



# *The Fusilier*

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*The Official Newsletter of the Royal Welch Fusiliers in America*

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*August 2016*

Friends and Fellow Fusiliers,

It would be improper for me to begin this newsletter without mentioning the heroic actions of the Royal Welch Fusiliers on the fields of Minden, Germany on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1759. Lance-Serjeant Greg Urwin, graciously provided us with this concise, but detailed account of the battle:

"At the Battle of Minden in Germany on August 1, 1759, confused orders caused six British infantry regiments (including the Royal Welch Fusiliers) and three Hanoverian battalions to launch an unsupported attack against the center of an entire French army. Though hammered by enemy artillery, these red-coated heroes kept their formation and unleashed withering musketry to stop charges by fifty-one squadrons of French cavalry and repel eight French infantry battalions. The Royal Welch Fusiliers lost 117 out of 485 officers and men engaged, but it became one of the most respected commands in the British Army. After the Regiment arrived at Boston, Massachusetts, in the summer of 1774, a local newspaper hailed it as "one of the six renowned British Corps, to whose Valor and Intrepidity the ever memorable Victory at Mendin [*sic*] was gloriously acquired the 1<sup>st</sup> of August, 1759."

This past month contained a lot of activity both on and off the field for the 23<sup>rd</sup>. On July 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, Privates Ken Siegel, John Crawford, Shane Reilly and Recruit David Leslie-Hughes journeyed northward to Vermont to participate in a recreation of the Battle of Hubbardton. Although the site is gorgeous and well preserved, the wind and intermittent rain played havoc on Saturday and caused the cancellation of Sunday's activities. The 23<sup>rd</sup> was brigaded with our brothers in HM 24<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot under the command of Major Novotny. While the event was limited to Saturday, there were three separate actions. Our combined battalion, representing General Simon Fraser's Grenadier Battalion fought fiercely. At the conclusion of the third

engagement, running out of ammunition, the 23<sup>rd</sup> launched a heroic, but futile charge against a numerically superior rebel force; engaging in (simulated) hand-to-hand combat. All but one--David Leslie-Hughes--selflessly gained glory for the Regiment and their comrades, falling in the face of a massive rebel army. Overall the event was a great time at a great site. The weather didn't diminish our spirits and it was great to serve with our comrades in the 24<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Regiments of Foot among others.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> held the quarterly command and staff teleconference for unit commanders and key staff on 24 July. The participants included:

- Maj. Shane Reilly (Colonel's Company)
- Maj. Richard Ford, retired (Pensioner's Company)
- Maj. Ken Siegel, retired (Pensioner's Company)
- Maj. Jeff Morgan, retired (Pensioner's Company)
- Capt. Thomas Pieper (Capt. Grey Grove's Company)
- Capt. George Mack (Capt. Ferguson's Company)
- GV Eric Spaar (Capt. Horsefall's Company)
- RSM Paul Astle (Colonel's Company)
- RDM Joseph Siegel (Colonel's Company)
- Lance Sergeant Gregory Urwin (Colonel's Company)

The meeting reviewed a number of pertinent topics and provided a forum for unit commanders to discuss both current and future issues pertaining to the Regiment. Here are some brief synopses of the issues discussed:

--Monmouth Event, 17-18 September: Company commanders briefed anticipated numbers for the event. Based on the feedback, the 23<sup>rd</sup> should turnout approximately 20 personnel for the event. This would be the largest turnout for the 2016 season. The current scenarios are: Saturday--a recreation of General Howe's brilliant drubbing of the rebels near the village of Brooklyn in August 1776; Sunday--a recreation of the battle near Harlem Heights in which the rebels pushed back and nearly captured an overaggressive British element.

Keith Spaar agreed to run the camp kitchen for the event and will provide a suggested donation amount to cover the cost of food stuffs and supplies. Ensure that you bring your mess kits (i.e. plate, cup, bowl, utensils, etc.) with you. We need 2-3 volunteers to assist Keith in the camp mess.

--Evolution of the British Brigade and Importance of Uniformity: The units of the British Brigade continue to mature and evolve as more historical scholarship becomes available on the service of the British Army during the American War of Independence. Part of that evolution and growth is the creation of newer, more progressive or "campaign impression" units in the Brigade. These units attempt to recreate the same austere conditions that 18<sup>th</sup> Century soldiers lived in during a full campaign season. Many of the units are very good recreating army life under harsh campaigning conditions, including prohibiting the use of tents at events. My intent is not to transition the 23<sup>rd</sup> into a progressive unit. However, that doesn't mean that we shouldn't try to improve our appearance through cost-effective ways to improve our impression. A final word on

uniform modifications, I know that some are scratching their heads asking: “where does the madness stop?” This concern surfaced during the conference call. My response was and is the same for everyone, I have to do what I think is in the best interests of the Royal Welch Fusiliers in America. The officers elected me to manage and set the direction for our organization, but reserved the right to relieve me if I do not do what is in the best interests of the 23<sup>rd</sup>. In that vein, when considering a possible uniform modification, my first concern is the cost to the membership and availability of the item/product(s). I don’t believe in change for the sake of change, but only when supporting historical documentation warrants it. One modification, the incorporation of half-gaiters is discussed under the next topic. So, how does the evolution of British Brigade units impact the RWFIA? How can the 23<sup>rd</sup> benefit from the changing dynamics within the British Brigade?

The answer is actually pretty simple and is nothing revolutionary. It all goes back to the same phrases we all hear: “polish your brass, whiten the belts, brush the bearskins and wigs, clean your musket, etc.” These frequent requests (not demands—we are a volunteer organization) are not merely words, but are what sets us apart from other units. We portray a Garrison impression (for the most part) of an ACTIVE British Army Regiment. Even in our campaign impression we need to maintain the same standards (the uniform may change, but the standards don’t). These two factors distinguish the 23<sup>rd</sup> from most of the other units in the British Brigade. The appearance of the 23<sup>rd</sup> is what drew many of us into the ranks whether Tom, Richard, Peter, Ken or Jeff were commanding. It also shows that we take pride in ourselves and the traditions that the 23<sup>rd</sup> created and that the Royal Welsh continue to carry on today. We need to set ourselves apart from other units in competing for recruits and those two factors: appearance/discipline and a connection to the Royal Welsh, an Active British Army Regiment are great selling points. So next time you are wondering why do I need to spend two hours getting my kit together brushing and polishing, remember who we represent and why we are in the 23<sup>rd</sup> to begin with. Yes, that goes for wigs too. Yes, they may be uncomfortable, but 18<sup>th</sup> Century uniforms weren’t designed for comfort. Just remember what we do and why we do it.

--Transition to Half-Gaiters: This was an issue raised through the ranks, which we then discussed at the Command and Staff teleconference. I raised the issue with Greg Urwin, who provided primary source documentation (including illustrations of the action at Lexington) showing the British soldiers wearing half-gaiters. Based on this research it appears that the soldiers wore the half gaiters during the warmer months (including campaign season) and reserved the long gaiters for winter. In the interest in improving the impression of the 23<sup>rd</sup>, I reviewed the topic with the command and staff to determine the feasibility of incorporating the wear of half-gaiters:

- **Transition Date: August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017**—Long gaiters will continue to be worn until after August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, after which all members are expected to be wearing the half-gaiters at events.
- Specifications:
  - Seven button pattern
  - Horn buttons
  - Painted (black) canvas or cotton
  - Fitted and snug
  - Garters (same): Wide, British-style wide with brass buckle, trimmed

- Socks (same): White wool or white cotton
- Vendors:\*
  - Half-Gaiters: Godwin or Regimentally approved seamstresses/tailors
  - Horn Buttons: JAS Townsend
  - \*-If anyone has any recommendations on other sources, please feel free to contact me
- Status of Long Gaiters: The 23<sup>rd</sup> will retain use of the long gaiters for formal occasions. The Regimental or local Commander(s) will notify participants in advance if long gaiters are required for an event. Greg's research indicates that British soldiers were issued both pairs of gaiters as part of their standard kit.
- Gaiter Conversion: I would strongly discourage those thinking about cutting their long gaiters down because:
  - a) The long gaiters are still required for formal occasions (i.e. Colour Guards)
  - b) Most of us (myself included) aren't skilled in terms of tailoring enough to properly convert the long gaiters to half-gaiters.

–Possible Trailer Purchase: This is another topic of the command and staff, the purchase of a single axel trailer to transport tentage (i.e. marquee, dining fly), extra uniforms and accoutrements and camp equipment to events. The idea is to stage it in the Philadelphia area since that is the geographic center of the Mid-Atlantic and most of the AWI battlefields and reenactment sites. The cost would be in the \$2,000-\$2,500 range, which would come out of Regimental funds or donations from the membership. This idea is not definite and is still being worked.

–Article for annual Royal Welsh Regimental Journal, *Y CYMRO (The Welshman)*: The RWFIA was asked to provide an article (including pictures) for the annual journal of the Royal Welsh. This goes back to my point about having a direct connection to the Regiment in Wales. I am working on getting the particulars from Regimental Headquarters. Submission date for the article and photographs is late September.

Your Humble and Most Obedient Servant,

*Major S.P. Reilly*

**I. Administrative:** The administrative notes are listed above

**II. Operations**

a. 2016 Schedule of Events:

- i. **September 17-18: Mounmouth Courthouse**—This will be The Colour Event for the 2016 season and is not your normal Monmouth event. This event is based on the Battle of Brooklyn in

August, 1776. It's a great site within reasonable commuting distance of the site for many of our members.

**Uniform:** 1768 Kit

- ii. **October 1: Germantown (Philadelphia), PA**—Fast, furious and firing out of the house is a brief synopsis of Germantown. An annual event that provides great exposure in the Philadelphia area is definitely not one to miss.

**Uniform:** 1768 Kit

- iii. **October 15: Old Bethpage Village (Long Island), NY**—This is the second year for the 23<sup>rd</sup>'s one day encampment at OBV. Justin Parker (Grenadier Company) coordinated with the site in an effort to rejuvenate our recruiting efforts in the NYC area. Other units include HM 42<sup>nd</sup> Regiment of Foot and the Huntington Militia. Looks like a great time at a great site!

- iv. **November 5-6: Camden, SC**—Capt. Horsefall's Company. POC: GV Eric Spaar ([eric.spaar@gmail.com](mailto:eric.spaar@gmail.com))

- v. **November 5: Hope Lodge, PA**—Hope Lodge is a nice way to wind down the season. Laid back atmosphere and a couple of battles provide great opportunities to close out the season.

b. 2017 Schedule of Events (Tentative):

- i. **September 2017: Sandy Hollow, PA**—This is an event being coordinated by Major Loane of HM 43<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of Foot. The site is part of the Brandywine battlefield, but is on private land. It is the actual location that General Howe's flanking column fought through the rebel right flank. The site is now on private (preserved) land. This is definitely not one to miss, camping and fighting on the site of some of the heaviest fighting on September 11, 1777.

### III. Quartermaster

**Ordering Procedures:** I received the Regimental Stores from Ron Turfitt. If you need to order anything, please make a check payable to the "Royal Welch Fusiliers in America" and mail it along with your order sheet to:

David Leslie-Hughes  
P.O. Box 73  
Mechanicsville, PA 18934

Once David receives your check, he will contact me regarding the order and I will mail it out. Recruits, if you have any questions regarding the uniform or purchasing items, please consult with your Company leadership.

Be advised that we are currently out of wool for Other Ranks coats and cap cords. We are in the process of ordering more wool and are looking for a new manufacturer for cap cords.

a. Regimentally authorized tailors/seamstresses

- i. Carl Johnson  
3508 Mill Stream Place  
Greensboro, NC 27410  
Phone: (704) 957-9108  
Email: [carlivar@yahoo.com](mailto:carlivar@yahoo.com)
- ii. Heather Chaffee  
15010 Victory Blvd. #102  
Van Nuys, Ca 91411  
Phone: (201) 450-6153  
Email: [Heath51937@aol.com](mailto:Heath51937@aol.com)
- iii. Ben Beers  
1195 Rogers Road  
Mount Airy, NC 27030  
Email: [mbeers@surry.net](mailto:mbeers@surry.net)
- iv. Steven Gardner  
162 Puddin Lane  
Mansfield Center, CT 06250  
Phone: (860) 9428483  
Email: [flaming54th@att.net](mailto:flaming54th@att.net)

*1764 Manual Exercise (as taken from Grenadier Coy NCO Manual)*

1. Poise your Firelocks

2. Cock your Firelocks
3. Present
4. Fire
5. Half Cock your Firelocks
6. Handle your Cartridge
7. Prime
8. Shut your Pans
9. Charge with Cartridge
10. Draw your Rammers
11. Ram down your Cartridge
12. Return your Rammer
13. Shoulder your Firelocks
14. Rest your Firelock
15. Order your Firelock
16. Ground your Firelocks
17. Take up your Firelocks
18. Rest your Firelocks
19. Shoulder your Firelocks

20. Secure your Firelocks
21. Shoulder your Firelocks
22. Fix your Bayonet
23. Shoulder your Firelocks
24. Present your Arms
25. To the Right Face
26. To the Right Face
27. To the Right About Face
28. To the Left Face
29. To the Left Face
30. To the Left About Face
31. Shoulder your Firelocks
32. Charge your Bayonets
33. Shoulder your Firelocks
34. Advance your Arms
35. Shoulder your Firelock

His Majesty's  
23<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of Foot



Royal Welch Fusiliers in America

*Reenlistment for the Conflict in America*

One of His Majesty's most distinguished Regiments is offering you the opportunity to obtain honour and glory known only to the 23<sup>rd</sup> through noble service in the present conflict. The term of this contract is for one year and encompasses supporting Army and Regimental operations throughout the troublesome 13 Colonies.

Each Fusilier is expected to help fund the Regimental treasury through the payment of Regimental dues of **\$20.00**; which does not include Company Fees. An addition fee of \$25.00 is required for membership in the Brigade of the American Revolution.

**Company Commanders** will consolidate their Company's funds and send the requisite amount to the Regimental Adjutant **no later than 15 March**. Make the check payable to: "Royal Welch Fusiliers in America". His post is:

Lieut. David Leslie-Hughes  
P.O. Box 73  
Mechanicsville, PA 18934

*Failure to pay Regimental dues will result in being dropped from the Regimental muster rolls and prohibition from Regimental activities.*

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Cut and mail along with payment to Company Commander

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Regimental Dues: \$20.00

BAR Dues (optional): \$25.00

Total Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

MailingAddress: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_