



Lancashire North Branch

Despatch – April 2021

Third Email edition.



Keeping communications open



Editor's Notes



As we approach what is hopefully the end of this unparalleled lockdown I trust that our members have all stayed well and safe and are looking forward to re-starting our meetings in some form or other.

It is now just over a year since our last branch meeting on 2 March 2020, closely followed by the issue of our first on-line edition of Despatch in April 2020 and still without our 'normal' meetings. By now I suspect most members will have sorted their books, re-read the favourites or found the time to delve into the volumes they always wanted to read or explore subjects through the internet. The good news is that from 12 April Lancashire libraries will begin to open, Archives will open on 13 April and museums will start reopening from 17 May.

To see how other branches are keeping in touch, I carried out a quick review of the 53 branches on the WFA website, to see what they were each doing, if anything, during lockdown and also how they were communicating with their members.

Website	14
Zoom meetings	13
Newsletter	9
Bulletin	7
Podcast	1
Facebook	9
Twitter/Linked-in	3

One branch, Wolverhampton, in an effort to help maintain interest provided an inclusive list of on-line talks and lectures, virtual visits and a comprehensive list of films/programs relating to First World War subjects.

Tom Williams

(Unless otherwise indicated, articles are by the editor.)

A comparison in the costs of the Great War and the Covid pandemic.

£££££

“The adjectives of magnitude were exhausted long ago” according to an article on the cost of the war that appeared in The Daily Telegraph on 25 July 1917. With the Chancellor recently delivering a budget that acknowledged the cost to the country of the current Covid 19 pandemic it may be of interest to attempt to make a comparison with the cost of the Great War.

By July 1917 the Government was becoming alarmed over the steadily increasing rate of daily expenditure on the war. Up to July 1917 the total cost of the war so far was estimated to be £1.025 billion. With an average daily expenditure of £6,795,000 against a budgeted figure of £6,411,000. For simplicity let us call that £7,000,000 per day. Added to which is an estimated debt charge of around £1,000,000 per day, so in total the daily cost appears to be £8,000,000 per day.

If we apply the inflationary changes to £1 in 1917 this works out at an equivalent value today of £71.93, the daily cost of £8,000,000 becomes in today’s value, £575 billion per day.

The figures supplied by the Office for Budget Responsibility gives the costs of Covid 19 for the financial year 2020-21 as £355 billion. This equates to £972,600,000 per day or near enough £1.0 billion per day.



Brothers in Arms



The Dubois family of Lewisham, south London, were a modest middle class Victorian family. The father ran a Gentlemen's Outfitting business. The mother had thirteen children, ten surviving in 1901 with two sons dying by 1904. Of the surviving eight children, the four sons all served during the Great War.

The elder son served with the 2/20th London Regiment from 1914 until medically discharged in 1919. Having served in Salonika, this was probably Malaria, for which he received a disability pension. He died in 1927.

The youngest son was mobilised in March 1916 into the 4/4th London Regiment. On 15 July 1916 he was presented with a Silver War Badge before being medically discharged in December 1916 with Pulmonary Tuberculosis. The condition was later deemed to have been aggravated by military service and he was awarded a pension of £2.0.0 per week in October 1919. He survived until 1963.

The two middle brothers attended Addey and Stanhope School, Lewisham. As young men they travelled to Australia where they were briefly engaged in farming before returning to London and entering their father's business. The brothers were among the first to enlist in 1914 and were both killed within two days in April 1917. This is their story:

Oliver Cromwell Dubois DCM, MID



Oliver Cromwell Dubois was born in Lewisham, London on 12 July 1889. On the outbreak of war he enlisted in London into the Royal Field Artillery. He joined the 420th (Howitzer) Battery, 15th Brigade, RHA attached to 29th Division.

The 29th Division as part of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force was ordered to Egypt. The 15th Brigade embarked at Avonmouth aboard HMT ‘Haverford’ and sailed for Egypt at 6.30 pm on 15 March 1915. They travelled via Malta and arrived at Alexandria on 30 March 1915, disembarked and moved to Chatby Camp.

On 17 April 1915 the 15th Brigade sailed on HMT ‘Kingstonian’ for Lemnos, arriving at 6.00 pm on 19 April. The brigade stayed aboard the vessel and

departed for the Gallipoli peninsular at 7.00 am on 26 April 1915. The ship anchored three miles offshore until they could begin disembarkation at 12.30 pm on 27 April 1915 at Cape Helles. The evening and night was spent preparing roads and gun positions. At 6.00 am on 28 April, 'B' and 420th Batteries were in action supporting the attack by 88th Infantry Brigade on Krithia.



Caption: On 28 April, Bombardier Dubois was sent with a message to the French firing line, and on his way back picked up a wounded Frenchman and carried him to the nearest Dressing Station, where he left him, the whole action being performed under heavy rifle fire. Throughout the campaign Bombardier Dubois won a reputation for his bravery under fire and his devotion to duty.

For the next three months 15th Brigade RHA was busily engaged in supporting the numerous attempted advances of the 88th Infantry Brigade, providing defensive fire against Turkish counter attacks and counter-battery fire. On 6

August 1915 a number of Allied offensives commenced at various parts of the Gallipoli peninsular. The 29th Division was to attack the enemy positions north of Krithia Nullah (ravine) with the overall objective to capture Achi Baba, the hill that commanded most of the peninsula. The infantry were to be supported by every gun on the peninsular.

The 15th Brigade RHA opened fire at 3.15 am on 6 August 1915 in preparation for the infantry advance at 3.50 am. During the next twenty-four hours the 15th Brigade fired 1,959 shrapnel shells. Only one man was reported wounded on 6 August but within another day they had lost two men killed and five wounded. Bombardier Cromwell was wounded on 6 August and evacuated to Alexandria.

A summary of the events at this time appears in the 15th Brigade war diary and acknowledges the work done by the telephonists.

‘A severe strain has been imposed on the telephonists of the brigade and there have been many casualties and no trained men sent in drafts. The work done by these men, especially those of the HQ has been admirable.’



The citation for the Distinguished Conduct Medal appeared in the London Gazette, 16th November 1915.

"For conspicuous gallantry and resource on 6th August 1915, at Cape Helles, Dardanelles, when he spent four hours repairing telephone wires under exceptionally heavy shell fire, doing his work well and effectively. Previously, on the 28th April, when sent with a message to the French firing line, he picked up a wounded Frenchman on his way back and carried him to the nearest dressing station, where he left him, the whole action being performed under heavy shell fire. Throughout the whole campaign, Bombardier Dubois has been distinguished for his bravery under fire and his devotion to duty."

For his actions during the Gallipoli campaign, 3740 Bombardier O C Dubois was 'Mentioned in Despatches', published in the London Gazette on 28 January 1916.

When the Allies evacuated the Gallipoli peninsular in January 1916, the 29th Division returned to Egypt before embarking for France between 15-29 March 1916. The division was in action during the Battle of the Somme, at Albert and the Transloy Ridges. The 15th Brigade remained in the Somme area until September 1916 when they moved to the Ypres sector for about six weeks. They returned to the Somme in Mid-October 1916 before moving on to Arras at the end of March 1917.

On 1 April 1917, 15th Brigade RHA was established within the town of Arras in preparation for the coming Battle of Arras. The batteries prepared for a four day bombardment prior to an assault by 3rd, 12th and 15th Divisions. On 4 April the batteries began their program of firing. The attack started in pouring rain at 05.30 am on 9 April. 460th Battery received heavy and consistent shelling, resulting in a number of casualties. This may have been the result of German counter-battery fire. At 10.30 am the railway bridge beside the battery was

blown up, burying three howitzers and setting fire to charges stored under the arches of the bridge.

The 460th Battery suffered eight wounded. Two later died of their wounds, one of them being Bombardier Oliver Cromwell Dubois, who died of his wounds in the 8th Casualty Clearing Station at Etrun.

Latimer Ridley Dubois



Courtesy of IWM

Latimer Ridley Dubois was born on 10 July 1890 at Lewisham, London. On the outbreak of war he enlisted in the Territorials of 1/20th London Regiment (County of London) Blackheath and Woolwich, as 1819 Private L. R Dubois.

On mobilisation the 1/20th London moved to the 47th (2nd London) Divisional concentration area near St. Albans. The 1/20th London landed in France on 9 March 1915, where they joined the 141st Infantry Brigade, 47th Division. During

1915 the battalion was involved at the Battle of Aubers Ridge, the Battle of Festubert and the Battle of Loos. In 1916 the 1/20th London took part in the attack at Vimy ridge before moving to the Somme area where they took part in the capture of High Wood

At some point during the height of the Battle of the Somme, Latimer Dubois was selected for officer training and no doubt sent off to an officer cadet school. He was commissioned into the Devonshire Regiment on 23 October 1916 as 2nd Lieutenant Dubois. On 2 November 1916 he was Gazetted to his old regiment, the London Regiment, joining the 1/18th London (London Irish Rifles) Regiment, also part of 141st Infantry Brigade, 47th Division.

The 1/18th London Regiment was in the Ypres sector and we must assume that 2nd Lieutenant Dubois joined the battalion sometime in November 1916. Unlike most battalion war diaries, that of the 1/18th London Regiment makes no mention of the arrivals and departures of junior officers or of individual casualties among the officers.

The first three months of 1917 were spent in the ‘Hill 60’ sector before the battalion moved to Halifax Camp near Vlamertinghe for training, The 1/18th London was to carry out a ‘minor operation’ against the German Imperial and Imperial Support trenches, just north of the Bluff near Hill 60. The objective was to kill or capture as many Germans as possible, destroy war material and machine gun and Trench Mortar emplacements. The war diary records this operation;

‘7 April 1917. The battalion carried out a minor operation. Zero hour being 8.0 pm. All objectives were gained successfully, but there was delay owing to the extraordinary bad state of no man’s land and the ground between the enemy’s front and support lines. The withdrawal was carried out successfully but very slowly owing to the very heavy enemy

barrage. A stubborn resistance was met with and many of the enemy were killed. Eighteen prisoners were taken. Several emplacements and dugouts were destroyed and one machine gun. Relieved at 2.30 am and went into reserve at Halifax Camp.’

2nd Lieutenant Dubois is only mentioned in the operational orders as a platoon commander in ‘B’ Company. There is no list of casualties in the war diary. 2nd Lieutenant Dubois is commemorated on the Arras Memorial. We do not know if his body was lost during the raid on 7 April 1917 or his subsequent grave was lost.



2nd Loyal North Lancashire Regiment in East Africa



It was one of those chance comments that set me looking at the history of this battalion. My son, who lives in Surrey, had noted the name of a soldier on a local war memorial who had died whilst serving with the 2nd Loyal North Lancashire Regiment (LNL). He considered this an odd finding among the other names, most of who had served in local regiments. We know that men could end up serving in regiments outside their geographical area and as this was a regular battalion I decided to have a ‘quick’ look at his story.

The 2nd LNL was the only regular infantry unit to operate in British East Africa during November 1914 - May 1916, before being transferred to South Africa due to mass ill-health as a result of their service in the African bush. In January 1917 they moved to Suez in Egypt, attached to the 232nd Brigade, 75th Division. They were quickly rotated through the 233rd and 234th Brigade of 75th Division until August 1917, when a Medical Board pronounced the whole battalion to be unfit for front line duties. They were then reassigned to 'Lines of Communication' troops in Gaza. Finally the 2nd LNL moved to France in May 1918. They were briefly attached to 94th Brigade, 31st Division before transferring to 101st Brigade, 34th Division where they suffered badly in July 1918. (see Despatch issue 21, May 1918.)

The man named on a Surrey war memorial was mobilised in 1915 and later transferred from the A.S.C to the 2nd Loyal North Lancashire in July 1917. Shortly after joining the battalion in Alexandria, Egypt he was admitted to hospital and died of stomach cancer in December 1917. He started the interest but did not serve in East Africa.

At the outbreak of war the 2nd LNL were based in Bangalore, India as part of the 27th Bangalore Brigade. In 1914, the Governor of British East Africa (now Kenya) requested assistance to deal with the German forces in German East Africa (Tanganyika, now Tanzania). The matter was forwarded to the India Office which assembled two Expeditionary forces to go to British East Africa.

The original plan was for a larger Indian Expeditionary Force 'B', to assault Dar es Salaam in German East Africa, with 16th (Poona) Brigade as its nucleus. However, the 16th (Poona) Brigade was mobilized with 6th (Poona) Division and sent to Mesopotamia. This left only the 27th Indian Infantry Brigade to form the Indian Expeditionary Force 'B'. The 27th Bangalore Infantry Brigade were

'regular' troops commanded by Brigadier General Richard Wapshare; the second Brigade was the 'Imperial Service Infantry Brigade', an assorted collection of formations, mostly untrained and poorly equipped, under the, command of Brigadier General Michael Tighe. They were accompanied by a pioneer battalion, a mountain artillery battery and engineers.

27th Indian Infantry (Bangalore) Brigade - Brig Gen R Wapshare

2nd Loyal North Lancashire Regt

63rd Palmacottah Light Infantry

98th Infantry

101st Grenadiers

Imperial Service Brigade - Brig Gen M J Tighe

13th Rajputs

2nd Kashmir Imperial Service Infantry

A Composite Battalion of Gwalior and Kashmir Imperial Service Infantry

Divisional Troops

61st Pioneers

28th Mountain Battery

Imperial Service Coy Sappers and Miners

On 16 October 1914, 2nd LNL embarked aboard HMT 'Karmala' at Bombay bound for operations in British East Africa. The Indian Expeditionary Force

'B' commander was Major General Aitken. The training and equipping of the force under ideal conditions should have taken months but instead it was completed in a couple of days at Deolali camp near Bombay and then shipped 2,000 miles across the Indian Ocean. There was inadequate food and water and most of the men were seasick. The two weeks sea journey in overcrowded boats was not to be the best preparation for an expeditionary force.

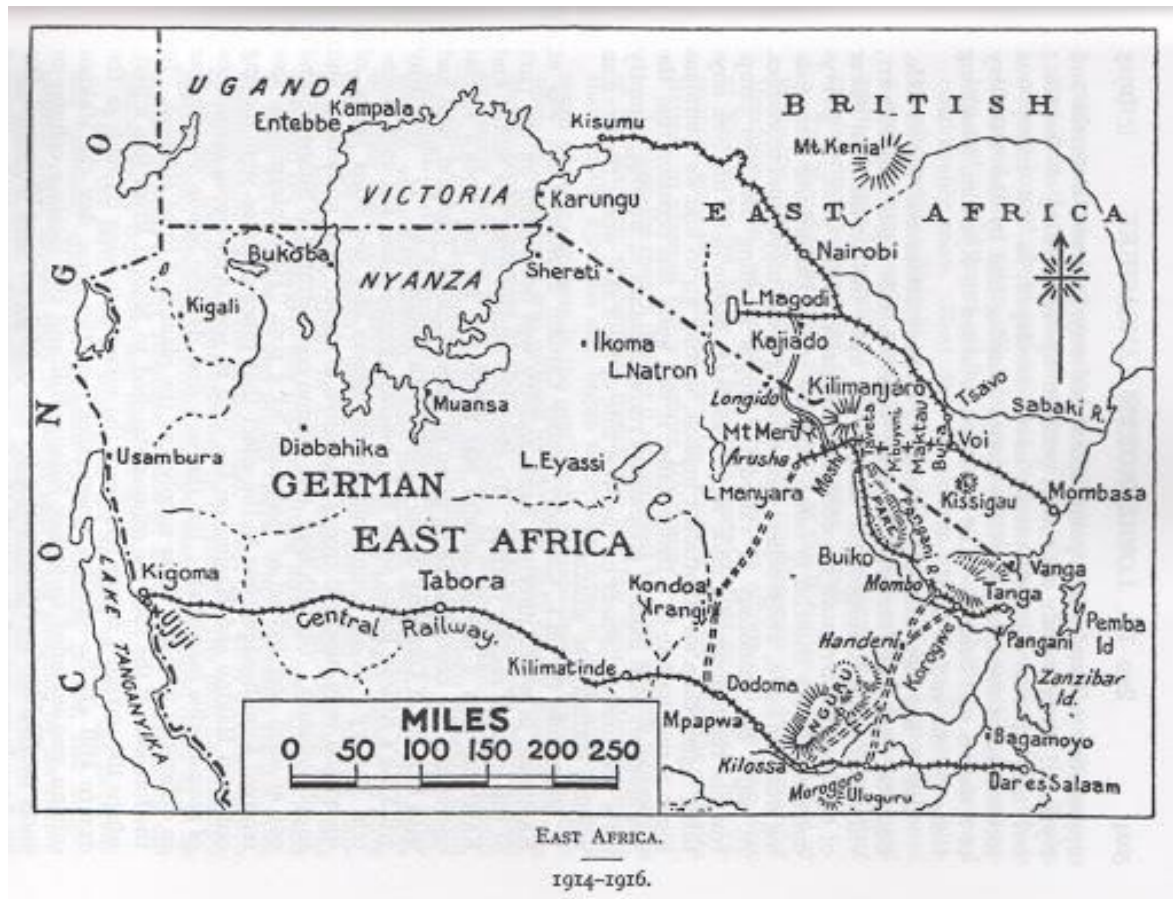
Indian Expeditionary Force 'B' arrived at Mombasa, British East Africa (Kenya) on 30 October 1914. The troops remained on board until HMT 'Karmala' joined the other transports on 1 November to make their way to German East Africa, where they were to make a landing at the port of Tanga on 2–3 November 1914.

German Forces in East Africa.

Prior to the outbreak of war, Colonel Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck was the commander of a small but well trained army in German East Africa. His plan was to tie down as many British troops as he could in the region in order to prevent them from being deployed elsewhere. From August 1914, German forces had been raiding British positions around Mount Kilimanjaro and Lake Victoria. With an army that never numbered more than around 14,000 men - comprising about 3,000 Germans and 11,000 askaris (African soldiers) - he succeeded, and later re-called;

'With the means available, protection of the Colony could not be ensured even by purely defensive tactics... it followed that it was necessary, not to split up our small available forces in local defence, but... to keep them together, to grip the enemy by the throat and force him to employ his forces for self-defence.'

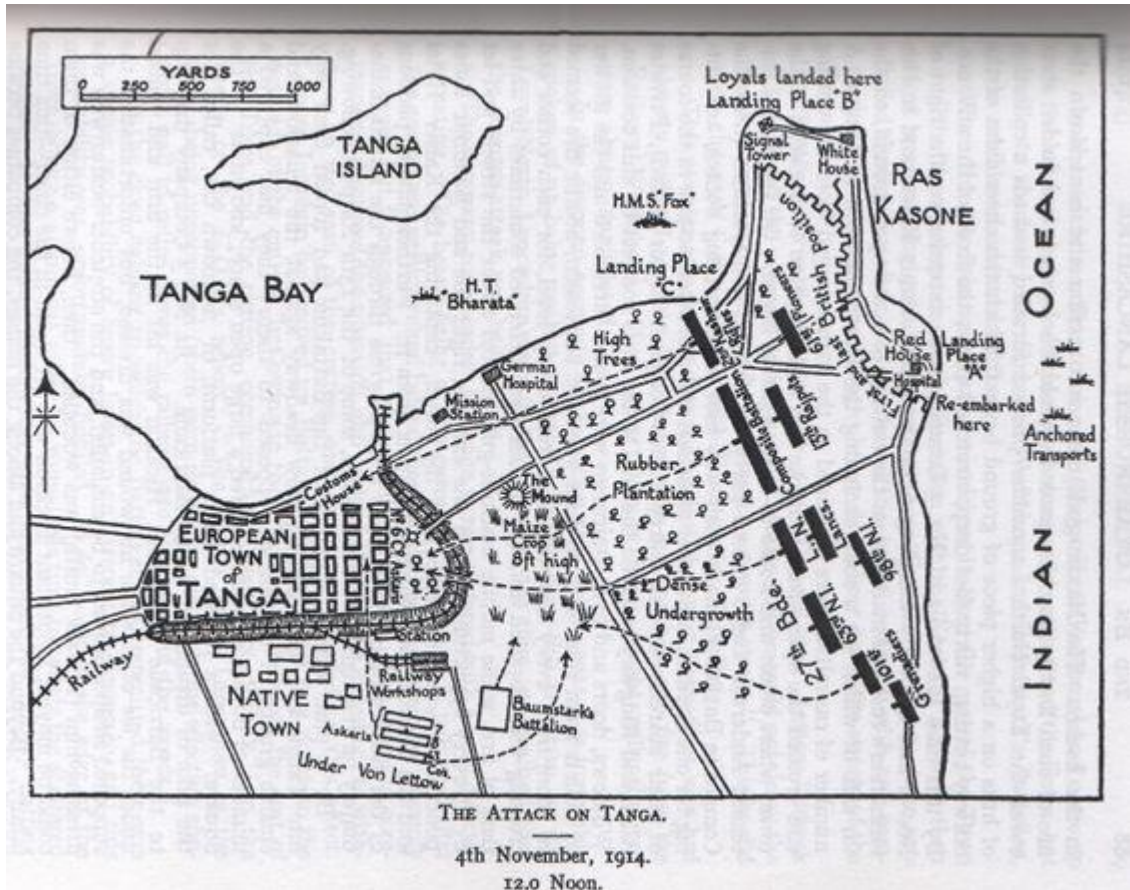
British forces were to fight a four-year guerrilla campaign against this small German force. Despite being outnumbered, the German commander, Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck, skilfully ran rings around his enemies, inflicting many casualties and avoiding defeat.



The Battle of Tanga

When the Indian Expeditionary Force ‘B’ arrived at Tanga there had been no reconnaissance of possible landing places. Eventually a site was selected that was free of mangroves on the south of a headland called Ras Kasone. Any chance of strategic surprise was further lost when Captain Francis Caulfield RN, the commander of the cruiser HMS Fox, went ashore on the 2 of November 1914, to demand the town’s surrender within the next 24 hours. This gift

allowed Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck an entire day to bring reinforcements to Tanga by rail and organise his local defences. Needless to say the offer to surrender was declined.



Briefly and without going into great detail, Aitkens' 9,000 men were badly beaten by the 1,000 men under Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck. They suffered 850 casualties and the loss of several hundred rifles, 16 machine guns and 600,000 rounds of ammunition. The German casualties were estimated to be 150.

On the morning of 5 November 1914, orders were issued to re-embark at 1.00 pm. Captain Meinertzhagen, intelligence officer to General Aitken, went into Tanga and successfully negotiated a cease fire with the Germans to allow the evacuation of the wounded. At 3.00 pm on 6 November, two hundred unarmed

men went ashore to recover the wounded from the German hospital. They were all back on board by 5.00 am on 7 November, having been without food and water for fourteen hours. At noon the convoy departed for Mombasa.

This was not an auspicious start to the war for the 2nd Loyal North Lancashire Regiment. It was however, an indication of what was to follow over the next fifteen months when they were faced with a wily enemy, difficult country, an equatorial climate, tropical disease, poor equipment, irregular supplies and inept commanders.

The war diary of 2nd Loyal North Lancashire Regiment contains almost unique personal comments inserted by the battalion Commanding Officer, Lt. Colonel Charles Edward Arthur Jourdain DSO; these reveal what his concerns are what is happening to his battalion. His comments represent the paternalistic Victorian views of a senior army officer of his men and the influences of his relatively recent Boer War experiences on his tactical thinking.

Operations in East Africa

The 2nd Loyal North Lancashire moved by train from Mombasa on 8 November 1914, with half the battalion going into quarters at Nairobi and the remainder to Kajiado, about fifteen miles south of Nairobi where they are to patrol an area north of the German East Africa border. All movement was on foot. Supplies and ammunition are carried by porters and a few Ox carts, neither of which can keep up with the marching soldiers. The country they are operating in was 'bad for flies'. This principally refers to mosquitos, as there are no mosquito nets available for the troops. Foot patrols of 15–20 miles in bush country invariably fail to locate an elusive enemy who raid and immediately fade away into the bush avoiding any direct engagement.

In January 1916 the half-battalion based at Nairobi depart for Kisumu on Lake Victoria where they patrol the lake on armed steamers manned by the Royal Navy. They make the occasional raid ashore to attack known or suspected enemy positions. The German forces again offer only the occasional exchange of rifle fire. 'A' company is sent to Vango near Mombasa, where the enemy have been reported only to find it an unhealthy place 'hot and full of flies'. In just over a week a quarter of the men are sick suffering from Malaria, Tick Fever and the results of poor drinking water. The men are withdrawn. At this stage the seriously ill are being evacuated from Nairobi to Mombasa and then on to hospital in India.

The two operational areas; Lake Victoria and Kajiado – Longido, north of the border with German East Africa, are both unhealthy places. 100 sick men are returned from the lake to Nairobi (5,000 feet above sea level and free of mosquitos). At Longido poor rations result in thirty cases of BeriBeri (Vitamin B1, Thiamine deficiency). Frustrated by the military authorities' inability to provide mosquito nets, the Commanding Officer orders them to be made and shipped direct from India.

To increase mobility in the bush, a mounted infantry unit of one officer and twenty-nine men is formed within the battalion at Nairobi. The health of the battalion however, continues to deteriorate and by April 1915, 130 men are attending hospital at Nairobi. Quinine is now beginning to be distributed. The Commanding Officer observes that 'discipline is becoming a problem among soldiers in British East Africa. 'The civilian population are leading men astray with drink'. Brigadier General Malleson imposes martial law at Nairobi in mid-April. All bars must close by 10.00 pm and other places of 'entertainment' at 11.00 pm. Civilians are requested not to offer soldiers hospitality within their

own homes. Lt. Colonel Jourdain records that, ‘Regular soldiers are not used to such temptations.’

Two companies and two mountain guns are assigned to the Lake Victoria steamers and an armoured train is to operate at Simba, thirty miles north of the border between Mount Kilimanjaro and Tsavo to the east. The patrols at Simba and on Lake Victoria continue throughout May with little contact with the enemy. The mosquito nets arrive from India on 3 June 1915 and are immediately distributed to each man.

The battalion is constantly responding to small scale raids on the railway that connects Mombasa, Nairobi and Uganda. Attempts are also made to disrupt telegraph and telephone communications alongside the railway. The occasional random shot is fired at the British positions but regular foot patrols and mobile columns of up to two companies all fail to engage with the enemy.

Eventually an enemy raiding party is successfully ambushed by a patrol from Simba on 5 June and a quantity of small arms ammunition, rations and tools are recovered. On 10 June the two companies operating on Lake Victoria return to Nairobi looking sick and worn out. From a battalion strength of 855 only 350 men are considered fit for duty in the field. Lt. Colonel Jourdain comments; ‘It is poor command in the field that allows men to get into this state. The Medical Officer is also at fault.’

On 5 July 1915, the 2nd Loyal North Lancs move by train to Maktau, east of the junction at Voi on the main Nairobi – Mombasa line. This area is part of the Rift Valley running south-east to north-west roughly 30 miles wide and about 30 miles north of the border where German raiders enter Kenya. Following an explosion on the railway, Brigadier General Malleon moves half of the

battalion to high ground at Bura in an attempt to block raiders moving along the river which runs roughly north-south.

A mobile column of 120 men came completely by chance on a German patrol of two white Germans and twelve askaris. Shots were exchanged but the enemy as usual, melted away into the bush. British patrols were ordered by brig Gen Malleon to wear a coloured woollen 'flash', about six inches long on their left shoulder, with the colour to be changed at regular intervals; the idea being that friendly forces operating in the bush could be identified. (This was an accessory that persisted in the Boy Scouts until the 1960.) The Commanding Officer of the 2nd Loyal North Lancs did not think much of this idea although he did advocate establishing a Boer -War style, line of 'Blockhouses' across the route favoured by the enemy. Life was difficult enough in East Africa and morale must have dropped when for no apparent reason Brigadier General Malleon suddenly stopped the battalion purchasing beer from India. This had been permitted at Nairobi and the Medical Officer had been in favour of the regular sale of beer to the men which had never resulted in any drunkenness.

On 13 July 1915, in order to attack an enemy camp, Brigadier General Malleon advanced on Mbuyuni with 1,100 men, eight machine guns, and three guns of the Mountain Battery. After a night march he launched a frontal attack the following morning against the entrenched German positions. The entire operation was reminiscent of the Boer War and produced the same disastrous results. This unsuccessful assault against an expected inferior force resulted in 170 casualties and the loss of one machine gun. The 2nd Loyal North Lancs War Diary contains a vague after-action report by Major Robinson, officer commanding the detachment in reply to Lt. Col Jourdain's questions. As far as Major Robinson was concerned, no attack orders were issued except that Lt. Col Price of the detached column should cooperate at 8.0 am. No one seems to

know what the orders were or what the intention of the GOC was. Lt. Col Jourdain notes, on 22 July 1915, that the official account of this affair as published does not give a correct impression of what occurred.

The number of men reporting continues to rise steadily. On 20 July 1915, 1 officer and 155 men were in hospital. One man died of pneumonia and beriberi. On 31 July a patrol south of Maktau were fired on by a German patrol. This was the first time the enemy had opened fire on the battalion. The only man wounded walked back to camp. By the end of July 1915 the 2nd Loyal North Lancs was operating at two principal locations, at Maktau and Bura. With a nominal strength of 834 men, 123 were in hospital, 213 unfit for hard work due to fever; 577 of the men have been hospitalised at least once. The continuous, unrewarding patrols in a hot climate by men far from their peak fitness are rewarded by Brig Gen Malleon, who now absolutely prohibits any further issue of beer to the battalion.

Two new armoured trains are brought into service and all passenger trains will have an armed escort. Brigadier General Malleon inspected the defences at Bura and declared that he did not wish any defences to be made without his prior approval. Lt. Col Jourdain again suggested the construction of blockhouses and later notes that ‘this area has the painful habit of having defences of all posts on the same pattern. No originality’.

At the beginning of October 1915, the Germans make a number of attempts to damage the railway and a patrol uncovers one hundred sticks of Dynamite near a proposed ‘blockhouse’. It would appear that Lt. Col Jourdain’s suggestion had been accepted. To further increase the security of the railway, Brigadier General Malleon has ordered the bush to be cleared two hundred yards on each side of the track. Lt. Col Jourdain comments that this ‘should have been done months

ago, a few blockhouses would keep the raiders off'. By the end of October 1915, a total of 836 men at some time have been admitted to hospital.

In November 1915 preparations were being made for the expected arrival of South African troops. The 2nd Loyal North Lincs were now to be part of a re-structured brigade under Brigadier General Malleon –

1st East African Brigade.

2nd Loyal North Lincs

30th Baluchis

2nd Rhodesian Infantry

3rd King's African Rifles

Reports had been received that German forces have captured the town of Kinsharo, 10 miles north of the border. On 22 December, Brigadier General Malleon ordered a large force of 350 men, machine guns and 2 Mountain guns to be assembled for a proposed attack on Kinsharo. The Brigadier's orders are questioned in a War Diary note that states, 'most officer think that this is not a good idea. There would be no time for reconnaissance. Such a large force would require a lot of water. It is not necessary to send 300 men to find if Kinsharo is occupied. It could be done with 3 men on 4 mules in 2-3 days.'

The following day the orders are amended to: 350 men, 4 machine guns, 1 section of mountain battery. To move and attack the enemy if still at Kinsharo. Eventually at 2.00 pm 14 officers, 356 OR's, 4 machine guns, 20 armed scouts and 116 porters left by train for Voi. This force returned on 29 December 1915. The enemy had already vacated Kinsharo.

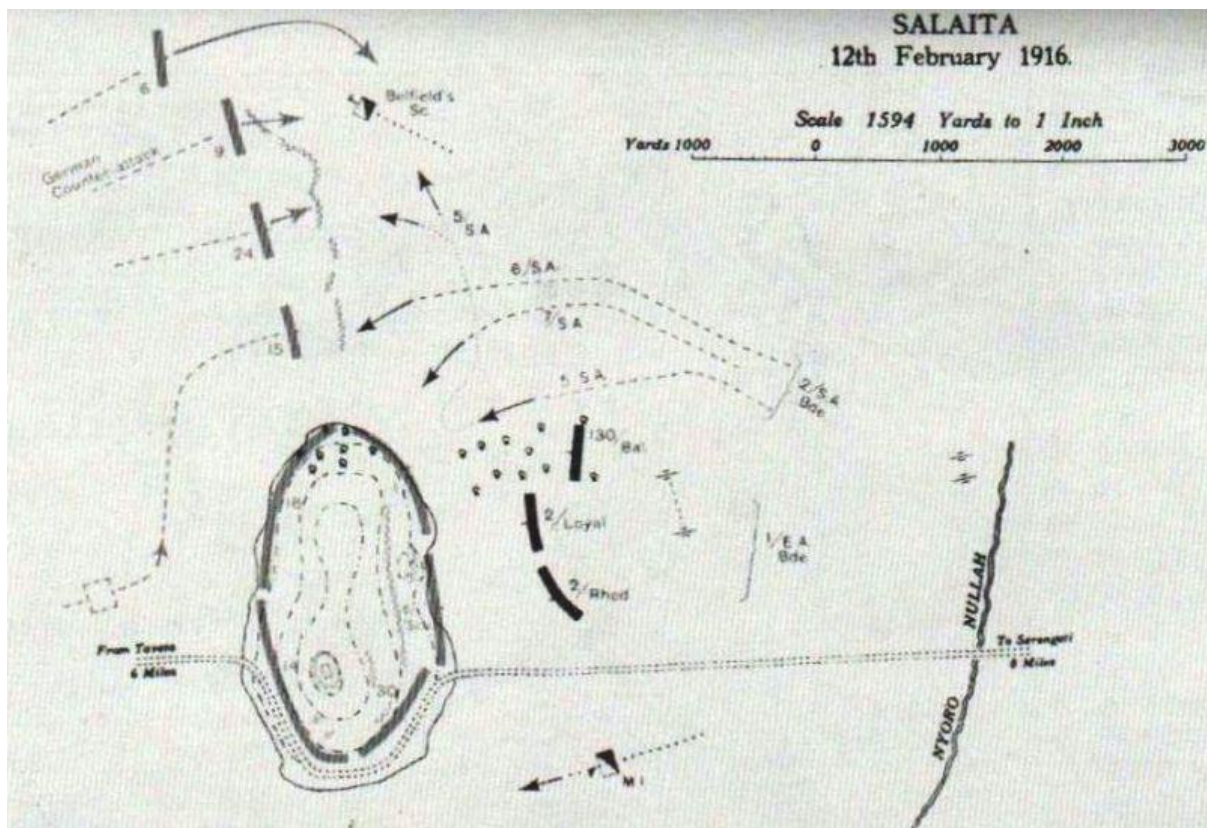
Although Brigadier General Malleson had not allowed beer to be provided to the battalion since August 1915, beer had been ordered and provided at the men's Christmas dinner held at Mashoti. At 5.00 pm that day just before dusk shots were heard just north of the camp. Scouts were immediately sent out only to find a party of 25th Royal Fusiliers from Maktau, who had become lost and had fired shots to draw attention.

Continual unsuccessful patrols, ineffectual tracking and failed ambushes must have frustrated and possibly demoralised the men of 2nd Loyal North Lancs. Added to these problems was an indifferent, possibly incompetent commander in the form of Brigadier General Malleson. The frustrations of the Commanding Officer of 2nd Loyal North Lancs are evidenced by the unique comments within the battalion War Diary. Lt. Col Jourdain expressed his concerns about the war in East Africa thus; 'The British are committed to using thousands of troops to guard the railways and lines of communication. The Germans maintain a Guerilla war and rely on dumps of hidden arms and supplies without the need of railways.' He further estimates that it will be at least six months before British forces take the Moshi–Tanga railway, and then another year and a half to remove the German Government and round up the pockets of resistance in the field. Lt. Col Jourdain had purchased out of his own funds, six radium (luminous) night sights.

The beginning of February 1916 was the usual unending round of patrols and mobile columns sent out from Mbuyuni and Maktau. During a visit by Brig Gen Malleson on 5 February, he remarked to Lt. Col Jourdain that, "the men should not get too comfortable here, as they may have to move on in a few days". Lt. Col Jourdain showing his exasperation writes that he 'wishes any General out here would exhibit some sign of interest in the British soldier and do something for his comfort.'

Malleson's Battle for Salaita Hill

Salaita Hill was a strategic German outpost constructed on British East African soil formed part of an in-depth defensive system which guarded the Taveta Gap, the gateway into Kenya. This position also facilitated the raiding of communications and supply lines. The hill was believed to be defended by a small detachment of about 300 men without artillery; Brig-Gen Malleson issued orders for an attack to be made by the 2nd South African Division on 12 February 1916. The attacking force totalled about 6,000 men.



The intelligence proved to be wrong. Salaita Hill was defended by approximately 1,300 men in entrenched positions supported by about another 1,000 men in the surrounding area. The preliminary artillery bombardment using 4” Naval guns targeted the trenches at the top of the hill instead of the manned primary trenches further down the slopes. The artillery alerted the enemy and the reserves were already making their way from Salaita and Taveta. Two hours later when the infantry began their assault, the German artillery responded.

The South African Infantry did reach some of the German first line positions at the base of the hill but their advance came under effective machine gun fire. The South African Infantry then found themselves being outflanked on their right by German reinforcements. The 2nd South African Division was then forced to retire.

The 2nd Loyal North Lancs returned to camp at Serengeti. The health of the men continued to deteriorate, another man died of dysentery and the toll is telling. Lt. Col Jourdain commented; ‘Those not serving on the equator cannot realise how exposure to the sun and weather take it out of men, especially if they are not well nourished. Soldiers are getting worn out and will not last out the campaign.’

Salita Hill was eventually occupied on 9 March 1916 and Taveta the following day. General Smuts occupied Moshi, 30 miles west of Taveta in German East Africa. The battalion moved initially to Salita town and then on to Taveta, camping on unhealthy low-lying ground formerly used by German askaris. The Medical Officer considered this to be “an unhealthy place”. The 2nd Loyal North Lancs continue with their role of providing outposts and perimeter duties.

Brigadier General S. Sheppard takes over command of the 1st East African Brigade from Brigadier General Malleson who is now on the sick list. The 2nd Loyal North Lancs briefly moves three miles west of Taveta to a ridge at Latema. Lt. Col Jourdain is becoming even more concerned over the health of his men when he notes; ‘officers and men are showing the effects of exposure to sun and rain and were so done up that they had made hardly any effort to construct any kind of shelter’. A large percentage of the men are unfit for work. The battalion returns to its old camping ground at Taveta – ‘The men are looking very ill’. That evening Lt. Col Jourdain met with General Sheppard and obtained permission to cable India for beer. He notes; ‘that it is most encouraging to find that the Brigadier takes an interest in the British soldier.’ Tents finally arrive which offer some shelter to the men who have been living in the open during the hot wet weather for the last ten days.

The battalion is not sorry to leave Taveta; ‘it is an unhealthy and insanitary place, generally depressing and with hospitals overcrowded with sick’. The 2nd Loyal North Lancs travel by train to Mbuyuni. Men are sick in such large numbers and with no room in the hospital they have to be treated in the lines 108 men reported sick to the battalion Medical Officer, 78 have malaria, most should be in hospital but there is only accommodation for 12 men. ‘The whole battalion looks ill’. Lt. Col Jourdain met with the Divisional Commander in order to make arrangements for the treatment of these men.

At the beginning of April 1916, within the battalion only 19 officers and 433 OR’s are fit for work. The battalion Medical Officer was severely ‘told off’ by the GOC Medical Services for his ‘impudent messages’ but it did have the effect of bringing the general to see what is happening to the 2nd Loyal North Lancs. By 4 April, 124 men have been diagnosed with malaria, 28 have been admitted to hospital and another man has died of malaria.

The Medical Officer examined 293 men on 7 April 1916, of which only 126 men are fit for duty. Meanwhile, the enemy continues with attacks on the railway. By 15 April only 657 men out of 907 are declared fit for duty. Another man dies of malaria and one from blackwater fever (a variant of malaria). It is now proposed to move the battalion out of the unhealthy climate of East Africa. The battalion is warned to move prepare to move to South Africa at the end of the week.

Brigadier General Sheppard addressed the battalion on 28 April prior to their departure for South Africa. “Although the battalion had not had the fighting of Flanders or the Dardanelles, the country and climate of this campaign was a very severe strain on everyone. Such was the trust in the regiment that when any particular work was to be done, no matter the locality, the North Lancs were always sent to assist. That the men were now in bad health was not a mark of reproach, but rather an honour. He hoped their absence would be temporary and that the men who started at the beginning of the campaign would see it to the final act. He wished the battalion a quick return to health and to the old Voi Brigade.”

The Brigadier’s visit was followed by that of General Hoskins who arrived to inspect the line but found the men full of fever. Lt. Col Jourdain comments in the War Diary, ‘It does not seem to strike Generals that all men are human, that both the French and Germans have found that all soldiers require a periodical (sic) change of a week or two every six months or so and that it pays in the long run to give it.’

The sick and unfit men of the battalion depart for Kilindini, Mombasa by train on 7 May 1916. The machine gun company remained behind in East Africa while the remainder of the 2nd Loyal North Lancs made their way to Mombasa

where the whole battalion departed aboard HMT ‘Professor’ bound for Durban, South Africa where they will spend six months recuperating before travelling to Suez in January 1917. The bottled beer that had thoughtfully been purchased by Lt. Col Jourdain was distributed to the men.

2nd Loyal North Lancs Regiment Casualties August 1914-May 1916

The following figures are abstracted from the ‘Soldiers Died in the Great War 1914-1919’.

	Killed in Action	Died of Wounds	Died
1914	39	7	2
1915	34	0	10
1916	0	0	12

The numbers of men who were discharged due to sickness contracted on war service and those who later claimed and were awarded a disability pensions as a result of disease contracted in East Africa is a subject for future study.



Brigadier-General Wilfrid Malleson (1866-1946)



Brigadier-General Wilfrid Malleson (1866–1946) received his commission into the Royal Artillery in 1886 and transferred to the Indian Army in 1904. He was relatively inexperienced in combat having served on the staff of Field Marshal Kitchener as part of the British military mission in Afghanistan. He had seen very little in the way of combat and even less time in command. Captain Meinertzhagen, Intelligence Officer to General Aitken, describes Malleson as having no knowledge of command and; ‘a bad man, clever as a monkey, but hopelessly unreliable and with a nasty record behind him. He is by far the cleverest man out here, but having spent all his service in an Ordinance Office, knows very little about active operations and still less of the usual courtesies amongst British officers. He comes from a class which would wreck the Empire to advance himself, is loathed and despised as an overbearing bully, ill mannered, and a rotten soldier.’

General Jan Smuts Commander of the Allied forces in East Africa was also less than complimentary when he appealed for Malleson’s removal on the 15 March

1916 following the Battle of Salaita Hill. “I regret to say that after the Salaita fiasco on the 12 February 1916 there is very little confidence in the fighting ability of Malleson and a change in the command of the 1st East African Brigade is also desirable”. General Tighe considered him a capable administrator and hoped his talents could be better employed by the War Office. Malleson asked to be relieved of his command "owing to serious indisposition".



BRIGADIER GENERAL REGINALD JOHN KENTISH (RJK) & HIS 12th TALE



“A WELL EQUIPPED ARMY”: Terry Dean

In November 2013’s Despatch I first told of my visit to the Imperial War Museum to view the papers of RJK and my discovery of stories (tales) he had drafted around 1940. They described amusing incidents he experienced in WW1 and this is his 12th Tale, Tales 1 to 11 having being included in earlier editions of Despatch.

SCENE: TIME: PLACE: The British line between Messines and Plugstreet Wood, sometime in November 1914.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE: ‘A’ Company 1st Battalion the Irish Fusiliers; Lieut. Stanton R.G.A; many Huns --- and myself a Captain, commanding the Company



One afternoon, late in November, I was sitting in my ‘dug-out’, a real proper ‘OLD BILL’ ‘dug-out’ a la Bruce Bairnsfather (Note 1 – see end), e.g. .a hole dug into the ‘parados’ (N.B. for those not versed in military parlance, the ‘parados is the wall or side of the trench facing the parapet) with a pit-prop or two supporting the roof, and two or three sandbags on top to keep the splinters out -- that was all -- when my telephone rang, and a voice said: “Stanton speaking. Is that you Kentish?” “Yes,” I replied. “Oh,” he said, “I’ve got a couple of spare rounds left, and I thought I’d give you a ring, and ask you where you’d like them put?”

Here I should perhaps explain that Stanton was the Officer Commanding the ‘heavies’ as we called them in those days to distinguish them from the light 18 pounders of the Royal Field Artillery, and he was in command of half a section of his battery of 6 inch howitzers, that is to say one gun only with which he had to cover the whole of the Brigade front perhaps about two miles!

On the other hand the ‘Huns’ had guns and howitzers of every size and calibre ranging from their field gun, known to every British soldier in France as the ‘Whizz-bang’ --- this, because the ‘whizz’ the shell made as it exploded, all seemed to arrive at once --- upwards to their 4.5’s, 5.9’s and 8 inch howitzers , the two latter both being brutal pieces of work, which made great craters in our trenches and buried our men by the half-dozens at a time if they got a direct hit, and with this mass of artillery the ‘Huns’ shot us up from dawn to dusk and often all through the night as well!!

But bad and serious as the shortage of artillery --- and especially heavy artillery --- was , the shortage in ammunition was a hundred time worse, the ration to each ‘heavy’ being around six rounds per day, whereas a ‘Boche’ Battery would loose off 300 rounds or so in five or ten minutes and think nothing of it. Every now and then, however, the heavies would manage to ‘scrounge’ an extra round or two and then they would ring us up on the front line and ask us where we’d like them put!!

On this particular occasion, when Stanton rang me I said:- “Just a moment and I’ll see what the ‘Huns’ are doing,” and getting out of my ‘dug-out’ into the trench, I said to my Company Sergeant Major, an excellent fellow by name Fynne – Moses Fynne to give him his full name – and hailing from Drogheda: he had come along to see me and was just having a look at the ‘Huns’ through

one of the loopholes, “Any movement, Fynne?” “Just a bit of smoke, sor, going up to the right of the ‘Lonely Tree’. Looks as though Jerry’s having his afternoon tea, sor!” Looking where he pointed, I saw a thin wreath of blue smoke coming up from the Hun’s trench: - “Yes,” I said, “I see it and I think you’re right. The ‘heavies have got a couple of rounds left and they want to know where we’d like ‘em put! I think I’ll tell ‘em to put ‘em into Jerry’s tea party!!” and saying this I returned to the telephone:- “There’s some smoke in A(1) sector, just to the right of the ‘Lonely Tree’. Looks as though they’re having a tea party! Put ‘em there!”

“Right,” said Stanton, “you might watch and see where they go and ring me back.” “I will,” I said, and putting the receiver down I returned to the trench and waited for the two shells to come over!!

After a pause over they came, the first right into the trench by ‘Lonely Tree’, and the other one short and to the right. Going to the telephone, I said:- “The first was excellent! Right into the middle of his tea party! But the second was short and to the right.” “Thanks very much,” he said, “it’s a difficult light! Look in on your way out to-night” --- we were due for relief that night --- “and have a drink!” “Right-Oh!” I said, “I certainly will,” and then I rang off.

Two or three hours afterwards, having handed over to the relieving Company of the 2nd Battalion (the Old 78th) Seaforth Highlanders, and having got my Company safely out of the line, I sent them on, platoon by platoon, independently to their billets, and I followed. As I came to the farm where Stanton had his head-quarters, I went in and he, at once, gave me a real good glass of steaming hot grog, which was all ready and waiting for me --- and by Jove after all the filth and mud and water and shells I’d just come from, how much I appreciated it --- and then, after a word or two about the situation, local

news etc., etc., he got on to the shortage of ammunition:- “Just think!” he said, “Six miserable rounds per gun per day, when the ‘Huns’ have 200 or even 2,000 if they want them! It just makes my blood boil to see you poor devils sitting down there in your trenches up to your hocks in mud and water and being shelled to hell all day and every day, and we ‘Gunners’ with only half a dozen rounds per gun and only allowed to fire them off if the ‘Hun’ is actually attacking! It is a ----- scandal,” Stanton went on “ and I only wish those d----- d politicians, who are responsible for this , were sitting, where you and your men have been sitting since October, instead of sitting where they’ve been ever since the War began and where they’ll sit until it’s over --- in their homes safe and sound in England!!”

Very feelingly I agreed with every word he said, for it was indeed as he put it, a _____ scandal of the very first order that our Army --- our Regular Army --- should have been sent to France to fight the most highly trained and best equipped Army in the world, with not a single round of High Explosive for its Field Guns, and only half a dozen rounds of Lyddite per day for its ‘Heavies’!! But this is how the British Regular Army went to war in 1914 and it was just a marvel that we were able to hold the ‘Huns’, until Lloyd George came into power and eventually got us all the guns and howitzers of every calibre and the high explosives we required, and which enabled us, after going through hell for the best part of three years --- for this is what it took us to gain superiority in weapons --- to blast our enemy from his trenches and finally to defeat him!

And now, here we are again twenty years afterwards, in exactly the same position, the politicians for the second time having let us down (Note 2) with the result that, as I actually write these words (February 8th, 1941), the fate of the Empire and of the nations allied to it, is just hanging in the balance!! We

shall, of course, win again! Of this there can be and is no doubt, but it will only be at the cost of the lives of thousands and thousands of our men --- and in this war thousands and thousands of our women and children too --- bringing untold grief, misery and woe into the homes of millions, to say nothing of the destruction of billions of pounds worth of property, and I can only express the hope --- and a very sincere and earnest hope it is too --- that, when the bugles sound the ‘Cease fire’ and the Victory is won, those, who have been our leaders since the last war and who, in spite of the warnings they have received from every quarter that Hitler was out to annihilate us and destroy our Empire, failed to arm the country and who are therefore responsible --- entirely responsible --- for the catastrophe, which has befallen us for the second time within a generation, will be impeached, brought to trial and, if found guilty, suffer the penalty they so richly deserve, which is death!

If we don’t bring the ‘Guilty Men’ --- and we know who they are (Note 3) ---- to trial this time, the same catastrophe will assuredly fall on us again and for the third time within the memory of a generation!

Notes:

1. Bruce Bairnsfather was an officer in the 2nd Royal Warwickshire Regiment in our (the 10th) Brigade, and it was in this particular sector of the line and the conditions prevailing generally, that inspired him to draw his first ‘Old Bill’ pictures , which were to make him famous the world over.



Bruce Bairnsfather

2. Vide Viscount Gort's Despatches:-

(a) I hadn't a single Armoured Division under my Command, whereas the enemy had at least twelve.

(b) My Anti-tank guns had no armour-piercing shells.

(c) I only had 50 fighters of the Royal Air Force at my Disposal

3. Vide "Guilty Men" by Candidus (A recent Google search indicates the book was written under the pseudonym "Cato" by Michael Foot, Frank Owen, and Peter Howard. It names fifteen "Guilty Men")



Victorian boy soldier to a commissioned officer.

Lieutenant Fredrick McKay DCM



The horrendous losses suffered by the regular army during the winter of 1914 and the spring of 1915, exasperated the severe shortage of officers for the rapidly expanding British Army. In an effort to meet this demand, many experienced senior non-commissioned officers were considered for a Commission. Company Sergeant Major Fredrick MacKay of 2nd West Yorkshire Regiment was one of many who were commissioned from the ranks.

Fredrick Mackay started his military career in a very humble way when, as a fifteen year old youth he joined one of the Militia battalions of the West Yorkshire Regiment, at Leeds on 28 February 1895. Life as a labourer obviously did not appeal to young Fredrick and he enlisted into the 2nd West Yorkshire Regiment as 5045 Private Fredrick MacKay on 31 August 1897.

Young Fredrick adapted well to life in the army and was appointed Lance Corporal in February 1899. He was then awarded Good Conduct pay from 31 August 1899. The 2nd West Yorkshire sailed for service in South Africa on 19 October 1899. They arrived at Durban on 11 November. For some misdemeanour whilst aboard the ship on 30 October Fredrick MacKay was reduced back to the rank of Private.

The 2nd West Yorkshire formed part of the 2nd Brigade, along with 2nd Queens (West Surrey), 2nd Devonshire and 2nd East Surrey Regiments. The 2nd Brigade

was part of the Natal Field Force who took part in practically all the engagements fought in the relief of Ladysmith. The battalion was immediately in action between Estcourt and Mooi River on 22 November 1899. Ladysmith was eventually relieved on 28 February 1900. There followed a number of engagements culminating at Aleman's Neck in June 1900 after which the 2nd Brigade were mostly employed in garrison duties. Fredrick MacKay regained his Lance Corporal stripe on 26 August 1900 but was reduced to Private again on 21 August 1902 for two episodes of drunkenness. He was charged again on 25 April 1903 at Pietermaritzburg with being absent from work, drunk in barracks, resisting escort and using obscene language to an NCO for which he lost his Good Conduct pay. Fredrick was again charged with a drunken disturbance on 4 May 1913, fined and confined to barracks.

On 1 April 1904, after seven years' service Fredrick's pay was increased by 7d per day and one week later he was again appointed Lance Corporal. The 2nd West Yorkshire Regiment left South Africa for England on 2 June 1904. For his services in the South African war Frederick MacKay was awarded;

The Queen's South Africa Medal. With clasps for-

Tugila Heights

Orange Free State

Relief of Ladysmith

Transvaal

Laingur Neck.

The King's South Africa Medal. With clasps for-

South Africa 1901

South Africa 1902

The battalion returned to barracks in England and on 10 October 1914 Fredrick MacKay married Agnes Ferns in Leeds. By the time their first child was born on 28 October 1905 the battalion was at Holywood Barracks, Belfast. Marriage obviously had a calming effect on Fredrick; he was promoted to corporal on 1 November 1906. Then appointed Lance Sergeant on 20 February 1908. Promoted to full Sergeant on 2 November 1910 and Colour Sergeant on 26 January 1914. Just prior to the outbreak of war he was appointed Company Quartermaster Sergeant on 1 August 1914. During these years Fredrick MacKay had become qualified in Chiropody (1904), Cookery (1907), Stretcher Drill (1909) and a Musketry Instructor in 1912.

The birthplaces of his children are a record of the battalion's stations.

Frederick,	28 October 1905. Holywood.
Ada Louise,	26 March 1907, Aldershot
Walter,	20 May 1908, Aldershot
William	10 April 1910, Colchester
Alfred	8 October 1912 Malta.

Alfred sadly died on 6 June 1915 at 13 Industrial Street, Beckett Street, Leeds. He died as the result of shock from scalds to his body from upsetting a bath of hot water.

The 2nd West Yorkshire Regiment was stationed in Malta when war was declared in 1914. The battalion returned to England on 25 September and Landed at Le Havre 5 November 1914. The 2nd West Yorkshire Regiment spent the winter of 1914-15 in the newly established trenches north of Neuve Chapelle. In March 1915 the battalion took part of the first large scale attack by British forces, in the unsuccessful attempt to capture Neuve Chapelle. Further actions followed at Aubers Ridge and Festubert in May 1915. The War Diary of

the 2nd West Yorkshire makes no mention of men recommended for a commission.

Fredrick left the West Yorkshire Regiment when he was commissioned on 23 September 1915. After an officer training course, he was posted on 30 October 1915 to the 2nd Royal Welsh Fusiliers, a regular army battalion of 19th Infantry Brigade, 2nd Division who were soon transferred to 33rd Division on 25 November 1915. The 2nd Royal Welsh Fusiliers spent the winter of 1915-16 on the Western Front in the Cambrin and Givenchy trenches situated between Bethune and La Bassee, north of Arras.

On 15 January 1916 second Lieutenant Fredrick MacKay was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for his service with the West Yorkshire Regiment. The citation for the Distinguished Conduct Medal was for; 5045 Company Sergeant Major F McKay, 2nd West Yorkshire Regiment now 2nd lieutenant, 2nd Royal Welsh Fusiliers;

“For conspicuous gallantry throughout the campaign as a sniper. He has invariably shown great bravery and ability in the performance of his duties and given a splendid example of devotion to duty.”

Shortly after his presentation, Second Lieutenant McKay was wounded while on a patrol on 8 February 1916. Captain J C Dunn in his well-known book ‘The War the Infantry Knew’, describes this incident;

‘McKay, just off leave, and reckless, and sent on patrol by his Company Commander, was badly wounded on the German wire; he was brought back with difficult by Sergeant Bale, and Radford who went out to help, McKay was a fire-eating Scot promoted from the East Yorks. He would ring a good target impetuously, and remark, “that’ll put the wind up him,”

but he had not the patience to take, like Stanway, his chance of a timely shot that got home.”

Fredrick Mackay was admitted to the Red Cross Hospital at Rouen with Gun Shot Wounds to the hip. He was later transferred to the Michelham Convalescent Hospital for Officers in Nice, before being discharged on 23 March 1916. The 2nd Royal Welsh Fusiliers remained in the area north of Arras for the remainder of 1916 but there is no further mention of Second Lieutenant Fredrick Mackay in the War Diary.

Second Lieutenant Fredrick Mackay arrived at the Base Depot at Rouen, on 23 December 1916 from here, he and five other ranks, joined the 1st Royal Welsh Fusiliers on 2 January 1917.

The 1st Royal Welsh Fusiliers were at the northern area of the old Somme battlefield at Bertrancourt, about 6 kilometres east of Beaumont Hamel. On 11 January 1917 the battalion supported the 91st Infantry Brigade in a successful attack on the fortified German positions at Munich Trench. This was the opening phase of the Battle of the Ancre 11 January – 13 March 1917. The battalion then went into Division reserve positions before leaving for Louvencourt, 3 kilometres east of Bertrancourt.

On 21 January 1917. They moved south from here to Rubempre where they went into company training and preparations for the next phase of the offensive. The training continued until 19 February when the battalion moved back into the line near Bertrancourt. The attack on Puisieux began on 25 February 1917 when the 1st Royal Welsh Fusiliers attacked the village of Serre at 05.00 and by 09.00 had gained their objective at Serre road. The battalion then prepared for

the advance on Puisieux the next day and following a heavy bombardment from 02.00 to 05.30, patrols pushed through Puisieux and established posts on the northern side.

By 11.15 all objectives had been taken. The positions were quickly consolidated but attempts the next day to push forward again were met by heavy enemy machine gun fire north of the village. Two strong counter-attacks by the Germans were repelled before the 1st Royal Welsh Fusiliers were relieved at 22.30 that night.

The 1st Royal Welsh Fusiliers' casualties during the attack on Puisieux amounted to; Officers – 2 Died of Wounds, 4 Wounded. Other Ranks – 21 Killed, 4 Died of Wounds, 52 Wounded, 9 Missing. Second Lieutenant Fredrick MacKay was initially listed among the wounded casualties. He died of his wounds on 28 February 1917 at the 48th Field Ambulance at Couin, 15 kilometres east of Doullens. In twenty years of military service Fredrick Mackay had served as a commissioned officer for sixteen months but had spent only eighteen weeks of that time on active service.

Fredrick Mackay's wife Agnes was informed by telegram on 28 February 1917 that her husband had died of his wounds. Later correspondence shows that no will had been left and therefore Fredrick's effects, including the sum of £9.8.9 was sent to his wife at 124 Beckett Street, Leeds. In the absence of a will a statement of living relatives had to be provided. The statement showed his wife Agnes and their children at Becket Street, his mother at Acacia Place, off Beckett Street, and his sister Mrs Ada Gill of 43 Bairstow Street, near Central Drive, Blackpool.

During the period of Fredrick's service in France, the family home was 124 Beckett Street, Leeds. By 1920 Agnes MacKay had moved to join Frederick's

sister living at 33 Bairstow Street, Blackpool. Fredrick’s CWGC headstone at Couin New British Cemetery bears the epitaph, “Cherished memories of our loved one bring many a silent tear. Sadly missed by his wife.”



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