



# *The Flash*

*Col's Co, RWF in America*

February/ March 2019

## **The Year Ahead**

We have the year before us and I'm waiting to hear what the full season. The main event will be October at Mount Harmon Maryland. After being rained out last year they are determined to make a go of it and I for one am glad. This is a great site, well located with owners who want us to come and play. There are open fields with a redoubt built in it and winding paths through the woods for a more natural setting.

I'm still waiting to hear what's coming down the pike but the plan for the spring is to make a push for the event at Old Beth Page on Long Island. Justin Parker has been working with them and I see nothing wrong with them seeing us as *the* British regiment people want to see.

## **Carlisle**

The weekend of February 9 saw myself, David Hughes and the major at the army war college. There were lots of reenactors here but in a sea of green and blue uniforms and we in red stood out. It was a fun day talking to the public and other reenactors followed by some good beer and nice food in a local bar afterward.

## **Your kit**

I mentioned this in January but to give you a very real example from myself. The day of going out to Carlisle I went to get dressed and found I did not have a

single pair of stockings. I don't know how this happened. I mean is this part of the disappearing socks syndrome? What I had were three single stockings from different pairs. I've since bought a few more pairs but wow, not a good surprise to have as you're trying to go out the door.

One the other side of the coin I realized the shirt I was wearing was pretty much shot. I ordered a new shirt, only to find I had three others neatly folded in my closet. So seriously. Check your gear.

### **Saint David's Day**

As already mentioned, we will not be having a regimental dinner to mark the annual saint's day of wales, but that doesn't mean you can't or shouldn't. There's nothing wrong with getting together locally to toast the regiment, the Colonel of the regiment and of course, Saint David.

Let me know what you do, even if it's just a mug raised at your dinner table.

### **The Regiment.**

Since Chinese New Year is upon us, I thought I'd bring up a unique battle honor of the Royal Welch Fusiliers- Peking. In all the British army only the 23<sup>rd</sup> has this on its colours.

It comes from the turn of the last century during the Boxer Rebellion in China. As various diplomatic staff were besieged in Peking an army of various powers was put together to break the siege. Most were fairly small, drawn from their local colonial garrisons. The largest forces were the Japanese and the Russians, who had their borders right there, the United states who had an army in the Philippines from the Spanish American war and the British from the Indian Garrison.

The bulk of the British contribution were Indian regiments and royal marines. The one army regiment that was available was the RWF. It was during this war that we formed out friendship to the USMC. They were in a position of being a small marine detachment in a force led by an Army officer who had a low view of Marines.

During a lull in the drive to Peking while they were consolidating forces the Marine and Fusiliers held ends of a railroad building. They shared food, the marines were happy to have English speaking troops who were decent to them and a friendship was formed that exists to this day.

If you've even seen the movie "55 days at Peking" it focuses on the people being

rescued, not the rescuer but the last scene, as various columns all march in, I thought was a rubbishy bit of Hollywood showmanship. Uh-no. In fact, it was surprisingly accurate because everyone wanted be the first ones into the city. So, diplomacy took over on the battle field and each foreign contingent was assigned a gate to attack.

The problem was the Russians were eager to prove themselves and attacked before anyone else and in the wrong spot. Over lapping the American target. The Americans climbed the wall of the city. The Japanese eager to prove themselves among the European armies attacked two gates.

The British did not compound the chaos but attacked a part of the wall no one was assigned, what is politely referred to as the 'water gate.' Some say this was the sluice gate to let water out, some say it was the sewers. The truth of the matter is that Indians troops broke open the bars on it and the Royal Welch Fusiliers then pressed forward, through the 'water gate' into savage street fighting and a unique battle honor. So if you watch the movie and see troops marching to the British legation to bagpipes, the bagpipes are wrong, the troops are the RWF.

### Dues

I'm still waiting to hear from far too many people about their dues. Please. if you're planning on turning out this year, we need to get the dues in just to pay for insurance so we're allowed to run around in fields shooting guns and waving pointing little things on them. The dues are

Regimental	\$20
Col's company	\$10
Total	\$30

If you want to also have BAR membership for 2017 that is an additional \$25.

For a total of \$55

Make the check out to Colonel's Company RWFIA and mail it to me at  
Paul Astle  
1103 Oxford Cir  
Lansdale PA 19446

And yes, it's col's company even if you're a grenadier or light bob-it's how I set up the bank account when I was the Colonel's company sergeant and that's how the checks go in.