act as a guard of honour to Royalty when passing through Liverpool. The bearskin was afterwards changed to the black cloth helmet. The covered drill-places were a room in the Works and the Assembly-room, and for outdoor drill the Bowling-green behind the Works, a field behind Mr. Mercers house in High Street, and the Mesnes. The headquarters of the company for many years, down to the formation of the Territorials, were the old building once occupied by Captain Hilton, situated at the left-hand corner of the approach out of Southworth-road to the Goods Station. This building was taken down in June, 1908. The first shooting-butts, constructed by the volunteers themselves, were in the Golborne valley to the east of the railway, which butts, on account of stray shots from poor marksmen dropping into the Lowton road, were afterwards changed to Highfield Moss, where a range of 600 yards was obtained. The volunteer band was noted for its efficiency, was conducted by a Mr. Oakden, the conductor of the Warrington Militia band, and consisted of the following members :-

William Aitken, jun.

Richard Fairclough

Abel Jones

John Hall

Thos. S. Fairclough

William Mark
 Addison Briggs

William Fairclough

Charles Notman

Edmund C. Cooper

Abram Gleave

Hugh Paton
 William Ellam

Thos. Hincklenton

William Sharp

Peter Fairclough

Ben. Jackson

George Stead Wood

Reviews.

On August 11th, 1860, a grand review was held at Newton, when 8000 volunteers from Warrington, Manchester, Liverpool, and Newton, together with the Lancashire Hussars, the Duke of Lancaster's Yeomanry, and the Mounted Rifles from Manchester, were under arms, and were inspected by Lieut.-General Sir George Wetherall, K.C.B., the General Commanding the Northern and Midland Districts, and in presence of the Earl of Sefton (Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire), the Earl of Ellesmere, J. Ireland Blackburne, Esq., the Hon. Captain Egerton, and officers of H.M.'s ship, "St. George," a fair gathering of other officers of the Army and Navy, and a large number of ladies. The review took place on the Racecourse, which was kindly placed at the disposal of the authorities by William J. Legh, Esq. Notwithstanding the fact that charges of ten shillings and five shillings were made for the privilege of occupying seats on the grand stand, that capacious structure was crowded in every part. So numerous a body of volunteers had not, up to that time, assembled together and performed such complicated movements, and these under the most unfavourable conditions, the Common, owing to the state of the weather of previous days, being a perfect quagmire.--The second Newton volunteer review took place on Newton Common, on August 3rd, 1861, and, in spite of the gloomy weather of the morning, attracted an immense crowd from Warrington, Bolton, Wigan, Manchester, and nearer places. The Cheshire corps on this occasion were not allowed to participate, but the increase in the Lancashire corps raised the number to 7,900.--On September 1st, 1860, a review on a more extensive scale was held at Knowsley, when every volunteer regiment in Lancashire, with the exception of Oldham, was represented, with a total of 10,000 men.--On the 13th July, 1867, there was an inspection of the 80th L.R.V. at Liverpool, at which the men appeared for the first time in their new slings and bearskins.--Again, on the 5th October of the same year, a review took place on the ground acquired for the proposed new Sefton Park, Liverpool, the event being favoured with fine weather and the presence of H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge. There were 12,022 volunteers present under arms and over 100,000 spectators. The cavalry was represented by the Lancashire Hussars and the Second Light Horse. The 80th Lancashire battalion (the Press Guard) was under the command of Lieut.-Colonel McCorquodale, and consisted of 14 officers, 41 sergeants, 44 band, etc., and 341 rank and file, a total of 440. The two Newton contingents had an enthusiastic reception, which was highly appreciated by the gallant colonel and his friend Captain Birley. Of these reviews the old Newton volunteers still speak with enthusiasm, as they do also of their sham fight in Lyme Park, when their old chaplain, the Rev. Peter Legh, took them tither and right royally entertained them at his own expense. They also speak so gleefully of their camp life in the Isle of Man and at other places, and of their prowess at Highfield Moss, Altcar, Wimbledon, and Bisley, that one almost wishes they were thirty years younger to take their places in the trenches along the banks of the river Aisne, where we are sure they would give a good account of themselves.

The downpour of rain could not have been greater on the Aisne than it was on the Sankey on the occasion of the first review on Newton Common, for it was an all-day's rain, so we were "droukit like craws," And the review could no more be put off than the battle, and it was infru dig. to use an umbrella. The Common had been cleared of its luxuriant growth of gorse and all its golden glory that used to gladden the eyes of the natives for centuries before, and left it as desolate as a veritable battlefield. I remember only one visit to Lyme Park, and it was memorable not only for its manoeuvres in carrying the fortalice by assault in the face of a valiant force of yeomanry, but in the short shrift we gave the foe as they sailed out to meet us ; and we gave them a fen de joie instead of so much cold steel. And my only objection to the use of the muzzle-loader was that we ran the risk of firing the ramrod ! Of the hospitalities on these and other occasions, it would be superflous to speak. The commissariat was a model of its kind in each case, and the entraining almost equal to that of the Prussians in 1864, when i marched with them from Altona to Hamburg : so let no one henceforth say we would have been ineffectives. At that time we often had to run the gauntlet of public criticism, as I remember once or twice on the Landing Stage in Liverpool, but the public became accustomed to us, and we increased and multiplied till a retrograde action set in that has well-nigh left us at the mercy of the foreign mercenary.- P.M.C.

The annual inspection of the 19th L.R.V. (Press Guard) was held on the Mesnes on the 18th June, 1887 (the Queen's Jubilee year), on the invitation of Colonel McCorquodale. The inspecting officer was Lieut.-General Thackwell, C.B. The Newton company, under the command of Captain Norman McCorquodale, before taking part in the inspection, were marched to the Willows, and were there photographed by Mr. Birtles, of Warrington. Thence the men marched to the railway station to await the arrival of the Liverpool companies, the battalion then marching to the Mesnes. Amongst them, mounted and in regimentals, were Colonel Whitney and Colonel McCorquodale. The ground was kept by a detachment of the Newton Troop of Hussars under the command of Sergt.-Major Hughes.

Amongst the officers were:-
Major Pemberton Wood,
Captain and Hon. Major Cooper,

Major and Adjutant de Burgh,
 Surgeon-Major Bailey,
 Captains: Peace, Watts, Pride, Anderton, Hartley, Kennedy, McCorquodale,
 Lieutenants: Bruce, Perry, Stuart, Whitney, Whitehead, Ratcliffe, McPherson, Wood, Harris, Lane, and Quarter-Master G. N. Hodge.

The inspecting officer was received with a royal salute on arrival, after which he inspected the accoutrements of the men. The regiment was then formed into companies and marched past in review order. In doing so the men showed to great advantage, all the companies parading in good order and displaying a soldierly bearing which evoked the hearty plaudits of the numerous spectators. The battalion was afterwards drawn up into line and put through the manual and firing exercises by Major de Burgh, in all of which movements the men proved themselves proficient. At the close, Lieut.-General Thackwell, in addressing the volunteers, said :-

That was the largest muster of the regiment he had ever seen, and he had no doubt it would maintain its strength and position. No soldier was worth much now unless he was a fair shot. Any man with fair eyesight and good determination could easily manage to get out of the third-class and become a second-class shot. One of the best companies, and a very efficient one, belonged to Newton. This company had been very ably commanded by Captain Wood for some years. Captain, now Major Wood was now in a position in which he would be able to do more general good to the battalion. The company would lose none of that efficiency under the present captain, Captain McCorquodale, son of Colonel McCorquodale, who had been connected with the regiment for so many years, and who had taken great interest in it and done so much for it. He was quite sure the movement which had taken place that day would add much to the popularity of the Newton company and the Press Guards.

The state of parade was as follows: 26 officers, 39 sergeants, 46 band and buglers. 410 rank and file; total 521. Absent on leave-3 officers, 4 band and buglers, 46 rank and file; total 53. Absent without leave-17 rank and file. The regiment subsequently marched to the Willows, where they were entertained by Colonel McCorquodale, who evinced great interest in the proceedings.

The following is a list of the officers during the forty-eight years of the companies existence, many of whom joined as privates and passed through the various grades :-

LIEUT. COLONELS

Geo. McCorquodale
 Chas. E. Hamilton
 Joseph L. Wood, V.D.

CAPTAINS

W. H. Blacklock
 Hugh McCorquodale
 George Hilton
 G. F. McCorquodale
 N. McCorquodale
 W. Hindley Smith

LIEUTENANTS

Thos. J. Gillespie
 Henry Tayleur
 Richard Brewis

Henry Liddell
A. C. McCorquodale
H. S. McCorquodale
J. D. P. Smith

CHAPLAIN

Rev. Peter Legh

COLOUR-SERGEANTS

Henry Houghton
Thos. Boardman
Thos. Appleton
Robt. Wright

SERGEANTS

Joseph Aitken
William Aitken, jun.
Frederick Appleton
Isaac Bateman
John Brown
Peter M. Campbell
Walter Devereux
Peter Haselden
William Hinckleton
Robert J. Hill
Robert Honderwood
William Kent
John Lawson
Thomas Mayor
George McCormick
William Moister
Henry Nobbs
William Nuttall
Peter Percival
James Pullan
John Rimmer
Henry Roberts
William Rose
William Sutton
W. G. Wallace

CORPORALS

John Ball (binder)
William Ellam
G. L. Fitzgerald
George Goff
William Hall
Ellis Hill
John Kean
George Lougworth
Wm. Pendlebury

John Singleton
George Wright

LANCE-CORPORALS

Duncan Bryce
Thomas Hill
John Roden

Amongst a large number of excellent marksmen who took part in competitions at Highfield Moss, Altcar, Wimbledon, and Bisley, the following were pre-eminent :-

Isaac Bateman
Thomas Boardman
Robert Chorley
Walter Devereux
John Fitzgerald
James Gibson
James Glover
Thomas Griffith
Robert J. Hill
Robert Honderwood
John Lawson
William Moister
William Nash
Peter Percival
James Pullan
John Rimmer
William Sutton
Edwin Vardy
Alfred Walker
George Wright
Robert Wright

Isaac Bateman obtained the Queen's Badge at Wimbledon in 1878, also the County Badge. He afterwards won the Lord Lieutenant's Prize at Altcar.-Robert Chorley was a winner of prizes at both Wimbledon and Altcar.-James Gilson also shot at Wimbledon and won many local prizes.-Robert Honderwood was a distinguished marksman and won a £3 money prize at Wimbledon in 1876, and was second in the Queen's, at Wimbledon, in 1879.-Peter Percival had a good reputation as a marksman.-James Pullan won a money prize of £3 at Bisley, prizes at County meetings, and many local prizes, including Captain G. F. McCorquodale's Cup and Colonel Hamilton's Cup.-John Rimmer shot at Wimbledon and won prizes at the County meetings, also the Marksman's Cup and the Battalion Cup.

A list of those who completed twenty or more years' service and received the long-service medal :-

Joseph Aitken

Frederick Appleton
Thomas Appleton
Samuel Barrett
Isaac Bateman
Thomas Boardman
Walter Devereux
William Hall
R.J. Hill
Henry Houghton
Thomas Mayor
George McCormick
Peter Percival

John Rimmer
William Rose
William Sutton
Robert Wright

The following are selected from a later roll-book containing over 700 names of the members of this company who have received more or less military training :-

Joseph Aitken

Joseph Anderson
Frederick Appleton
John Appleton
Thomas Appleton
Thomas Ashton
Peter Aspinall
Samuel Barrett
Isaac Bateman
James Baybut
James Bennison
John Benson
Richard Boardman
Thomas Boardman
John J. Boyer

Joseph Braddock
Robert Brown
Charles Burgess
Duncan Chisholm
Robert Chorley
John Clemson, jun.
John Cook
Albert I. Craughton
John Davies
David Davis
Thos. Dudgeon, jun.
Thomas Egan
Thomas Egan, jun.
William Ellam
Thomas Fairclough
Edmund Forman
Arthur Frost
J. A. Galloway
Robt. A. Galloway
 John Gannon
William J. Gee
John German
William Gloster
George Goff
Jas. A. Gowenlock
William Grace
Thomas Heaton
Robert J. Hill
Charles Hindley
William H. Hindley
Henry Holdcroft
Robert H. Holdgate
Robert Honderwood
Frank Houghton
John Howe
John Hunter
George F. Irving
John R. Jones
William Kent
Henry Kitchen
John Lyons
Arthur Lennox
James Lennox
Herbert Liptrott
George McCormick
John McCormick
Wm. G. McCormick
Douglas McHardy
Percy McHardy
William Moister
Daniel Murphy
Charles V. Naylor
William Owen
 John W. Parks

 William H. Parks
Barry Pearson
William Pendlebury
Norman H. Percival
Percy A. Percival
Edward Perry
William Perry
James Pullan
John H. Pullan
Thomas Ratcliffe

John Rimmer
William Rose
Thomas Sharp
John Siddeley
Thomas Speakman
Albert Spencer
George Sturgess
William Sutton
William R. Tasker
Albert Tietjen
John Tomkins
Frank A. Turner
Richard Turner
Edwin Vardy
Frank Wagg
Hector Weekes
Frederick Whittle
Robert Williams
Thomas Wilson
George S. Wood, jun.
George Wright
Robert Wright
Edward Wyatt

"Birley's" Volunteers

This company claimed to be the senior of the two Newton companies formed in 1860, although they were both practically formed at the same time. As we have seen, a meeting was held at the end of 1859 to organize a corps, and all appears to have gone smoothly until the matter of choosing a captain was introduced. The Sugar Works' men wished to appoint Mr. J. H. Birley, and the Printing Works' men naturally wished to appoint one of the heads of their establishment. We are told there was a majority at the meeting in favour of Mr. Birley, to whose election the Printers could not agree. This difference resulted in the formation of two separate corps-the 49th and the 73rd; and thus more volunteers were enrolled in the two companies than would probably have been the case had only one company been formed. The first members of the 49th were sworn in at the Cockpit School.

The company's original title was "The 49th Lancashire Volunteer Rifle Corps," which was subsequently changed to " 'G' Company 9th Lancashire Volunteer Corps," and " 'G' Company 1st Volunteer Battalion (Price of Wales' Volunteers), South Lancashire Regiment."

The following are the names of those who enrolled from 1860 to 1876, taken from an old roll-book kindly lent to us by Drill-Instructor Hackett :-

John Andrews

Thomas Ashcroft
Peter Ashton
Geo. Hy. Atkinson
William Barrow
George Barnes
Joseph Bickerton
John Brown
Aaron Burgess
Patrick Burkes
Frank Burnes
Christopher Carlin
James Cartwright
Aaron Cauce
John Conway
Martin Conway
Thomas Corcoran
John Coyle, sen.
John Coyle, jun.
Robert Crusher
John Daley
James Dalton
Joseph Dean
Bernard Dolan
Henry Edwards
John Fielding
Edward Fitzgerald
Michael Fitzgerald
James Flanigan
John S. Foister
John Gandy
Thomas Gannon
John Gibbons
Thomas Gillonly
Thomas Gleave
James Goodwin
John Goodwin
William Goodwin
David Harrison
Thomas Haselden
Martin Haverty
John Henry
William Higgins
John Hindley
Edward R. Hogarth

William A. Howarth
Thomas Jackson
Michael Jennings
Alfred Jones
Nathaniel Jones
Thomas Jones
George Jay
John Kavanagh
James Kelly
Michael Kenny
Thomas Kenny
Thomas Large
Thos. S. Large
James Larkin
Charles Latham
James Lester
Edward Lister
Robert Lomas
Thomas Lydon

John Lynch
 Patrick Mahon
 Thomas Mahoney
 John Mains
 James Mannion
 John Martin
 Thomas Matthews
 Daniel McMillan
 Chas. A. Morgan
 James Mullin
 Michael Murphy
 William Noble
 Ambrose Parsons
 Joseph Parsons
 James Pennington
 Thomas Pill
 John Plumpton
 Joseph Redfern
 Joseph Richardson
 Thomas Richardson
 James Seddon
 Thomas Shannon
 G. Armitage Smith
 Patrick Solan
 Henry Stevenson

Martin Touhey
 John Travis
 Thomas Tunstall
 John Turton
 William Walton
 Robert Watkinson
 George Wilson

This company was latterly not so numerous as the 73rd, for in 1863 we find it consisted of about 70 rank and file; in May, 1876, it consisted of the captain (Dr. E. Lister), the colour-sergeant, four sergeants, the bugler, 29 privates, and the sergeant-instructor, a total of 37.

Like the 73rd, this company was self supporting. The headquarters were at the old Cockpit School, where the members drilled down to 1908, when what remained of the two Newton detachments became part of the same battalion under the Territorial Act of Mr. Haldane. The 49th took part in the making of the Golborne Dale butts, and also contributed to the cause of their removal to Highfield Moss. Sergeant B. Dolan tells a story of the shooting which hastened this removal. One summer evening the 49th were practising at the Golborne butts, and a stray shot found its way over the top of the mound into the sand-field on the south of the Lowton road, striking one of the spokes in the wheel of a cart that was being filled with sand. Captain Birley-who dearly loved a joke-set the tale a-going that his lieutenant, Julius Caesar John Baile, had fired the shot that struck the cart, and poor Baile had to endure a good deal of chaff in consequence. A few evenings after this occurrence, as Sergeant Dolan and others were going there to practise, the carter accosted them thus: "Are yo chaps gooin' a-shootin' to-neet?" Yes. "Well, as soon as yore flag goes up, my spade goes deawn! Aw'm clearin' eawt!" He was not going to run the risk of being shot.-This company also had a band with Mr. Abel Jones, of Earlestown, as conductor. He was formerly in the band of the 73rd.

REVIEWS.

The 49th took part in the reviews held on the Common in 1860 and 1861, and in those held at Knowsley and Sefton Park, Liverpool. Captain Birley also paid the expenses of those members of his company who went to York with the 9th

(Warrington), under command of Lieutenant.-Colonel Greenall, on August 11th, 1866. The review was held on the Knavesmire (racecourse), where 30,000 volunteers were reviewed by H. R. H. the Duke of Cambridge, accompanied by the Prince and Princess of Wales. The Warrington battalion, including the members of the 49th, was 400 strong, and was specially noted by the Commander-in-Chief, during the march past, by reason of the steadiness which characterised the marching.

A large number of English and French volunteers visited Belgium, in October, 1866, when some of the 9th L.R.V. (Warrington), with Adjutant Burgess and Captain Hugh McCorquodale, accompanied them. His Majesty, the King of the Belgians, according to The Times report-

Expressed the pleasure he felt at seeing foreign riflemen competing with Belgian marksmen, and shook hands with the French officer, Colonel Lindsay, Lord Bury, Sir Paul Hunter, Adjutant Burgess, and Lieutenant Furley.

The best shot was made by Mr. A. Curtis, of the 11th Surrey Volunteers. And now, forty-eight years afterwards, in the same country, the three associated nationalities are proving their superior marksmanship in their deadly struggle with the Kaiser's hordes! – The following year (13th July, 1867), the Belgian riflemen paid a return visit to England, and on arrival at Wimbledon sustained a warm reception amid a pelting rain. As they reached the camp and were being presented to the Prince of Wales, a heavy thunderstorm came on, and in a few minutes everybody was drenched. His Highness presented each Belgian volunteer with a medal as a memento of the occasion, and addressed them in a complimentary speech, which was replied to by Colonel Gregoire, who in turn presented to the Prince a souvenir of their visit, which had been sent by the town of Antwerp. Private Bernard Dolan, of the 49th, was present on this occasion, and was one of the winners of £10 and the N.R.A. Badge, in the shooting for the Queen's Prize.

I was in Coblenz a very weeks before the Franco-German War began, and went to the butts to witness the military practice, and can conscientiously say it was no better than ours in Newton. At the long distance there were many ricochets, showing that the shooters were being taught to aim low as to wound, if not kill. The effect of this was seen in the many wounded in the battles. At the nearer distances many of the shots hit the tops of the butts, for I was looking at them through a field-glass. The day before, for a wonder, I was allowed to inspect the fortress of Ehrenbreitstein, and met the Crown Prince and Governor on the pontoon bridge returning; but was refused at Rosenstein Castle at the point of the bayonet, and warned away from Ulm on the Danube. I had also an opportunity of seeing how the Russians could entrench themselves at Brest-Litouski, now a great fortress, and saw ten thousand of them in Warsaw returning from Turkey. I was on every great battlefield in Europe, from Chalons to Waterloo, and so matriculated as a Newton volunteer.- P.M.C

The following is a list of the officers during the lifetime of the company (1860-1908), many of whom joined as privates and passed through the various grades:-

CAPTAINS

J. H. Birley H. J. Widdows E. E. Bernhard
Edward Lister Brereton Fairclough C. L. Williamson
Harry Thomson E. L. Fletcher

LIEUTENANTS

Edward R. Hogarth R. Stephenson J. N. Patterson
J. C. J. Bailey H. F. Gooch

CHAPLAINS

Rev. S. B. Baird Rev. H. Siddall

MEDICAL OFFICERS

J. W. Watkins J. N. Patterson

COLOUR SERGEANTS

John Thomson Thomas Haselden Bernard Dolan

G. H. Atkinson Michael McCoy George Bailey

SERGEANTS

Thomas Ashcroft Thomas Kenny Patrick Solan

Thomas Jackson James Seddon Thomas Tunstall

CORPORALS

William Goodwin William Higgins Thomas Pill

LONG SERVICE MEN

Joseph Dean William Goodwin Thomas Pill

Aaron Counce Thomas Haselden James Seddon

Bernard Dolan Michael Kenny Thomas Tunstall

MARKSMEN

Bernard Dolan Thomas Griffith Thomas Tunstall

Edward Fitzgerald Thomas Haselden

Captain Birley was one of the first volunteer officers in the district to be presented to Her Majesty Queen Victoria.

Thomas Haselden was prominent at the National Rifle Associations meetings at Wimbledon, where, in 1878, he brought distinction to his company by winning the St. Georges badge and medal and accompanying money prize. A clever feat was the winning of the Wigan Challenge Cup, which had to be shot for by three men belonging to one company. The crack shots were Sergeants B. Dolan, T. Tunstall, and T. Haselden.-Bernard Dolan, as we have seen, won £10 and the N.R.A. badge at Wimbledon, and he claims the unique experience of competing with four different rifles-the Enfield muzzle-loader, the Snider breech-loader, the Martini, and the Lee-Metford.-Thomas Tunstall obtained a Queen's badge at Wimbledon in 1878, and also won the John Pearson Cup three times, thus becoming the owner.

The following is an account of one of the competitions:-

The annual prize meeting of the 49th L.R.V. took place at Highfield Moss on Saturday, September 9th, 1876, for the late High Sheriff's (Mr. John Pearson's) Cup, and prizes subscribed for by Captain Lister and friends of the Corps. Prize Winners: Colour-Sergeant T. Haselden, Private John Andrews, Sergeant B. Dolan, Sergeant T. Tunstall, Private J. Fielding, Corporal T. Kenny, Private E. Fitzgerald, Private D. Harrison, Corporal T. Pill, Corporal Goodwin, Privates Thomas Smith, Thomas Shannon, R. Crusher, Thomas Large, W. Walton, T. S. Large, Corporal W. Higgins, Privates P. Mahon, Joseph Dean, and M. Touhey.—Warrington Guardian.

PRESENTATION OF WATCHES.

On September 7th, 1901, a meeting was held in the Newton Town Hall, under the presidency of the Rev. James Ryder, to present silver watches to the returned local yeoman and volunteers who had served in South Africa during the Boer War. There were present Dr. Chavasse (Bishop of Liverpool), Lord Newton, Colonel R. Pilkington, M.P., Captain T. E. Withington, J.P., Captain F. M. Appleton (Warrington), Lieut. C. T. Street, Lieut. E. S. Pilkington, the Rev. H. E. H. Probyn (the Bishop's Chaplain), Mr. R. Stone, J.P., Mr. R. Barton, Mr. C. B. F. Borron, and others. The volunteer recipients were as follow: Corporals A. Dean and E. Moss, Privates T. Shallcross, T.A. Moore, C. E. Booth, E. Bevan, G. Singleton, A. Houghton. Lord Newton presented the watches to the yeomen, and Colonel Pilkington presented them to the volunteers.- On October 26th, 1903, another meeting was held, in the Earlestown Town Hall, under the presidency of the Rev. James Ryder, to distribute other watches to the second draft of citizen soldiers who left this district for the Boer War. They were: Corporal T. Green (1st V.B., South Lancashire Regiment) and Private W. Owen (6th V.B., South Lancashire Regiment). They also received medals from the King. The watches were made by the Lancashire Watch Company, Limited, Prescott, were of excellent workmanship, suitably inscribed, and enclosed in a neat leather case. A sum of £120 was raised for the purpose by a committee of which the Rev. James Ryder was chairman, Mr. W. H. Hindley, treasurer, and Messrs. T. Mayor and W. A. Mawdsley, secretaries.

THE WAR MEMORIAL.

Alongside the Earlestown Town Hall, was erected to perpetuate the names of those men from Newton-in-Makerfield who volunteered for the front and served in South Africa during the Boer War. The memorial was unveiled by Lord Newton on April 29th, 1905. The following names of members of infantry corps appear thereon:

Lieutenant H. S. McCorquodale (killed in action); Lance-Corporals A. Dean, T. Green, S. F. Moss; Privates E. Bevan, C. Booth, A. Houghton, T. Moore, E. T. Pimblett, T. Shallcross, G. Singleton (1st V.B. South Lancashire Regiment); Private C. Horrocks (3rd V.B.); Private W. Owen (6th V.B.).

Newton men serving in other regiments: Lance-Corporal A. de Courcy Carson (Ceylon Mounted Infantry), Privates T. Bartley (2nd V.B., Welsh Fusiliers), Sydney Smith (1st V.B., Suffolk Regiment), C.J. Thorp (Kimberley Volunteer Corps), John Walton (Royal Army Medical Corps), W. J. Atkinson (Kimberley Town Guard).

THE PASSING OF THE PRESS GUARDS.

On March 31st, 1908, the officers and men of the "F" Company, 6th V.B. (Kings), Liverpool Regiment, met at the Pied Bull Hotel, Newton, for the last time under the old order. During the evening Colonel S. H. Perry, V.D., said :-

Their old title ceased to exist that night, and it was a great grief to him to lose the Newton company which had been so long connected with the battalion he had the honour to command. The Newton company was second to none in the battalion, which was one of the best in Liverpool, if not in the nation. It was formed forty-nine years ago by Colonel McCorquodale, whose name was honoured and respected by every man in Newton. It was a great grief to part, but personal feeling would have to be put aside in the interest of the new movement, which, whether 'for good or ill, was designed for the purpose of improving or increasing the volunteer force. The title Volunteer was now erased and was replaced by the Territorial Army. The officers were unanimously taking service under the new conditions, and he believed a great many of the sergeants had signified their intention of accepting also. They had sixty recruits, and resignations were never fewer. The Newton company was to be attached to the 4th South Lancashire regiment. Their organization was not to be interfered with, and they would all be in camp together. He wanted to ask the sergeants to accept their scarlet uniforms and keep them as a memento of the old battalion.-Earlestown Guardian

Some amusement was caused at the meeting by the exhibition of this funeral card :-

IN REMEMBRANCE OF

"F" Company, Newton Detachment,
6th V.B. (King's) Liverpool Regiment.
Disbanded 31st March, 1908.

Good-bye, "F," all sad and forlorn,

Into the "Terriers" we've been sworn;

Good-bye, "F," we'll remember thee

When we shoulder our rifles in the "G."

And so the Newton Company of the 6th V.B. (King's). Liverpool Regiment, with its long-cherished association with the historic Press Guards, ceased to exist. Colour-Sergeant Henry Houghton, who, forty-eight years before, saw the volunteers in, was present, and therefore saw the volunteers out.

Thanks for this transcription goto Mark Wheatley

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