

Spring/Summer 2021 Issue
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DESPATCHES

the magazine of the International Guild of Battlefield Guides



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PLUS

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FIELDguides

Cover image: Chemin des Dames ©Mike Sheil

“HIMMEL! TOURISTS!” Carl Giles and D-Day

Like you, the sixth of June in any year consists of juggling tour groups with high expectations, some journalism, the odd media interview, traffic jams of Overlord proportions, long queues for portaloos, and overpriced commemorative tat. In managing our own timetables, it is easy to miss those of our 1944 ancestors. This year I – like you – was obliged to slow down and consider D-Day virtually. This gave me time to ponder the hopes and fears of our forebears over several days. Largely through tweets, I thought of being sealed into those embarkation camps in the early days of June, the worsening weather, the postponement by 24 hours, the naval armada setting forth, the airborne forces climbing into their gliders and C-47s. For once, I considered the D-Day story at their pace, over several days, rather than all the 21st Century emotion crammed into a few hours. It was refreshing and salutary. I shall do it again.

Although blind in one eye and deaf in one ear, one of those who would shortly join the reinforcement waves as a Second Army War Correspondent was Londoner Carl

Giles, OBE (1916-95). Better known as the cartoonist of the Daily and Sunday Express, his first illustration for them had been on 3 October 1943, a relationship that would last for 48 years. In the end he retired to Ipswich, from where he continued to throw at us – several times a week – the antics of the Giles family, dominated by Grandma. No self-respecting loo is



complete without Giles Annuals to peruse! This cartoon looks to be from the 1970s, with some of his characters in German uniform manning their bunker. It could only be by Giles. You might be astonished to learn that it dates from the first Sunday after D-Day, 11 June 1944. We could all come up with our own captions, but Giles labelled his cartoon, “Himmel! Tourists!” Not only is it outrageously funny, but also of professional interest to us.

Just as earlier generations were fascinated by Waterloo, Carl Giles knew that huge numbers (in fact, over one million) had visited the 1914-18 battlefields during the inter-war period. Thus, no explanation was needed for the idea of tourists swarming over a battlezone. Due to the equivalent of the IGBG in the 20s and 30s, readers of the Express that Sunday in 1944 would have been familiar with the idea of studying an old battlefield. Just that, in Giles’s cartoon, the tourists are too early! By their dress, the visitors are wealthy Americans, reflecting the three million US service personnel who were passing through the UK at

that moment, and swamping his adopted county of Suffolk. Over-sexed, overpaid and over here. Perhaps even now, in the Great Muster Beyond, he is nodding approvingly as we stumble across the Normandy crater fields wondering – where on Earth is Grandma?

Peter Caddick-Adams

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Material for publication in the Autumn edition of ‘Despatches’ must be with the Editor no later than 1 Oct 2021. This is a deadline and submissions should be sent as far in advance as possible.

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

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EVENTguide 2021/22

- 20 Aug - Guild Annual Golf Championship - John O’Gaunt Golf Club - For more information please contact Graeme Cooper - graeme@corporatebattlefields.com
- 26-31 Aug - Guild Portuguese Recce - For more information please contact Graeme Cooper - graeme@corporatebattlefields.com
- 11-12 Sep - Special Forces Recce, Poole - The theme of the recce is the development of Special Forces capabilities during WW2 - Bob Shaw - rtshaw@hotmail.com
- 1-5 Nov - Guild Recce, Somme, France - This event in the Somme battlefields will be led by WWI experts Paul Oldfield and John Cotterill. To register an interest contact David Harvey - events@gbg-international.com
- 12 Nov - Badge Guides Dinner - Badged Members are encouraged to register with Graeme Cooper - graeme@corporatebattlefields.com
- 3 Dec - IGBG Christmas Lunch - To reserve a place at the lunch please contact Andy Thompson - andy.ewt@gmail.com
- 1-3 Apr ‘22 - Malta Recce - The theme of this recce will be the defence of Malta during WW2, with the emphasis being on the Explosive Ordnance Disposal capability of the Islands. This recce will almost be as interesting as a John Cotterill’s quiz night. Contact Bob Shaw - rtshaw@hotmail.com

This full programme of events has been planned for this year, in the expectation of a more positive social atmosphere as the Covid-19 vaccines roll out and government’s restrictions ease. However, the continuing influence of COVID-19 restrictions upon plans cannot be predicted. Therefore members are encouraged to consider their opportunities to hold more localised events in line with the appropriate restrictions to that locality.

OPENINGshot:

THE CHAIRMAN'S VIEW

Hello Fellow Guild Members and Guild Partners, welcome to a combined Spring-Summer issue of 'Dispatches'.

I cannot start this editorial without mentioning the sad passing of one of the Guild's founders, Christopher Newbould. Christopher was a much respected, and much-loved patriarchal figure, who was a consistent and staunch advocate of validation and accreditation. A highly experienced guide, he was generous with advice born out of his extensive experience of leading groups of all types across the battlefields of the world. A great servant to the Guild, Christopher worked hard as a council member, and as skilled validator. As an organisation today, we owe much to Christopher's sound thinking and knowledge of the battlefield tour industry. On a personal note, I will miss his humour, frequently delivered with a waft of pipe smoke, and his completely honest judgement and sage advice. Guild Secretary, Tim Stoneman has circulated information on the arrangements for Christopher's funeral, and arrangements for members to offer condolences should you wish to do so.

Turning to the Guild itself in these troubled times, I am pleased to report that in spite of all of the challenges facing our members across the world, we, as a collective, remain in good shape.

Our membership figures have remained stable, in fact, we have retained more members than in the previous year. As you will have seen, we have also welcomed back re-joining past members. The practical and tangible benefits of ETOA partnership, and the Group Insurance Scheme have proven to be a retention incentive. These financial benefits compliment the huge value for money that accreditation itself offers. All of this, as well as the pastoral and intellectual mutual support gained from belonging to an international network of Battlefield Guides. It is this mutual support that has really come to the fore as we have navigated through the turbulence of the past eighteen months.

Fellowship may be an outdated term in these politically correct times, perhaps friendship, or 'mateship' suits you better? Whatever you call it, it sits at the core of the Guild's ethos, and I ask you all to look out for each other in the coming months. We are far from out of the pandemic yet. The battle against COVID is progressing at very different rates

around the world, so please make the effort to contact less fortunate fellow members who are still closed down in isolation. A friendly message or a call from a fellow Guide will make a huge difference to their morale.

To that end, I should mention that this issue's timing reflects the difficulty in securing articles. As we are all acutely aware, the international travel industry remains affected by constantly changing regulations and, sadly, and frankly, there isn't a lot of guiding to write about. Nevertheless, we have managed to produce a full issue of 'Dispatches' - and we're all looking forward to better days.

On the subject of 'Dispatches', its content, format, and frequency, the management board continues to investigate how we can improve our magazine, and what members actually want from 'Dispatches'. Suffice to say, rather like the proverbial assignment 6 coach load of the battlefield tourists we all know and love, you can't please all of the people, all of the time! Our Comms Director, Merryn Walters is reviewing 'Dispatches' alongside our other media channels, and I know she welcomes forthright ideas on improving how our organisation communicates. All views are welcome.

This issue of 'Dispatches' offers a diverse and interesting range of articles and features that reflect another strength of our Guild, and the many different interests held by our membership. I offer a huge public thanks to all of you that have contributed to this issue. If anybody would like to contribute to the next issue, guidelines on writing for 'Dispatches' can now be found on our website on the 'Being a Member' page - you'll find them under 'Writing for Dispatches'.

I think that's enough from me. I wish you all the best of health and a return to some form of normality wherever you are in the world. I resolutely stick to my guns on my claim that - there has never been a more important time to be a member of the Guild!

Mike Peters
Chairman



COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY

Merryn Walters, Director of Communications

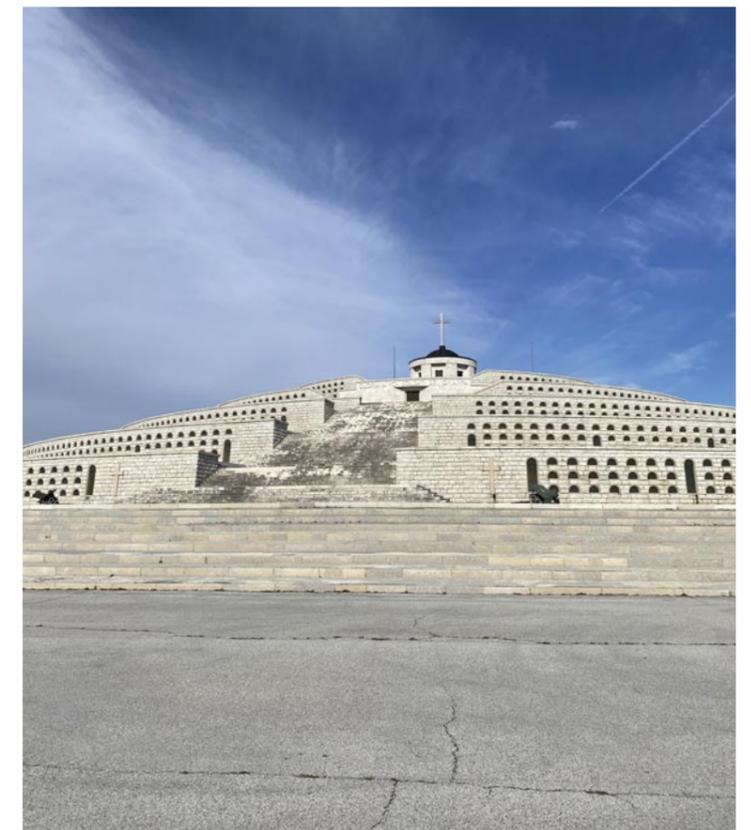
Communication is a double if not triple-edged sword. Too much communication, we ignore what we're reading or hearing. Too little, we lose interest or feel there's no tangible relationship with the communicator. Too often, we fail to recognise that the art of creating communications ('comms') is a learned skill, and everyone's view of what's right or wrong may have validity - particularly if we represent a vast range of expertise and experience, communicating with myriad audiences tackling an inordinately diverse subject.



At one end of the scale, for example, our illustrious Secretary and I are in vehement disagreement about the number of commas that are appropriate per ream of paper. I'm quite comma-heavy, Tim is comma-light by comparison, having both worked professionally in print media at different times. We spar with each other, quite happily I might add, in the emails sent - daily - between members of the Management Board. The Guild is a business, so there's an inordinate amount of comms that go on behind the scenes (and I don't always win those battles, by the way, but I do put up a mean fight).

At the other end of the scale, communication is - it should be - everything for us at the moment, as battleguides-in-waiting. We have an audience that's as frustrated as we are about the 'please-don't-mention-the-pandemic-again' situation. Most of our members are looking forward to the day we can travel Europe-wide and beyond; there are questions to ask, answers to find, and I imagine most of us are prefacing 'back on the battlefields' with at least one recce to find out what's changed and how we'll need to change the way we communicate, in situ. Put it this way: if you've been exploring options for 'home grown' tours in the interim, as I have, you'll have found new and on occasion rather testing communication challenges to overcome. When I'm not projecting my voice to the point of being hoarse to accommodate two-metre distancing, I'm dodging death threats in direct messages on social media, or abusive comments in response to a livestream. Great joy. Not.

Over the last 18 months or so, social media has been a lifeline for many. It can be a good



Monte Grappa - communicating on an open battlefield or at a national monument is unlikely to pose a problem, but how are we communicating to our customers about reduced capacity on a coach - or confined spaces in a museum?

place to connect and learn from like-minded people. It can also be a minefield, but it's an excellent forum in which to raise questions about the nature of our work and how we could or should communicate with potential customers. There is no audience that does not have a presence on social media today. Veterans, military, schools, private individuals - they all have an avatar. So what should we talk about,

and how can we engage them – better – with a view to (let's be blunt) selling tours?

Should we be changing our presentations to embrace more recent discussions about remembrance and race, for example? Could we be investing, as individuals or businesses, in multi-media options that build a huge following, be that podcasts, livestreams, or 'live' battlefield tours? Who we should be commemorating, or not? And what should we say, or shouldn't we say now, as we communicate the value and benefit of touring the battlefields today?

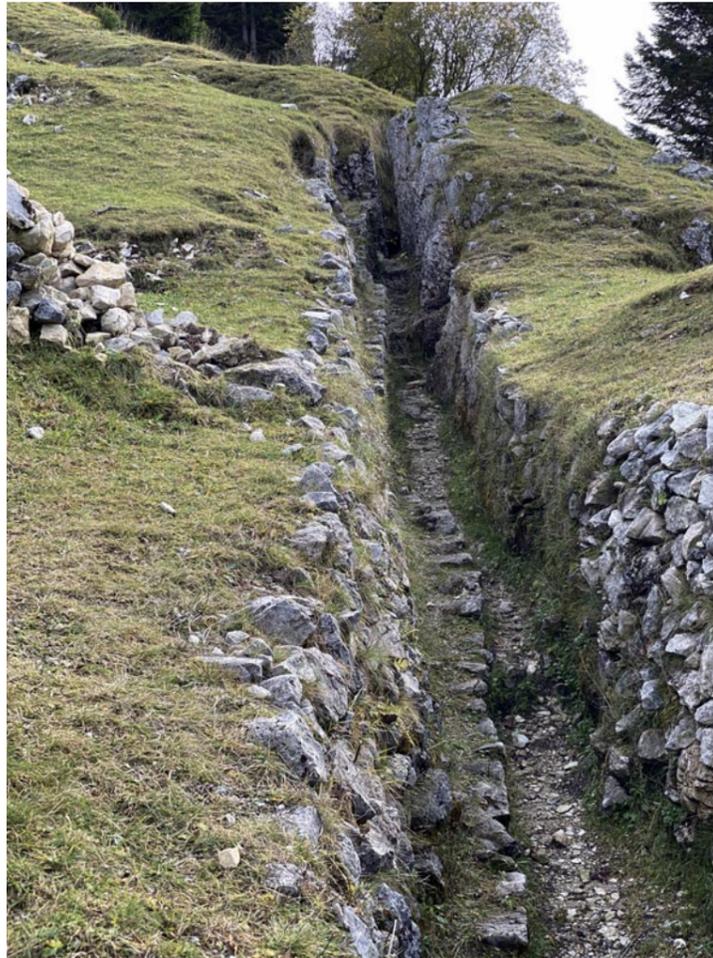
Unpalatable as it may be, let's explore this for a minute – it is part of my responsibility, please don't shoot the poor old messenger.

Everyone's politics, morals, principles, faith, and personal belief systems are personal. That is the nature of the id, the impulsive, unconscious part of our psyche that responds immediately to basic urges, needs, and desires. It makes us individuals, entitled to our own opinions. Heaven knows, that's a blessing. That individuality is what makes some of our personalities appeal to, say, a team that's organising staff rides and others to schools with children who have learning difficulties. However, even though we're entitled to our opinions and personal traits, some subjects or themes have become more prevalent in general conversations and our customers have opinions about those subjects too, there's no use pretending they don't.

A good example is one that some of us might 'poo-poo' on the surface, but it is also an example that goes to the heart of our organisation as it touches on a sensitive subject. Red trousers.

In the twenty-first century, red trousers are both the defining burden and great benefit of being a battlefield guide. The fact of the matter is, until more recently, our work has usually been delivered by those for whom an understanding of military matters is not only second nature but also second-hand – men. I'm dealing with facts. Not opinions about what's right or wrong. I make no apologies for being at the back of the line when it comes to men-vs-women as a discussion point, there are far too many other things I'd rather be talking about. Better ways to create plans that cater for post-Covid circumstances in a small and confined space like a rural museum, for example.

But this is a fact: most of the military has been, and is, male, and most of the work we do on the battlefields involves discussing men in the heat of a battle, so no, I'm definitely not making any excuses for overlooking the many women who've been involved in operations



Trenches behind Monte Grappa. Shouldn't be a problem for communications, right? Until we imagine an enthusiastic group, that is, eager to risk life and limb – and less than two metres of social distance – in their eagerness to explore them in person.

and strategy in equal measure in this piece. Should all people be considered equal, irrespective of race, colour, sex, or creed? Oh for heaven's sakes, yes, do we even need to go there? And is there still injustice in the word? Well yes, of course there is. Who among us hasn't had to handle 'the chap at the back, the one with no filter when it comes to having an opinion' – about everything, politically correct or not?

This is not an article about what's right or wrong. This is about communication, and how can we leverage – awful word – our Guild's communications and our business presentations to a) improve the way we convey what happened on the battlefields, and b) engage with more potential customers. Simple.

For example: our customers talk about equality. They talk about diversity. They're curious about how religion and race and sex and racism were handled on the battlefields, and what impact these issues have had and how times have changed. Tricky subjects today, all of them. Our audiences also think about and care about the issues concerning personal safety, for example, and safety concerns should never be taken lightly. I cannot imagine a scenario in which a member of our Guild would ever dismiss the worries of a customer or colleague – female or

male – for whom personal safety is a concern. Nor can I name a Guild member who is not aware of how important personal safety is, both theirs and their customers'. And when it comes to conveying our credibility as individuals who can shed light on the facts about the past, my heavens, I will not hear any criticism about the value of wearing red trousers. I have more than one metaphorical pair and I wear them all with humility.

Do we want more diversity in the Guild, to reflect the greater diversity of our potential customer bases? Yes. But should we also recognise the fact some of our older customers, in particular, don't give two hoots about diversity? Yup. Should we be honest about the fact many Guild members have a military background, and that fact lends credibility to those member's presentations, at a stand? Yes, of course it does. But should we also point out there's more than one perspective and history shows even the most credible – at the time – military voices have been found lacking in accuracy or useful context? Yup. And, as we're communicating our proposition – be that individually or as a community – is there immense value in emphasising a unique selling point, that every member of the Guild has access to a vast combination of expertise and blended context for customers, be that military, academic, social history, and besides? Yes. Yes. YES.

Our social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram at the moment) aren't working as hard as they could be, we know that. We're in agreement and working on ways to increase our presence. We're also starting to rebuild the communication channels to connect with partners, sister organisations and stakeholders – another awful word – in as many places as we can.



At Nervesa della Battaglia, on the Piave – "The boiling waves of the waters drag away everything they find, ship decks, pontoons, small steamers..." – how do we communicate the past, accurately, in the present?

The Guild's website needs updating, too. Changing. Re-organising. Improving, again, to reflect our evolution as an organisation and the changing needs of our customers and those partners. Comms take many forms, but it feels as though all roads lead to Times New Roman on a zinging webpage these days, and one thing I know to be certain – some of these changes will be popular, some won't. Such is the burden of being a communicator. Our aspiration for the Guild's website is that it becomes more popular as a central reference point to explain our value, promote the benefit of engaging a member of the Guild as a guide, and encourage people to experience the battlefields in person.

And Despatches ... yes, by the time this is printed, I hope to have overcome the logistic technofunk that's sitting behind the Guild's older website's pages at the moment, and have that promised page online. We have over 300 members. Every one of us could benefit from YOUR experience and your perspective on what turns a good battlefield tour, into a great battlefield tour. Which moments in your career, on or off the battlefields for that matter, have helped you become a better communicator. Where you've found value in the ever-expanding pool of resources – podcasts, YouTube videos, livestreams, subscription channels – and which people have impacted the way you communicate and sell your tours. What works, what doesn't. How. Why.

Over the coming months, I welcome your criticism about how we're communicating the value and benefits of not only Guild membership and the validation programme, but also about members' own commercial propositions and the many resources at our disposal. I positively encourage it, in fact. These are broad shoulders, and critique goes hand in hand with creating communications.

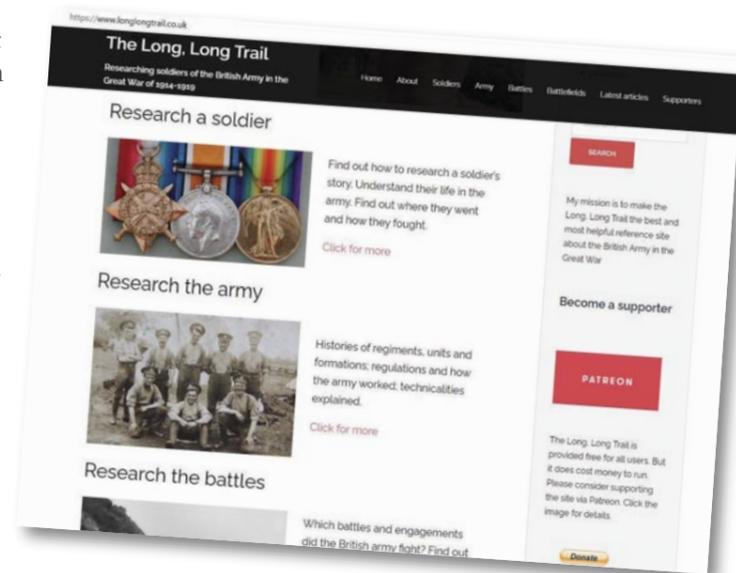
Part of the joy of being a battlefield guide and being a validated guide for me, personally, is having the freedom to work independently, but know there's an incredible community of experts who are all willing to support me – to help make more meaningful connections, and to spread the word about the value of touring the battlefields. We're a community. One of our greatest challenges will always be getting our communications right.

WALKING A LONG, LONG TRAIL THROUGH HISTORY

Chris Baker

I am honoured to be invited to write this piece for *'Despatches'*, especially as I am not a battlefield guide myself. If you have heard of me before it is likely to have been because of my website 'The Long, Long Trail' or its spin-off the 'Great War Forum'; or perhaps from my time as Chairman of the Western Front Association; or from my books. These days I make my living as a researcher of soldiers of the British Army, focused mainly on the Great War era – but if anyone say twenty years ago would have suggested that, then I would have thought them quite mad. Perhaps I should explain how I got here.

I am from a working class Birmingham family but we moved to Lichfield in Staffordshire when I was in my teens and since 1986 I have lived in Leamington Spa in Warwickshire. Looking back, I must have been a bit of a whizz kid in my chosen profession of manufacturing engineering, as I became a Chartered Engineer when I was 25 and by 30 I was Operations Director of a large automotive company. It also took me into industrial use of computing when that was all in its infancy, and that began for me when I was an undergraduate at the University of Nottingham and developed in a Masters at Birmingham. I later moved into consultancy and was privileged to work worldwide and advise some of the largest names, like Ford, General Motors, Volkswagen, GKN, Massey-Ferguson, and Nokia. The nearest I came to anything warlike was on a project for Shorts in Belfast and what became the Starstreak missile system. Consulting was a terrific and lucrative life but took me away from my home an awful lot. By then I was married and had two children. In 1999 I had a business idea and started a new IT consultancy company that, as things turned out, made me financially very secure.



Without that it is most improbable that I would have done what I do today. No-one is going to get rich on researching soldiers!

My Great War interest began with my own family but really only got going when I was an adult. In my early years of it, 1980's, it seemed to me that I was the only person interested in the Great War. Very few books were being published on the subject and in general it seemed to be a real backwater. I then stumbled across the Western Front Association and after a while as a founder member of my local Warwick branch and some years on its Executive Committee I was honoured to become its Chairman. This proved fairly short-lived. It coincided with a period in which I was working in the USA more than at home and something had to give!

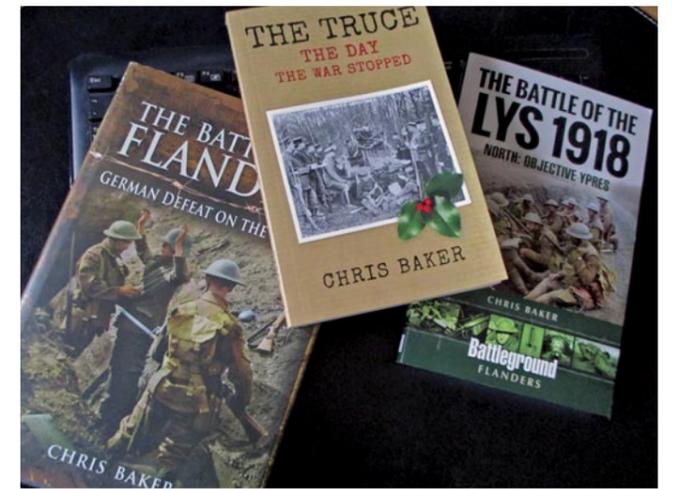
I eventually returned to the University of Birmingham where I gained another Masters, this time the MA in British First World War Studies, in 2007. I was still working in consulting at that time but as an industry it had moved on and, in my mind,

had lost its way. On Anzac Day in 2008, I walked out of its doors for the final time.

By then, the 'Long, Long Trail' was already over a decade old and I had been carrying out research of soldiers on a part-time, evening and weekend, basis for over six years. Military history and my technical interest of fiddling about with computers had come together and although I had never envisaged this, it had created a stream of work. Today's LLT traces its roots directly back to my first website which began in 1996. I have added something to it most days since. I think it was 1998 I added a discussion forum, which was quite a new thing then. Technology was shifting fast and I moved it onto different software at least twice, the last being onto the Invision application which the Great War Forum uses to this day. This was all while I was still doing my day job and not even in the country half the time! Later on, as the membership and traffic at the Great War Forum continued to grow, I just did not have the time it needed to run it. The group of volunteer moderators at the time agreed to take it over and from that time it became a separate resource. It is great to see it continuing to flourish.

My research work mainly originates from visitors to the Long, Long Trail, and it is from the sheer number of them (the site rarely gets fewer than 2,000 in a day) that more enquiries come than I can comfortably deal with. My crude method of regulating my order book is to temporarily replace the order form with a page that effectively says "Please come back next week". I added whole sections to the site to give people the method and knowledge for researching a soldier themselves, but despite digitisation it remains a rather complex thing to do and as most readers of *'Despatches'* will be fully aware, military documents are hard things to decipher. So, people keep on asking for help! My work has also led to me being engaged for 'Who do you think you are?' and several other similar TV programmes. I have even been the 'expert' for a BBC radio phone-in show in which people asked me questions about their soldier. I have never needed to advertise.

Over the years I have examined the life and military service of about 11,000 individuals. Every story interests me and I think I learn something new with every single project. It's taken me into every theatre of war, the discovery of why things took place the way they did, tracking down obscure regulations and so on. There have been many fascinating stories, both good and bad. Men who turned out to be decorated heroes and the family knew nothing. Men seen wearing impressive medal sets who, it turned out, never actually qualified for them. Men who saved lives. One man who caused the death of himself and two comrades. Men who served 25 years without ever seeing action. Men killed before they had even reached the front. All sorts. The most unusual was the story of Walter Lancelot Merritt.



His story was later expanded and turned into a book, 'A German Tommy: The Secret of a War Hero' by my client Ken Anderson. I won't tell you too much here as I want you to buy Ken's book, but it is the most fabulous story of how an Australian boy of German background eventually absconded after he found he was being kept back by the army from fighting, falsified his details to re-enlist, became an officer of a British regiment, was twice decorated for gallantry – and then had to appeal to the King for a pardon so he could get the free ride home after the war!

A few of my research clients have engaged me to take them to the battlefields and they have always proved to be wonderful trips, but I have never thought of myself as a battlefield guide and have never sought to develop in that direction. To be honest, I prefer my own company and time for thought and reflection when on the ground. Over the years I have observed many a battlefield guide in action, although I mean 'guide' in the loosest sense and not necessarily one leading a professional organised tour. I have to say that I have often been aghast at what I overheard, for it was either plain wrong or repeating myths. There's no need for that, with good information being so readily available these days. It has been a genuine pleasure to see that the Guild has been a force for improving the professionalism and standard of guiding. I am also really happy to see that the study of the Great War is attracting an increasingly diverse audience: a far more female, younger, international mix. That can only be good for the subject. It remains to be seen what the demand for tours and the industry will look like in the post-Brexit, post-Covid world, but it is certain that customers will always place a high value on quality, solid information and on having their eyes opened. If the trends continue, I think there is every reason for a positive outlook. I would like to think that the Long, Long Trail and my few books can play a part in ensuring that guides are well-armed with the facts and stories.

THE BATTLE OF ST FAGANS, 8th MAY 1648

Ian Doyle

Ian Gumm set the challenge, 'A Battlefield Near You.' I do not profess to be any form of expert on the English Civil War. The challenge set was to write about a battle near you – any battle near you – keep yourself sane during lockdown. So I have!



Re-enactors at the Battle of St Fagans (courtesy of historic-uk.com)

The Location

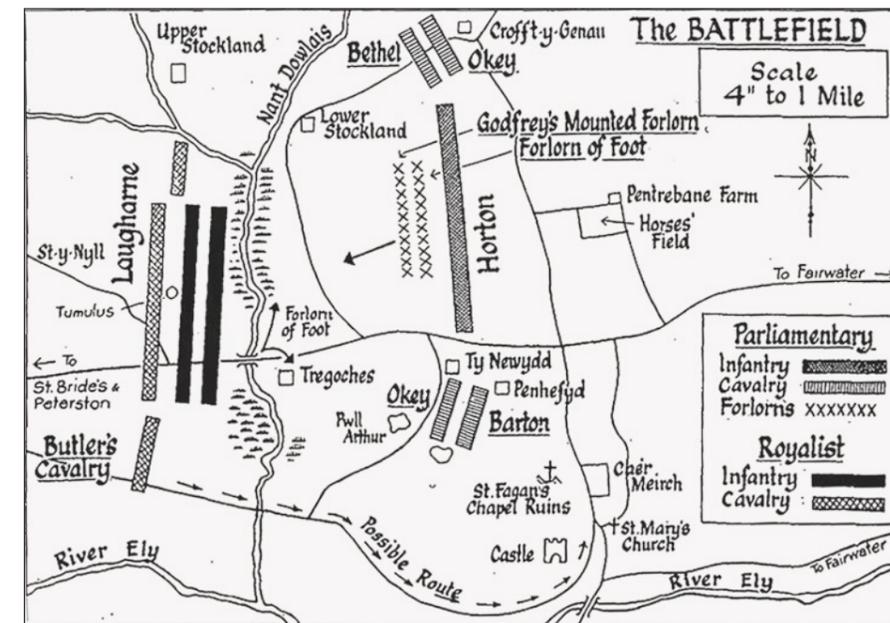
The battlefield is located close to the village of St Fagans on the outskirts of Cardiff, about 5½ miles from the front door of my house – just outside the 5 mile 'Stay Local' exclusion zone set by the Welsh Government during lockdown. It is the largest battle to have been fought in Wales, involving 11,000 men in total.

The Story

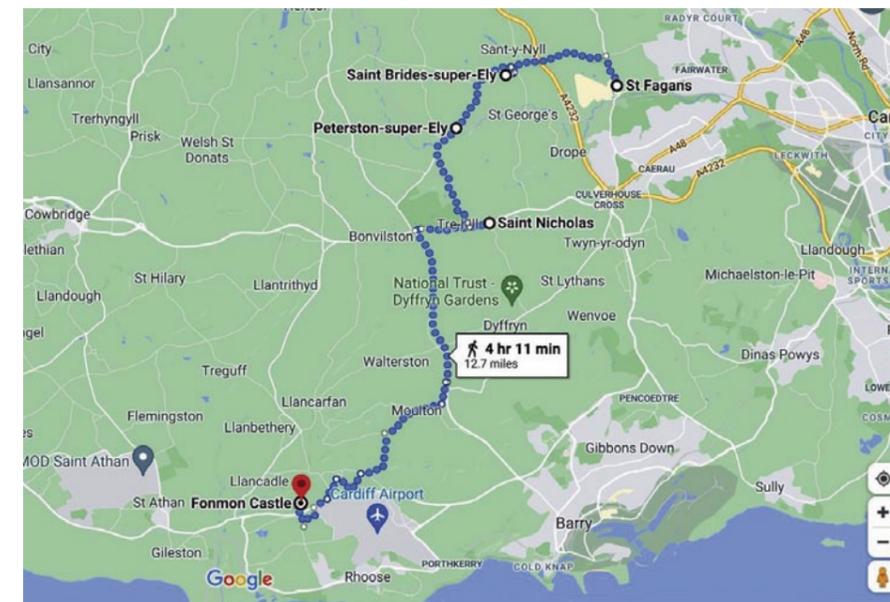
It is late in the Civil War. The King, Charles I has been captured. He is currently imprisoned in Carisbrooke Castle on the Isle of Wight still trying to negotiate his way back into power with Parliament, whilst continuing to plot with whomever he can to overthrow them. The Royalist cause seems lost; but, at this time, the Parliamentarians – having won the war – like many groups who seek to overthrow an established order, are beginning to fall out with themselves. Parliament does not trust the New Model Army which had been created by Oliver

Cromwell in 1645 and had been instrumental in the defeat of the Royalists. Many in Parliament now wished to disband the New Model Army; or send it to Ireland.

The New Model Army did not trust Parliament. Its soldiers had not been paid regularly. Many were weeks, if not months in arrears; and they rightly feared that Parliament would very much like to see them disbanded or sent to Ireland. A number of its members were being prosecuted for 'crimes' committed during the war, such as horse theft, when soldiers were acting under orders to requisition mounts for the cavalry. And finally, the Army was suspicious of Parliament's continuing engagement with the King whilst he was in captivity. Rumours abounded that Parliament was on the verge of finalising a deal with the King which would see him back on the throne without any major democratic reforms or religious freedoms being introduced. Many soldiers questioned, why had they risked their lives for Parliament in the first place?



Courtesy of the Cromwell Association



Courtesy of Google Maps

The result? An unpaid mass of armed men, the New Model Army AND the militias and Trained Bands who had volunteered to fight and who felt themselves to have been forgotten by Parliament, and whom Parliament very much hoped would go away and disperse back to their homes.

Royalist sympathisers, who hoped still to restore the King to his throne, sought to tap into this disaffected mass. Many of the 'Royalist' troops who fought at this battle were disaffected former Parliamentary soldiers from the commands of the Colonels Rice Powell and John Poyer, who had marched from Pembrokeshire with General Rowland Laugharne. General Laugharne was himself now under suspicion of plotting with the King.

Colonel Thomas Horton, commanding the Parliamentary Army, writes that his piquets were so close to the Royalist camp that they could hear the guns being fired in welcome when General Laugharne arrived to take command. It is reported that he brought promises to the Rebels that they would have all the supplies that they needed, that the Scots would invade England and that Royalists throughout the country would rise once more for the King. All this was true. The Scots did invade England; and Royalist uprisings had taken place in Kent, Sussex and Lancashire. Had Laugharne been plotting with the King?

In total, 8,000 men were finally mustered under the Royalist colours. They were, in the main, a poorly trained and poorly armed army.

"Between three and four thousand were 'clubmen' – the countrymen of South Wales. They were armed mostly with Pikes and most of them had never seen cannon fired in battle. The rest were more adequately armed and there were small groups of cavalry raised among the Glamorgan county families. They wore the royalist blue ribbon."

It is thought that their intention was to seize Cardiff in the name of the king.

Colonel Horton, commanded a Parliamentary force of 3,000 troops. They had marched from Brecon during which they had been subjected to guerrilla attacks from Welsh 'rebels'. They were already in a state of low morale before this battle was fought. Many were suffering from sickness as they had been deprived of food for themselves; fodder for their horses and equipment with which to fight. Nevertheless, they successfully undertook a forced march and arrived to block the crossing of the Nant Dowlais stream on 4th May 1648.

Horton's objective seems merely to have been to prevent the 'Royalists' from taking Cardiff. He sent scouts out who quickly discovered that the Royalists were camped;

“only two miles from us on the other side of the river Ely, being a place much to their advantage, where we could make no use of our horse, and ... for want of food, we could not rationally attempt anything upon them.”

Horton acted quickly. He sent detachments to secure the crossings over the River Ely and sent a messenger to Oliver Cromwell in Gloucester requesting reinforcements.

In contrast, General Laugharne, seemed to be wracked with indecision. Having discovered the presence of a Parliamentary army of inferior numbers, he withdrew to Fonmon Castle on 5th May. Admittedly many in his army were poorly trained in comparison with the ‘professional’ soldiers of Cromwell’s New Model Army, but the Parliamentary Colonel, John Okey, reports that in the skirmishing that took place between the armies;

“We sought every opportunity to fight them, which we could never do. They could take always the advantage of their Welsh ways, hills and rivers. This pastime they continued until divers of our soldiers were wearied out, and both foot and horse forespent; the enemy himself knowing his great advantage over us.”

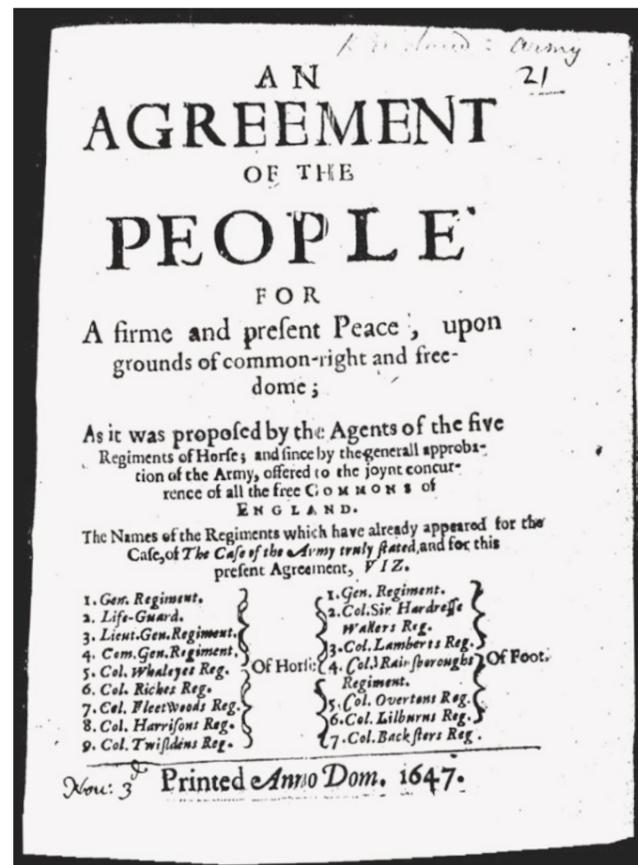
Horton did not pursue. His advantage lay in waiting for reinforcements to arrive before attacking. General Laugharne seems to have eventually realised the danger of further delay and during the night of 7th May, he marched back towards St Nicholas.

Our understanding of the battle depends upon only two surviving documents, both written by Colonels Horton and Okey. There is no definitive account of the battle from a Royalist source. There is a danger that this historic view of the battle is somewhat biased.

According to the reports of Horton and Okey, the Royalists advanced at 07:00 hrs on the morning of Monday 8th May 1648. They were spotted by scouts about 1½ miles away marching towards St Fagans. Horton ordered his men drawn up in battle lines and awaited their approach. He himself took command of the infantry in the centre; Okey took command of the dragoons on both wings.

A ‘Forlorn Hope’; under the command of Lieutenant Godfrey were deployed to the front with orders to contest the crossing of the Nant Dowlais bridge. The Royalists sent forth their own “strong” ‘Forlorn Hope’ consisting of foot and “six pickering horse” (cavalrymen fighting as individuals). Lieutenant Godfrey drove off the Royalist Forlorn Hope which action seems to have encouraged the Parliamentary Army, who began to advance. Godfrey then engaged the advancing Royalist cavalry.

Okey with some Dragoons and ‘200 firelocks’ went forward to support Godfrey. The battle here



Pamphlet published by representatives of Parliamentary Army outlining their grievances to the general population, 1647 (courtesy of historyworkshop.org)

raged from hedgerow to hedgerow and twice Okey halted his advance so that his cavalry would not be led from the field in pursuit of the fleeing Cavaliers. In doing so, he was twice “constrained to stand the enemy’s shot for some time before foot (though they made great haste) could come up to them.” At some point during this engagement Okey’s helmet was shot through by a musket ball.

On the second occasion that the cavalry halted, the Royalist foot fell back over the Nant Dowlais stream. Up until this time, the Royalist foot had been pouring as many of their men forward as they could to support the attack; but once the attack was halted, they were unable to regain the initiative. As the Parliamentary infantry again marched forward to support Okey, the Royalists fell back in the expectation that an assault over the bridge was imminent, but the attack never came. Instead, Horton ordered two flanking attacks. One, on the right by infantry, which seems not to have been very successful. The one on the left by the remaining cavalry and dragoons managed to turn the flank of the Royalists and started to engage them to the rear.

This outflanking manoeuvre threatened the Royalists’ line of retreat. As fears grew that they

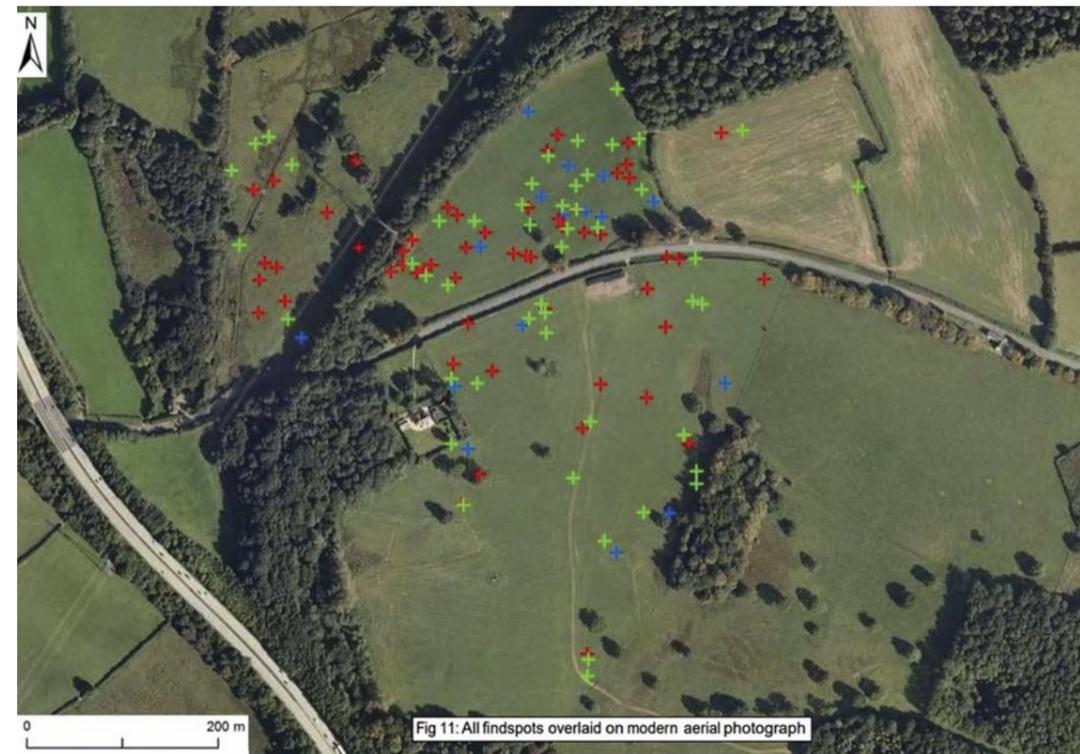


Fig 11: All findspots overlaid on modern aerial photograph

would be completely encircled, at 09:00 hrs the Royalist army broke and fled. This time, Okey allowed the Parliamentary cavalry to pursue. Okey writes in his report that he pursued the enemy to a body of water and from thence to a river where he made good his stand. The Royalist soldier Edmund Traherne writes that he fled back to his home about 9 miles from the site of the battle, and hid in an anchorite cave, whilst Parliamentary troops occupied and searched his house.

3,000 ordinary Royalist soldiers and 400 officers surrendered. In addition, 2,000 firearms were captured.

General Laugharne, was wounded in the battle and taken away, seeking refuge in Pembroke Castle where he was eventually captured. He was sentenced to death along with Colonels Powell and Poyer, but the sentence was commuted. Only one of them was to be executed - to be chosen by lot! Colonel Poyer was chosen and duly executed at Covent Garden in London. A blue wall plaque commemorates the event.

General Laugharne was imprisoned for the duration of the Protectorate. His estates were removed from him and given to Parliamentary supporters. He was released from prison as part of the Restoration but never recovered from his financial losses. His wife claimed that he had “been obliged to pawn his cloak and sword, and had only 3 shillings in the world” at the time of his death. Colonel Poyer’s widow petitioned King Charles II for a grant on the grounds that her husband had lost £8,000 in supporting the Royalist cause. She was awarded £3,000, paid at £300 a year.

After this ‘Welsh Rebellion’ Colonels Horton and Okey were two of men who sat in judgement over King Charles I, being one of the 59 men to sign the warrant condemning the King to death.

In September 1649 Colonel Horton and the New Model Army were sent to Ireland – by Cromwell. Horton died of disease shortly after landing. Although Okey subsequently fell

out of favour with Cromwell, he nevertheless fled the country when King Charles II was restored to the throne in 1660. He was hunted by Royalist agents and captured in the Netherlands. He was executed at Tyburn on 19th April 1662.

Sources

The principal primary source I used for this battle was the battlefield itself. A pleasant walk in typical hedged fields used to graze cattle. Colonel Horton wrote to the Speaker of the House of Commons providing a report on the battle and Colonel Okey’s works survive in a number of treatise and pamphlets he published in support of his religious thinking. The pamphlet ‘Crowelliana’, published by the Cromwell Association in 1991 contains a number of quotes from these sources.

The Welsh Government have also produced a report ‘The Inventory of the Historic Battlefields in Wales’ which contains details of more than 40 other engagements fought in Wales over the period from 1078 to 1797.

The original battlefield for this battle has been subjected to some alteration. Two major features should be noted on the satellite image.

The first is a now disused railway line built on an embankment – the curved line of trees – which cuts the battlefield in two and creates a visual barrier to the battlefield as a whole. The second is the A4232, a dual carriageway, built in 1985 which can be seen in the bottom left hand corner of the photograph above.

EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY DEUTSCHLAND ERWACHE: Part Two

Tonie and Valmai Holt

Following Part One, published in the AGM 2021 Issue, which followed the rise of Hitler and the National Socialist Party in Braunau, Munich and Berchtesgaden, we now examine the parallel path through Nuremberg from 1923 to Hitler's death in Berlin in 1945. We also reminisce on our tours to the areas in the 1980's.

Our tours to Berlin and Nuremberg were among our very first visits which ventured beyond the original Ypres, Somme & Normandy tours. We recently found a bundle of our brochures dating from 1981 onwards. In that first brochure the *East and West Berlin* tour was already described as 'One of our most popular annual visits'. It also featured what we called *Bavaria/Austria*. This included *Nuremberg* in a tour which also covered *Munich* and *Berchtesgaden*, the latter two being covered in the first section of this two-part article.

A. NUREMBERG

Nuremberg is a beautiful city to visit and it is difficult to believe that in January 1945, 90% of the city had been destroyed in one hour by air attacks by the RAF and the USAAF when 1,800 citizens were killed. Finally, after further bombing raids, it is estimated that some 6,000 citizens died in the attacks.

After the war it was mostly rebuilt, including the facades of the fine medieval buildings. It is known for its delicious food and its gingerbread and is best visited over the period of the famous Christmas market.

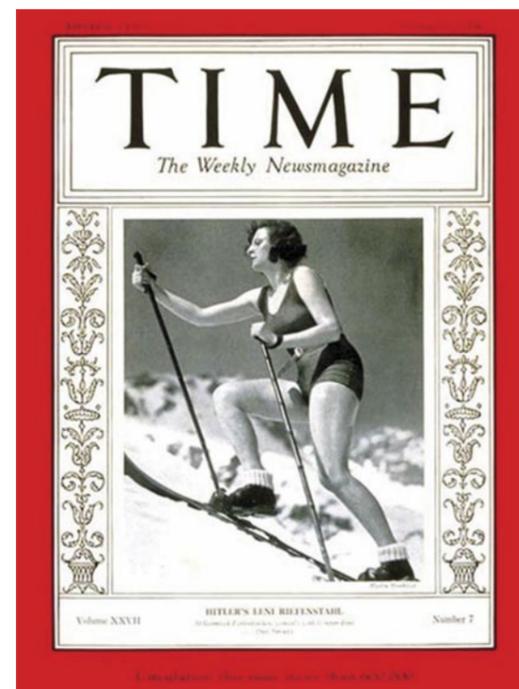
But the main object of a battlefield tour there was, of course, to visit the *Stadt der Reichsparteitag*. Hitler, who had been appointed Chancellor on 30 January 1933, had learned much from his association with Mussolini of the importance of large, inspiring gatherings. The first one took place on Deutscher Tag (German Day) held at Nuremberg in September 1923.

After his release from the Landsberg prison, where he served for 264 days after being found guilty of treason for his part in the Munich Putsch of November 1923 and during which he dictated *Mein Kampf* to Rudolph Hess, Hitler decided that all future Reichspartei days of the NSDAP should be held in Nuremberg. One reason for the choice was the city's central position in Germany. The 1927 and 1929 Reichspartei rallies and those from 1933-1938 took place in Nuremberg. Held in early September the temperate weather became known as 'Führer weather'.

The 1934 rally was filmed by Leni Riefenstahl, an extraordinarily talented woman – actress, film director, photographer, artist, swimmer, dancer and

climber, who became very close to Hitler during the making of *Triumph of the Will* which so vividly captures the power of the rally. It uses special documentary film techniques which influenced future development of the genre. It also made Leni famous enough to feature on the cover of the 1936 copy of *Times Magazine*.

Post-war she was arrested and frequently tried but denied all knowledge of Nazi war crimes.



1. Leni Riefenstahl on the cover of the 1936 Time Magazine

Albert Speer was chosen to be the architect of what was to become a massive complex in Nuremberg and work began in 1935. It comprised the Zeppelin Field (named after Count von Zeppelin who landed his airships there in 1909) with its imposing tribune for political and armed forces events, and the nearby Luitpold Arena for the SA (Sturm Abteilung), SS (Schutz Stafel) and other NSDAP (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei) units. There was also a Congress Hall and other ambitious plans which were never completed.

The most stirring marching song at the rallies was always *Die Fahne Hoch* (Raise High the Flag). This was written by Horst Wessel, then a 21-year-old law student. He was shot by a 'Red Gang' member



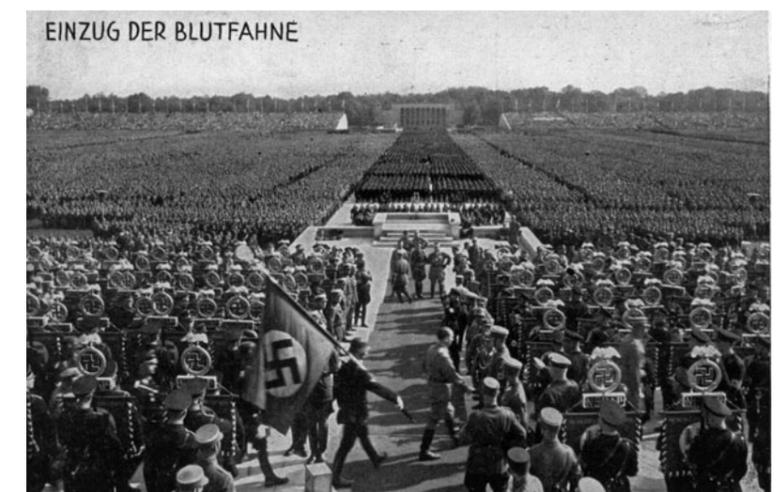
2. Horst Wessel leading a marching group with the flag held high, Nuremberg 1929.



3. The 14 Martyrs of the 1923 Munich Putsch.



4. Hitler during the ceremonial touching of the Blood Flag, Nuremberg 1933.



5. Luitpold Area 1934. The Blood Flag, followed by Hitler marching towards the First World War Memorial, in the centre.

during a street battle against the Communists in 1930, but in 1929 he led a group marching at the rally in Nuremberg to what later became known as 'The Horst Wessel Song'.

On arriving at the site of the *Stadt der Reichspartei* during one tour we explained this story and played the *Horst Wessel Song* in the coach before disembarking. We soon noticed that everyone was leaning to look at our driver's feet which were tapping heartily. "I came here with the Hitler Youth and marched to this tune", he explained enthusiastically.



6. First of May 1935, Day of National Work

Postcards to commemorate each Reichsparteitag were published, showing powerful symbols such as the Swastika, the Blood Flag, an Eagle and strong hands clasped in comradeship. Each year had its particular theme, such as ‘Party Day of Work’, ‘The Party of Honour’, ‘Day of Awakening’.



8. Reichsparteitag 1934

Flags, banners, uniforms, awards, standards and stirring music played important roles in Nazi ritual. One of the rituals performed at the Reichsparteitag involved the ceremonial touching of the ‘Blood Flag’, which had been stained during the Munich Putsch of 1923 with the blood of the fourteen (though accounts of their number varied) martyrs shot by the Police as they marched to the Feldhernhalle. The stained flag was later used to touch the flag of new units in a consecration ceremony.

In 1933 Hitler used a wooden grandstand for his stirring speech. After the rally a labour force of 600 men worked for twelve months to construct an imposing permanent stand, designed by Hitler. In 1934 the concluding march past of the ceremony took five hours.



7. Reichsparteitag 1933

The 1934 Rally, 5-10 September, was the first one where Hitler appeared as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, Chancellor and complete Dictator of Germany.

Please try to watch Leni Riefenstahl’s stirring film ‘Triumph of the Will’ (which can be found using Google). It will give you a feeling of what must have been the intoxicating atmosphere of those meetings, with some 200,000 people marching, many with their standards, in the Zeppelin Field with 130 searchlights flaming. It was akin to religious fervour, of re-commitment to the Party.

B. BERLIN

Our first visits to Berlin were in the 1960’s when Tonie was stationed in Osnabruck. He travelled to the city on several occasions to play hockey for the Army in the old Olympic Stadium.

On one occasion the whole family went too – Valmai, daughter Sian and toddler son Gareth, who had both recently had their injections for mumps. We set off by car to the first check point of The Corridor – the only road into the city which was then surrounded by the Russians. Here Tonie produced his ID card, which was refused as a full stop was missing on one of the lines. Happily he had another one at home, so we drove back, picked up the card which fortunately had the all-important full stop and set off again, by now in the dark. Arriving again at the Check Point, the armed Russian Guard, wearing his long uniform coat, loomed threateningly out of his hut, indicated he would rather like to have Tonie’s watch but eventually, after noting the time we left, let us through.

We reached Check Point Bravo in West Berlin within the allocated time, very late in



9. Edinburgh House, Berlin, built in 1960 for British Forces Officers.

the day and exhausted from the long drive through The Corridor. Then we arrived at *Edinburgh House*, the custom-built British Forces Hotel for Officers, where both children were sick in the lift... Not the happiest of holidays and little did we think that some 20 years later we would be returning as tour operators!

Our Tour of East and West Berlin in the 1980’s

During this decade Berlin was still a city separated into West and East by the Berlin Wall, erected in 1961, and West Berlin was divided into three Sectors – American, French and British.

The largest was the American Sector in the South, with ten miles of The Wall, which included Tempelhof Airport where the famous Airlift flew supplies into the ruined city in

1948/9 and which was the base of the US Air Force in Berlin and, most importantly, Check Point Charlie. The smallest was the French to the North and in between was the British. Though we had no contact with the French, Tonie’s ex-army status was invaluable with the US and British during our tours.

We could offer dinner in the British Officers’ Club, a visit to the US Berlin Brigade small arms Training Butts where our travellers were amazed at being allowed to fire live ammunition, a lecture by a US historian and, because we had built up good relations with the Berlin Tourist Officer on our recce, a Champagne breakfast hosted by him.

The highlight of the tour was a visit to East Berlin through Checkpoint Charlie in the American Sector, the only crossing for Allied Forces and Foreigners. We were always accompanied by a British officer, which meant that after our visit to the then very small Haus am Checkpoint Charlie Museum, we got back on to our coach and the East German border guard, who was not allowed on the vehicle, had to examine our passports through the windows.



10. Holts’ traveller taking aim at the US Training Butts, Berlin

It felt exciting, but rather scary, to enter East Berlin. Indeed on one of Tonie's visits to Berlin in the 1960's, when he was driven into Check Point Charlie in a British staff car, he got out of the car, not really sure whether he was still in the American Sector or technically in East Berlin and started filming. At this point, it soon became evident that he had indeed crossed the border as a German soldier rushed towards him, brandishing his rifle. Tonie quickly sprinted back to the car.



11. Tonie's photo of Checkpoint Charlie c 1963. Note the warning notice in the background – 'You are leaving the American Sector'.

On the early tours in the 1980's we still had to pass a series of threatening uniformed guards – the grey East Berlin Border Brigade, the blue East German Customs Police, the green Peoples Police (VOPO) and the field grey East German Army in the huge white watchtower (just visible in Tonie's photo), the zigzag barriers and the notorious Berlin Wall, constructed in 1961 and at that time painted white. We were still running tours to Berlin in November 1989 when the Wall was torn down, the Iron Curtain dissolved, and the end of the Cold War was declared.

Although it appeared a drab and somewhat soulless city, there was so much of interest to visit in those early days. East Berlin comprised what was once the heart of the old Berlin, with many of its museums, fashionable hotels, restaurants and café's (like the famous Adlon Hotel and Café Adler) and shopping areas – many owned by Jews and which were seized from 1933 onwards – still to be seen.

En route we passed *Goering's Air Ministry* which had, extraordinarily, remained virtually untouched throughout the War, then a visit to see the grass mound which marked the site of *Hitler's Chancellery and Bunker* – later completely covered by a car park in 1988 'to dissolve from the memory of Berliners' Hitler's influence. The richly decorated Chancellery was Hitler's official residence and office, although he spent little time in Berlin during the war. He did however spend his last days in the complex, many roomed Bunker which had been sophisticated and extended to make it suitable as Nazi HQ. It was so

deep it was below the ground water level and required much pumping, its concrete roof was 3 metres thick, the walls had two layers of armoured concrete and there was a ventilation filter system against gas. There were conference, map rooms and private quarters.

Hitler arrived first with Eva Braun and his staff in January 1945 and, as the Russians moved ever closer, Bormann and Goebbels and their families joined him. He made few ventures out of the safety of the Bunker, one memorable occasion being to award medals to members of the Hitler Youth. It was on his 56th Birthday, 20 April 1945, and many onlookers commented on how ill The Führer looked. However, he greeted each young boy with affection and even patted one lad on his cheek. It was 12 years old Alfred Czech whose Iron Cross was awarded for saving the lives of 12 of his comrades on the Oder Front.

12. Hitler patting the cheek of 12 year old Iron Cross winner, Alfred Czech, who died on 13 June 2011.



Nine days later Hitler married Eva Braun and the next day the couple committed suicide by taking cyanide pills – after first testing them on their dog Blondi. The next day their bodies were burnt and buried in a bomb crater.

On 1 May, Goebbels and his wife Magda killed their six children, then committed suicide. The following day the Russians officially took over Berlin.

Although the grassy mound over the site of such momentous events seemed so insignificant, knowing what happened below it caused a shudder as one stood beside it.

The next visit was to *Treptow Park and the imposing Soviet War Memorial*, situated on the banks of the River Spree. Here are buried 5,000 (some accounts say 7,000) Russian soldiers who fell in the final Battle for Berlin in 1945, in five massed graves, each surmounted by a bronze wreath. At the top of the avenue lined with weeping birch trees is a massive statue of Mother Russia mourning her dead sons. The centre piece is a mausoleum surmounted by a 42ft high figure of a Russian soldier, clasping a child in his left arm and trampling a broken Nazi Swastika.

Near the entrance to Treptow Park were stalls selling gluwain, coffee, pretzels and bratwurst – all enthusiastically partaken of by our groups.



14. Russian Soldier with Child, Treptow Park



15. A welcome Bratwurst near Treptow Park



13. Joseph Goebbels, his wife Magda and four of their six children.

Another popular visit was to see the *Changing of the Guard at the Neue Wache* (New Guard House) on Unter den Linden. The Guard House had originally been built by Friedrich 3rd in 1818. In 1931 President Hindenburg remodelled it to house the Unknown Warrior of the '14-18' War.

During WW2 a Heroes Memorial Parade was held annually and there are many photos of Hitler present at the occasion.

It was badly damaged by Allied bombing and the 'Russian Battle for Berlin'. In 1960 it was rebuilt, with

its imposing classical column façade, and included an eternal flame.

The Changing of the Guard has taken place in the same manner, with impressive goose-stepping, up to and during the period of our visits, by East German soldiers.

The next stop would always be *Museum Island* on the River Spree. It contains five superb museums and in 1999 was listed as a World Heritage Site.

We visited two of the Museums – first was the *Neues Museum*. Building started in 1843 and it was opened in 1855. It was built on the spongy soil of the Spree and a steam engine rail line ran to it bearing material to stabilise it. Its pride and joy is the



16. Valmai and one of the imposing Guards at the Neue Wache 1982.

hauntingly beautiful (despite the loss of its left eye) head of Nefertiti, wife of Akhenaten, which dates from 1345 BC. It was discovered by German archaeologist Ludwig Borchardt in 1912 in Thutmose's workshop.

Incidentally, whilst on a Tour of the historic sites along the River Nile, we bought, at what we thought was a bargain price, a black basalt head of Akhenaten. We showed it off proudly to our group, only to be disillusioned by one of them – a WW2 veteran who had spent some time in Egypt. He took out his pen knife and scraped the base to reveal the cheap white pottery under the black paint!

Next was the *Pergamon Museum*, which opened in 1904 but was only completed in 1930. After much damage in WW2 it reopened in 1959. It contains part of the wondrously re-assembled *Pergamon Altar* and the colourful *Ishtar Gate from Babylon*. The latter was excavated by Robert Koldenay and laboriously reconstructed here in the 1930's from crates of glazed brick fragments.

Over the years the Greeks have been insisting that the UK should return to them historic items such as the Elgin Marbles and in many cases Greece's Culture Ministry has agreed to 'loan' such artefacts for 25 years. In March 2021 it was reported that Boris Johnson had 'slapped down' Greece's request for permanent return, stating that they were 'legally owned by the British Museum's Trustees'. Some Museums, however, have decided that they will return some such items and France has agreed to return a precious Grecian Frieze from the Louvre. A similar situation exists in Germany, with the



17. Changing the Guard at the Neue Wache 1982.



18. The head of Queen Nefertiti, Neues Museum, East Germany

Egyptians trying to reclaim some of the wondrous exhibits on show in Museum Island and other museums around the country.

Back in the West we stayed over the years in several excellent hotels. But one year in particular we managed to get a very good price at the Kempinski Hotel on the Kurfurstendamm, then the only luxury hotel in Berlin. It had a very

smart dining room, swimming pool and all the trappings of a 5 star hotel. On that tour we had a wonderful group of three Worcestershire veterans comprising their Officer, Bill, his ex-batman, Morris, and Sergeant, Alf, who had served in China.

On coming back from the pool early one morning we were surprised to bump into Morris, marching briskly along the hotel corridor carrying a small spirit stove. He explained that he was going to make a cup of tea for his 'Orficer'... The three of them became our firm friends, as so many of our travellers did, and now that neither they, nor we, are able to travel as we once did, the memories of comradeship, emotion and laughter are treasured jewels for rainy days.

Illus 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,13 are taken from our book 'Germany Awake! The Rise of National Socialism 1919-1939'. Unfortunately this is now out of print. Tonie and Valmai Holt.

WILLIAM III's ENTRY INTO EXETER

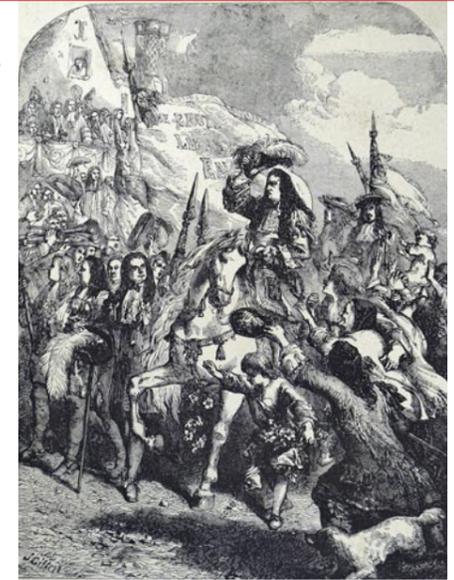
Chris Scott

I've been asked to write a book on William III's invasion of England in 1688. I'm not sure if I want to do this as, although I like creating the text, illustrations and notes really do annoy me. However, I've done some background reading just in case and there's one little snippet that was too good not to share with other Guides.

Unfortunately it is from Macaulay and those who have done research into the late 17C will know what a buffoon and fabricator of testimony he is! However, he claims it was from an eyewitness description, but even if he made this up (which wasn't beyond him) it's a good read.

Background: After his unopposed landing at Torbay, William's polyglot army began marching into England and it's first major stop was Exeter. The city initially shut its gates in their faces, considering themselves loyal to King James II (city motto '*Semper Fidelis*'). The Corporation held out against what they believed was a foreign, Dutch invasion, so envoys and emissaries were exchanged until the city authorities, leading worthies and prominent merchants were persuaded to change their minds and welcome the Prince of Orange, their 'new king'. I have read somewhere that money changed hands and promises of future favours abounded – if Paris was worth a mass, then Exeter was apparently worth a few backhanders.

Macaulay's description: "*First rode Macclesfield¹ at the head of two hundred gentlemen, most of English blood, glittering in helmets and cuirasses and mounted on Flemish war horses. Each was attended by a negro, brought from the sugar plantations on the coast of Guiana. The citizens of Exeter, who had never seen so many specimens of the African race, gazed with wonder on those black faces, set off by embroidered turbans and white feathers. Then with drawn broadswords came a squadron of Swedish horsemen in black armour and fur cloaks. They were regarded with a strange interest; for it was rumoured they were natives of a land where the ocean was frozen and where the night lasted through half of the year, and that they had themselves slain the huge bears whose skins they wore. Next, surrounded by a goodly company of gentlemen and pages, was borne aloft the Princes' banner. On its broad folds the crowd, which covered the roofs and filled the windows, read with delight that memorable inscription "The Protestant Religion and the Liberties of England". But the acclamations redoubled when, attended by forty running footmen, the Prince himself appeared.*"



Another witness, not mentioned by Macaulay, says the Prince himself came after his banner riding a splendid white steed and wearing both back and breast plates. There is no mention of helmet or hat but he was known to have worn an impressive white plume of feathers. This description was used by Sir Geoffrey Kneller to create a large painting (supposedly commissioned by William) which now resides in the Royal Collection.

It is worth speculating about what each section of the parade was supposed to communicate to the crowds and what overall message the image conveyed. Could it be that they were not foreign but were led by Englishmen, who were both wealthy and high status individuals; that William brought the exotic and the potential for worldwide trade as well as the formidable armed might to back up his claim; plus the reverence and special veneration of his banner as a prelude to the appearance of his good self? A clever bit of visual propaganda and use of political theatre?

As a Devonian who was born and brought up in Newton Abbot, I cannot let it pass without commenting that William spent his first night in England in my home town - there is something that I would like to add. His first night was spent in Ford House on the outskirts of the town (now Council Offices I believe). The following morning, he was proclaimed King at the foot of St. Leonard's tower where there is a monument to the event - an event that was commemorated in Coronation year when I, as a ten-year old, took his part (in a superb costume made by my mother) in a tableau that my primary school produced in the procession on the backs of lorries that wound its way throughout the town. My friend was cheesed off as I had a sword whereas he was the priest who had to read out the proclamation. Unfortunately, a photo of me dressed for the occasion was lost.

The proclamation was, I realise, somewhat premature being in advance of the discussions with Parliament's representatives at Hungerford - nevertheless their heart was in the right place and was a measure of the lasting West Country feeling post-Monmouth.

¹ Charles Gerard, 1st Earl of Macclesfield. An old soldier and one time friend of Charles I.

GUIDEpath

Paul Colbourne

After informally guiding for a number of years for family and friends I wanted to take the next step. To make my approach more professional I joined the Guild of Battlefield Guides (GBG) in 2016. Looking at the accreditation process and realising I needed to further my knowledge, I applied for and was accepted on the History of Britain and the First World War Masters (MA) programme Wolverhampton University under the tutelage of Professor Gary Sheffield and his team and I began the course in September 2016.

Busy, odd and peculiar times would see me in 2018 working away from home, later being made redundant, setting up a new business and working on my dissertation. One particular rejection for a guiding opportunity left me frustrated and wondering if Battlefield Guiding was for me. Without the encouragement of University colleagues Dan Hill, Mark Ridiford and Rick Smith it would have been easy to give up. 'Push on' they said. 'Do not give up'.

In the summer of 2018 my next tentative step was to attend a TGT+V One-Day Battlefield Guide Insight Course in what I considered to be a last throw of the dice, to see if guiding was for me. Leaving me inspired and motivated, August would see me on the Somme taking part in a three-day Battlefield Guide Field Module led by Mike Peters who was ably assisted by Jo Hook. Also on the module were Simon Burges (Now Badge #108), Stephen Reece and Francis Mullan. With newfound confidence, it was on with the dissertation, with the intention of securing work and applying for guiding positions.

December 2018 saw me in London for an interview and assessment as a Battlefield Guide and Tour leader for 'Back-Roads Touring'. Here my path would cross once again with Francis Mullan. With my dissertation submitted early (December 31 2018), I was clear to focus on the 2 week training and selection for Back-Roads. This proved to be tough but a genuine insight into the workings of a guide/tour leader and a start to my first year as a guide. I then secured 4 tours for 2019 with Back-Roads and also 3 for Galloway.



Fellow Guild Member Francis Mullan and I. Francis had just completed his first tour and I was about to start mine and we met in our hotel in Lille for a handover.

I graduated in April 2019 and was awarded a Merit pass. I was also nominated for 'Rookie of the year' by my Back-Roads colleagues. What a good year and it was all now looking good for 2020!

With ten tours in the diary for 2020, and a relaxing family Trip to New Zealand to look forward to, my guiding dream was being fulfilled.

Returning from New Zealand early due to a family crisis, we were surrounded by people in masks at a stopover in Singapore airport. Little did we know what lay ahead.

A return to my day job gave me some sense of normality and in March I was off with Galloway taking a school to Ypres and surrounds.

And then it all changed. Tours were being cancelled, and of course, we all know what happened next.

I was due to attempt Assignment 1 on 4 April at the Tally Ho! Club in Edgbaston. This was subsequently cancelled but the Guild offered the opportunity to attempt Assignment 1 via Zoom so I grabbed this with both hands. As a guinea pig, I was the first Zoom Assessed assignment which I passed with a huge sigh of relief.

With no prospect of any tours and limited opportunities to get over to the continent to visit the places we all have a special affinity with, I needed a focus and working towards the Badge would provide this.

Work was turned upside down and I was now back on the shop floor working six days a week. However, I had made the commitment and it was now the time to get on with completing my badge.

On 11 May I passed Assignment 5. The 18 May would see a referral for Assignment 6. How could this be? (What would my friend and mentor Jo Hook

say? She was not referred once). I knew my stuff; how could this happen?

Quite easy. When you get your feedback it can be extremely tough to take as you will have put your heart and soul into it, but it is honest and the assignment is viewed by the validation team without prejudice. I re-present Assignment 6 for a pass only to be referred for Assignment 4, what was going on? In truth I was burning the candle at both ends and sometimes in the middle and it was time to consolidate and take a breath.

This was not however, a time to throw the towel in; I had set myself a target of completing all assignments within 12 months, I just needed some time to settle. A GBG event at Ridgewell in September would see me chatting to Badged guides who were full of support and encouragement, although our Chairman did say I looked a little tired! I could see the eventual goal on the horizon. Some assignments proved to be a true challenge for me but on Friday 19 February 2021 I was awarded Badge 113 and as I write this it is yet to sink in.

My goal was to take something positive from this last year. The whole process has given me focus and an objective. The accreditation program is managed professionally and is structured to be challenging. It should NOT be easy, and it is tough at times, but if something is worth having it is worth working for. If you start the process (and I would encourage anyone to do so) you must at times have some fairly thick skin. No one likes to have their shortcomings pointed out, just dust yourself off, take the referrals as constructive and build on them.

I now volunteer for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission on their 'Eyes On Hands On' project and I have just been accepted on their Kantor Speakers programme. As with all of us, guiding is on hold for the foreseeable future but I do believe that there is light at the end of the tunnel. Outside of my family (who are tremendously supportive) the MA is one of my proudest achievements. The award of the Guild's Badge runs a close second.



Lijsenthoek Military Cemetery with Galloway.



Caterpillar Crater, Hill 60 with Galloway.



Villers-Bretonneux, ANZACS on the Western Front, Backroads Touring

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW VOLUNTEER TOUR GUIDES ROLL AT CWGC

Simon Bendry, Head of Education and Engagement, CWGC



Since 2017, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission has been using a number of different methods to engage people while they are visiting our cemeteries and memorials. The most well-known of these approaches is the Intern Programme. Many members will have come across our Interns at the Thiepval Memorial in France and at Tyne Cot Cemetery in Belgium. The interns have always been

well received by the public, offering tours of those sites and being available to answer questions. Unfortunately, the pandemic has meant that the programme has not been able to run in 2020 or 2021. However, plans are already being formed to see the Interns return in 2022.

Less well known is the use of a very small group of volunteers to act as tour guides at a limited number of locations in the UK, principally Brookwood Military Cemeteries and at the Air Forces Memorial at Runnymede. A number of Guild members have been involved at these sites since 2017.

In the early autumn of 2020, as lockdown restrictions eased we took the opportunity of Heritage Open Days to test the public demand for guided tours. After advertising within the local area, we were delighted that all of the tours we offered 'sold out'. While these were all ticketed events, no charge is made for the tour. Instead visitors are invited to donate to the Commonwealth War Graves Foundation.

After the Heritage Open Days events, there was clearly an appetite from the public to join guided tours of Commission sites, with more than 200 joining tours over the course of the week – and these had all only been advertised locally. Evaluations and feedback showed that the tours were popular and that our volunteer guides were doing an excellent job to engage the public.

Inspired by this, in the spring of 2021, we made the decision to run a pilot of a volunteer tour guide programme right across Great Britain. For this pilot we approached a small number of our current volunteers to see if they would be interested in developing and guiding a tour in their local area. The



aim was to be able to offer tours right across Great Britain and to launch this during War Graves Week, in late May. Those approached had to have previous guiding experience, and as a result quite a number of Guild members were selected for the pilot.

All volunteers underwent a training process. This ensured that their historical knowledge of the Commission, and their understanding of the work that it does today was accurate and up to date. A new Volunteer Tour Guides Manual was created to support this, and briefings were led by myself, and Megan Maltby, our Public Engagement Manager, herself a former Intern. A centralised admin system was created to support the new volunteer guides with the whole process of creating the tour, risk assessing sites and liaising with local authorities. Having experienced

guides as part of our pilot was hugely beneficial.

By the middle of May, we had 60 volunteers trained and ready to go and as a result, were able to offer more than 180 tours at more than 40 different sites right across Great Britain. Tickets sold quickly with more than 1450 places being booked – not bad considering the challenges of managing changing government and local guidance, and trialling a brand new booking and communication system.

Amongst the Guild members who were part of the pilot were a number of Badged Guides: Allan 'Chippy' Wood lead tours of the CWGC graves at Portland – not a bad spot for tour which includes being able to share the story of a VC within sight of the 'battlefield' where it was won. Andy Johnson was on familiar turf while leading tours of the RAF burials at Scampton. Other Guild members involved in the pilot included 'Rocky' Salmon who led a number of tours in the far South West, Eugenie Brooks led tours at both Brookwood and Runnymede, including one for the new Director General of the CWGC Claire Horton CBE and local MP Dr Ben Spencer. Further north, Susie Rotherforth led a number of tours of Harrogate's Stonefall Cemetery. Our most northerly offer was by another Guild member, Jon Sandison who led a number of tours of Lerwick Cemetery on Shetland!

The pilot programme has been a huge success and we now plan to develop it further.



Susie Rotherforth and the volunteer guides at Harrogate Stonefall



Allan Wood at Portland



Eugenie Brooks at Runnymede



Andy Johnson at Scampton

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer tour guide for the CWGC and would like to find out more, please email volunteers@cwgc.org

THE US ASSAULT TRAINING CENTRE WOOLACOMBE, DEVON

Tony Smith

In 1943, American troops started arriving in the UK in preparation for the planned assault on Europe. It had been assumed that they would have been fully trained for the job before they arrived and realisation that they were not led to a situation that had to be resolved as quickly as possible. The planned invasion was only a few months away and whilst training of British and Canadian troops was already well advanced, it looked like the Americans were nowhere near ready!

The first challenge was finding someone to spearhead this task and, after looking around for a suitably qualified officer, it was decided to appoint Lieutenant Colonel Paul W. Thompson to undertake the task. He was uniquely qualified. He had spent 1935 to 1937 in Germany as a military attaché to the United States embassy in Berlin and had spent a period of attachment with the German 16th Engineer Battalion learning their theory and practice of defensive fortifications. Thompson quickly accepted the appointment to set up and run an Assault Training Centre in England.

On arrival in the UK in January 1943 he soon discovered that he had to start from scratch. He was confirmed in his title as Commandant of the Assault Training Centre on the 2nd April 1943 and promoted to full Colonel. By the end of April after much discussion about what was required, his mission was finally committed to paper on the 6th May.

It had two key elements, firstly to produce a doctrine for assaulting a defended enemy coastline and establishing a beachhead, and secondly to train troops in those principles. This required not only the creation of a completely new doctrine, as there was nothing in existence up to this point, but also to undertake the actual training of thousands of troops in its principles and all in a very short space of time.

Thompson's first step was to organise a conference in London. His objective was to pull together all available expertise to develop a workable plan for neutralising the German defences on the Normandy

beaches. This conference started on the 23rd May 1943 and ran for a month. Speakers were drafted in from the Army, Navy and Air Forces, drawing upon the experience gained from similar amphibious landings including the 1942 Dieppe raid and the attacks on islands in the Pacific. Intelligence sources were also pooled, with vast amounts of information and photographs being analysed to get a clear understanding of what the troops would face on the beaches and what needed to be done to train them.

A key issue was going to be the terrain which would be encountered on the two beaches selected for the American attack. Unlike the British and Canadian assaults which were to be onto sandy beaches which led to fairly flat areas where tanks could be used from

the outset, the Americans at Omaha would be faced with steep bluffs with a few narrow well defended valleys or draws leading off the beach. Utah also posed problems with low dunes behind the beach and then a flooded area with only four causeways across it which would need to be secured before moving inland. Given these geographical challenges, the primary means of attacking the defences on both beaches would have to be by infantry assault. Only once the infantry had secured a beachhead could tanks and other equipment be effectively brought in.

As well as the topography, another issue to be considered was the lack of large landing craft available for the invasion, most of which were being used in other theatres. The initial waves of troops would, for the most part, be put on the beaches from small 30 man landing craft – the LCPV. This further constraint led to the conclusion that “the outcome of the final assault on beach defences will depend on small unit leadership and thorough training and determination of individual soldiers and small groups to a much larger extent than is normally the case”. There were further concerns that small landing craft might become scattered or sunk during the invasion. It was therefore considered important that each landing craft carried a mixture of men and equipment to provide each team with the tools needed to breach the German fortifications.

Given these conclusions, the techniques to be taught at the Assault Training Centre were now to be centred around the idea that ... “Infantry to be reorganized into assault sections; with flamethrowers and high explosive teams being the heart of the assault section”. This thinking determined the main thrust of the doctrine that was being developed and the way that the training would evolve.

A venue for the proposed Assault centre was needed and, after discussion, the Americans had been allocated a stretch of coastline in North Devon, stretching from Morte Point, just to the north of the town of Woolacombe, to Crow Point at the entrance to the Taw Torridge estuary in the south. The British had already taken all the ‘best’ training areas and considered these beaches unsuitable for their own needs. By good fortune however, the coastline, tides and currents in the area very closely matched the Normandy Beaches to be attacked by the Americans on D Day.

The beach at Woolacombe itself bears an uncanny resemblance to that at Omaha. It was identical in nearly every respect of sand quality, beach gradient, and tide range! On the third week of their meetings the entire conference went down to Woolacombe to see some of their ideas for training in practice and to make revisions as necessary to the proposed training.

By the end of April 1943, the assault doctrine had been created and a three-week training schedule was agreed. This, it was believed, would adequately train

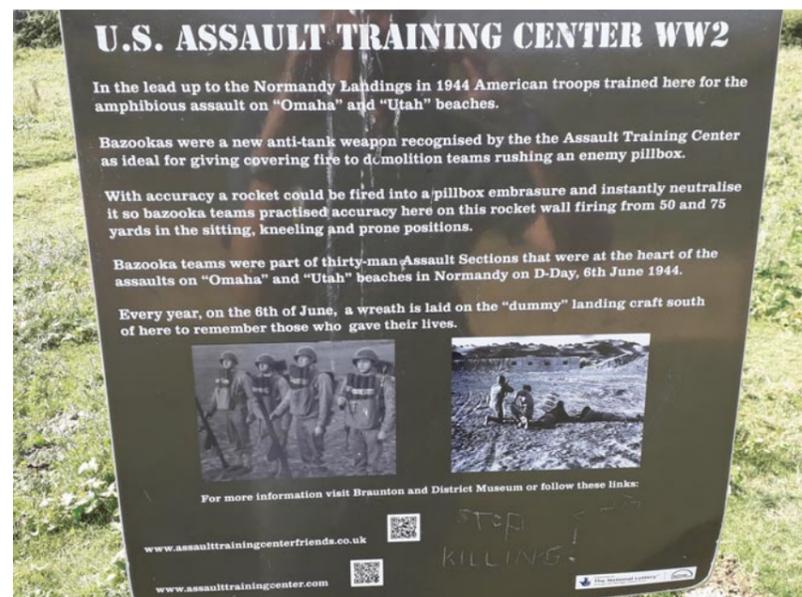
soldiers in the new tactics.

Once the training land had been formally handed over and cleared of the mines laid as part of the beach defence system from earlier in the war, the 112th Engineer Regiment started work. They covered the beaches and dunes with pill boxes, obstacles and other fortifications similar to those to be encountered in Normandy. These would be used for practice attacks, being attacked, destroyed and rebuilt on a regular basis. The layout and type of these obstacles were regularly updated from aerial photographs taken of enemy installations on Omaha and Utah. The whole area was then divided into ten separate areas each of which were used for specific elements of training.

Troops would board landing craft at the southern end of Saunton Sands at Crow Point and then ‘attack’ the beach at Woolacombe. Demolition experiments were carried out on Saunton Sands and the rocky area at Baggy Point was used to train men in landing on rough terrain. Croyde Bay was used for training DUKW crews.

The Assault Training Centre HQ team established its Headquarters at the Woolacombe Bay Hotel and tented and hatted accommodation was then created for the troops in Ilfracombe, Saunton and a smaller establishment being set up in Croyde.

The Training Centre opened for its first trainees on September 1st 1943. The first troops to attend were a cadre from the 29th Infantry Division. They trained



The Bazooka Wall information board.



with members of the 156th Infantry Regiment, the instructors from the Centre, for ten days prior to the arrival of their 1st Regimental Combat Team (RCT). This cadre then trained the 1st RCT. Whilst this was being done a cadre from the 2nd RCT were trained up and then went on to train the 2nd RCT and so it went on. The idea was that a cadre from a RCT would train with the current RCT and then go on to train its own.

The training covered embarking into, debarking from, wading ashore from landing craft, developing individual skills in the use of assault weapons, co-ordination of weapons in the assault, methods for crossing wire and fire and movement teamwork in the assault of a defended obstacle. Troops were also taught to become accustomed to advancing under fire from supporting weapons and to co-ordinate movement with such fire.

Training started with individual skills such as how to use a pole charge or disembark from a landing craft. It then progressed to small unit operations and company and battalion exercises. Larger scale landing exercises were then held at the larger facility at Slapton Sands on the south Devon coast.

By March 1944 some 22,500 men of the Combat Teams that were to spearhead the invasion had passed through the Centre. The Centre ceased its training role and was disbanded on the 26th May 1944. Not everyone that came to the Centre left alive – some ninety-eight men died at Woolacombe, most of them American, as they trained. Fourteen drowned on December 18th 1943 when three of landing craft foundered in surf. Five GIs died and fourteen were wounded by machine gun fire during an exercise in which the barrage was supposed to pass over troops' heads.

There is still much to see of the training centre. In Woolacombe, the Woolacombe Bay Hotel is still there, now a 4* hotel, a plaque on its front door marking its importance during the war. The Red Barn café, taken over as an American Red Cross Centre is now a surfer bar, with its steps on which those that drowned on the 18th December were laid out and there is a memorial on the green overlooking the bay.

Amongst the dunes there are visible remnants of the Training Centre. There are a number of concrete LCT mock-ups to the south of Braunton Burrows where the troops practiced loading and unloading landing craft. There are also the remains of dummy pill boxes, dragons' teeth and a long rocket wall which was used as a target backdrop for bazooka teams. Nearby there are pieces of steel which suggest that vehicles were also used as targets in front of the wall. There are also the remains of a Matilda tank used for target practice.

The importance of the Assault Training Centre in the overall success of the D Day landings should not



The remains of a Matilda tank.



The remains of a vehicle used for target practice.



Dummy landing craft.



The landing craft memorial plaque.

be underestimated. Although on D Day itself, something like a quarter of the men that passed through the centre died on the beaches of France in one day, without the training received at the Assault Training Centre many more would have died, and the US side of the operation may have ultimately failed.

GUILDmerchandise

With the winter guiding season fast approaching now is the time to get your orders in for your Guild clothing! All items are available with either the GBG logo or Accredited member badges. The range includes:



Polo shirts:



Sweatshirts:



Soft Shell Jackets:

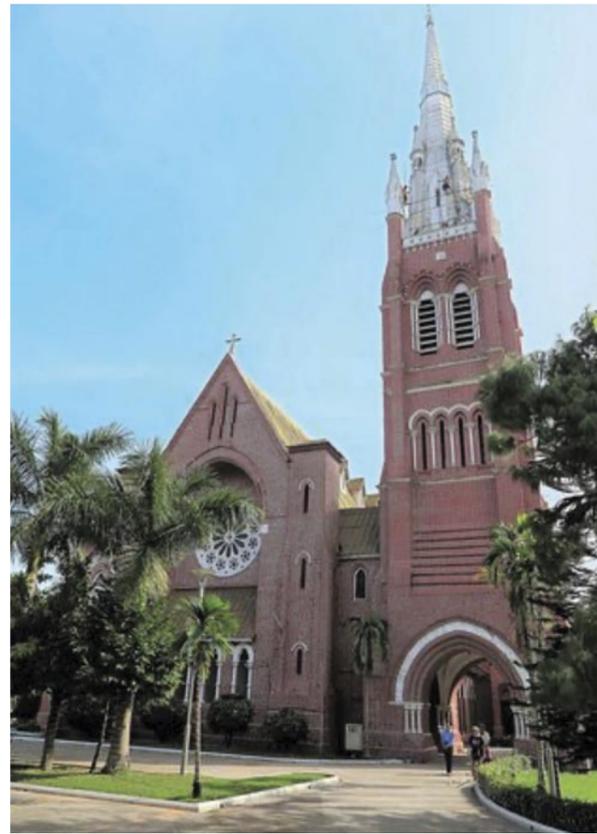
The easiest way to order is online via the Guild website – go to:
www.gbg-international.com/shop/
and pick what you want in the sizes you want.

If you don't want to pay online you can still send a cheque for the required amount to the Secretary at: Trenanton, Shutta Road, Looe, Cornwall. PL13 1HP

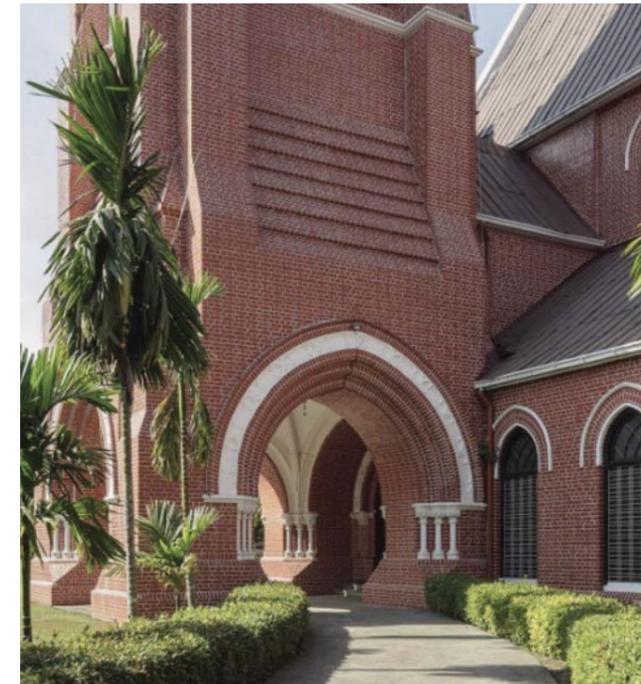
HOLY TRINITY CATHEDRAL, RANGOON AND THE CHINDITS

Piers Storie-Pugh OBE TD DL FRGS

Although the great Buddhist Shwedagon Pagoda in central Rangoon was not included in the 'New Wonders of the World', many believe it should have been. Less than quarter of an hour's walk away, is another Rangoon wonder – the imposing Christian Holy Trinity Cathedral. The foundation stone was laid by Lord Dufferin, Viceroy of India – of which Burma was a part – in 1886 and the building was designed by Robert Chisholm, a Madras-based British architect. The first choral celebration of Holy Communion took place at 7.30am on Sunday, 18th November 1894.



The sanctuary is paved in marble and the groined roof—the intersection of two barrel roofs—is a real feature of this magnificent building. The bell, weighing 840 kg, was first rung on 18th August 1914, a week after the British Expeditionary Force crossed the Channel heading to war. Above the cathedral tower the spire rises to a magnificent height of 200 ft; and in thoughtful recognition of the Burmese climate, the roof entrance underneath the tower is an adaptation to shelter worshippers from the torrential rains experienced in this country.

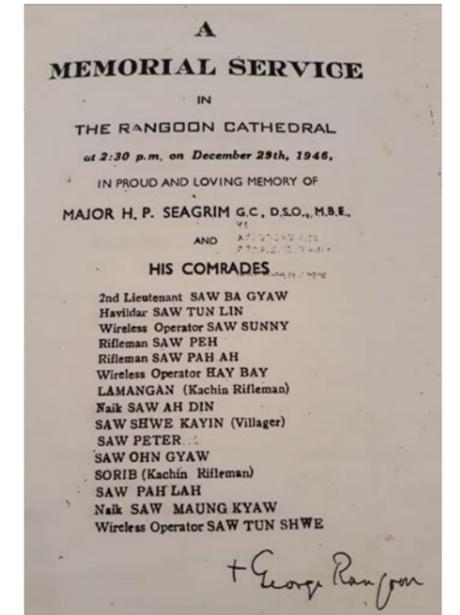


The entrance under the bell tower.

in Holy Trinity Cathedral. A page in the Book of Remembrance, containing the Roll of Honour of those who died in Burma 1942-45 and the units that served, is turned every day.

In the cathedral grounds is a memorial to the officers and men of the Queen's Royal Regiment (the 2nd of Foot).

The 1st Battalion, commanded by Colonel Duncombe, fought in the Arakan on the west coast of Burma in 1943, then at Kohima in 1944 and was still fighting in July 1945 at the Battle of the Sittang Bend in Southern Burma. The 2nd Battalion, commanded by Colonel Metcalfe, had fought in the Middle East before being sent to Brigadier Bernard Ferguson's 16th Chindit Brigade, part of General Wingate's Operation Thursday. This battalion, divided into 21 Column and 22 Column, each of 400



From the memorial service for Major Hugh Seagrim GC DSO MBE in 1946.



This beautiful cathedral includes a west-facing rose window and a Carrara marble high altar.



The east window depicts the Epiphany, Baptism, Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension.

During the Second World War, Rangoon was occupied by the Japanese and the Cathedral used as a brewery; and during this period the high altar, organ and stained glass windows were destroyed. In 1945, Royal Engineer units of the British Army set about repairing the cathedral and a Forces Memorial Chapel was created.

Many military plaques of units that served at sea, on land and in the air during the Burma campaign are displayed in this chapel, which is especially dedicated to the memory of Major Hugh Seagrim GC DSO MBE. Major Seagrim, nicknamed 'Grandfather Longlegs', was notable for his outstanding bravery in leading the Karen rebels against the Japanese; and upon capture he was executed. He is buried in the Rangoon Cemetery and a memorial service was held



The military plaques in the Forces Memorial Chapel.



At the Memorial to the Queens Royal Regiment in the Cathedral grounds - (right) the Memorial today.

men and 75 mules, left India in February 1944 and marched back into Burma, passing through the Naga head-hunters' territory before crossing the Chindwin River and heading for their destination, the Aberdeen Fortress. On 22nd March 1944 the column under Major Close ambushed a Japanese lorry convoy, killing 80 Japanese for the loss of five killed and four wounded. Major Close was awarded the DSO and Pte Burke, Medical Orderly, the MM. This intrepid journey took the battalion 94 days, of which 70 were actually on the march. They covered



The Guard of Honour.

almost 600 miles, slogged up to heights of 6,000 ft and received 19 air drops of supplies, ammunition, food and cigarettes.

Ferguson's 16 Brigade, responsible for guarding General Stilwell's right flank was the only one to march in, the remainder were delivered by glider. Stilwell's huge American-Chinese army advanced southwards from China and the Chindits thus did much to keep them committed to the Burma front. The Chindits also frustrated the Japanese target of reaching Imphal, Field Marshal Bill Slim's enormous

base for reinvasion. The Chindits were finally flown out of the jungles of Burma to Imphal on 1st August 1944, their job done.

The plaques to the Chindits and the Queen's Royal Regiment are amongst those which proudly hang in Rangoon's Holy Trinity Cathedral Memorial Chapel to this day; as does a photograph of the Guard of Honour, provided by the Queens's Royal Regiment and which I presented to the Cathedral in 1996.

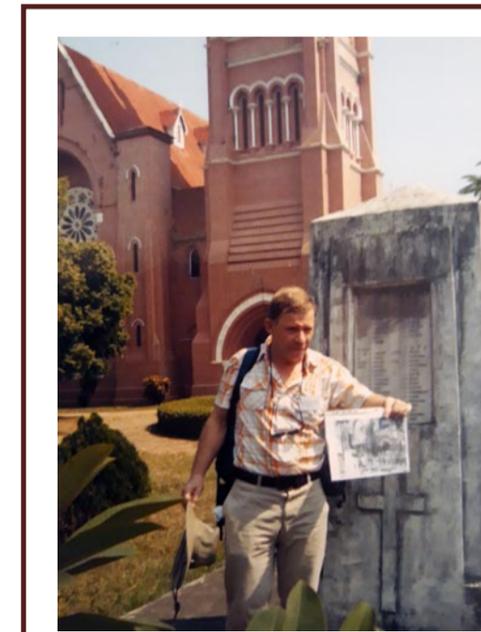
I had served in the 1st Battalion the Queen's



The Memorial at Wimbledon Common

Regiment before going on to command the 6th/7th Battalion. The Queen's Royal Regiment was founded in 1661 with a parade near to Wimbledon Common. A fine memorial to this event still stands today on Wimbledon Common.

Whenever I brought out a group of war widows, relatives and veterans to Burma our pilgrimage always ended with a service in Holy Trinity Cathedral. Over time, some of the beautiful stained glass in the cathedral's east-facing window had deteriorated. Poignantly they were repaired by David Knowles, former chairman of the Royal British Legion and a good friend, during a Remembrance Travel pilgrimage of war widows and relatives of men who lost their lives in Burma including in the Chindit Operations.



(Copyright © Piers Storie-Pugh February 2021) Piers Storie-Pugh, Accredited Member No.12 of The International Guild of Battlefield Guides

Piers Storie-Pugh
Piers guides groups and gives presentations in support of charitable fundraising:

The Chindit Operation of Burma

Escaping from Colditz

The Battle of Arnhem and Nijmegen

The Great Sieges of Malta 1565 and 1940-42

Build-up to Normandy and D-Day

The Great War and Remembrance

War Cemeteries Worldwide

Website: wartalks.co

MEDALguide

Stories Behind the Medals The British War Medal 1914-1920

The British War Medal was instituted to record the successful conclusion of the Great War. Its issue was later extended to cover the period 1919 – 1920 for service in mine clearing at sea and operations in North and South Russia, the eastern Baltic, Siberia, the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. In total some 6,095,352 medals were awarded in silver. Some 110,000 medals in bronze were also awarded to Chinese, Indian and Maltese personnel working in labour battalions.

The medal was awarded to those in the Army who entered a theatre of war during the defined period or who left their places of residence and rendered approved service overseas. For the Navy and Merchant Navy it was 28 days mobilised service or who died before such service could be completed. Medals are named on the rim with the recipient's name, number and unit.

It was originally intended that campaign clasps should be awarded with the medal and recommendations for 79 were put forward by the Army and 68 by the Navy – so the idea was

eventually given up in 1923 as impractical and expensive! However, the Naval clasps were actually authorised in July 1920 and miniature medals are known to exist with them. The full-size clasps were never issued.

The medal itself was designed by William McMillan, a celebrated sculptor, who himself served in the Artist's Rifles and the Ox and Bucks Light Infantry during the war. William lived to be 90 and tragically died of injuries following a street robbery in 1977.

As a postscript many of the British War Medals were melted down for scrap in the late 1970's following a bid by speculators to corner the silver market as a hedge against inflation. The late 1970's and 1980's saw thousands of First War medals come onto the market as old soldiers died and many thousands of groups of medals were broken up to realise the silver value.



Tony Smith

BATTLEFIELD BRIEFS - PART TWO

Marc Yates, Governance Director

MANAGING YOUR DUTY OF CARE TO CLIENTS

*(and if that doesn't sound interesting enough,
Occupational Health and Safety and Risk Management!)*

In my last article, we looked at the need to set out the terms of contract (T&Cs) between a guide and his or her clients. Those T&Cs should ensure that what is promised is delivered, the parties, their safety and well-being are protected and deal with the obligations owed by the guide to clients and vice versa. They should also seek to manage where possible the issues which give rise to the duty of care owed by the guide to his or her clients and to mitigate the exposure of legal liability in the event of breach.

Warning – this is the legal bit!

A duty of care refers to the circumstances and relationships which the law recognises as giving rise to a legal duty to take care. A failure to take such care can result in a person being liable to pay damages to a party who is injured or suffers loss as a result of their breach of duty of care.



The all-important briefing at the start of a tour

In relation to the safety and well-being of your clients in particular, the law will impose a duty of care upon a guide. Liability for breach of this duty cannot be contractually excluded and therefore a guide must consider other practical ways of minimising risk.

As this article will hopefully demonstrate, there is an inextricable and required link between those T&Cs and the way in which you provide your services to your clients operationally (Occupational Health & Safety), and risk management.

Occupational Health & Safety (OHS)

As a guide you need to be aware of OHS, meaning that you should consider the health and safety aspects of the working environment which pertain to yourself and your clients.

Statutory OHS obligations are imposed so that guides and clients have a defined legal standard against which compliance will be measured. Equally, considering the guide's duty of care, the law will also recognise a level of standards dependant on the circumstances, and against which the duty will be measured.

In previous times, the term "common sense" might have been used to suggest that through education and life experiences, an individual would develop the knowledge and skills necessary for living, working, and socialising. It might have been assumed that as a result, most clients would have sufficient common sense not to need to be reminded at length as to what they should do and not do when on tour.

However, in today's multicultural and ever-changing world, where we must allow for different educational, cultural, social, and environmental influences, the "common" element can no longer necessarily be assumed. We therefore need to ensure that relevant information is clearly communicated in so far as it relates to specific situations and circumstances.

For a guide to operate in a manner appropriate to OHS, he or she will need to have knowledge of OHS and devised operating procedures before clients can be briefed. Not only that, he or she will have to consider any relevant legal obligations in relation to OHS imposed upon a guide (including whether any relevant qualifications which need to be held e.g., first aid) which may be dependant upon where the services are provided. Not to be overlooked, a Guide will also need to ensure that OHS knowledge acquired is regularly updated and refreshed.

Communication to your clients may be partially achieved by way of printed standard instructions and often these will be provided pre-tour. They will, however,

never replace verbal briefings at a specific location where the guide will use his or her knowledge of the site, local area, and country to ensure that the safety and well-being of clients are protected and enhanced.

Communication methods – which do you prefer?

Guide A

"Our walk today commences here at the Visitor Centre. It will take us along the marked footpath through the preserved battlefield, and we will cross a pedestrian footbridge to reach our final destination – the 'Battlefield Café'. Our tour of the battlefield will be 45 minutes. The pathway which we follow is flat and partially shaded, and your support is requested in protecting this significant area by keeping yourself within that pathway. Don't be tempted to pick up or prod items that you may see off the pathway. They are battlefield artefacts and may also be dangerous. Please stay with me throughout the walk, and should you need to leave the tour before the end, please let me know. Refreshment, toilet, and first-aid facilities are available in both the Visitor Centre and the café. If you have any questions during the tour, please ask me. Welcome to our walk and I hope that you enjoy it!"

Guide B

"We are about to start the walk. By the way, I have to tell you these points:

- Don't leave the path.
- Don't touch anything on the ground.
- Don't drop anything on the battlefield.
- Don't trip when you walk.
- Stay out of the sun to avoid sunstroke.
- Don't stray from the group.
- Don't cross the road; use the footbridge.
- There are no refreshment, toilet, or first-aid facilities on the battlefield; if you need them, they are in the Visitor Centre or the café.

We'll be finished in 45 minutes, and we will have fun!"

Risk Management

What is risk management and how does it relate to OHS? As we have seen, initially a good guide needs to develop an OHS awareness and understanding which will assist in developing practices which support the goal of good health and safety in a work environment. Risk management provides the opportunity to identify and analyse potential risks, and then develop an appropriate strategy for managing them.

To put another way, risk management is the process of planning, organising, directing, and



How many hazards can you identify at this Atlantic Wall site which is a “must-see” on a Jersey WW2 battlefield tour? (Answers at the end of the article.)

controlling resources and activities to minimise the adverse effects of accidental losses on a guide’s business in the most cost-effective way.

The concept of risk can be considered as the likelihood of something happening and the consequences if it happens. Risk represents the interaction between:

- A hazard that has the potential to do some damage;
- The people who may be damaged;
- An environment that may make the hazard more (or less) serious.

It follows therefore that the most appropriate way of analysing this interaction is to develop and document a risk-management plan. Indeed, in many instances, certain types of client (e.g., schools, and other organisations who themselves owe duties to persons in their charge) are unlikely to book a guide without the latter showing a satisfactory risk-management plan for the tour/tour type as part of the tour engagement process.

If you look up risk-management plans on the internet, you will find all sorts of templates which can serve as a starting point for your own risk planning process. This is a good way to start the process.

In undertaking this process, and picking the right format for your plan, you will need to have the ability to:

- Identify possible hazards;
- Assess and rate the risks involved in relation to the hazards identified;
- Identify appropriate safety and risk minimisation measures that will control and/or eliminate the potential risks (this might involve changing tour

arrangements, postponing the tour or deciding not to proceed if the risks are perceived to be too great);

- Identify who is responsible/accountable for implementing measures to control/minimise risks;
- Continuously monitor and evaluate effectiveness of measures used to control/minimise risks.

Examples of areas of risk management

- Sites close to natural hazards like cliffs and water
- Sites with man-made hazards
- Potentially dangerous battlefield artefacts
- Physical exertion
- Weather conditions
- Potentially dangerous wildlife/ vegetation
- School / children groups
- Vulnerable clients
- Fire / power cuts
- Bookings (whether taken /maximum numbers)
- Breakdowns
- Health conditions and illness

Conclusions

The topic covering duties owed to a guide’s clients and how to minimise/avoid liabilities in the event of breach is more extensive than a short article can cover. Hopefully, the article does however highlight the need to combine the requirement of having adequate T&Cs with consideration of how the guiding services are to be provided to ensure the safety and well-being of clients. In doing so, the necessity of undertaking risk management becomes

integral and needs to be continuously monitored and updated based upon experience and changes to law and practice.

Finally, you should note that in some countries, they take health and safety very seriously and it is not just a case of a civil liability and the payment of damages (for which you should have public liability insurance to cover). In the event of an accident involving injury or death of a tour guest, you may also find yourself arrested and facing criminal charges!



Nothing in this article constitutes legal advice and the reader should seek appropriate legal advice in the jurisdictions where they are resident and/or operate in formulating appropriate operational health and safety practices and procedures, and risk management strategies.



Hazard identification answers:

1. Unfenced drop
2. Remoteness – some way from car park; physical exertion/health of clients in reaching site; medical assistance access if required; availability of phone signal in emergency
3. Potential slippery vegetation and drop
4. Crush injury potential on heavy armoured door access
5. Loose gravel path and large drops over cliff
6. Unfenced sheer drop exposed to high winds, as well as enticing view of the post war clear up
7. Many natural hazards with the potential of “artillery gun graveyard” at cliff base.
8. Clear skies – potential of sunburn / heat-stroke causing injury / death for those wandering off
9. Remoteness means no electricity within structure – need to have sufficient lighting if entering
10. As a former battlefield site (actual or contemplated), risk of unfound live munitions still being present.

MEDALguide

Stories Behind the Medals The Victory Medal 1914-1920



The idea of an Allied Victory Medal was first mooted by Marshal Foch at a meeting of the Supreme War Council in January 1919. He suggested that ‘all Allied nations alike should receive one identical commemorative medal’.

His idea was approved, and a series of meetings took place. Amongst the decisions made was that the medal be called ‘The Victory medal’. Other titles were discarded – amongst them ‘The International Medal of the Great War’ and ‘The Military and Naval Medal of the Great War’. The main concern was that the title could not be legitimately copied by the Germans – ‘The Victory Medal’ was one they could not use!

The ribbon was designed to eliminate national flag designs but to include all the colours of the Allied flags, watered together to symbolise unity in a common cause. The ribbon was 37mm wide – 5mm wider than other British Campaign Medals. In total some 5,750,000 medals were issued. The medal was never issued by itself – always being accompanied by the British War Medal and qualification for the award was any service in a theatre of war between 5th August 1914 and 11th November 1918.

The British medal has two variants – the ‘standard’ featuring the words ‘The Great War for Civilisation 1914-1919’ on the reverse and a bilingual version for South African forces of which 75,000 were produced. There was one clasp authorised – the oak leaf which denoted a mention in despatches.

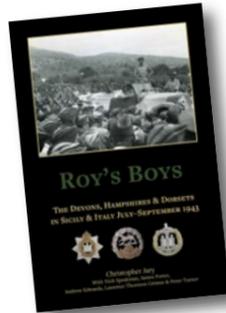
Each country issued its own variant of the medal, but all have the winged figure of victory on the obverse. The American medals were issued with campaign bars which reflect their involvement in the war.

The pictures show the British medal with a mention in despatches clasp and a selection of Allied medals – from left to right – France, USA (Army), USA (Navy), Italy and Belgium.



Tony Smith

GUIDEbooks:



ROY'S BOYS

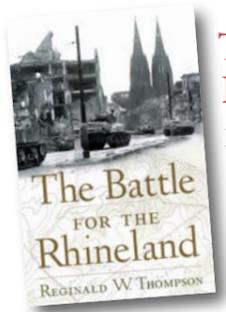
The Devons, Hampshires & Dorsets in Sicily & Italy July-September 1943

By Christopher Jary with Nick Speakman, James Porter, Andrew Edwards, Laurence Thornton-Grimes & Peter Turner

This is not the story of another forgotten brigade, it does however highlight the history of one of the British Army's most effective infantry formations, 231 (Malta) Brigade. After three years of siege in Malta, 231 Brigade re-roled as a fighting infantry brigade. Commanded by Brigadier Roy Urquhart they completed three assault landings, forging a reputation as a capable fighting brigade. This history is exceptionally well-written, packed with maps, photographs, and insightful personal accounts. Essential reading if you are preparing for a return to the battlefields of Sicilian and Italian campaigns.

Review by Mike Peters

Published by Semper Fidelis
RRP £15.00
paperback, pp206



THE BATTLE FOR THE RHINELAND

By Reginald W Thompson

The last six months of the fighting on the Western Front, through the Autumn of 1944, to the collapse of Germany early in May 1945 are increasingly attracting attention. This account of those events was first published in 1958, while the wounds of those bitter fights were still not fully healed. The author laments the fact that some of his commentary on American conduct was effectively censored. Nevertheless, because it is of its time, and the scars are visible, it is certainly worth a read – flawed as is, it offers useful context and an understanding of the mindset at the time.

Review by Mike Peters

Published by Westholme Publishing Ltd
RRP \$15.95
paperback, pp242

THEIRS THE STRIFE

The Forgotten Battles of British Second Army and Armeegruppe Blumentritt, April 1945

By John Russell

The last weeks and days of the war in this corner of NW Europe have rarely been covered in any meaningful, or useful detail. This latest history has totally raised the bar. Researched to an exceptional standard and presented with a lavish array of maps and photographs it really does cover the final weeks of the Second World War, and Second Army's hard-fought battle to cross the Weser and Aller rivers in absorbing depth. It is an outstanding work, worth investing in a copy – a comprehensive battlefield study on a plate!

Review by Mike Peters

Published by Helion & Company
RRP £29.95
paperback, pp502

VICTORIA CROSSES ON THE WESTERN FRONT

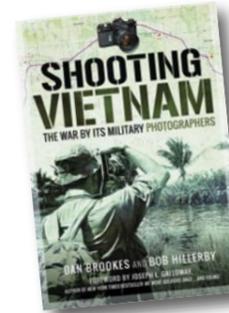
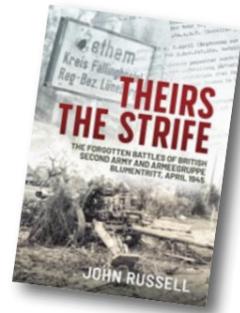
Battle of Amiens
8-13 August 1918

By Paul Oldfield

The eighth book in Paul Oldfield's excellent series on Western Front VCs covers the 14 VCs awarded at the Battle of Amiens, 13 of which were awarded to Dominion Forces. The content is split into two large chapters. The first chapter sets the scene, where the VCs were awarded in the context of the overall campaign and then covers the recipients action in detail providing narrative, maps and photographs to locate the action. The second chapter provides detailed biographies of the recipients which gives you a sense of the man and the background he came from. This book is a must for anyone studying or guiding the Battle of Amiens.

Review by Andrew Duff

Published by Pen & Sword Ltd
RRP £19.99
paperback, pp290



SHOOTING VIETNAM

The War by its Military Photographers

By Dan Brookes & Bob Hillerby

A war that to me is very much in colour, on film and photographed more than any other to that point. Searing images are embedded in our minds as we think of the 'napalm girl' and the Vietnamese Officer shooting the VC prisoner in the head in Saigon.

Shooting Vietnam tells the story of Combat Photographers and both the authors served in Vietnam giving this book a truly authentic feel. Included are first hand accounts from landing zone firefights and trudging through rice paddies to life in the 'firebase hooch' and the work behind the scenes of the 'Lab Rats' who developed film and documented the works both on and off the battlefields. As historians and Battlefield Guides we rely on sources for our research and photographs of battlefields (the first recorded of which, is 1847 in the Mexican-American War) are one of those most vital sources and here we can read about just what it takes to capture some of those images and in some cases the cost in lives. An engaging book that exposes the work of these 'shooters'.

Review by Julian Whippy

Published by Pen and Sword Books
RRP £25.00
hardback, pp235



THE TERROR RAIDS OF 1942

The Baedeker Blitz

By Jan Gore

As far as I am aware there is no other book that completely covers the 1942 Baedeker raids in as much detail as this. It is obvious this book has been thoroughly researched. It is well laid out in that it gives a summary of what was happening within the echelons of Bomber command during 1942 and a summary of each raid in the first chapter. Subsequent chapters relate in detail to each of the five cities targeted with raids. Chapters are interspersed with personal anecdotes as well as statistics of the Luftwaffe raids. Casualty figures are also given, and this is all interwoven with an interesting and detailed narrative. The German perspective from one of the Luftwaffe pilots is also explored. Numerous unpublished first-hand accounts by the civilians who endured the bombing are also included. All in all, this book is a must for anyone interested in the Baedeker raids.

Review by Jo Hook

Published by Pen & Sword Military
RRP £20.00
hardback, pp240

FIRE-STEP TO FOKKER FODDER

From the trenches to the Red Baron, the First World War Diaries of William 'Jack' Lidsey

By Andrew White

One man's journey from infantry to the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) told through his diary entries. Not what I would class as a traditional day by day account, the diary entries are intermixed with the narrative giving it a real personal touch. Family, local and social history are all covered in the opening chapter and rounded off nicely at the close. A fascinating insight into one man's war experience with his journeys in and out of the front line, promotion and eventual transfer to the RFC all told with empathy. A thoroughly good read and clearly a labour of love.

Review by Paul Colbourne

Published by Fighting High Ltd
RRP £19.95
hardback, pp180

THE FINAL ARCHIVES OF THE FÜHRERBUNKER

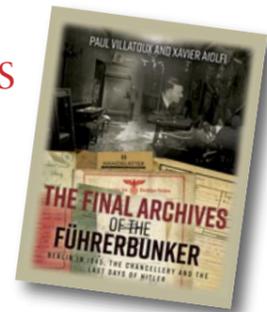
Berlin in 1945, the Chancellery and the last days of Hitler

By Paul Villatoux and Xavier Aiolfi

This well presented and lavishly illustrated book sets out to explore 'the history of the Führerbunker and the events of the last days of the Third Reich...' It does so through a collection of previously unpublished documents that were taken from the Chancellery bunker by two French officers in November 1945. The first half of the book covers the Battle of Berlin and the final throes of the Third Reich. Most of this will be familiar to established Berlin guides although there are some interesting details on the personalities in the bunker and the bunker's construction including an excellent diagram. The second half of the book concentrates on the documents collected from the bunker by French officers of the Combined Repatriation Executive. The documents are reproduced in the book and range from touchingly personal to ruthlessly official. Personal documents include a drawing sent to Martin Bormann by one of his daughters and a booklet of sketches and poems presented to Otto Günsche on his birthday. Many of the official documents centre on Hitler's reaction to Göring's treason. While the contents of the book do not add anything substantially new they do offer a layer of detail that will be appreciated by anyone who guides Berlin.

Review by Dr John Greenacre

Published by Casemate
RRP £29.95
hardback, pp160



10 Questions:

Name: Ian Gumm

Age: 63

Nationality: British

Home Location: Ross-on-Wye,
Herefordshire

Tour Company: In The Footsteps

Validating: Badge Number 62.



In each edition of 'Despatches', we will be introducing a member of the Guild. In this edition, it is Ian Gumm.

- 1. How long have you been interested in battlefields and what was it that initially attracted your interest?** My mother had a keen interest in Elizabethan History and I developed a love of Medieval History. From an early age, I spent days visiting churches, castles and country houses. You could say a love of history has always been there. In 1998, as a Company Commander with Wales University Officer Training Corps, I went on a battlefield tour with the officer cadets and our guide was the late Colonel Christopher Newbould. It was that tour that switched me on to battlefield touring. The following year, the Commanding Officer, Second-in-Command and I ran our own battlefield study. My road to becoming a battlefield guide had begun.
- 2. Have any experiences stood out?** There are so many. Perhaps the most significant was during my first 'In The Footsteps' tour. I was guiding an American gentleman, Raynor Fairty Jr, on a tour following the footsteps of his father in the First World War. Raynor Fairty Sr had been in the US 11th Engineers and had been wounded by aerial bombing in the French village of Wanquetin. Using a contemporary photograph, we went looking for the bomb crater. We looked across the area from a slight rise and then from the communal cemetery into a paddock. I thought I could see a slight depression in the ground, so went to the house in front of the paddock. I knocked at the door and Seron Gérard, the owner, answered. When I explained what we were doing he came with us into the paddock. Mr Gérard told us that the paddock had never been ploughed and said that several artefacts had been recovered from the fields nearby. He then returned to his house and came back with
- 3. What do you enjoy the most about battlefield guiding?** The people and the stories. Taking people to where their ancestors fought, and occasionally died, is so rewarding, and getting paid to do what one loves is of course a bonus.
- 4. What is your favourite stand, location or battlefield and why?** Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift. Why? I was the Company Commander of B (Rorke's Drift) Company in the 2nd Battalion the Royal Regiment of Wales. In 1997, I commanded the Regimental Contingent at the Affiliation Parade at Matubatuba, KwaZulu-Natal with 121 South African Infantry Battalion. We were taken around Isandlwana by Major Paul Naish and at Rorke's Drift I was introduced to the late David Rattray. Brigadier David de Gonville Bromhead, who was with us, turned to me and said '*Ian, you know the battle why don't you tell the story*'. If validation scares you, imagine presenting a battle to the great-nephew of a Victoria Cross recipient and the world's expert at that battlefield off the top of your head.
- 5. Which battlefield would you like to visit in the future?** El Alamein – I began my military service in the Royal Wiltshire Yeomanry who spearheaded the break-out of the 2nd New Zealand Division at El Alamein.
- 6. What have you enjoyed the most about being a member of the Guild?** The camaraderie and fraternity, and the willingness of some members to share and exchange information.
- 7. If there was a fire and you could only save one battlefield-related book or prop, what would you save and why?** My laptop. It holds all my research and is invaluable.
- 8. What type of group do you think is the most challenging to lead on a tour?** A group of historians or re-enactors. There is always one who knows more than you and often another who has a different interpretation of the battle.
- 9. What's the best tip, story or nugget of information you have been given by a fellow battlefield guide?** Best tip – be yourself. Second best tip – Preparation, preparation, preparation.
- 10. What is the funniest or most dramatic thing you have seen on tour?** One of my guests running through a soggy and very muddy ploughed field waving a stick re-enacting the French advance at Agincourt. It had the rest of us in stitches.

NEWmembers:

New members who have been welcomed to the Guild between Spring 2021 and the date of publication.

Mark Bailey

Andrew Burcher

Paul Burton

Brian Fare

Stew Kilby

Michael Mart

Andrew Lock

Andy Merry

Bethany Moore

Mike Owens

David Parmee

Simon Pritchard

Gareth Williams