

Spring 2015

[www.gbg-international.com](http://www.gbg-international.com)



# DESPATCHES

the magazine of the International Guild of Battlefield Guides



## IN THIS ISSUE:

Falkland Islands 2014

Off Piste on Omaha Beach

Gustav Line 1943 - 44

## PLUS

Guiding the 100 Years War

## AND

First Battle of the Nile

# FIELD*guides*: IN ACTION

Our cover image: Explaining mountain warfare to men of the Low Countries' Italian Member, Carlo Larosa with a group from WFA Holland on Cinque Torri, near Cortina.



Clive Harris & Steve Chambers scratching out a sand table model on 'V' Beach, Gallipoli



Frank Toogood extolling the virtues of the SMLE to a group of students on the Somme.



Dutch Member, Wybo Boersma in his element talking about Arnhem and Operation Market Garden

# Contents

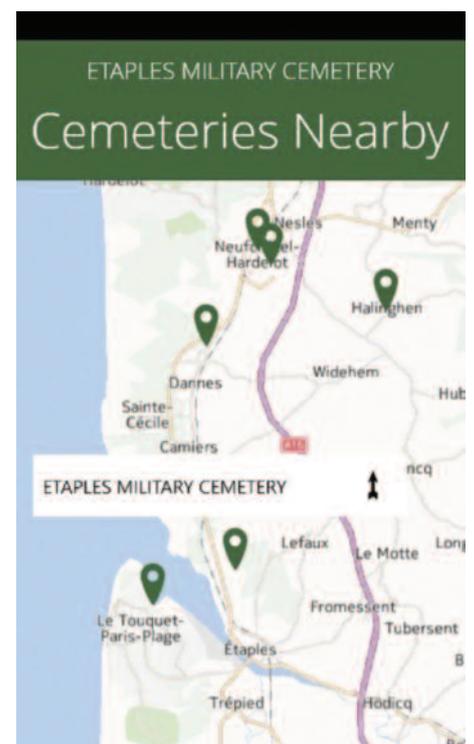
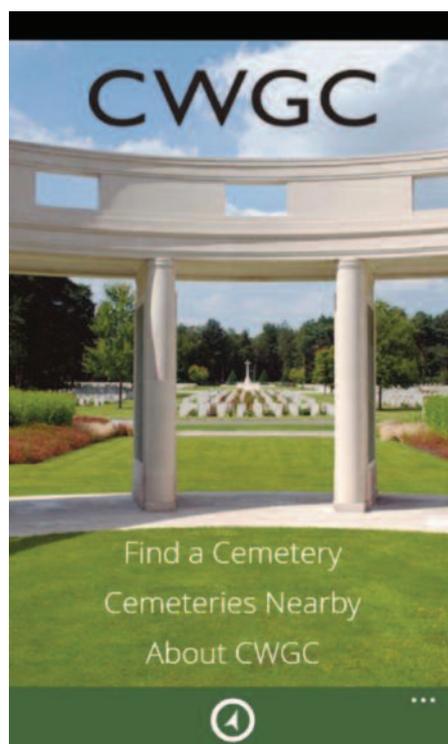


- |        |                                                                 |        |                                                    |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------|----------------------------------------------------|
| P2/17  | FIELD <i>guides</i><br>IN ACTION                                | P16    | EVENT <i>guide</i> 2015                            |
| P5-7   | FALKLANDS<br>BATTLEFIELD TOUR<br><i>November 2014</i>           | P18-19 | GUIDING LITERARY<br>TOURS                          |
| P8-9   | OMAHA<br><i>Going Off Piste</i>                                 | P20-21 | FALL IN NEW ENGLAND<br><i>with Johnny Burgoyne</i> |
| P10-12 | BATTLEFIELD STUDY<br><i>British Airborne on the Gustav Line</i> | P22-23 | GUILD <i>partners</i><br><i>Battle Honours Ltd</i> |
| P13    | LEARNING <i>guides</i><br><i>CPD Article</i>                    | P24-25 | THE FIRST BATTLE<br><i>of the Nile</i>             |
| P14-16 | GUIDING THE 100<br>YEARS WAR                                    | P26-27 | GUIDE <i>books</i>                                 |

## ELECTRONIC*guide*

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission recently made its brand new CWGC War Graves App freely available for smartphone and tablet users to download from:  
[www.cwgc.org/app](http://www.cwgc.org/app)

The Centenary of the outbreak of the Great War has fuelled soaring interest in the CWGC's commemoration of the 1.7 million Commonwealth servicemen and women who died during the two world wars. But the CWGC War Graves App has been specifically designed to make it easier than ever before to find and visit these places of remembrance at more than 23,000 locations in 154 countries.



# OPENINGshot:

## THE CHAIRMAN'S VIEW



Welcome fellow members, Guild Partners, and Supporters to your Spring edition of Despatches, the house magazine of the Guild. The New Guiding Year is already well underway and as I said at the AGM and in my last Chairman's despatch it is becoming more and more difficult to define when the battlefield-guiding season begins and when it ends. This is of course good news as it indicates that battlefield touring has an ever-broadening appeal. This year it is already evident that there is an increasing demand for tours and that reputable tour operators are looking for high quality Battlefield Guides to lead and tour manage those tours for them.

It is also interesting to see that although the First World War Centenary has created a tangible surge in public interest internationally and a corresponding increase in the number of FWW battlefield tourists, the FWW is not totally dominating the market. Members are reporting a general increase in tour numbers in WW2 tours as well as a demand for tours that encompass the anniversaries of Agincourt 600 and Waterloo 200. It will also be interesting to see how many of the non-specialist tour operators that ventured onto the battlefields under the FWW Centenary banner last year will maintain their interest in 2015.

In addition, members specialising in the military market are benefitting from the withdrawal from Afghanistan and the military's operational need to refocus on conventional war fighting doctrine and tactics. Part of this process is historical study in the guise of the

classic Staff Ride and themed Battlefield Study Period. Currently aside from FWW battlefields, the most popular destinations for these tours are Monte Cassino, Berlin, Arnhem and Sicily. This resurgent military interest is contributing further to the increased demand for guides and military historians, as well as extending the parameters of the traditional guiding season.

All of this activity is reflected in this issue of Despatches, we have articles and photographs from tours of the Falkland Islands, South Africa, and the Gustav Line in Italy, North America and even some endless poetry from the FWW! Our regular Guild Partner feature hosts an upbeat contribution from the winners of last year's Nathaniel Wade Award, Clive Harris and Julian Whippy at Battle Honours. It has been a pleasure to edit this issue and I am hoping that we can maintain our momentum with an equally vibrant summer issue. Thank you to everybody who has contributed to what is a bumper edition of the Guild magazine, please keep your articles coming.

In summary our year is off to a great start and it promises to be another bumper year for Guild members. I look forward to your reports from Gallipoli 100, Waterloo 200 and all of the other interesting tours that are in the offing this summer. Please look out for fellow members, take the time to say hello and of course, recruit new members if you can. Above all, have a great season everybody, stay safe, hone your skills and enjoy your guiding!

**Mike Peters**

## FIRSTcontact:

 <https://www.facebook.com/battleguide>

 <https://twitter.com/GuildofBG> - Twitter

Guild Chairman  
Mike Peters

Ascot House  
Norwich Road  
Little Stonham  
Ipswich  
Suffolk IP14 5DL  
United Kingdom

chairman@gbg-  
international.com

Guild Secretary  
Tony Smith

Trenanton  
Shutta Road  
Looe  
Cornwall PL13 1HP  
United Kingdom

+44 (0) 1503 269301  
secretary@gbg-  
international.com

Guild Membership  
Secretary  
Jo Hook

Quince Cottage  
5 West Church Street  
Kenninghall  
Norfolk  
United Kingdom

mbr.sec@gbg-  
international.com

Material for publication on the March edition of Despatches must be with the Editor no later than 30 May 15.

This is a deadline and submissions should be sent as far in advance as possible.

All material should be sent via Guild Secretary Tony Smith at:  
secretary@gbg-international.com

---

# FALKLANDS BATTLEFIELD TOUR NOVEMBER 2014

---

It's now 32 years since the end of the Falklands War and the return of sovereignty back to the Islanders.

Bob Darby



*The rugged terrain of the Falkland Islands restricts access and preserves the battlefields of 1982*

There are many reminders of that conflict, not just in the memorials to recognised individual units that took part in actions on the islands and out at sea, but also individual memorials to those who were killed during the 74 days war.

There can be no other battlefield outside the Middle East where the debris of war litters the landscape. From gun batteries with their discarded ammunition boxes still lying heaped on the ground to the wreckage of shot down Argentine aircraft. The maritime climate of these islands and the isolation of

the battlefields from human kind and therefore pilferage, has preserved these artefacts of one of the most successful campaigns carried out by British forces in the 20th Century.

It's a long way to the Falklands, an 18-hour flight and 8000 miles from the UK. The journey is broken up half way by a refuelling stop at Ascension Island, a British Dependency in the mid Atlantic and a location vital to the success of the 82 campaign which had one of the longest logistic tails in the history of warfare.

I took a party of ten enthusiastic battlefield tourists who call themselves the Heathrow Pals on this long odyssey. We had talked about it for over year until eventually they made the decision they wanted to go. Would like to have taken more travellers but the logistics and limited accommodation meant I could only take a maximum of ten.

In addition to battlefield touring, they also wanted to attend the Remembrance Day Service in the Cathedral at Stanley, which we did. Many Falkland Islanders



*The walls of Red and Green Life Machine were witness to the reality of modern war.*

served in the British Armed Forces in both World Wars. The Conflict, as the 1982 campaign is known to the Islanders, is remembered on June 14th the day of the Argentine surrender, Liberation Day.

Travelling around the battle sites is not easy and a four-wheel vehicle plus a local driver is essential. The Islanders start driving as soon as their feet can touch the pedals! They are also

able to read ground in a way that we urban motorists could not do, Permission is also required from the local landowner when visiting the battlefields.

Having local friends and connections really helps as farms and smallholdings are far and few between. The road system is limited to what are called graded roads made up of crushed stone and which graders and diggers are

constantly renovating. Real caution is required in driving. Local friends means you can ring ahead and get tea and cakes organised. Also, if you breakdown somebody will know where you are.

We visited all the main battle sites around Stanley. Some of the locations are now remembered as Battle Honours on the Colours of The Parachute Regiment and the Scots Guards, Tumbledown, Longdon, Goose Green and

Wireless Ridge. The Royal Marines, in keeping with their tradition, remember Mount Harriet and Two Sisters.

Whilst staying at the Malvina House we discovered that 25 Argentine veterans from the campaign were also staying there. Being a veteran of that campaign they wanted to speak to me. We conversed through an interpreter and found that some of them had



*Local knowledge and specialist vehicles are the key to a successful tour here*



*The Heathrow Pals with the battlefield to themselves*

been on the 'other side of the hill' to me on Mount Longdon. They told me their story and visa versa. It seems the only thing they could do when confronted by a screaming charging Tommy was to run! That is not meant to be derogatory to them. They had generally suffered from their experiences all those years ago. To see the face of the 'enemy' and talk was possibly an act of closure and for that I am pleased.

The Islands are not just about war. The sea and wild life is stunning and as part of the trip we flew to Pebble Island site of the SAS raid in 1982 but also the home of five different species of penguin! Any trip to the Falklands has to include the natural world.

Our time came to an end after eight days and we returned back to the UK to grey damp skies in contrast to the South Atlantic summer we had left behind.

A Falklands Battlefield tour is for most, a once in a lifetime trip. If nothing else it will remind you (those of us older enough to remember!) that as a nation, the British together can achieve almost anything!



*Thorough safety briefs are essential before allowing your group to explore bunkers and fire positions.*



*The battlefield is still strewn with evidence of the fighting*

# GOING OFF PISTE AT OMAHA

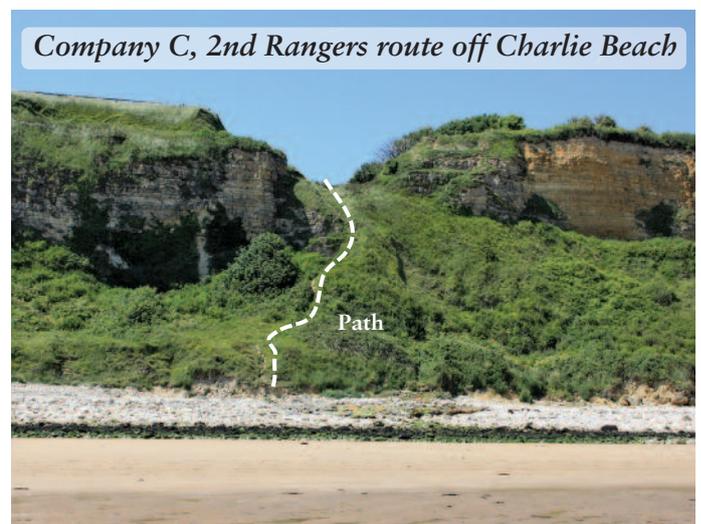
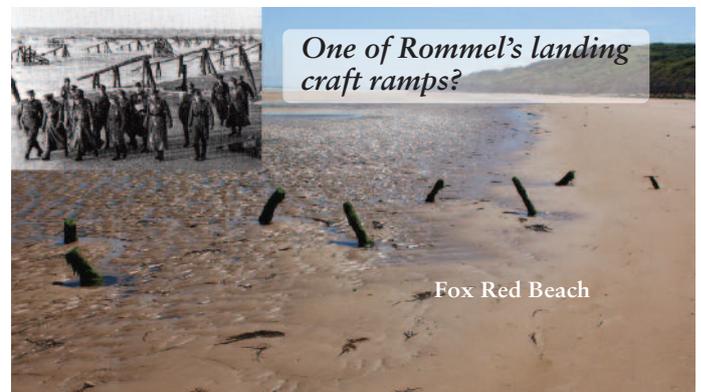
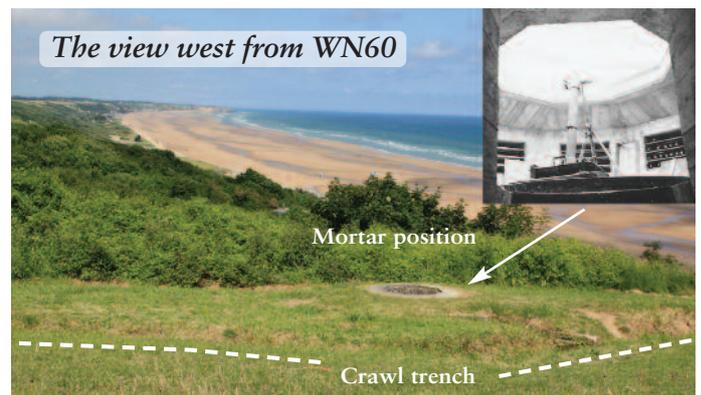
Paul Oldfield

For practical reasons tours usually stick to the most accessible sites, but some of the more inaccessible sites are real gems that amply reward the effort in time, sweat and shoe leather involved. I'm the first to agree they are not suitable for a 50-seat coach of pensioners. However, if your party is small and they are happy for their soles (and souls) to make contact with real earth, there are two sites at opposite ends of Omaha Beach that are well worth the effort.

At the eastern end, we often point out WN60 where Jimmy Monteith won his Medal of Honor. How many have actually been up there? Park between WN62 and WN61 and fortify yourself with a brew at the café above the land yacht school, before heading eastwards along the beach. After about 500m there is a small re-entrant with a few chalets at the bottom and a gap in the low cliffs where you can scramble off the beach. But before leaving the sand, if you are lucky, you may see what appear to be the cut off supports of one of Rommel's ramp obstacles (it was there on 20 June 2014). The beach in this area still has the shingle bank that was removed elsewhere by engineers to fill in the anti-tank ditches and for use as hard core for the beach exits.

Follow the track up the re-entrant for several hundred metres. You are following the route taken by the US troops who captured WN60. As the trees start to thin on the left, look for a track through the woods and follow it onto the open high ground. Very soon you will be looking at the double mortar pits and crawl trenches of WN60. Then look up at the unique view westwards along the whole of Omaha. Continue along the cliff edge eastwards carefully as there are a few dodgy bits where the trench isn't easy to see and you may fall in (I did!). Also watch out where it branches towards the coast in places. These branches usually connect with concrete structures that are in a poor state of repair, probably the result of shell strikes on 6 June 1944.

The half destroyed OP is where Major Werner Pluskat reported thousands of ships coming towards him, as described in Cornelius Ryan's 'The Longest Day' and portrayed in the film of the same name. For the film,



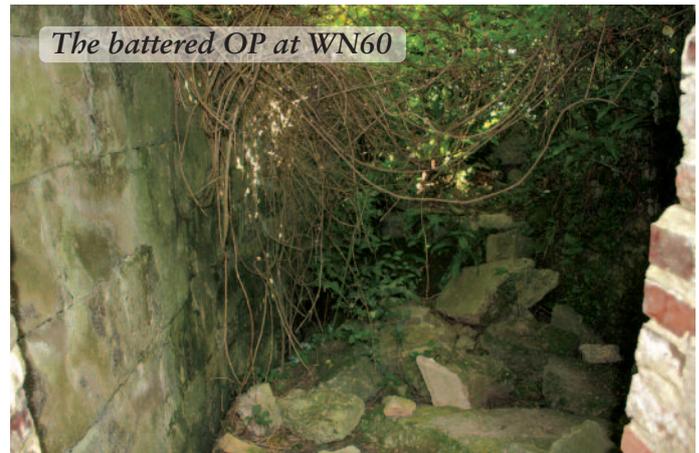
Pluskat's experience was filmed in the Longues-sur-Mer battery OP. There is also access to WN60 from the landward side, although I've not tried it.

Now go to the western end of the beach. We've all seen 'Saving Private Ryan' and no doubt tell tour groups the true story. But how many have walked along Charlie Beach at low tide (high tide presents a bit of a challenge) and hoofed it up the small re-entrant where Company C, 2nd Rangers almost bled to death getting to the top at WN73? There is a path. It is steep, but it doesn't require crampons or belays. If your clients climb it, they will start to get some idea of what the Rangers faced. If the beach approach is too much, walk past that odd concrete embrasure on the footpath leading up to the campsite at WN73 and continue west along the cliff path, which is actually a German crawl trench in places. In summer it can be claustrophobic in the dense vegetation, but keep your eyes open. There are at least two branches leading to dugout positions on the cliff edge on the right, probably the ones that caused the Rangers so many problems.

Keep going past a large fig tree and you'll emerge above the re-entrant where the 'fortified house' taken by the Rangers once stood. Look down the cliff. It's a daunting prospect getting up it in on a calm summer's afternoon, never mind under fire after being chucked about in a shoebox for hours and hitting the beach nauseous, exhausted, cold, disorientated and in a state of shock.

Continue westwards a mile to WN74, from where a report was sent to HQ 352 Inf Div that the landings at Omaha had failed. As a result, some divisional reserves were directed towards Gold Beach, giving the poor souls on Omaha a bit of a respite. WN74 is not for the faint-hearted. It is a long walk, if you consider just over a mile a long walk! When you get to the vicinity of WN74, access to the cliff top is all but impossible without a Sherman Crab or bocage hedge cutter. Continue another quarter mile or so and look for gaps in the field boundary on the right. You will need to be robust. Having got through, you'll be close to the edge of the cliff. In summer approach with even more caution as the deep grass obscures trenches and precipitous drops into old concrete positions. One of the bunkers here was blown into the sea by a destroyer on 6 June 1944. Looking below the concrete bits are difficult to see, but there are a number of iron girders. A few metres west is an OP on the cliff edge. Look eastwards from it and appreciate the view that observer had when he made his report.

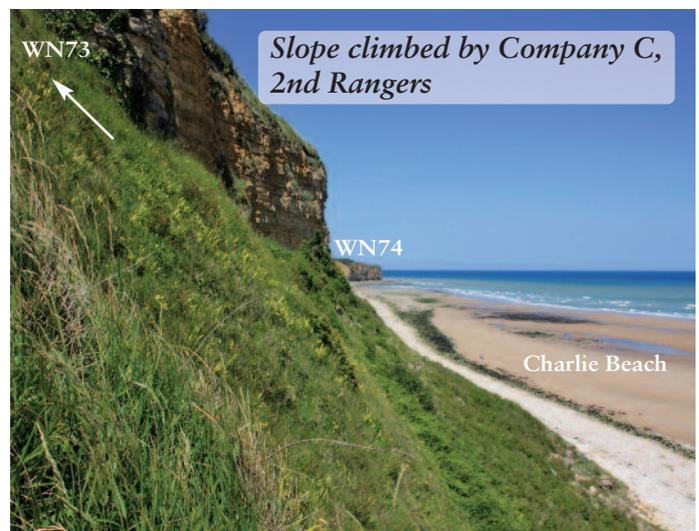
The cliff path goes all the way to Pointe du Hoc, but you will probably want to return for a well-earned drink in the café at Vierville. Those who make the effort to visit these sites will certainly have a better understanding of what happened on Omaha seventy years ago.



*The battered OP at WN60*



*Signs of close combat at WN60*



*Slope climbed by Company C, 2nd Rangers*



*View eastwards from WN74*

# BATTLEFIELD STUDY BY THE PARACHUTE REGIMENT BRITISH AIRBORNE FORCES ON THE GUSTAV LINE 1943 – 1944

Francesco Di Cintio

A research project I carried out on ‘The Red Devils in the Italian Campaign’ prompted the first regimental battlefield study visit by the Parachute Regiment to historic sites on the Gustav Line in Italy. The visit by members of the 4th Battalion Parachute Regiment was led by Lt Col Giles Matthew Timms MC, who has recently served in Afghanistan, and Maj Richard Hargreaves MC (OC B Coy, 4 PARA), aged 95, a veteran of the Second World War who fought in the area of the Aventino River and on the slopes of the Maiella massif in the Abruzzo region 71 years ago.

It was an honour to be able to tell the British Paras about this overlooked, and yet important chapter of their regimental history, a chapter which has been almost entirely neglected for over seventy years. At the same time, we were able to examine the surprising similarities between operations in this area of Italy and the more recent Operation Herrick in Afghanistan, both in terms of operational tactics and the difficulty of the terrain.

The battlefield study visit began on 23 October 2014 in Casoli, at the former primary school, where Lt Col Vic Coxen DSO MC (CO 4 PARA) established the first Allied headquarters in the area 71 years ago, on 6 December 1943. During the evening of 2 December 1943, 4 PARA (as part of the 2nd

Independent Parachute Brigade) had been put under the command of the 2nd New Zealand Division, with the task of defending the Division’s left flank during the advance on Orsogna.

After an introduction to the historical background of the Italian campaign and the deployment of the 1st Airborne Division in Operation Slapstick, I accompanied the group of servicemen up the castle tower in Casoli, a vantage point from which we were able to survey the entire sector that was entrusted to the Red Devils. The front extended over 30 kilometres from the west of Casoli to the northeast. The German troops had selected the Sangro basin below the river bend at Alfedena as a natural bulwark in their defences, with support positioned on the northwestern side, in particular on the Maiella massif and on the hills sloping down towards the Adriatic Sea between the villages of Pennapiedimonte, Guardiagrele, Orsogna and Ortona. Perched on steep hills, these villages made for ideal defensive points, with their low stone buildings and narrow streets. The middle part of the Sangro River Valley and the entire course of the Aventino River were notoriously susceptible to landslides and erosion, and the area was also infamous for being subjected to heavy winter snowfall, with temperatures reaching as low as -11°C.

The initial plan was for the paras to secure all the small villages to the west of Casoli and to reconnoitre the main German artillery observation points between Pennapiedimonte and Guardiagrele. This gave the Red Devils a highly demanding task to perform, bearing in mind the nature of the terrain and the fact that the few roads available were entirely vulnerable to the direct and indirect fire of the German troops. As mountain guides, Lt Col Coxen decided to use the partisans of a newly formed resistance unit, the Gruppo Patrioti della Maiella (Group of Maiella Patriots), which had been founded in Casoli on 5 December 1943 by Ettore Troilo, a local lawyer. Although they had not at first been officially recognised by commanders of the Eighth Army, the partisans proved to be useful guides for the paratroopers, accompanying them along forest paths very close to enemy positions.

Following the same old paths, I accompanied the modern-day British paratroopers to the small village of Palombaro, where Lt Leslie John Deacon had arrived late on 6 December 1943, led by the partisans. The Mayor of Palombaro at the time spoke a little English, and he informed Leslie’s platoon of German patrols and observation posts in the area of Pennapiedimonte, a small village that had a key position on

the Maiella front. Our journey then continued towards Balzolo, an area in the municipality of Pennapiedimonte where the German forces had set up an observation post in 1943, which is still visible today. This point gave the German troops an overview of the whole area of operations from Guardiagrele to Casoli and on to Orsogna. The partisans led Lt Deacon towards this point. At dawn on 8 December, the British paratroopers launched a frontal attack on the German positions, which were taken. As Major Hargreaves himself remembered, this was the first significant breach of the Gustav Line. From Pennapiedimonte, it would be possible to advance towards Guardiagrele, where the German troops were covering the deployment of defences in Orsogna. From his vantage point at Pennapiedimonte, Deacon sought to persuade the New Zealand command to move on Orsogna from Guardiagrele,

following the tactics best suited to the terrain, but the New Zealanders opted for an open battle with armoured vehicles, suffering a heavy defeat.

The most important part of the study visit took place later that afternoon in the cinema auditorium, in the former primary school in Casoli. Through a Skype video connection, the British Paras were able to speak with Maj Paddy Deacon MBE MC, who was decorated with the Military Cross for his actions at Pennapiedimonte and Guardiagrele, while still a lieutenant. An interesting debate followed between the two veterans and Lt Col Timms regarding the tactics adopted by British airborne forces on the Maiella front and in Afghanistan. Seventy years ago, platoon commanders did not have the cutting-edge communication systems or close air support of today when they went out on patrol. They were often forced to make quick decisions while moving through mountainous

terrain covered in vegetation, where German ambushes were frequent occurrences, as was the possibility of running into fascist spies. Maj Hargreaves stressed the critical role of the local population in Abruzzo and their self-sacrifice in supplying the British paratroopers with provisions when they were often isolated on barren snow-covered mountains.

A fine example of the attacks carried out by platoons was the action led by Lt Pat Angier (9 Platoon, C Company) in the small village of Civitella Messer Raimondo, which was the next stop on the battlefield study trip. There, I was able to describe the attack on the garrison at Civitella, which allowed the British paratroopers to secure one of the most strategically important villages. The visit was made even more emotional by the eyewitness account of the partisan Michele Martinelli, who took part in the action led by Lt Angier against the German paratroopers, when

*Sangro Front allotted to Red Devils (original map of 2nd Indep Para Bde Hq)*



Martinelli was aged only seventeen.

We had planned a stop at La Morgia, a ridge near Gessopalena, but this had to be cancelled due to poor weather. La Morgia had been an important German defensive site with mortars and machine gun emplacements. For the entire time they were at the front line in this area, the paratroopers were continually tasked with taking this particular site, without any artillery support. The trenches dug there can still be seen, and signs of the furious fighting are still visible in the surrounding villages.

After visiting Abruzzo, the battlefield study trip continued to the town of Cassino, in Lazio, known as the site of one of the bloodiest battles of the Second World War. With the support of Damiano Parravano, President of the Gustav Line Association, an educational and research organisation, the British paras visited the key position on Castle Hill, where they were able to gain a clear picture of the territory on which the battle was fought and of the German positions that dominated the Liri Valley and the town of Cassino. The 4th Battalion Parachute Regiment was deployed on 4 April 1944, occupying the railway station sector, where they lay at the mercy of the enemy positions on higher ground to the north. All their units experienced the constant smokescreens used to conceal unavoidable movements in daylight.

The visit ended at the Abbey of Monte Cassino, where an exhibition had been set up (thanks to the support of the Airborne Assault Museum and Archive of the Parachute Regiment & Airborne Forces) especially for the occasion, telling the story of the Red Devils at the Battle of Monte Cassino.

*(Thanks are due to the Capt. Adam Sergeant (4 PARA), Dr Guy Puzey, the staff of Airborne Assault Museum and Archive of the Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces and Gustav Line Association for their excellent support).*



*Mules were the primary method of transporting combat supplies throughout the campaign*



*Pte Hadden, Norfolk. and Sgt Williams, Liverpool. (Arielli, 1944) Feb 1944*



*Three Para Privates rest outside a dugout.*

# LEARNING *guides*

## CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Chris Scott

*As we become more established and more people both join and achieve their badge, it is important that we do not lose sight of the underlying purpose of the Guild of Battlefield Guides.*

We were set up in order to analyse, develop and raise the understanding and practice of battlefield guiding, and we only have to refer to our well thought through and written Constitution for direction in times of potential mission drift, a disease which bedevils most organisations as they expand. The purpose at the heart of the original proposals for the creation of the Guild was 'improvement' and this does not stop with the achievement of the badge. Improvement is continuous, and in professional and academic circles this on-going process to improve abilities and understanding of a skill or activity is known as Continuing Professional Development, or CPD.

Most professionals are encouraged to keep a personal log or record of professionally related activities and experiences undertaken which help develop their appreciation and practice of their craft – Personnel/ Human Resources managers usually ensure it. Hopefully all members, Guides or not, undergo a degree of private CPD as their interest directs, but, it is incumbent upon the Guild Council to provide or facilitate a varied programme of GBG opportunities for this to happen.

### Such a programme could include:

1. Witnessing Validation presentations
2. Attending lectures, conferences and study days
  - Battlefield interpretation
  - Historical events
  - Landscape appreciation and influences
  - Archaeological finds and remains

- Sources of evidence
  - Hypothesis not truth
3. Visiting battlefield related venues
    - Battlefields
    - Museums
    - Battlefield-related organisations
  4. Both on and off-site sharing of good practice including:
    - Watching others at work
    - The Duty of Care and its implications
    - Legal requirements and advice
    - Communication and presentation skills
    - Conduct and image
    - Health & Safety awareness
    - Emergency and First Aid procedures
  5. Direction towards useful reading material
    - Battlefield guiding and interpretation
    - Historical knowledge & evidence selection
  6. Articles and papers given or published
    - By self
    - By colleagues
    - By professionals in the same craft or field.

The emphasis should be very much upon the personal, and development should be geared to individual needs; whether that means filling in gaps in experience or extending areas of expertise. This implies that anyone undergoing CPD should also go through fairly regular periods of personal review and skills monitoring. The easiest form of this is via a SWOT Analysis. That is a session dedicated to an individual thinking seriously about himself or herself, and is best undertaken with a notebook and a glass of something nice!

In the notebook one lists Strengths (what you're good at), Weaknesses

(what you're not so good at), Objectives (what you want to achieve), and Threats (what can stop you getting what you want). This way one identifies things, which require attention; either to help develop a strength, eradicate a weakness, to meet an objective or remove a threat.

Setting personal priority targets and then seeing if anything on the Guild's programme will meet those needs will help determine which events one attends. It is up to the Guild's programme designer to come up with a varied, challenging and stimulating set of activities and events! I am sure they would welcome guidance and ideas and indeed help.

Having outlined what we need to do to succeed, let us also be aware of what we need to do if we wish to fail!

There is a danger in any specialist group that the subject matter of that specialism becomes confused with the purpose of the group and for us that looms large in the haunting presence of Military History. Fascinating, as it might be we are not a military history society and tales of battles have only a minimal role within our brief. That is why only Assignment One in the Validation process focuses upon this aspect and even there it is more about engaging and holding an audience. Our province is Battlefield Guiding and the key words should be FIELD and GUIDE. If we replicate the work of the Battlefields Trust, The British Commission for Military History, The Society for Army Research or any of the other excellent period specialist groups such as The Richard III Society or the Western Front Association then I really don't see why we should enlist in their ranks! We certainly would have failed in our objectives if we permit military history to steer our ship.

If we can avoid this spectre, and focus upon the skill and practice of interpretation and guiding through the process of Continuing Professional Development then we can fulfil our mission and achieve improvement. This is not training and I will try a set out what I think the Guild must undertake if it wishes to launch itself down that road in the next issue. Meanwhile why don't you conduct a SWOT analysis on yourself and suggest to Council what sort of events or experiences you would like them to stage so that you can improve your skills through CPD.

# GUIDING THE 100 YEARS WAR

Peter Hoskins

THE VISITOR TO A BATTLEFIELD INEVITABLY AND UNDERSTANDABLY WANTS TO KNOW BOTH WHAT HAPPENED AND WHERE THE ACTION TOOK PLACE. HERE IS THE NUB OF THE PROBLEM OF GUIDING THE BATTLEFIELDS OF THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR, WE SIMPLY DO NOT KNOW WITH CERTAINTY WHERE THE BATTLES WERE FOUGHT. TO COMPOUND THE PROBLEM CONTEMPORARY ACCOUNTS OF THE DISPOSITION OF THE ARMIES AND THE ACTION ARE OFTEN CONTRADICTIONARY, IMPRECISE AND HIGHLY STYLISED

The three best known battles of the Hundred Years War, Cr cy (1346), Poitiers (1356) and Agincourt (1415), all lack conclusive archaeological evidence to support the sites of the battle. There is a broad, although not always unanimous, consensus about the sites, but we have to rely on a mix of tradition and interpretation of at best sketchy descriptions in contemporary sources.

Of the three battlefields that at Agincourt is probably the most straightforward to guide. We have a good deal of information on the forces employed and the French plans have survived. Furthermore, the probable battlefield has not been developed and is relatively easy to interpret. Thus, with the odd caveat about the lack of evidence and the problem with contemporary sources, a visitor can be given a fairly straightforward account of what happened and where.

Cr cy is a little less clear-cut. We can be confident of the general location of Edward III's army and the line of approach of the French. We also have a good panoramic view of the battlefield from the viewing platform on the presumed site of the windmill used by Edward III to

observe the battle and command his army as best he good with communications of the period. We know a reasonable amount about the orders of battle of the two armies, but the disposition of the armies is

not clear, in particular there is much speculation over the deployment of the English archers. However, once again a reasonably conventional approach can be taken to describing the battlefield and the action.



*On the battle site at Cr cy, looking up to the English positions.*

Of the three battles, Poitiers is by far the most problematic. There are two main interpretations of the battlefield and the disposition of forces, with a number of variations on a theme: one school of thought has the two armies facing each other on a broadly west-east axis with the French to the north and the Anglo-Gascon army to the south. The other school, which I favour, has the axis running north to south with the French under King John to the west and the Black Prince to the east. To add to the problem of these differing interpretations the descriptions of the battlefield are generally vague and the presumed battle site is in many places obscured by trees and twentieth-century housing. The good news is that we have a pretty good idea of the organisation of

the armies and the course of the battle. Thus, there is a story to be told, the question is how to do so without getting bogged down in the different opinions concerning the battle site.

My solution to the problem is to take as my starting point the most detailed description that we have, which was written a year or so after the battle by Geoffrey le Baker a clerk from Swinbrook in Oxford. Baker was not with the Anglo-Gascon army, but his accounts of the campaigns of the Black Prince in 1355 and 1356 are believed to be based on eye-witness testimony. He describes how the Black Prince surveyed the site of the battlefield and chose his positions. He tells us that there was near-by on one side a hill, surrounded by hedges and ditches,

to one side there was a pasture thick with thorn bushes, there was also an area sown with vines, and the rest of the area was arable land. Baker goes on to say that the prince thought that the French were on the arable land. Between the prince and the hill there was a broad, deep valley, and a marsh which was fed by a stream. The prince's army crossed the stream, and coming out of the valley across ditches and hedges occupied the hill. They were on higher ground than that held by the French, and the Anglo-Gascons were easily hidden by the natural fortifications among the thickets. The field in which the vanguard and the centre were deployed was separated from the open ground which the French occupied by a long hedge with a ditch on the far

*Looking down across the valley of the Miosson and up the hill towards the Anglo-Gascon positions.*



side, one end of which fell away into the marsh. The Earl of Warwick, commander of the vanguard, held the slope going down to the marsh. In the upper part of the hedge was a gap, which carters made in the autumn, distant a stone's throw from which was deployed the rear-guard under the command of the Earl of Salisbury. Baker then jumps ahead to the start of the battle by saying that the French, seeing the standard of the prince, previously visible, starting to move and to be hidden from their eyes by the slope of the hill, thought that he was withdrawing.

Of course the cultivation of the land has changed. However, the features of the landscape have not and my first stand is at a vantage point, which, although of course we cannot be certain that this was where the Black Prince surveyed the future battlefield, is a good match between the topography and the description. From this stand the broad and deep valley of the Miosson can be clearly seen, as can the location of the ford which was used until the construction of the modern bridge. The road across the river can be seen running up to the higher ground, more of a spur than a hill but certainly the high point on the

battlefield, where the centre of the Anglo-Gascon army may have been deployed. To the left is the marsh where Warwick's archers may have been deployed to cover the movements of the vanguard. Despite trees obscuring some features, this stand sets the scene well. We can then move onto subsequent stands with a picture of the battlefield in mind.

I next move on up the hill to the Anglo-Gascon position. When the Black Prince started to disengage in the absence of a French attack, a move which provoked the French into action, the earl of Warwick moved back down the road and started to cross the river. His initial move does not seem to have been spotted by the French, but as Baker tells us they did see the Black Prince's standard start to move. The prince was with a small reserve of 400 men-at-arms stepped back on the reverse slope behind the three main divisions, and moving up the hill it is easy to show how the topography explains both why the French did not see Warwick move, but did see the prince's standard, although not his men, start to move off.

The third stand is at the centre of the presumed deployment of the Anglo-Gascon army. From here

can be seen the likely French positions and the slope up which the dismounted French men-at-arms would have laboured to close with the Black Prince's army. Close by there are examples of hedges, typical of the region, which show clearly why they played such an important part in the battle. This stand also serves to describe the decisive move by the Captal de Buch in the closing stages of the battle to move behind the French, out of their view, with mounted men-at-arms and archers. The final stands show the possible route taken by the Captal in his flanking manoeuvre and the nature of the marshes which provided a natural defence for Warwick's archers in the opening phase of the battle.

Peter Hoskins is author of *'In the Steps of the Black Prince, the Road to Poitiers 1355-1356, Following the Black Prince on the Road to Poitiers, 1355-1356: a Handbook and Guide for Tourists'*, and, with Professor Anne Curry, of *'Agincourt 1415: a Tourist's Guide to the Campaign'*.

## EVENTguide 2015-16

7-8 March - Validation Session at Swindon – Ian Gumm

27 March - London Lunch UJC London – Andy Thompson

17-19 Apr - Dublin Weekend – Kathleen Neagle

12-17 Jun - Ardennes Recce – Ian Mitchell

7 Aug - Badged Guides Dinner – Graeme Cooper

8-11 Oct - Arnhem Weekend – Wybo Boersma

4 Dec - Christmas Lunch at UJC London – Andy Thompson

19-21 Feb 2016 - Guild AGM – Council

# FIELD*guides*: IN ACTION



Italian Member, Francesco Di Cintio with CO and members of 4 Para at the end of a successful Battlefield Study on the Gustav Line



Steve Roberts at Serre Road CWGC with Students from Wimbledon High School



Guild trio on the Buffalo River - Eugenie Brooks, Scottie and Julian Whippy



Quality Assurance is the name of the game here! Tonic & Valmai Holt out and about on the Somme testing their own products



Normandy, Adrian Ridley-Jones at Gold Beach

# GUIDING LITERARY TOURS

Viv Whelpton

Much of the controversy that surrounds the poetry of the First World War (and the advent of the centenary is, unfortunately, showing this controversy to be as alive as ever) comes about through a misunderstanding of the nature of the poetry on the part of military historians and enthusiasts and an ignorance about the actualities of the war amongst devotees of the literature. A degree of ‘myth-busting’ in both directions is called for. The intention behind the ‘Poets’ Tours’ was to help participants gain some understanding of the various conflicts in which the combatant poets took part and the roles they played, and to use this context to explore the verse (and some of the prose) they wrote and its relationship with the times, places and circumstances in which it was written.

We decided that to do both the poetry and the history justice we had to narrow the scope of each tour. It made sense to visit the Somme, Arras, Ypres, and Loos and Cambrai separately and this made it possible to focus on particular campaigns and sectors as well as on particular poets or particular stages of their poetic development. Thus on the Somme tour in 2012, along with several ‘minor’ poets, we explored the 1916 and early 1917 output of Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves, Wilfred Owen and Edmund Blunden. On the Arras tour in 2013 we were able to concentrate on Edward Thomas, Isaac Rosenberg and Sassoon. Ypres this summer focused our attention on Julian Grenfell in 1915 and on Blunden and Ivor Gurney in 1917, but was also a platform for an examination of the poetry – and war – of the Welsh and the Irish, through a consideration of the writings of Hedd Wyn and Francis Ledwidge. (Arras, through the work of minor poets such as Alan Mackintosh, Eugene Crombie and Hamish Mann, afforded a similar opportunity for a consideration of the war and the poetry of the Scots.) Loos and Cambrai this year will bring us back to Graves,

Literary tours of the Western Front are nothing new; indeed several members of the Guild community offer them. However, the centenary partnership between the Western Front Association and Battle Honours offered me the opportunity to implement what had been an ambition for several years, particularly as I already knew Clive Harris as a military historian with both a working knowledge of the war’s poetry and a respect for it.

Sassoon and Blunden but also allow us to study Charles Sorley and Richard Aldington.

We shall make only two exceptions to this approach: our 2017 tour will be devoted to Sassoon, following him from Bethune to the Somme and thence to Arras and on to St Venant, learning how his experiences altered him as soldier, man and writer; and in 2018 we shall focus on Owen’s two tours of duty – on the Somme and on the Hindenburg Line again acquiring an understanding of how his experiences on the battlefield shaped his writing, and ending our tour on the canal bank at Ors exactly a hundred years from the day on which he was killed.

Apart from their verse, the memoirs, diaries, novels and letters of these poets are also rich and relevant resources. This material illuminates the roles of the combatant as comrade, officer, ranker, fighter, casualty, friend, son, husband, father and professional writer, as well as providing insights into particular battles and actions. It also prompts stands on artillery, cavalry, mining, signalling, gas warfare, trench raids, shell shock, pals’ battalions, life behind the lines, trench routine, battlefield tactics and evacuation of the wounded, as well as on military culture, leadership, morale, the role of religion and the relationship between war and nature. Above all, it illuminates the battlefield itself and what took place there.

One of my most important resources has been Anne Powell’s comprehensive guide to the work of all the combatant poets who died on the Western Front, ‘A Deep Cry’. However, the poet soldiers (to use the term Winston Churchill coined to describe his friend Rupert Brooke) were not just ‘soldier poets’, of whom there were hundreds; while Anne Powell’s book introduces us to some fine poems by young men who died before they were able to mature as poets, it is important to recognise that just because something is in verse it is not necessarily worthy of

study. The very reason that the combatant poetry of the First World War resonates with readers and illuminates our understanding of the war is because the best of it is not only witness, but the product of fine sensibilities and skilled craftsmanship.

In many ways, tours like these are simply the implementation of best practice in battlefield guiding as disseminated by the Guild: an understanding of events is achieved through being at the right spot on the battlefield, through input on terrain, tactics and technology and through the human stories. The difference is that these stories are told through the medium of some of the finest literature in our culture.

On tour, Clive and I present the stands but the clients do the readings, having had the opportunity to select and prepare them en-route. The emotional outcome is often awe, pity or compassion; but it may equally be amusement. The poetry of Ivor Gurney and A.P. Herbert, not to mention the prose of Sassoon, Graves and Aldington, abounds in moments of wit and humour.

In mounting these tours I had hoped for two outcomes: that we might help literary enthusiasts to appreciate the social and strategic contexts and the



*Viv at Hedd Wyn's grave*

actual circumstances out of which the literature of the war arose; and that we would encourage military historians and enthusiasts to abandon their scepticism about the value of the poetry. What I had not anticipated was that we would attract so many people who were equally informed and passionate about both fields of study. The number of our returning clients – and there are many who are active members of both literary associations (such as the Siegfried Sassoon Fellowship and the Wilfred Owen Association) and the Western Front Association is evidence of this fact. Those military historians who are already using the centenary as an opportunity to disparage the poetry could learn from coming along on one of our tours!

Vivien Whelpton is a retired teacher of English and Media Studies with an M.A. in War Studies from King's College, London. She has recently published a biography of the First World War poet and novelist Richard Aldington, and she is currently working towards validation as a GBG guide.



*The Ivor Gurney Memorial at Hill 35 close to Gallipoli Farm in the Ypres Salient*

# WITH JOHNNY BURGOYNE IN NEW ENGLAND IN THE FALL

Jim Tanner

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ABOUNDS WITH BEAUTIFULLY PRESERVED BATTLEFIELDS WHERE THE LAVISH ATTENTION AND RESOURCES OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CAN MAKE THE BATTLEFIELD GUIDE ALMOST REDUNDANT, ESPECIALLY ON THE CIVIL WAR BATTLEFIELDS.

While far fewer in number, the sites of actions during the War of Independence are dealt with similarly but, interestingly, are much less well known by Americans. Boston is well and truly on the regular tourist route and a day or two in the city walking the Freedom Trail serves as a very useful introduction to what was, in reality, the first of two civil wars. Very little evidence of the ferociousness of the early days of America's revolution remains in the city and Bunker Hill has room today only for its magnificent monument and excellent museum.

If time does not permit a study on-site of all of the War of Independence battlefields then a two to three day focus on the 1777 Saratoga campaign is a perfect way to concentrate effort. The staggering beauty of upstate New York is, in itself, worth the journey and especially in the fall; this is also a good time of year to consider the consequences of the weather on campaigning in the truly vast American wilderness. Distance should not be underestimated! The importance of the campaign and the British failure are largely forgotten by us all today, but 'Saratoga' is considered one of the ten most important battles in history for its effect on the outcome of the war and the founding of the United States. Background and context are everything, but the battlefield historian is rewarded by the ability to demonstrate every key feature of a military campaign, good and poor: leadership, decision-making and planning, command and control, intelligence and information, tactical skill and the story of the soldier. And logistics – too easily ignored and so key to success or failure.

The study should commence with a visit to Fort Ticonderoga, in its strategic position at the southern end of Lake Champlain. For British audiences, Ticonderoga is most closely associated with the



*Jim Tanner – in the red coat – talks tactics at Fort Ticonderoga with an American audience.*



*Fort Ticonderoga (Carillon to the French) at the southern end of Lake Champlain, New York.*

French victory of 1758. But for Americans it marked the opening of the 1777 campaign and early tactical failure. An entire day could be spent here considering the 1758 battle, the Seven Years War/French and Indian Wars and tactical developments that were to influence the next war. The position provides an opportunity too to discuss the naval effort by the

British in 1777 and, critically, the logistic lifeline of the waterways of the ‘Great Warpath’. The restored stone fort and its visitor centre are quite superb. The day should include If time permits a visit to the site of the fight at Hubbardton, which occurred just a day after the fall of Ticonderoga in July 1777. It is important for the action of Simon Fraser and his Advance Corps and as an example of fine tactical handling of troops. It is important too to press on an American audience from the outset that this was typical of the redcoat and that he was not a “pipe-clayed automata.” This myth, and that America’s freedom was won by sharp-eyed, green-coated riflemen (and not by French Regulars!) can create some lively discussion!

The disaster that befell Baum’s Germans at Bennington is worth examining but only if there is ample time. And it would take a further full day to visit the site of the ambush of the American militia at Oriskany and of the siege of Fort Stanwix/Schuyler, where St Leger retreated from after his failed attempt to get a force via Lake Ontario to link up with Burgoyne in the Hudson Valley.

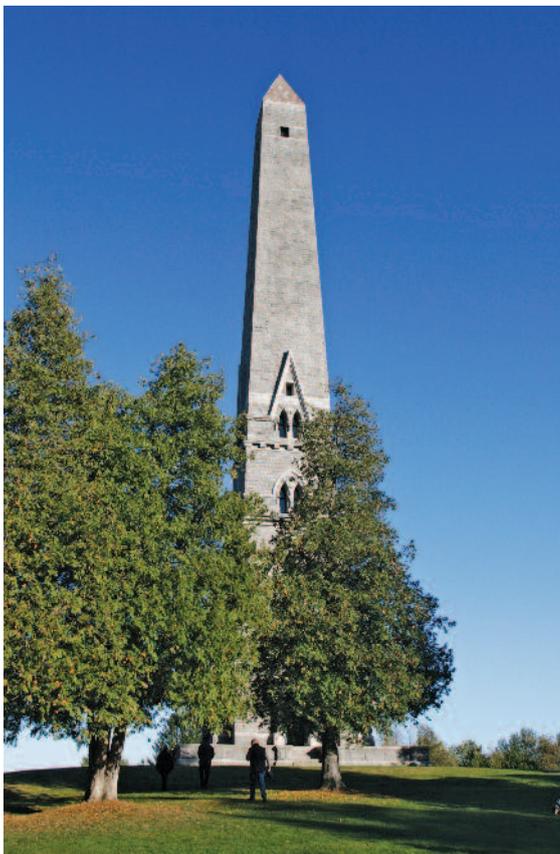
The Battle of Saratoga is actually two battles – ‘Freeman’s Farm’ on 19 September and ‘Bemis Heights’ on 7 October. Both can be explored in great detail within the Saratoga National Historical Park and there are excellent opportunities to talk through infantry and artillery tactics and command and control in battle. At the end of it all one must marvel



*The American line atop Monument Hill, Hubbardton.*



*Dave Fuhrman (with arms outstretched) talks through the fighting at Freeman's Farm*



*The Victory Monument in Schuylerville.*



*The Breymann Redoubt, key to Burgoyne's position at Saratoga.*

at the staying power of Burgoyne’s army that had moved south out of Canada with such high hopes four months before capitulating to despised rebels. Of those ‘despised rebels’ one can also wonder at their vigour, their will and their capacity for organisation. The day should end in Schuylerville (once the town of Saratoga) and the great monument placed at the scene of Burgoyne’s eventual surrender. A British guide might summarise at this point the efforts of the redcoats, eventually overwhelmed by numbers and hunger, during a war of extraordinary strategic ineptitude.

# GUILD PARTNERS BATTLE HONOURS LTD



*Military Staff Ride Italy WW2 - Overlooking the Garigliano River at Suio Alto we host a TEWT over the ground crossed by the 56 (London) Division*



**FOUNDED BY GUILD BADGED MEMBERS,  
JULIAN WHIPPY AND CLIVE HARRIS, BATTLE  
HONOURS LED THEIR FIRST TOUR IN 2005.**

They have grown the company from scratch to now running in excess of 40 tours a year.

Initially Battle Honours offered the niche of walking experiences across the battlefields. Having quickly established themselves a class leader in walking tours, they diversified whilst retaining the Battle Honours feel and now offer a far wider spectrum of specialist tours.

From bespoke groups to military staff rides accompanied by leading academics, non-scheduled departures now account for over 60% of the business.

Whilst the traditional Western Front remains ever popular, they often lead trips as far afield as Gallipoli, the Vosges Mountains, Monte Cassino and South Africa.

With new scheduled tours offered each year, Battle Honours enable returning clients to study battlefields in detail and develop their knowledge year on year, a cornerstone to their growth being client retention. Even the more familiar destinations of the Somme and Ypres can boast 40 different walks and counting.

This variety, coupled with realistic guide to group ratios and enviable tour dynamics ensure an almost 80% repeat business year on year.

An early decision by Clive and Julian was to aim their product at 'the battlefield enthusiast' rather than schools or entry level tours. This USP played to their strengths and offers an equally attractive prospect to both client and guide. Quite simply no two tours are the same.



*Julian at Isandlwana map briefing a group prior to starting a walk on our South African Tour*

More recently as the company profile grows, they find themselves attracting well-travelled clients who have experienced numerous tours before. A testimonial received from a recent trip typifies this, “I have been on Battlefield tours for 30 years, but this was the best yet. Battle Honours are doing it right.”

Clive and Julian strive for quality at every turn and this is true with their approach to guides and guiding. Both were badged in 2007, since then Clive has served on the guild council and Julian remains an active validator. With nearly 30 years guiding experience between them they certainly have come to know what a problem on tour can look like.

Having become Guild Partners in 2014, Battle Honours are not only active supporters, they are committed to employing badged guides, or occasionally people striving to achieve one.

To support this belief in the badge they have recently offered to sponsor a validation day in May 2015 offering guides an additional validation opportunity. This they felt was an opportunity to act in partnership with the Guild.

Amongst the UK based members of their guiding team they are proud to have three international Guild members in Kirk Drew (Canada), Carlo Larosa (Italy) and the recently recruited Peter Sweeney (Australia).

Clive in a recent article said “The real reason we are special, the real reason people come back year on year is quite simply the quality of our guides. Undoubtedly the best available, most are either badged members of the International Guild of Battlefield Guides, published authors and very often both.”

Mike Sheil, Mike Peters, Terry Webb, Frank Toogood and John Greenacre make up the current UK based badged team whilst Rory Stephens, Dan Hill and Stephen Chambers are in pursuit of their badge. All the guides are carefully chosen for their knowledge and passion for the battlefields, another skill is to be non-stand specific, to deviate from the obvious spots and sources ensuring they are not just a page or two ahead of the clients guidebook.

In 2013 Clive and Julian were very proud to have been awarded the IGBG Nathaniel Wade award for

services to Guiding and remain pleased to be part of an organisation that offers such great networking and support opportunities.

Based at their offices in Stevenage, Hertfordshire, Battle Honours have a valued backroom staff assisting with the admin, research and social media side of the company. This growth of staff in ‘The HQ dug out’ has been a careful measured process and is typical of the steady organic expansion of Battle Honours.

Having recently joined the TTA (Travel Trust Association) they now offer even greater financial protection for their clients whilst also gaining access to the Honeycomb tour operators booking platform, a real asset when planning a tour. This together with the addition of a t/ATOL will enable Battle Honours to grow and visit new battlefields often even further afield.

Battle Honours are the chosen tour provider for The Western Front Association, The Gallipoli Association and the National World War One Museum of Kansas City, USA. Satisfying such learned clients, year on year, with a variety of tours from Poets to Archaeology, German tactics at Verdun to the learning curve of amphibious operations in 1915 is a constant challenge for the team but one that they thrive on and feel privileged to face.



*Gallipoli - Clive uses the Turkish sand to describe the Suwla Landings to a group*



*Off the beaten track, a Battle Honours walking group on the Pimple, Gallipoli Peninsula*

# THE FIRST BATTLE OF THE NILE

David Harvey

IN THE LAST EDITION OF DESPATCHES THE FIRST RECORDED LAND BATTLE, QADESH, WAS DESCRIBED. HERE WE LOOK AT THE FIRST RECORDED SEA BATTLE, WHERE MERCENARIES FIGHTING IN THE LAND WAR APPEAR AGAIN, NOW PRIMARILY SEABORNE AND SEEKING TO DESTROY EGYPT. ALMOST UNBELIEVABLY EGYPT'S HERETO RIVAL SUPERPOWER, THE HITTITES, HAVE ALREADY SUCCUMBED TO THE SWORD.

This first naval engagement might properly be called the first battle of the Nile. Not the more famous engagement of the French by Nelson in 1798 nor that of Caesar against Ptolemy in 47 BC. The exact year for this first battle is uncertain but likely to be between 1176 and 1186 BC and the location was in the Nile delta, as Pharaoh Ramesses III records:

*Now the northern countries, which were in their isles, were quivering in their bodies. They penetrated the channels of the Nile mouths. Their nostrils have ceased to function, so that their desire is to breathe the breath. His majesty is gone forth like a whirlwind against them, fighting on the battlefield like a runner. The dread of him and the terror of him have entered their bodies; they are capsized and overwhelmed in their places. Their hearts are taken away; their soul is flown away. Their weapons are scattered in the sea.*

So who was Ramesses fighting? Temple inscriptions list a league of enemies; Lukka, Peleset, Tjekker, Sheklesh, Denyen, Weshesh and Sherden. These names may be unfamiliar but you do know of one of these groups, as they often feature in our news headlines. Can you guess which of these warrior bands is still fighting for their land three thousand years on?

Images of warships engaged in close fighting are engraved into the walls of the Egyptian temple at Medinet Habu, Thebes. In one picture enemy ships are met by Egyptian bowmen. The water is full of drowning men and one of the enemy ships has turned over. The nine vessels symbolise a much larger force and below bound prisoners are being led away.

The enemies attacking Egypt were significant in

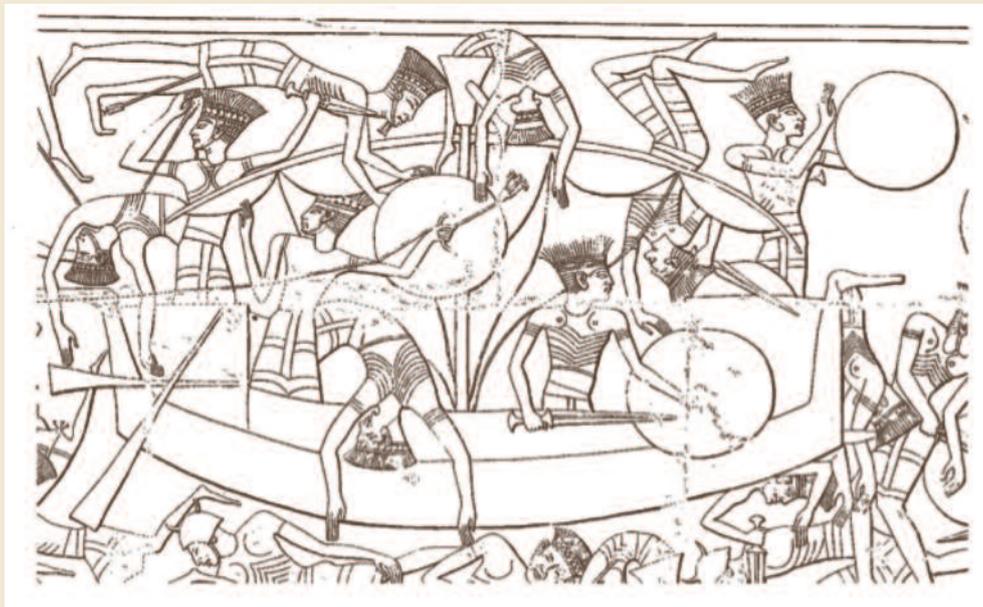
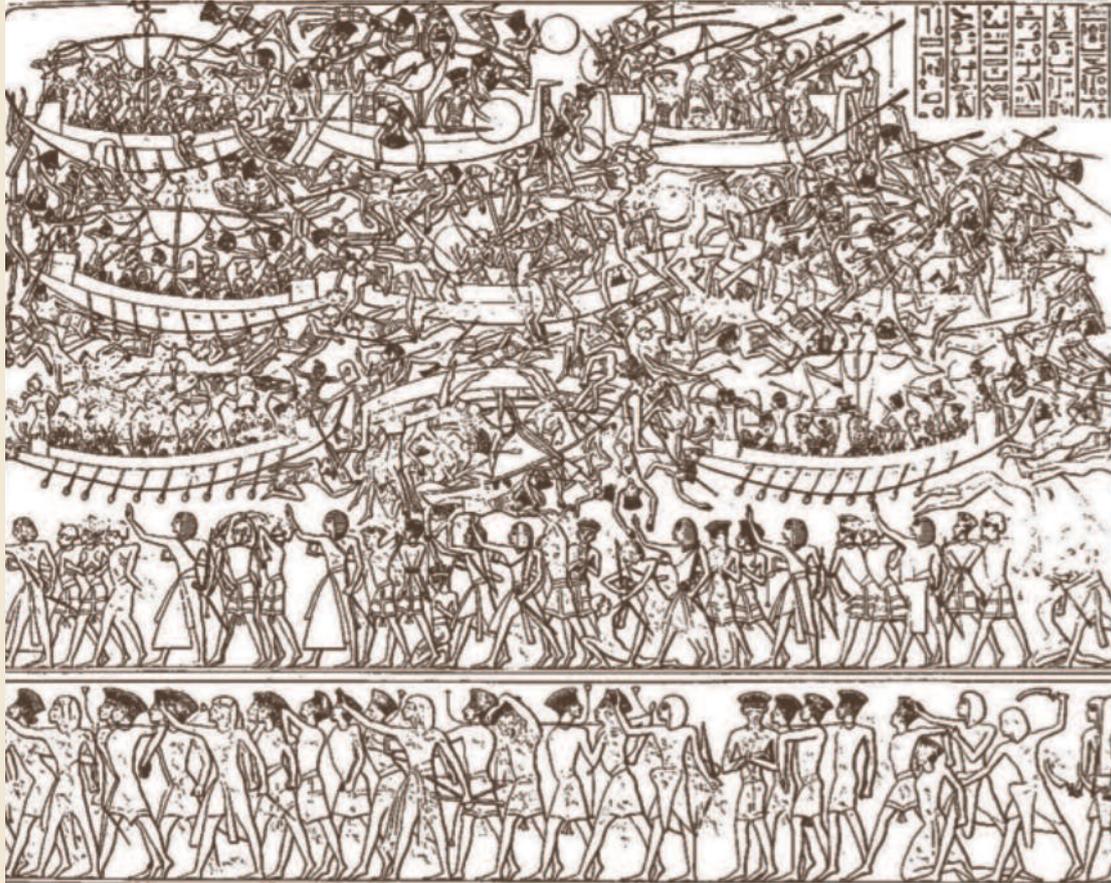
number and effect, but their origins remain obscure. Egyptian sources strongly imply a collective of groups of warriors, described as coming from the sea, they are often referred to as 'The Sea-People' and though associated with destruction and invasion their overall purpose remains elusive. Pharaoh had every reason to fear them as all other states had been swept away, which he records:

*The foreign countries made a conspiracy in their islands, and at once the lands were on the move, scattered in war. No county could stand before their arms, not the Hatti (Hittites), Kode (Cilicia), Carchemish (on the Euphrates), Arzawa (Lycia) and Alashiya (Cyprus) all being cut down. A camp was set up in one place in Amor. Their league was Lukka, Peleset, Tjekker, Sheklesh, Denyen and Weshesh.*

Here, what Pharaoh claims, is borne out by archaeological excavations from Greece, Turkey and all around the eastern Mediterranean. Whole Bronze Age civilisations have collapsed, palaces and temples burnt down. The cause is uncertain, perhaps famine, climate change or constant warfare. Military technology was advancing as evident with the Iron long swords and large round shields used by these sea warriors, perhaps precursors to the Greek Hoplite style.

Whatever the outcome of the naval battle, two things are clear; no other state before Egypt had been strong enough to withstand the assault and though Pharaoh claims victory he was unable to dislodge them from his empire. Instead he permits some to settle beyond Sinai at Ashkelon, Ashdod and Gaza.

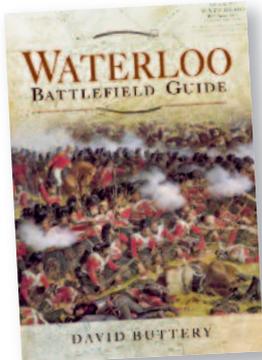
Well done if you thought the Peleset might be familiar. They gave their name to Palestine and are



referred to many times in the Bible as the aggressive Philistines. Additionally, archaeology is providing clues to the origins of the warrior groups; the land settled by the Peleset has strong indications of ancient Greek culture and the Bible says the Philistines were from Crete. The Lukka are from Lycia on the south

west coast of Turkey and the Sherden possibly from Sardis, Turkey. The debate goes on as to which lands the other warriors left to attempt invasion of Egypt and as to what motivated this militant league. It may simply be they are empowered by new weapons of an emerging age of iron.

# GUIDEbooks:

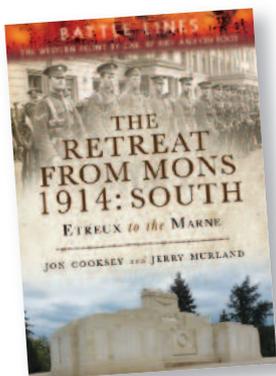


## WATERLOO BATTLEFIELD GUIDE

By David Buttery

This is a timely release, larger and weightier than the battleground series; It is very similar in content and presentation style to a Holts Guide. The pages are very well illustrated with contemporary sketches, paintings, complimented with a healthy array of colour and monochrome photographs. The narrative is equally comprehensive spanning the events of the campaign from strategic level right down to the tactical level at the bayonet point. This is a comprehensive battlefield guide that will corner the market for the foreseeable future - Recommended.

Published by Pen & Sword Ltd  
RRP £15.99  
paperback, pp291



## THE RETREAT FROM MONS 1914: South Etreux to the Marne

By Guild Members Jon Cooksey  
and Jerry Murland

I enjoyed using this guide, it has just enough of everything to make it both easy to use and informative. The stand notes are well balanced and the maps are simple and easy to read. Overall this guide is more than adequate for its target audience – the general battlefield tourist OR the experienced Battlefield Guide who will augment the contents with additional research – A useful addition to the library.

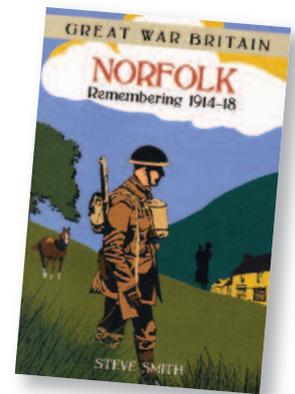
Published by Pen & Sword Ltd  
RRP £14.99  
paperback, pp152

## NORFOLK 1914-18

By Guild Member Steve Smith

There are a host of new (and recycled) FWW titles flooding the bookshelves of late. Their quality is as diverse as their titles and subject matter. This short but useful book is very much at the positive end of the quality spectrum. Although wide ranging in its subject matter it contains numerous Norfolk related gems that can be cherry-picked and used on tour – Well done Steve Smith on his first foray into print.

Published by The History Press  
RRP £9.99  
paperback, pp140

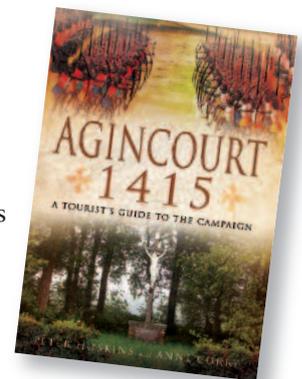


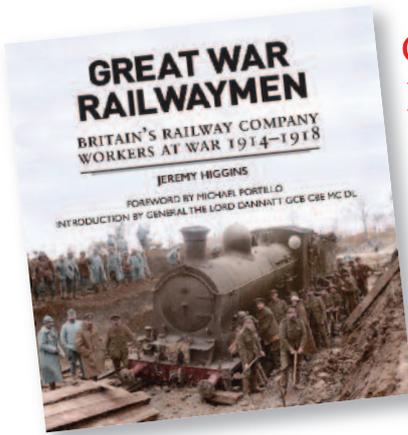
## AGINCOURT 1415 A Tourists Guide To the Campaign

By Guild Member Peter Hoskins  
& Anne Curry

With Agincourt 600 finally on the horizon this guide will certainly attract interest from many first-time Agincourt visitors. It is well written, and crucially it covers the entire campaign, not just the bloody events of St Crispin's Day. The combination of maps, narrative and stand notes are all of a high standard but possibly the most useful sections of the book cover the wider campaign, an overview of the Hundred Years War plenty of additional information. All of this gives the battlefield tourist the vital context required to fully understand any battle, especially one-day battles such as Agincourt – Recommended.

Published by Pen & Sword Ltd  
RRP £14.99  
paperback, pp188





## GREAT WAR RAILWAYMEN

### Britain's Railway Company Workers At War 1914-18

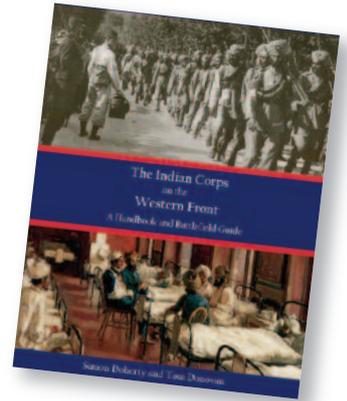
By Jeremy Higgins

The book's author works on the railways and serves as a Reserve

Army officer he is therefore

uniquely placed to write about every facet of the FWW railwayman's story. The narrative is engaging as well as authoritative; chapters are well illustrated and supported with hard data. This information on an often-overlooked subject area will add depth to any FWW tour. If you are looking for a stand-alone source on British Railwaymen in the FWW, this is it.

Published by Uniform Press  
RRP £25.00  
paperback, pp348



## THE INDIAN CORPS ON THE WESTERN FRONT

### A Handbook & Battlefield Guide

By Simon Doherty & Tom Donovan

This year's FWW Centenary events will undoubtedly trigger interest in the actions of the Indian Army Corps on the Western Front. If you are planning on leading some tours with an Indian Army thread you could do no worse than to acquire this guide. Plenty of useful maps, photographs and historical insight make this a worthwhile purchase for the 2015 season and beyond – Recommended.

Published by Tom Donovan Editions  
RRP £35.00  
paperback, pp194

*Poppies on the Aisne by Guild Member, Simon Gregor*



# 10 Questions:

Name: Simon Gregor

Age: 39 (but not for long!)

Nationality: British

● Home Location: London

Tour Company: Sole Trader –  
Freelance

Validating: Intending to start in next 12 months



In each edition of Despatches, we will be introducing a member of the Guild. In this edition, it is Simon Gregor.

**1. How long have you been interested in battlefields and what was it that initially attracted your interest?**

I can date my interest very precisely, to when I was 14 years old, and went on a WW1 battlefield tour with my school. I've never forgotten the impact that tour had, and in particular how a good guide can make the history you've been reading about at school leap off the page.

**2. Have any experiences stood out?** I am a keen photographer, and as well as guiding I am developing a library of images for the Remembrance Image Project. I think one of my most memorable experiences was on a recce trip to Vimy Ridge, where I arrived at sunset to find I had the place to myself. Vimy always seems a powerful place, and that was amplified in the silence and the soft evening light.

**3. What do you enjoy the most about battlefield guiding?** I think it's the feeling of being able to open up a new period of history to people, and perhaps challenge some of the myths of the past. It's also about helping people to make connections, perhaps by exploring a part of their own family's history which had been forgotten.

**4. What is your favourite stand, location or battlefield and why?** I'm still very new at this, so doubtless new "favourites" will come with time. For now it's the sunken lane at Beaumont Hamel. It's one of the first stands I ever gave (on a training course with TGT&V); it seems to have changed very little in 100 years; and as a photographer, the link with Geoffrey Malins is fascinating.

**5. Which battlefield would you like to visit in the future?** I'd like to visit some of the WW1 battlefields of the Eastern Front – I think some British people (though not GBG members of course!) tend to get hung up on the Western Front, and a small portion of it at that. So I'd like to develop a more rounded knowledge.

**6. What have you enjoyed the most about being a member of the Guild?** It's been the camaraderie, the banter, and people's willingness to help out and to share knowledge. On a more mundane note, the financial member benefits more than pay for the membership fee!

**7. If there was a fire and you could only save one battlefield-related book or prop, what would you save and why?** My great-grandfather's WW1 photo album. He lived in Prague and fought with the Austro-Hungarian army in 1914-18.

**8. What type of group do you think is the most challenging to lead on a tour?** I think all groups bring their own excitement and challenges. I think small private groups can be particularly demanding, as they are quite intense and often involve a lot of research. But at the same time, if you forge a strong connection, they can be hugely rewarding.

**9. What's the best tip, story or nugget of information you have been given by a fellow battlefield guide?** Someone told me very early on to 'be myself' – admittedly, that was before they knew me very well, so they might revise that now! But I think it was good advice – a guide has to know their facts, of course, but bringing your own passion and personality to what you do is also important.

**10. What is the funniest or most dramatic thing you have seen on tour?** On the coach journey home with a school, the children put a Disney video on. I and my fellow guide muttered darkly and settled down to ignore it – yet strangely, when the time came to resume the video after a break in the tunnel, we both knew exactly what point the film had reached. Rumours that we were singing along have since been strongly denied...

## NEWmembers:

New members who have been welcomed to the Guild between August 2014 and the date of publication.

Rob Deere  
Richard Cast

Terry Whenham  
Duncan Cook

Stephen Roberts  
Ian Langworthy

Graeme MacPherson  
Neil MacDonald  
Albert Eikelenboom