

The Buffs

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Published in 1972 by
Osprey Publishing Ltd, P.O. Box 25,
707 Oxford Road, Reading, Berkshire
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SBN 85045 064 0

Printed in Great Britain by
Jarrold & Sons Ltd, Norwich

Freedom For Holland



On 1 May 1572 Queen Elizabeth held a review of the Trained Bands of London outside her palace at Greenwich. Three thousand of them marched up and down before her, displaying the warlike feats they had been practising three times a week since March, when orders for the muster were issued. It would appear, from the account in Stow's *Annales*, that they were newly armed and equipped, for only on the issue of the muster order were the most likely and active persons of every company picked out and appointed pikemen and shot. 'The pike men were forthwith armed in faire corslets and other furniture, according thereunto: the gunners had every of them his caliver, with the furniture, & murrains on their heads.'

The parade was obviously intended as no more than a gesture, to demonstrate that England was not to be bullied. Across the Channel the military might of Spain was in harsh and heavy labour, squeezing the spirit of revolt out of King Philip's Protestant subjects in the Netherlands. Englishmen gave the rebels private, though conspicuous, aid, while the Queen pursued a policy of cautious neutrality. Thus when the burghers of Flushing, having hung their quisling governor, needed aid against the vengeance to come, their deputies came to London and approached, not the Queen, but 'some great men who favoured the cause' (as

they were termed by the one chronicler of the ensuing events, Sir Roger Williams). These great men turned to one of the veteran warriors who had been training the Londoners, Captain Thomas Morgan, and he took advantage of the muster to levy 'a faire company of three hundred strong' to go to the defence of Flushing. The Buffs could trace their ancestry from this company and thus regarded Queen Elizabeth's review as their inaugural parade.

It is popularly supposed that the men of the Trained Bands wore buff jerkins, which indeed can be seen today in the Lord Mayor's Show, worn by men of the Honourable Artillery Company dressed as musketeers under details provided in 1631. It seems reasonable to suppose that similar jerkins, of a rough, raw-hide buff, may have been in use in 1572, although it can only be assumption, for the chroniclers showed more interest in equipment than in colour. The 'corslets' mentioned by Stow's reporter appear in a similar version in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, and this means breastplates, of which the pikemen had good need, since they had to give protection to the musketeers while they were reloading. The 'murrains', or helmets, said to have been worn by the gunners, appear also to have been worn by pikemen; the 1631 version portrays pikemen with breastplates and helmets, and musketeers in jerkins and feathered hats. The 'caliver' with which the gunners were issued was a light form of musket not needing an aiming rest, and here again the report may not be strictly accurate, for both musketeers and caliverers had their parts to play on the battlefield. As for the 'furniture', this would include a sword for both pikemen and gunners, and for the latter a bandolier, cleaning rod and match.

Certainly it must have been a rare and wonderful scene at Greenwich as the three thousand performed their manœuvres under their valiant

captains, even though they were, to quote Stow, 'hindred by the wether, which was al day showing'. We learn from Sir Roger Williams that Morgan lost no time in shipping his volunteers over to Flushing and that at least a hundred of them were 'gentlemen', who no doubt had their own private suits of armour and uniform. (Williams was one of them.) They found Flushing a poor, ill-defended little fishing port, lying at the mercy of the force which the Duke of Alva was ponderously concentrating. Morgan took the offensive with his three hundred and disrupted the Spaniards' plan of attack with some fiery raids. At the same time his men much endeared themselves to the burghers by their kindness, giving a great boost to the resistance movement.

Morgan soon expanded his company to a full regiment, and three other privately raised English regiments also came to the aid of coastal towns that had joined the revolt. In 1585, following the assassination of the rebels' leader, Prince William of Orange, Queen Elizabeth openly entered the fight and sent a force of 6,000 under her jaded favourite, the Earl of Leicester. His kinsman, Sir Philip Sidney, was among them, and by dying a hero's death at Zutphen he cast a ray of light on the soldiers of that period, for one of his followers, Thomas Lant, made a drawing of his funeral procession in London. It shows musketeers in front, using their aiming rests as walking sticks, then drums and fifes, then the main body, twenty ranks of small shot, or caliverers, and twenty of pikemen, then halberdiers, officers of field rank and more drums and fifes. Only the pikemen wear breastplates, and all have the same shapeless form of headgear, probably a helmet.

Leicester's troops were withdrawn when the Armada threatened, and the English representation in the Netherlands was subsequently stabilized at 4,000 men, who from 1595 onwards received their pay from the Dutch rebel states. This strength was to rise and fall as the sieges, the battering and the sorties continued their fluctuating but unrelenting course. A truce was signed in 1609 for a period of twelve years, at the end of which the fighting was resumed with fresh intensity, another Morgan, Sir Charles, now distinguishing himself with the English contingent. At last the Spaniards gave in and, by the Treaty of Münster

of January 1648, acknowledged the independence of the seven United Provinces of the Netherlands, of which Holland was the chief.

The four English regiments, together with three of Scots, stayed on as garrison, enjoying the snug content of the land they had liberated, while in England King Charles I was beheaded. His son came to The Hague and took over a mistress, Lucy Waters, from one of the English officers, Robert Sidney, a grandson of the Earl of Leicester. Charles did not stay long, being lured to Scotland on a forlorn attempt to gain his throne, leaving his English and Scots troops behind in the Netherlands.

By employing these troops the Dutch were able to make maximum concentration at sea. From 1651 to 1654 they fought a war for the trade routes against Cromwell's England, and their English mercenaries willingly gave them such help as was needed for the protection of the land frontiers. But when, during the latter half of 1664, the two countries began to drift into another maritime war, a more difficult, indeed an agonizing, problem of loyalty confronted the regiments, for Charles was now King of England. After long deliberation the Dutch, just after declaring war in February 1665, ordered their mercenaries to sign an oath of allegiance. Thirty-four English officers, out of a total of sixty-five, refused to sign, and so too did about 1,500 of their men. They put themselves in great peril, risking the loss of their property, if nothing more.



Officers, pikemen and musketeers of the Holland Regiment, as depicted by the prolific artist, R. Simkin. He puts its date as 1689, which was the year the Regiment became Prince George of Denmark's Regiment, and Simkin seems to be anticipating the affiliation to East Kent by showing the men with a cliff beside them and sea below

King Charles could have recalled his regiments and at regular intervals during the previous six months he had been urged to take this step. For some reason unknown he declined to do so, being apparently quite indifferent to the fate of these brave loyalists who had received no encouragement whatever in making their stand against the demands of their paymasters. They were now summarily discharged from the service of the Dutch and would have become mere vagabonds, had not Sir George Downing, English Envoy to The Hague, personally made arrangements for their return to England. Holland being now at war with England, it is far from clear how they made the crossing, but cross they did, and made their presence felt to such effect that King Charles formed them into a single regiment, which he named 'Our Holland Regiment of foote'.

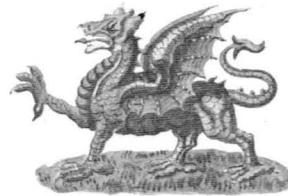
His commission was dated 31 May 1665, and it appointed Robert Sidney as Colonel. Sidney's former mistress, Lucy Waters, had prospered, and the King took such pride in her son, who had been born at The Hague in 1649, that he had given him the title of Duke of Monmouth, publicly recognizing him as his own. The boy was the living image of the handsome Sidney, much to his and the King's embarrassment, and as Sidney threw himself into the frolics of court life, every busy tongue was set a-wagging. The King must have realized that this might happen, and this could be why he had shown such reluctance to recall his troops from Holland.

It was now ninety-three years since the Trained Bands of London had paraded for the review from which the nucleus of the English force in the Netherlands had emerged. There can be no telling whether at this stage the Londoners felt any affinity with the product of this nucleus, as returned to them in the form of the Holland Regiment. Certainly permission was soon forthcoming, as required under a charter granted by King Edward III, for its recruiting parties to enter the city with drums beating and colours flying; but the other regiments on the English establishment – which were to become the Grenadier Guards, the Coldstream Guards, and the Royal Marines – also received warrants for this purpose, even though none except that of the Holland Regiment appears to have been placed on a

permanent basis, giving permission whenever needed, subject only to the issue of due warning to the Lord Mayor. Not until 1793 is there any record of the Buffs claiming the privilege of marching through the City as a regiment in full array. They are known on that occasion to have paid full compliments to the Lord Mayor, who is said to have been 'extremely tenacious of any infringement of the City's privileges'. It is not known whether they quoted any warrant as their authority or merely their origin from the Trained Bands, but the latter was acknowledged on a subsequent occasion in 1846, for the Lord Mayor wrote of 'the claim you have so properly made, of the ancient privilege of your Regiment, as having sprung from the City of London'.

The Buffs were very proud of their privilege and they appear to have been the first to have claimed it for ceremonial purposes. The Royal Marines also successfully laid claim to it, and so too did the 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards. In 1915 it was extended to the Grenadier Guards as a whole, and subsequently to the Royal Fusiliers, the Coldstream Guards, and the Royal Dragoons. The origin of the privilege may have become shrouded in obscurity, but its mystique still burns brightly, although three of its holders have been obliged to hand it on to their descendants.

Under the Stuarts



The first task given the Holland Regiment was to fight as marines against their former paymasters. They were on the payroll of the Admiralty for this purpose and must have had detachments present at the Battle of the Four Days, although there is no record of their doings. When the war ended in 1667 the ten companies of the Regiment were placed on garrison duty in England, spread

between Berwick and Plymouth. There is mention of the companies at Plymouth in the diary of the Grand Duke Cosmo of Tuscany, who paid them a visit and wrote: 'The men are very handsome and in excellent order; four companies wearing red jackets, lined with yellow. . . .'

There is no further information on the Holland Regiment's uniform until Nathan Brooks's *Army List* of 1684, and here it is described as 'Coated red, lined with a flesh colour'. The Regiment had in the meantime fought two more wars. They had again been employed as marines during the Third Dutch War of 1672-3, and there is evidence that at least two companies suffered casualties in the furious Battle of Texel. They had then been engaged in the first of their many campaigns in Flanders, fighting now on the side of Holland against France. A 2nd battalion was raised for this campaign, but neither it nor the 1st appears to have had any serious fighting and after less than a year abroad both were back by February 1679, the 2nd to be disbanded.

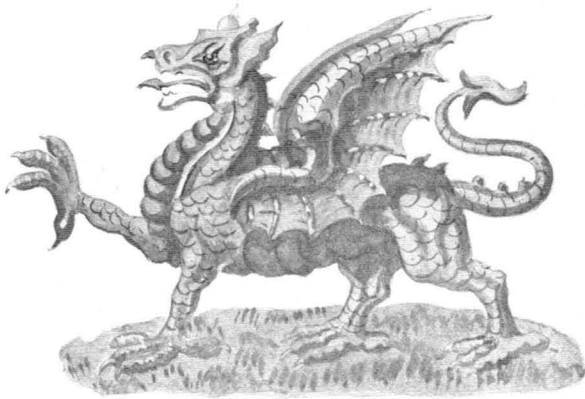
The 'yellow lining' of 1667 and the 'flesh colour' of 1684 were presumably different descriptions of the same colour, perhaps with some fading intervening, and neither version contradicts the

tradition that buff had been in evidence since the raising of Morgan's company, for buff is described in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* either as 'dull-yellow colour' or 'the human skin (*in buff*, naked)'. In 1685 the colour was described as buff, gaining its first known entry as such in the regimental annals. Ironically, it was three deserters who were the cause of this notable event. A notice about them in the *London Gazette* of 25 January 1685 provides this fascinating peep into the Regiment's uniform and men:

'Charles Plaster (of Bristol) a thick middle siz'd Man, ruddy and full faced, with short brown hair. John Brown, an Irish Man, middle siz'd, well set, with long curl'd hair, inclining to a sandy colour. Thomas Cobb, an Irish Man, tall, thin faced, slender, with dark brown hair long and lank, lately Run away out of Capt. Cornwallis's Company of Grenadiers in the Holland Regiment (quartered now in Southwark) every of them with a new Red Coat lin'd with a Buff colour'd lining, surtout sleeves, cross Pockets with scolops, large plain round pewter Buttons, Breeches of the same colour as the Coat-lining, and with His Majesties Arms. Whoever gives Notice of these three Deserters to any of Capt. Cornwallis's Serjeants at the Green Dragon in Blackman Street, near St. George's Church in Southwark, so that they may be Apprehended, shall for every of them have a Guinea Reward.'

A further variation of the colour's name and an addition to the items with which it was dyed appear in the *Antiquarian Repertory* of 1685, the uniform being described as 'Red lined with ash; ash-coloured breeches and stockings'. This would be a pale sort of buff, lacking the tinge of pink with which it was to be blended in later years.'

When Charles II died, the Holland Regiment were in the north of England, and they played no part in extinguishing the rebellion launched by the man who was almost certainly their former Colonel's son, the Duke of Monmouth. Sir Theophilus Oglethorpe, an officer knighted for his part in the Duke's overthrow, subsequently became Colonel of the Holland Regiment, and this must have caused uneasiness, for he was a staunch Roman Catholic and can hardly have been welcome as the head of a regiment reared through fervour for the cause of Protestantism. He lasted



Before 1685 the Buffs had no regimental badge - at least there is no mention of one. In 1707, at the request of her husband, Prince George of Denmark, Queen Anne awarded the dragon to the Regiment for their good services. It has been presumed that this particular device was chosen from among many royal badges because it connected the Regiment with the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, during which it was raised, the dragon having been one of the supporters to the Royal Arms of Her Majesty. However, whereas Elizabeth's dragon was gold, that of the Buffs was green, shaded pink. The most probable explanation for this is that it was so coloured as a memento of the green colour which the Regiment used to carry. This particular drawing of the Buffs' dragon was painted for the Regiment by the Royal College of Heraldry in 1881

no longer than his King, James II, being banished with him at the close of 1688.

With the arrival of a Dutch king, William III, the Holland Regiment ceased, ironically, to be so called, probably to avoid confusion with the troops William brought with him. While they did guard duty in London, the flower of the British Army was despatched to the Low Countries to wage war against the France of Louis XIV. The Regiment crossed in March 1689, commanded now by Colonel Charles Churchill, whose brother John had just been made Earl of Marlborough and was in command of this expedition. On arrival in the Low Countries the Regiment took the title and precedence of one disbanded at this time for no certain reason, but possibly because it had been raised by James when he was Duke of York. On his accession as King he had passed this regiment on to his son-in-law, Prince George of Denmark, together with the post of Lord High Admiral. Churchill's Regiment now took the formal title of Prince George of Denmark's or Lord High Admiral's Regiment, ranking third of Foot to the Royal Regiment and the Queen Dowager's. Prince George was Anne's consort, and it was thanks to him that the Buffs were later to receive, in the 20th century, the King of Denmark as their Colonel-in-Chief, making the bond with his country stronger than the historical one with Holland.

From June 1690 to March 1692 the Regiment formed part of the strategic reserve in England, and when they returned to Flanders King William had himself assumed command in place of Marlborough. On 3 August 1692 he was defeated by the French at Steinkirk; switched from the passive right wing as the left was being overwhelmed, Churchill's held the line of a sunken road for over an hour and enabled many battered regiments to withdraw in some order. On 27 July 1693, a day of sweltering heat, William again did battle, this time at Landen, and was again defeated, after some fighting of terrifying cost and intensity. Late in the afternoon Churchill's were switched from the left wing to the right, a march of some four miles, and on arrival there they had to stave off infantry attacks from their front and cavalry from the rear. They lost their three colours, hacked from the grasp of their ensigns, of whom



H.M. King Frederik IX of Denmark, the last Colonel-in-Chief of the Buffs

two were killed and the third wounded and captured.

One can only guess what these colours looked like. In the Regiment's earliest days on the English establishment each company had its colour, although it would appear, from bills for their making, that they were only issued when the companies went overseas. It was reported in the *Army List* of 1684 that the Holland Regiment 'flies the Red Cross, bordered white in a Green Field'. This was the cross of St George, the standard badge, though with individual background. An alteration in 1685 is on record, namely, 'The Colonel's Flag black. In the centre, very large, covering full half the space, the Sun in Splendour.' This was a Royal badge, as would be appropriate for a regiment styled 'Our', and it is thought to have been awarded as a mark of King James's favour to Theophilus Oglethorpe. Very

probably this Colonel's flag departed with King James and the Colonel, and at the same time the company colours are known to have been replaced by one for each of the three divisions of the Regiment – grenadiers, musketeers, and pikemen. These were the three colours lost at Landen, and they seem most likely to have been green, as in the days before Oglethorpe's colonelcy.

Having marched this way and that but fought no further pitched battle, the Regiment returned to England in November 1697, at the end of this war with France. When the next one began, in March 1702, over the issue of the Spanish succession, the Regiment sailed with the 2nd Duke of Ormonde to Spain and landed near Cádiz. Such was the strength of the defences that no assault was made, and after two months of shameful plundering the troops were re-embarked. They redeemed themselves on the way home by making a spirited raid on Vigo, in which Churchill's stormed a battery adjacent to the harbour boom, thus enabling the navy to force an entry and capture or destroy twenty-one galleons.

Churchill was meanwhile serving as a general with his brother's army in Flanders, and in April 1703 his own regiment joined it. In May 1704 he set out in command of the British infantry, thirteen regiments strong, on the great secret march to the Danube. His own regiment fought with the leading brigade in the assault upon the Schellenberg on 2 July. At Blenheim, on 13

August, they were in the thrust that eventually broke through in the centre after Marshall Tallard had committed his reserves to the flanks, and swinging left-handed they became the first infantry to reach the Danube beyond Blenheim, thus cutting off all the troops committed to its defence. They returned to Flanders by river barge, escorting 15,000 prisoners.

The year 1705 was one of frustration, in which Churchill's nevertheless took part in one thrilling success, sending the French scuttling from their defences by the Little Gheet after marching all night and surprising them at dawn. Then on 23 May 1706 came the Battle of Ramillies, and here Churchill's were one of two British regiments engaged in the fight for Ramillies itself. On the evidence of an Irishman fighting for the French, these two caught three French regiments in a morass and virtually annihilated them, but had a much tougher fight against the Irish regiment of Clare, who claimed the capture of the colours of Churchill's Regiment.

It was reported in the *London Gazette* that Churchill's and Mordaunt's (the 21st Royal Scots Fusiliers) 'suffered most' among British regiments in this great victory, but the Irish claim of the capture of the colours can hardly be true, since, probably in the following year, Churchill's received the Dragon 'as a reward for its gallant conduct on all occasions'. Such is the reason given by the Army historian, Richard Cannon, in a book on the Regiment's origin and badges published in 1839 by order of the Adjutant-General. 'The dragon,' he continues, 'being one of the supporters of the royal arms in the time of Queen Elizabeth, also indicated the origin of the corps in Her Majesty's reign.' Since Prince George was still Honorary Colonel (as he remained until his death in 1708) it is not so surprising that Queen Anne should have made this rare award of a royal badge, but there is the flaw that whereas Elizabeth's dragon was gold, the Buffs' was green, shaded pink. The popular explanation for this – and there is no guide except speculation – is that it was so coloured as a memento of the green colours which the Regiment used to carry. The regimental motto, 'Veteri Frondescit Honore', is thought to contain an allusion to this retention of green. The translation most favoured in the



The Buffs at Blenheim, again by Simkin. He shows them wearing buffalo equipment and with the recently issued bayonets fixed on their muskets. Their colours bear the cross of Saint George on a green field, and this may have been correct, for the 'Sun in Splendour' badge of Oglethorpe's Holland Regiment had disappeared by this time, and the dragon had yet to be awarded

Regiment was, 'With its ancient honour it is ever green.'

An illustration of the Colonel's colour in 1707 shows the dragon on a buff background, and this was long before it had become customary for regiments to display the same colour on their facings as on the colours they carried. In fact buff was so much in evidence that it seems probable that the word 'Bufs' had by now begun to creep into use as a nickname. In addition to the coat linings (and probably the cuffs), the breeches and stockings, the men also wore waistcoats of buff, made from the linings of the previous year's full bodied coat.

Thus the Bufs were clearly recognizable as such when they fought under the Duke of Marlborough, and there was no known change in their uniform when, in February 1707, the colonelcy passed from Churchill to the Duke of Argyll, who was confronted with a debt of £3,858 for uniforms already provided. He led the Regiment at the Battle of Oudenarde in July 1708, in which the Bufs arrived with the main body in time to prevent the French breaking through the ring encircling them, and at the Battle of Malplaquet on 11 September 1709. The Bufs lost fifteen officers killed or wounded in the bloody fighting through the woods near Malplaquet and were reputed to have suffered as heavily as any British regiment. A picture shows Argyll with sword aloft at the head of his grenadiers, who are recognizable as such by their mitre caps. They have muskets with bayonets fixed, which weapon had put the pikemen out of business and reduced the colours carried from three to two.

The drudgery of siege followed this battle, and the Bufs had no further taste of open battle, although they seemed to be heading for one in August 1711 when they were whisked off at night on the dramatic, punishing march by which Marlborough outwitted the proud Villars and outflanked his *Ne Plus Ultra* Line. But anti-climax followed, and that winter the troops were staggered to hear the news that their C.-in-C., the beloved 'Corporal John', had been dismissed. The Bufs were withdrawn to Flanders and remained there, in sullen inactivity, until their return home in August 1714. One hundred and sixty-eight years were to pass before they at last received

reward for their exploits and could emblazon the shining honours of Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet on their colour.

Old Bufs



In June 1715 the Bufs made their first visit to Ireland, and in August of that year they were abruptly recalled. Rebellion was brewing in Scotland in favour of the Stuart Pretender, who might conceivably have been the son of the Bufs' former Colonel, Oglethorpe, for it was alleged on the evidence of a serving maid that his baby had been substituted for a dead one born to the Queen – a less convincing yarn than that Sidney was the father of the previous rebel leader, Monmouth, but none the less plausible. The Bufs did battle against the rebels at Sheriffmuir on 13 November, in the force commanded by their former Colonel, the Duke of Argyll. Their Colonel was now the Earl of Forfar, and he had command of a brigade of cavalry which charged the left flank of the hitherto victorious rebels, with the Bufs following, and drove them from the field. But Forfar himself fell into their hands and was left behind, cruelly mutilated, when they withdrew. He died two days later.

From August to November 1719 the Bufs were away on another raid on Vigo, which yielded ample bounty at minimal cost, but they did not leave Britain again until 1742, spending by far their longest spell of home service in almost continual motion, with two visits to Scotland and one to Canterbury included in their journeying.

In May 1742 the Bufs paraded before King George II at Blackheath, as a preliminary to sailing for active service in the War of the Austrian Succession. No sovereign ever showed greater



Simkin's impression of the Buffs at Dettingen. There is in fact no evidence that they repulsed a cavalry charge, but their clothing may be accurately depicted

interest in his army, as the colonels had become increasingly aware from the flow of regulations they received on matters in which they had previously had freedom of action. Twelve regiments of Foot had been mobilized, and the King inspected each of them before it embarked.

A print of a private, issued this same year, provides the first authentic picture of the uniform worn. The coat is still buff-lined and long, with attachments to free the knees for marching. It has large gauntlet cuffs of buff and buttoned embroidery above them, and the front of the coat is elaborately lapelled and faced around the buttons with buff. Waistcoat and breeches are now red, the waistcoat with a buff lining, and white leggings with black garters conceal the stockings. The hat is black, with ends turned up and bound with white tape, to form the three-cornered cocked hat; the shoes are black. The soldier has a large buff belt and an even wider shoulder-strap for his pouch. According to the *British Military Library* of 1799, the Buffs were the first to be issued with this

leather equipment, said to be of buffalo hide, and gained the nickname of 'Buffs' as a result. But their buff linings were of older origin than the equipment.

The Buffs spent over a year in the Low Countries before they had their first battle, at Dettingen on 27 June 1743. They were in reserve and achieved nothing of note except to stop King George's bolting horse from carrying him off the battlefield. Later in the day the King called out, 'Bravo, Buffs!' to a regiment striding forward with great spirit. 'Sir, we are the 31st, not the Old Buffs', came the indignant response from one of its officers, to which the King swiftly retorted, 'Then bravo, Young Buffs!'

This brief exchange is the first recorded occasion on which the Buffs are known to have been so called, and its manner suggests that the name was in familiar usage. The reply of the officer makes it clear that 'Old Buffs' was the usual nickname, and the two words are frequently found linked, right into the 19th century. Indeed

the fact that the 31st, who were to become the 1st East Surreys, sported buff facings – as also did the 14th, 22nd, 27th, 42nd and 48th – might well account for the nickname, for it must have irked the Buffs to see these imitators springing up around them, and they would have been proud to call themselves by the distinctive name of ‘Old Buffs’.

What helped to convert nickname to proper name was the fact that since 1737 the Buffs had been ‘Howard’s’, from the name of their Colonel, and that another regiment of a similar name had joined the expeditionary force. To avoid confusion these two were known as ‘Howard’s Buffs’ and the ‘Green Howards’, and before the campaign ended the Buffs had been so named in an official document, with ‘Howard’s’ omitted.

While Lieutenant-General Thomas Howard was Colonel of the Buffs, his son George was their Lieutenant-Colonel (until he succeeded his father in 1749, remaining Colonel until 1763). George Howard was a resolute leader. When given rear-guard duties during the withdrawal that followed the attack at Fontenoy in May 1745, he handled his regiment very skilfully, and on the Buffs’ return to Scotland to deal with the Young Pretender, he managed to pull his men out of the panic sown by the rebels when they charged in a blizzard on Falkirk Moor in January 1746. With four other regiments the Buffs here retrieved an ugly situation from complete disaster, but at Culloden Moor they did little more than watch the rout of the enemy from the passive right flank. Howard now acquired a reputation of a different kind, being rated by the rebels’ historian, Robert Chambers, ‘as among the blood-thirstiest of all those human wolves’ for his part in the punitive operations. In March 1747 the Buffs were returned to Flanders and, still led by Howard, they suffered heavily at the Battle of Lauffeld, where the British infantry, though unable to save the allies from defeat, enhanced their reputation for staunchness. By the end of this year the Buffs had returned to England for another period of peace.

In 1751 a Royal warrant was issued standardizing the colours, badges and uniforms of all regiments, and in this the Buffs is listed as the ‘3rd Regiment or The Buffs’, being the only regiment officially named by its distinctive colour.

It was one of fourteen infantry regiments – ‘the Royal Regiments and the Six Old Corps’ – authorized to display badges, although it would appear that the dragon adorned the caps of the grenadiers only, resting against a buff background with below it the standard white horse of Hanover and the motto ‘Nec Aspera Terrent’ attached to the red base of the mitre cap. The dragon also adorned the colours (centrally placed), the drums, and the arms kote tents known as bells of arms. On three corners of the second colour, as in the case of three other regiments, the 5th, 6th, and 7th, the Rose and Crown were displayed. As usual, no reason was given for the grant of this royal badge, nor is it clear when it was made. The Buffs had it changed in 1830 to the Tudor Rose, officially described as ‘the United Red and White Rose ensigned with the Imperial Crown’, and it seems fair to assume that this alteration was authorized in token of the Tudor origin.

Around this time regiments were forming their own military bands in place of hired musicians, and like their drummers the bandsmen of the Buffs probably wore uniform of reversed colouring, namely buff coats with scarlet lining. Legend had it that the lively quick march adopted by the Regiment, and known to posterity merely as ‘The Buffs’, was specially written for them by Handel. Probing deeply in the 1920s, researchers decided that legend had gone astray. ‘The Buffs’ is not in fact typical of Handel; it has probably been confused with a slow march entitled ‘Old Buffs’ March’, which was unearthed in the British Museum and can definitely be attributed to Handel. The Buffs had in the meantime adopted ‘The Men of Kent’ as their slow march.

When war next broke out against France – the Seven Years War – the Buffs were ordered, in August 1756, to raise a second battalion. This was converted in 1758 into the 61st Foot, to become in due course the 2nd Gloucestershire, with buff facings converted to the variation of primrose-yellow.

In this war the Buffs did more travelling than fighting. In October 1758 they sailed for their first taste of the tropics, now wearing black gaiters in place of white ones, which cannot have added to their comfort. By August 1759 they had returned, having played their part in the reduction of

Guadeloupe, which cost them a few casualties at the hands of Negro irregulars and many more from an unspecified illness called 'the flux'. In March 1761 they set sail for Belle-Île-en-Mer, the island off the coast of Brittany, to speed the invasion of which Pitt had promised 'our old Battalion, the Buffs' as reinforcement. They arrived one week before the island's defenders capitulated. In July 1762 they went on to Portugal, in order to expel Spanish invaders. Only the Grenadier Company saw action here, being brigaded with those of the six other regiments; they twice surprised and routed the Spaniards, forcing them to make peace. This was the last action fought by the grenadiers in their mitre caps, for in 1768 they were ordered to exchange them for bearskins.

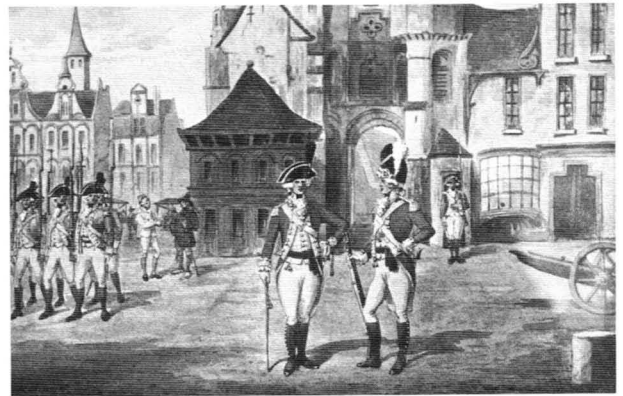
In June 1763, the war being ended, the Buffs took back the colony of Minorca from the French, and they stayed there eight years. Four in England (1771-5) and six in Ireland (1775-81) followed, before the Buffs again set off for war, stocked with recruits from Cork and Kinsale. They were bound for America, where the rebels had been teaching the British 'lobsters' a lesson or two. The derisive nickname stemmed from the tighter fit of the coat, which had been introduced in the late 1760s. It was also shorter, but higher in the neck, with lapels fixed back permanently and with plainer cuffs. Buttons were now stamped with the numeral '3' and looped across the lapels with lacing of yellow, black and red, which had been regularized since 1768 and worn at least since 1756, probably being the livery colours of General Howard. They were to remain as the Buffs' distinctive lacing. The powder and pigtail of the hair style enhanced the impression of ornate rigidity.

After landing in South Carolina in June 1781, the Buffs had one very stiff fight inland, at Eutaw Springs on 8 September. They eventually drove off the rebels but suffered 272 casualties. They fought no other engagement and in May 1782 were shipped to Jamaica without incident, leaving South Carolina to enjoy its independence.

On 31 August 1782 an order was issued affiliating the Buffs to East Kent, with the necessary insertion in the title. Kent is thought to have been chosen by the Colonel of the Regiment, Major-General Style, who in fact lived in West Kent and may perhaps never have seen his regiment, for

they were overseas throughout his colonelcy. On such straws hung the regimental destiny, but at the time little notice was paid to the affiliation, and recruits were gathered from whichever part of the country offered the best yield.

Returned to England in 1790, the Buffs now sported black cockades and feathers (the latter at the men's expense) in their black cocked hats, and their coats were cut back like morning coats and surmounted by white cross-belts, with a plate at the intersection. Thus attired, they set off in September 1793 to fight the French revolutionaries, only to endure some futile voyaging back and



The Buffs in Flanders, 1793 - another of Simkin's paintings - showing an officer of the Grenadier Company in the foreground with an officer of another company. The Buffs' visits to Flanders in this year were fleeting

forth across the Channel, which ended with their return to England badly smitten by the dread 'jail fever', typhus. In July 1794 they joined the army of Frederick Augustus, the 'noble Duke of York', in Flanders and in April 1795 they limped into Bremen for evacuation to Yarmouth. They had suffered terrible losses from frostbite and starvation and had hardly had a fight with the enemy.

In October 1795 they again embarked for the West Indies, as part of an enormous expedition. A storm wrought havoc. One shipload of Buffs (headquarters and five companies) rode it unscathed and reached Barbados in late January 1796, whence they were despatched to subdue a rising in St Vincent. The ship carrying the other five companies was forced back to England and did not reach the West Indies until March. They were directed to Grenada and had a very sticky

day's fighting in driving out the Negro rebels who had seized the island. The Buffs then occupied several other islands, perhaps deriving some relief from the cotton trousers and white hats they were authorized to wear. They returned to England in June 1802, leaving behind many comrades stricken by yellow fever.

They returned at a time of radical alteration in dress and probably received new uniform soon after their arrival. The cocked hats of the soldiers, though retained by officers, gave way to the peaked stove-pipe cap, which had a plate in front for the dragon and was also adorned by a plume, white for the Grenadier Company, green for the Light (formed in 1770), and red and white for the other companies. The cut-away coat was replaced by a single-breasted coatee, cut to the waist in front and to the seat behind, with high buff collar, buff cuffs, and bars of buff across the front. Officers wore double-breasted coats of longer skirting and without the bars across the front. They had silver epaulettes. The soldiers still wore breeches and gaiters, but were to exchange them for dark grey trousers some time after reaching the Peninsula. The officers took to blue pantaloons and hessian boots.

After a brief peace the war was resumed in May 1803, and the Buffs again raised a second battalion, which first stood ready to defend Kent and was subsequently relegated to draft-finding duties. The 1st Battalion journeyed to Germany in November 1805, to defend Hanover on the line of the Weser, but were obliged to return after three months, without being closely engaged.



A caricature by T. Rowlandson entitled 'Soldiers on the March 1808 (Old Buffs)'. He seems to have drawn the uniform, if not other details, with accuracy

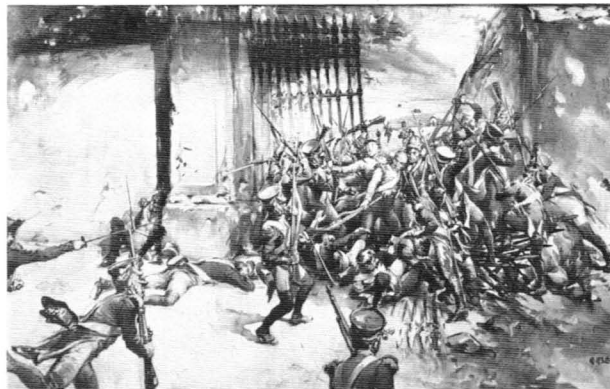
They moved to Ireland and from here, in December 1807, to Madeira, by invitation of the island's owner, Portugal. They were needed next year in Portugal itself, and as they arrived at Lisbon on 1 September 1808 the French sailed away in British ships with all their arms and booty. Such was the result of Wellesley's first great victory and the ensuing Convention of Cintra. It turned out to be, not the end, but the beginning.

Peninsular Honours



When Sir John Moore set off into Spain with two-thirds of the army he had in Portugal, the Buffs were assigned escort duties. This involved wide dispersal and much toil in pushing baggage carts through the winter mud; consequently only the Grenadier Company could join up with Moore when he was compelled to retreat on Corunna. They fought with the rearguard and were evacuated in a ragged and emaciated state, while the remainder of the battalion contrived to make a safe return to Portugal.

Sir Arthur Wellesley, having been recalled to England for an inquiry, returned to Portugal in



The Douro - 'The Buffs lead the Way' by Christopher Clark, who was also an artist of the First World War. The men are shown rushing to prevent the French from bursting into the seminary

April 1809 and lost no time in striking out northwards to gain Oporto. The Buffs led the advance and were the first to reach the River Douro, just after the bridge into Oporto had been blown up in the early hours of 12 May. Four barges were located on the far bank and brought across in daylight by a daring staff officer and some brave Portuguese. 'Well, let the men cross,' said Wellesley when told of their arrival; 'the men' were the Buffs.

For an hour the ferrying went on undetected, across a river 300 yards wide, and by the end of it three companies were firmly ensconced in a bishop's seminary adjacent to the far bank and on the eastern edge of Oporto. Shot now began to crash into the seminary, and later an attack was made by at least one regiment of Frenchmen, but there could be no dislodging the Buffs. Marshal Soult thereupon withdrew a brigade from the defences of Oporto and tried again. But there were now three battalions in the seminary, and Wellesley was ferrying over others opposite the now undefended walls of Oporto. Soult had to retreat.

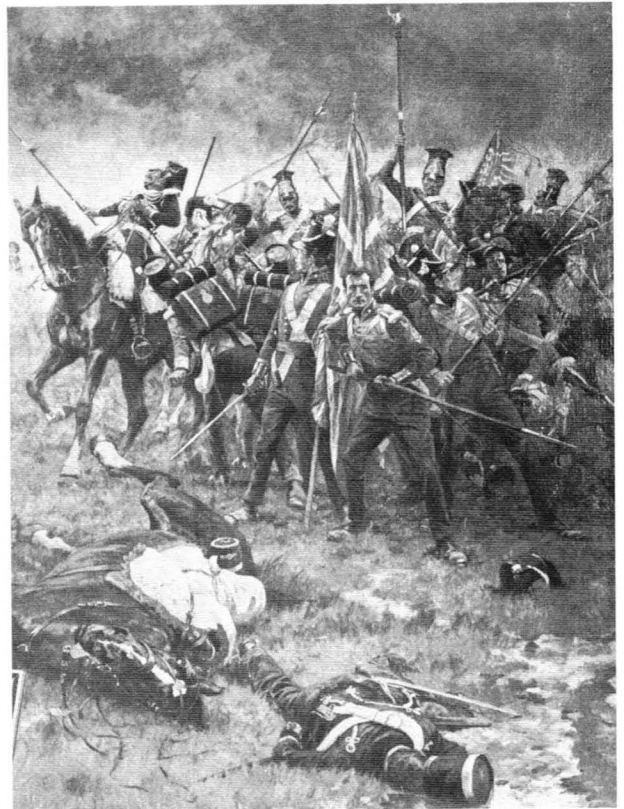
Out of a British total of 121 casualties the Buffs had suffered 50, and they received full credit in Wellesley's despatch. In September 1813 they and three other regiments were awarded the honour of 'Douro', to be borne on their regimental colour. This was a new way of commemorating a famous victory, and ten years were to elapse before the Buffs were to receive similar awards for other battles of the Peninsular.

Their next battle was Talavera, fought on 27 July 1809. They were in Rowland Hill's 2nd Division, holding the heights on the extreme left, and it was here that the French made their main attack, with massive support from their cannon. Ordered by Wellesley to lie down beyond the brow, the six battalions waited there for the great columns of Frenchmen to reach the summit, then shattered them with their volleys and chased them back down the hill. The Buffs had 152 casualties, with their commanding officer among the dead.

Lord Wellington, raised to the peerage for this victory, was now forced to make a gradual retreat to the lines of Torres Vedras. The 2nd Division had no real fighting either in the retreat or the repulse of the enemy from these lines, and it was

then detached under General Beresford on flank protection duties, which unexpectedly involved the siege of the recently fallen Badajoz. While still in the early stages of the siege, Beresford heard that Soult was marching on him from the south, and he rushed his heterogeneous force to the village of La Albuhera and the ridge above it. This was on 15 May 1811; the 16th was to prove the most horrific day in the Buffs' history.

Early on this morning the Buffs were sent down the ridge to Albuhera and were then rushed back up the hill to contend with a massive attack that was coming in round the right flank and throwing the Spaniards into confusion. The Buffs were halted on the Spaniards' right and at once suffered losses from cannon shot. They were then thrown into the attack, on the insistence of the impetuous William Stewart, who was acting G.O.C. 2nd Division. After firing two volleys, they saw the French break before them as they advanced far ahead of the remainder of the brigade. Then down came a blinding hailstorm, and through it two regiments of cavalry – French hussars and Polish



Albuhera – 'The Colours under Attack', by W. B. Wollen, 1912

lancers – swept in among the Buffs from their right rear.

Around 400 Buffs were spiked or hacked down in a matter of minutes, and when the roll was called after the battle only 85 were left to answer it out of 728. The colours were defended with amazing heroism. ‘Only with my life!’ yelled Ensign Thomas, aged 16, when the French demanded the Regimental colour, having felled its escorts. They took his life. The King’s colour was grabbed by Lieutenant Latham when he saw its ensign fall wounded with the French all round him. Latham had his face slashed almost in two by a sabre blow and an arm cut to a thread by another, sending the colour to the ground. Dropping his sword, he seized the colour with his remaining hand and sank, clutching it to his body, beneath a jostle of slashing horsemen.

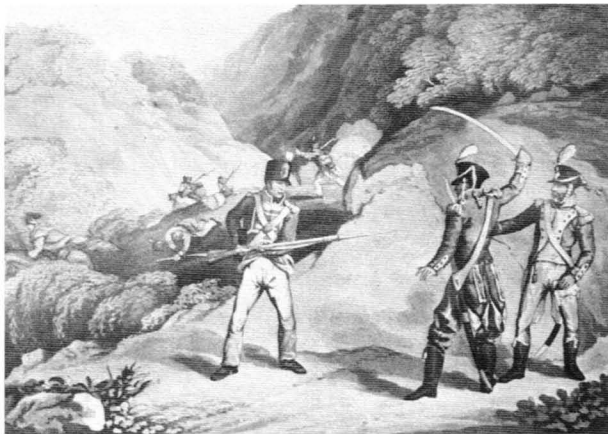
After hours of fury, this disastrous opening was redeemed by a charge of the Fusilier Brigade, which drove the French from the gory hill and regained the Buffs’ Regimental colour, starting an enduring friendship between the Buffs and the

Royal Fusiliers. The King’s colour was found inside the tunic of an unconscious and unrecognizable officer, who turned out to be Lieutenant Latham. Incredibly, he not only was alive but recovered to continue in the service, one-armed and woefully disfigured. The Prince of Wales arranged and paid for him to have special surgical treatment, and his brother officers struck a gold medal for him, which he was authorized to wear by a special Royal warrant. More recently, the Buffs honoured his memory by making Albuhera Day one of dedication and celebration.

So quickly were the ranks of the Buffs refilled that they gained the nickname of ‘Resurrectionists’. During the next eighteen months they had some exhausting marches, sometimes advancing, sometimes retreating, but fought no pitched battle until Wellington began his final advance on France in the summer of 1813. At Vittoria they gained a battle honour without being closely engaged. In the Pyrenees they were on outpost duty when Soult struck with overwhelming force and they played a crucial part in drawing the



The Latham Centrepiece – a silver monument to the valour that saved the King’s Colour at Albuhera



In the Pyrenees – a contemporary picture by M. Dubourg Souly entitled ‘A British Soldier Taking two French Officers’. The untidy look of the soldier provides a note of realism and the ‘3’ in his shako plate shows him to be a Buff

sting from his advance, which nevertheless brought Wellington’s generals to the verge of panic before he could intervene in person and send Soult’s thousands rolling back into France. On 10 November the Buffs were to the fore with the 2nd Division when Wellington made entry into France by ripping apart the defences beyond the Nivelle, and on 13 December they held the

extreme right of the line beyond the swollen Nive when Soult again attacked with what should have been overwhelming force. Here the Buffs brilliantly redeemed a withdrawal ordered by their commanding officer. When it was countermanded by the brigade commander, Sir John Byng, the men turned about with a great cheer and drove back the massed, overconfident Frenchmen with devastating courage.

They subsequently played minor parts in the reduction of Orthes and Toulouse, and in June 1814, within a mere three months of completing their five and a half years of continuous campaigning, they were shipped to Canada to wage war against the United States. Nine other battalions, removed from their old formations, went with them, and interesting light is thrown on the appearance of these veterans by the snub administered to them by their new G.O.C., Sir George Prevost. The order with which he greeted them stated that he had 'observed in the dress of several officers of corps and departments, lately added to this army from that of Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington, a fanciful variety inconsistent with the rules of the service', and it directed commanding officers to ensure that 'the established uniform of their corps is strictly observed'.

Note that it was the officers' dress to which Sir George took exception, and among the items that appear to have been unofficially discarded are the cocked hat and the silver epaulette, which could make an officer look both conspicuous and ridiculous, as in the case of the one being carried by a woman in Rowlandson's cartoon of the Buffs on the march. The soldiers in this picture (dated 1808) are wearing the stove-pipe hat, and around 1811 these were exchanged for the 'Wellington' shako, a cap of black felt about six inches high, with chain in front and short plume on top. Around the same time the breeches and leggings gave way to blue-grey trousers. It would appear that officers also donned shakos and trousers, no doubt adding their individual eccentricities. The troops had never been less ornate and were frequently shabby. They were also victorious.

Imperial Warfare



Arrived in Canada, the Buffs joined an invasion of New York State. They advanced to Plattsburg and were in process of mounting an attack on this fortress town when they were ordered to return, all because the makeshift fleet supporting them had been sunk. In this fiasco they lost some good officers and men. Six months later Napoleon escaped from Elba, and when the shipping was available the Buffs were brought back to Europe. They arrived in July 1815, to hear how Waterloo had been won, and were sent to Paris on occupational duty.

The presence of Prussian troops in France brought competing embellishments into British uniforms. The shako became higher and wider at the top, still adorned with a plume. Officers exchanged their silver buttons and epaulettes for gold ones and blossomed forth in buff-fronted double-breasted coats, which they wore until 1829, when under standardization orders the buff reverted merely to collar and cuffs. White trousers were introduced for summer wear, in place of the blue-grey ones.

The Buffs left France in November 1818. They were in Ireland until about September 1821, when they moved to Woolwich, thence to be drawn, in detachments varying in size from 50 to 150 men, to Australia as escorts to convicts. This process was not completed until August 1823, by which time the Regiment was spread on guard duties across New South Wales and in Tasmania.

Between 1827 and February 1828 the Buffs were transferred by detachments to the great new consumer of British troops, India. They were struck at once by cholera, which brought death to over 200 officers and men. Thereafter they

settled down to garrison duty, changing stations every eighteen months or so with a march down the Ganges valley, away from Calcutta. They were twice earmarked for service in Afghanistan, but were thwarted – or, as it turned out, spared – in the first instance by a change of plan and in the second by a bout of fever.

They saw action at last when the invasion of the Maratha state of Gwalior, in Central India, was ordered. Entering it from the south-east as part of a column commanded by Major-General Grey, the Buffs reached the vicinity of Punnar on the afternoon of 29 December 1843. As they were pitching their tents, with part of the column still toiling in, shot whistled in among them from an adjacent, unpicketed line of hills. Elephants, camels and bullocks broke loose; all was confusion. Lieutenant-Colonel Clunie of the Buffs thereupon led his men straight at the hills, quite on his own initiative and accompanied only by some Indian sappers. His men met a deluge of fire but pressed on most boldly and drove back a great multitude of Marathas, capturing eleven cannon. The arrival of the 50th Queen's Own (West Kent) and two battalions of native infantry completed the rout of the Marathas, at a cost to the Buffs of 24 killed and 54 wounded.

Officers wore scarlet in this battle, in place of the blue frock coat in which so many had been picked off in Afghanistan. It seems likely that they wore the single-breasted page-boy-style shell jacket, and the men would also have worn short, single-breasted jackets, with buff collars and cuffs. The lacing, of yellow, black and red, had been discarded in 1836, and the shakos were now adorned with pompom tufts in place of the more conspicuous plumes. It is not known whether the hot-weather wear of white cap covers, with neck flaps, and white trousers was worn; probably not.

The Buffs returned to England between January and May 1845. In October 1846 they moved to Ireland, exercising (for at least the third time) their 'ancient privilege' of marching through the City of London *en route*. In April 1851 they were sent to Malta and were there when the Crimean War broke out. They were not moved until November 1854 and were fortunate in spending the winter at Athens. They were brought into the Crimea in May 1855.

Their big battle here came on 8 September, when they had to provide the 2nd Division's scaling and covering parties for an assault on the Great Redan. The scaling party consisted of 160 volunteers and worked in conjunction with another, provided for the Light Division by the 97th Foot (later the 2nd Royal West Kent), who drew the lead by lot. So long did it take its men to clamber out at the end of the sap that Major Maude, commanding the Buffs' party, took his men over the top further back and led them across the open. They drew an inferno of fire, and out of twenty ladders being carried forward only seven reached their intended positions against the great defence ditch. It could in fact be scaled without them, such was the damage wrought by the guns, and the men climbed up and gained possession of the outer defences. Then as the main storming parties began to arrive the Russians counter-attacked, and there was a wild jumble of close-quarter fighting, with the British units spilled into a muddled medley of individuals. Eventually the follow-up waves took fright and there was a cascade of British soldiers into the defence ditch, made the more tumultuous by the bombs hurled



Crimea, 1855 – the first known photograph of some Buffs. Seated elegantly on the ground in his frock coat is Colonel van Straubenzee, who had been promoted brigade commander; seated left is the famous Major Maude, who was to win the V.C.; next to him is Lieutenant-Colonel Pater-son, commanding, dressed in civilian-style frock coat; then Sergeant-Major Cotter, resplendent in full dress; Bugler Corporal Cornish is in greatcoat and forage cap, making him resemble a Turk; and finally Lieutenant and Adjutant Sidebottom wearing a shell jacket



From a watercolour by a Crimean War artist, Orlando Norie, entitled 'The 3rd (East Kent - The Buffs) Regiment of Foot. Interrogation of a Russian Prisoner outside

Sevastopol'. It can be seen that the men are wearing the new loose, double-breasted tunics

down upon them by the Russians. None stayed in the Redan.

Perhaps because they had previously suffered less, the Buffs gained distinction on what for the army as a whole was a day of shame. Major Maude, who had been adjutant at Punniar and had there had his horse shot beneath him, fought like a lion, clinging on to a position with a few odd men long after he had been wounded. When the first awards of the Victoria Cross were announced his name was on the list, and so too was that of Private Connors, who had launched a single-handed assault to rescue an officer of the 30th Foot. Thirteen other officers and men were mentioned in the C.-in-C.'s despatch. The Buffs' casualties were 31 killed and 107 wounded – this out of a total of 260 engaged.

The Buffs also had the distinction of being the only regiment ever to take their colours into Sevastopol. They did this only four days after the assault, for with the French firmly ensconced in the Malakoff the Russians evacuated Sevastopol, leaving it a burning wreck. But their gunners could look down into it from the heights beyond, and the British occupation was confined to a brief visit by the Buffs.

A painting by Orlando Norie, said to have been done from sketches of the scene, shows a party of Buffs outside Sevastopol in the new tunic introduced during this war. At this same time a smaller shako, with chinstrap, was issued, and blue trousers replaced the grey or white ones. Forage, or field service, caps had been worn on informal occasions since the Napoleonic wars. For the men these were round pill boxes. The officers wore peaked caps, and if Major Maude's, which is in the Buffs' museum, was standard, they were far from plain. His has a soft crown of dark blue or black velvet, a gold bobble on top and gold lacing round the side, and a gold braided peak. It appears to have been worn either with the new tunic, the shell jacket, or with the frock coat, which had been evolved from the blue greatcoats.

In August 1857 Maude was commissioned to resurrect and command the 2nd Battalion, as part of the increase demanded by the Indian Mutiny. He raised it in Limerick, took it to Canterbury, and thence to Malta.

When the Crimean War ended in March 1856 the 1st Buffs moved to Corfu, and after two and a half years there they returned to India, arriving in the last week of 1858. In October 1859 they

joined a punitive expedition bound for China. It was a joint British and French venture, and the Buffs spent six months at Canton, which was under British protection, while the plans were being argued out. In July 1860 the expedition set out to storm the Taku Forts, at the mouth of the Pei-ho, and made an unopposed landing ten miles to the north of them.

During the advance on Taku, Private Moyes of the Buffs was caught by Tartar cavalry with a sergeant of the 44th Foot, some Indian sappers, and some coolies, who were trundling far in rear of the column, bringing along the division's rum carts. Next day they were brought before a local mandarin and ordered to kowtow to him. Moyes, who had once been a colour-sergeant and been court-martialled for insubordination, alone refused. He was warned, plainly enough, that he would be beheaded if he insisted and is said to have replied that he would rather die than disgrace his country. He was thereupon struck down and killed. His fellow prisoners were released within a week, and as soon as the story of Moyes's amazing defiance reached England it was immortalized by Sir Francis Doyle in a poem that begins (probably quite erroneously):

Last night, among his fellow roughs,
He jested, quaffed, and swore;
A drunken private of the Buffs,
Who never looked before.

and ends:

So, let his name through Europe ring –
A man of mean estate,
Who died, as firm as Sparta's king,
Because his soul was great.

Although there was desperate fighting for the first of the forts, the one the Buffs attacked fell without bloodshed, and Moyes appears to have been the battalion's only enemy-inflicted casualty. They did not go on to Peking but journeyed back to England between December 1860 and April 1861, sailing in three ships and enduring, without loss of life or decorum, a wreck in one and a mutiny by the crew in another.

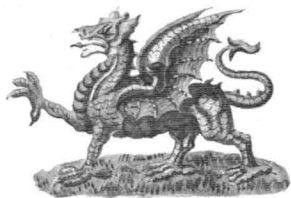
In September 1866 the 1st Buffs returned to India, and thereafter in November 1874 they went to Malaya for six months' toil through the jungles

of Perak, to avenge the murder of the British Resident. They blazed a trail here in more ways than one, for not only was this new territory for British soldiers but the Buffs, according to their order book, dyed their white tropical uniform 'kharkee', probably by dipping it in coffee. Ten years were to elapse before the army as a whole followed this lead, grey being the vogue when the Buffs left India in 1879.

Having visited Malta, Gibraltar and Jamaica on their first overseas tour, the 2nd Buffs set out on their second in October 1876 and landed on the shore of South Africa rather sooner than intended because their ship ran on the rocks, though fortunately in a calm sea. In January 1879 they crossed the River Tugela and entered Zululand, as part of the right column of three invading that country. On their heads were the new spiked helmets, which had brought the era of the shako to a close in 1878, and they had dyed them brown and removed the brass to avoid flash. Their colours were, for the last time in war, carried with them, and the band was there too, although whether it played as they marched is not known. Nor is it certain whether they wore their red tunics or, as on some occasions, shirt-sleeve order. The packs were certainly carried on the wagons.

The column, which was commanded by Colonel Pearson of the Buffs, was attacked by Zulus on 22 January but, unlike the central column at Isandhlwana on this same day, it easily repulsed them. Pearson did not hear of the disaster at Isandhlwana until he had reached his objective, the mission station of Eshowe, and he stood at bay here with his force of Buffs, 99th, ancillaries and local levies. For two months the Zulus prowled around them, and when they did finally launch an attack it was against the relief force, not the emaciated garrison of Eshowe. The latter had a distant view of the rout of the Zulus and next day – 3 April – Pearson was reunited with his G.O.C., Lord Chelmsford, who had brought two of the Buffs' eight companies in his powerful relieving force.

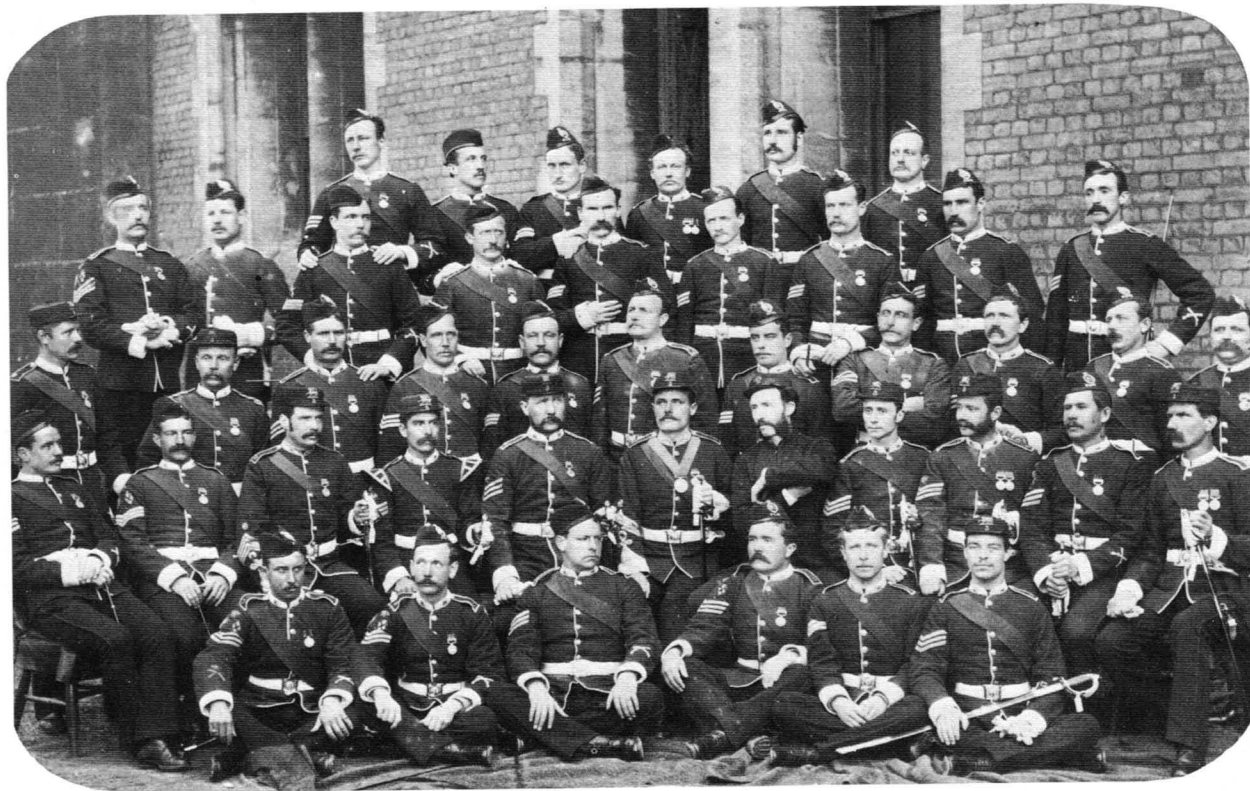
For Badge and Colour



The Cardwell System gave the Buffs, for the first time in their history, a static depot and a set recruiting area. The depot was set up in Canterbury in 1873, occupying barracks that had been built during the Napoleonic wars, and the recruits were drawn, though by no means exclusively, from East Kent, which at last gave reality to the sub-title given the Regiment in 1782. This

arrangement was combined with a closer linking of the two battalions, under which they were to alternate between home and overseas, with the home battalion providing drafts to keep the foreign battalion up to strength. The East Kent Militia was also brought nearer the East Kent Regiment, forming an administrative brigade with it.

These moves were welcome. The blow came in 1881, when the Infantry was reorganized on a full territorial basis by the amalgamation of the regular and militia battalions and the substitution of the old numerical titles for county ones. It was the aim of the planners, led by the orderly mind of the Adjutant-General, Sir Garnet Wolseley, to produce a neat organization on the Prussian model, and they consequently dealt many smarting blows at regimental pride. Most of them hit the regiments, from the 26th downwards, that had only one regular battalion and had to be amalgamated with another to form a pair. The reforms that affected the Buffs were of a more niggling nature, and the annoyance they caused was all the greater



Sergeants of the 1st Buffs at Dover, 1881. It was the brief era of the glengarry forage caps, but colour sergeants wear the peaked officer-style forage cap. The medal

suspended from the sergeant-major's neck is one of a limited issue commemorating the Queen's assumption of the title 'Empress of India'

since the only palpable reason for them seemed to be a craving for standardization. In fact the only necessary reform was the conversion of the East Kent Militia into the 3rd and (short-lived) 4th Battalions, and this was the only one that endured.

But title, badge, and even the cherished colour of buff all came within the planners' cruel predations and would have been lost for ever but for the fight made on their behalf. The title was to have been 'The Kentish Regiment, The Buffs', but between the issue of an order to that effect and its implementation on 1 July 1881 sufficient pressure was applied for it to be amended to 'The Buffs, East Kent Regiment'. This compromise still did not satisfy the Regiment, especially as 'E.Kent' was the official abbreviation and was embroidered on the men's shoulder-straps, and anger would be roused by anyone who referred to the East Kents, or even worse, the Buff Regiment. The pressure was maintained, with the result that the Regiment soon appeared in the *Army List* as 'The Buffs (East Kent Regiment)', and from 1898 – expense was involved, therefore the delay was greater – shoulder titles were issued bearing the word 'Buffs' in place of 'E.Kent'.

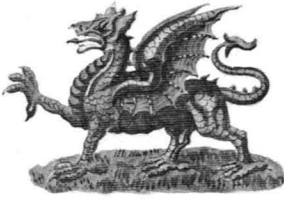
As for the dragon, it was replaced as main badge by the white horse of Kent, and yet it retained its place on the helmet plate and on the forage cap. The peaked version of the latter, as worn by officers and senior N.C.O.s, had become squatter than in the days of the Crimea and had borne the dragon with the numeral '3' below it. The '3' was now removed and the dragon consequently became larger, gaining added prominence. But on the collars it was replaced by the white horse, and when the 2nd Buffs received new colours from the Prince of Wales in 1886 the central crest on the regimental colour was the white horse. No Buff could feel pride in such a badge.

An even greater cause of depression was the fact that the background of this colour was white, as indeed were the collars and cuffs of all ranks' tunics. This bitterly resented change was the result of the standardization of colours by types of regiment: blue for the Royal regiments, yellow for the Scottish, green for the Irish, and white for the remainder. It was absurd that the Buffs, being

officially named after their old distinctive colour, should be subjected to such distortion, and the matter was the subject of questions in the House of Commons and a debate in the Lords. The answer was that the standardization was designed to save cost and labour at the clothing factories and that in any case an exception could not be made for fear it would give rise to other demands.

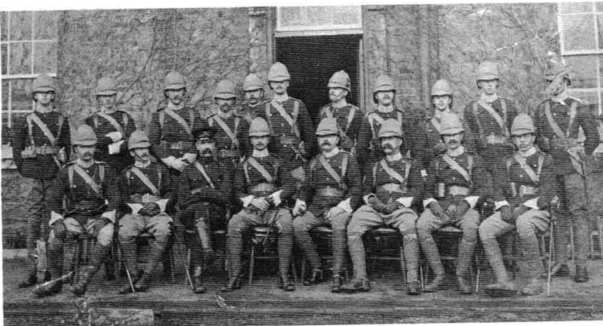
The point about the cost gave the Buffs their chance. A Captain Connellan of the 2nd Battalion invented a pipeclay mixture that could convert the white facings to buff, and the commanding officer, by a fine personal feat of persuasion, managed to obtain the approval of Lord Wolseley (as Sir Garnet had become) for the mixture to be used at the Regiment's expense. This great concession was made in March 1887. It was followed in 1891 by the replacement of white by buff as the regimental colour, although still with the white horse badge. In 1894 the full fruits of victory were conceded: the dragon was restored as main badge and collar badge and the issue of tunics with buff accessories was authorized at the public expense. But there was still a price to be paid. The shade of this manufactured buff was much darker than that acknowledged by the Regiment, and consequently an application was made to His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief by the Colonel of the Buffs on 'a most important matter affecting this distinguished old Regiment'. It asked that Connellan's mixture might remain in use at the Regiment's expense, and His Royal Highness (the Duke of Cambridge) was graciously pleased to consent.

At Their Finest



Fortunately the Buffs did not have to face the Queen's enemies while engaged on the long-drawn-out domestic battle for their rights. Following their return from India in 1879, the 1st Buffs had set out for active service in Egypt in 1882 but got no further than Malta, whence they again returned to home service. In 1885 they began a new foreign tour, which in 1887 brought them back to India after sojourns in Malta and Singapore. The 2nd had gone from South Africa to Singapore and thence to Hong Kong, before returning to England between October 1885 and April 1886, with a brief visit to Egypt *en route* for reserve duties against a Dervish invasion.

Clad in khaki drill and pith helmets, and armed with the new Lee-Metford rifle, the 1st Buffs went on active service on the North-West Frontier in March 1895. They marched to the relief of Chitral, as the only full battalion sent on by Sir Robert Low after opposition in the Malakand Pass had been subdued. There were 120 miles of the Himalayas to be crossed, including two passes



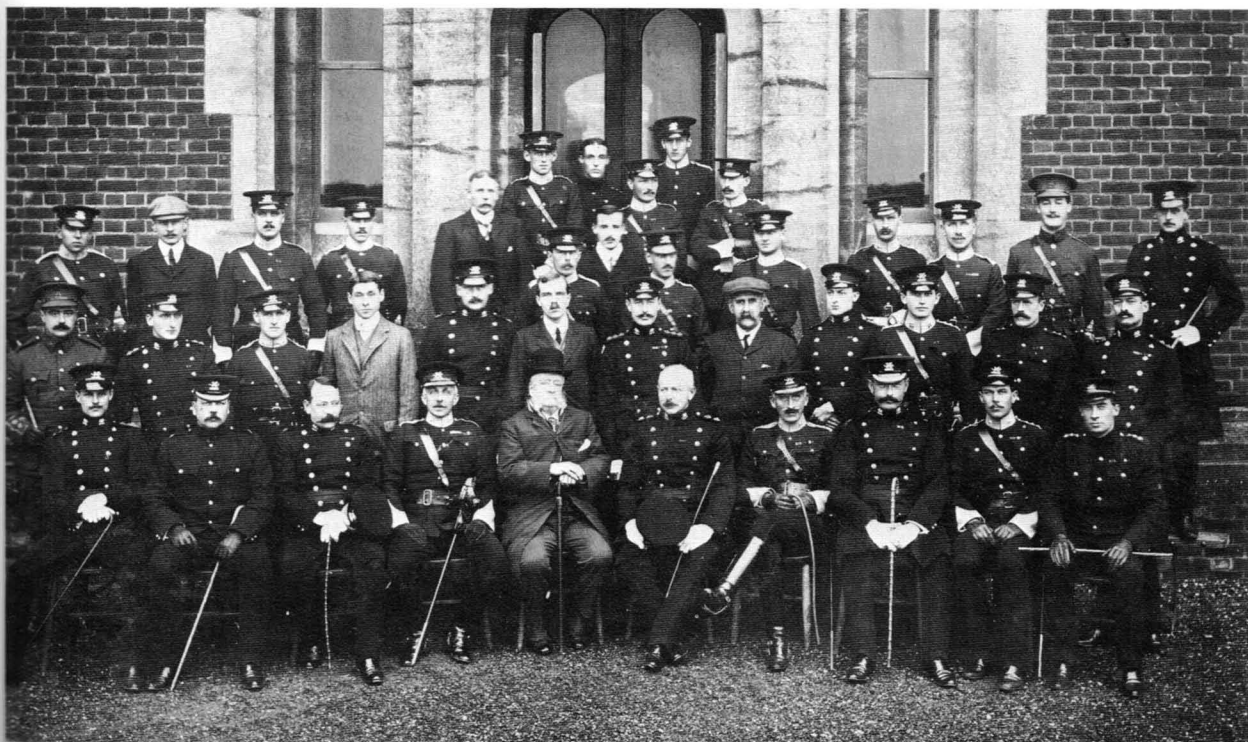
Officers, 2nd Buffs, prior to setting out for South Africa, 1899. They wear rough breeches and puttees in readiness for war, but had not yet exchanged their kersey scarlet undress tunics for khaki serge. Their helmets are the Wolseley pattern with canvas covers and title (in place of a badge) on the side

covered in snow and ice, and the Buffs reached their remote objective after twenty-six days of marching, hacking and grappling, to find that a party of Sikhs had arrived by a different route. No other British battalion ever visited Chitral.

In July 1897 the Buffs joined Sir Bindon Blood's Malakand Field Force, following a swoop upon it by Pathans. They were brought into action in September to make a punitive sweep up the Mamund valley. In an exhausting day they burned some villages and fired many rounds, impressing Winston Churchill, the correspondent accompanying them, by their steadiness. During the return to camp a section under Lance-Corporal Smith became cut off with the brigade commander, four guns and some Indian sappers. They were closely overlooked by the walls of the village of Bilot and for most of the night had to endure a hail of shot from the tribesmen, whose target was lit by fires and lightning. Seven of the eleven Buffs were hit, Smith included, and yet so bravely did they fight on that Smith was awarded the V.C. and four of his men the D.C.M. An operation against the Bunerwal tribe and a period of watch on the Malakand Pass brought the 1st Buffs' duties on the Frontier to an end in October 1898.

A year later it was the turn of the 2nd Buffs. Still stationed in England when war broke out in South Africa, they were mobilized with the 6th Division and on 22 December 1899 set sail, with the news from South Africa black. The officers posed for a photograph shortly before embarking. Their helmets (which were made of cork) were of the standard home service pattern, with a canvas cover added and title on the left side. Their tunics were the kersey scarlet ones used as second-best; they were replaced by khaki serge almost at the moment of embarking. On their legs, in place of the customary blue trousers, were rough khaki breeches and puttees.

The Buffs first came into action by the banks of the River Modder on 16 February 1900, one day after their detached Mounted Infantry company had had their first contact. After some scrappy fighting and much hardship in hemming in Cronjé at Paardeberg, the Buffs accepted his surrender on the 27th. They then joined the advance on Bloemfontein and fought a fine action at Driefontein, where the Boers took them by



A rare meeting: officers of the 1st and 2nd Buffs at Dover, 1904. The various forms of dress are described in the text

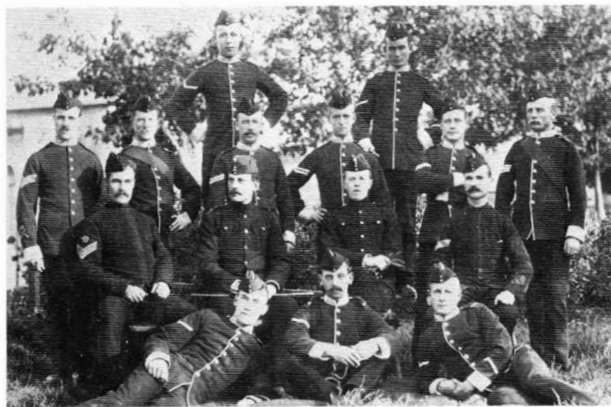
surprise from a strong position but could not withstand the determined section rushes by which the British advanced. The Buffs had 100 casualties. They entered Bloemfontein on 14 March and here their division dropped out of the advance, being hard hit by enteric.

The 3rd (Militia) Buffs arrived in April and made a fighting advance to relieve Lindley, a town 180 miles north-east of Bloemfontein. The two Volunteer battalions, which had nominally been part of the Buffs since 1883 but retained the uniforms they had worn as Kent Rifle Volunteers, were also represented, forming a composite company attached to the 2nd Battalion. The Boers now fell back on guerilla tactics, and both battalions spent long months on wearisome block-house guards and escort duties, fighting some fierce isolated actions here and there. For the 2nd Battalion there was also a spell on mobile column, in which they suffered 50 casualties during one hectic day.

Peace was made at the end of May 1902, and by the autumn both 2nd and 3rd Buffs had returned to England. The 1st Buffs also came to England in December 1904, having broken their

return from India with an arduous year's duty at Aden. They came to Dover, where the 2nd Buffs were also stationed, and an interesting photograph was taken of the officers celebrating this notable meeting. It shows four varieties of dress – or five, if one includes the near-uniform of civilian clothes. The officers of the 1st are mostly in their scarlet kersey, worn with Sam Browne belts, while those of the 2nd sport the new-style frock coats which had recently been introduced and formed, with crimson belt, a more elegant form of undress than the kersey. Two are in the high-necked khaki serge, such as had been worn by the 2nd Buffs since their departure for South Africa and was now in use at home as service dress. Four are in blue patrol.

Officers of the Buffs had been wearing blue patrol at least since 1867, when it was authorized as undress in place of the frock coat. Its original purpose was to provide concealment – the Army's first attempt at camouflage – and presumably for this reason badges were not worn on its collars. But it owed its popularity to its sartorial appeal, which was to give it as long an innings as any dress worn within the Buffs. Initially it had invisible



A company group, officers and N.C.O.s, 2nd Buffs, Ireland, 1896. Officers and senior sergeants are in patrol, the remainder in full-dress tunics and side hats

buttons and dark braid across the front. This gave way to brass buttons at some time in the 1890s, and the approved arrangement was the alignment of the breast-pocket buttons with the second central button, three in line being appropriate for the 3rd of Foot. Three sleeve buttons were adopted for a similar reason, and a side cap was designed with three buttons in front topped by a bobble of buff to which a small silver dragon was fixed. This cap is to be seen in a group photographed in 1896, in which the men are also in side caps, and it was still to be seen worn by officers of the Buffs' descendant, the Queen's Own Buffs, in the late 1960s.

This 1896 group is of the 2nd Buffs in Ireland, showing officers and senior N.C.O.s in patrol and the men in their fine full-dress tunics which had no pocket buttons or other frills. Another group shown is from the 1st Buffs in India in 1899, and

here the officers are in red undress, but with blue side caps, and the men also in full-dress tunics. The lighter Indian pattern appears less smart and has different cuffs, which in place of the buff bar have looped piping, presumably to reduce the weight on the lighter material.

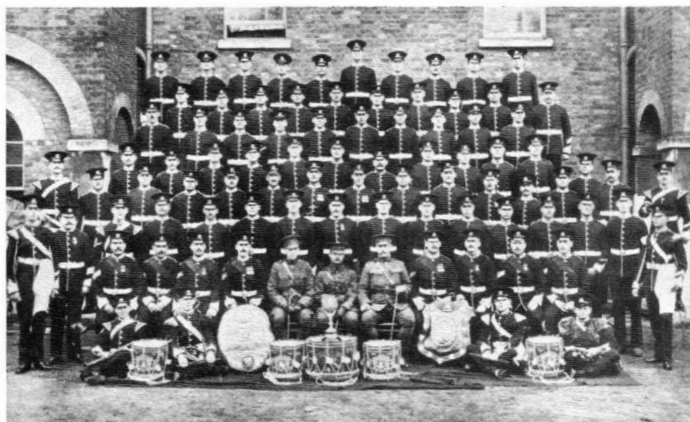
In the early 1900s the familiar peaked cap with flat top and overlapping rim was brought into use, both of khaki and dress varieties. It is apparent from a group photograph taken of the 1st Buffs in 1911 that in their full-dress tunics and with these dress caps on their heads the Buffs looked smarter than at any time before or since. The one incongruous note in this picture is struck, strangely, by two officers and the sergeant-major, who are wearing the khaki service dress, with khaki caps and badges of bronze, the latter being designed to avoid flash in the field. With a wide range of fine apparel to choose from, varying from crimson-belted full dress to the sombre yet smart blue patrol, it is odd that the officers should have chosen to wear their drabbest uniform for a formal group picture.

The outer covering of this period was in keeping with the splendour of the full-dress tunic. Since 1874 a dark grey greatcoat had been in use. It was smartly cut and, in the words of an officer who passed from this colourful era to a more mundane one, 'it was a garment I regretted to discard more than any other' (*The Dragon*, 1948, p. 116). The greatcoat had a detachable cape with richly gilt fastenings, and this was often worn on its own with mess kit.

On 9 November 1906 King Frederik VIII of



Dressed in their frock coats, as here at Aldershot in 1910, officers could look more elegant than sergeants in scarlet tunics, but this was not always the case as shown (right)



in a company group the following year. Note the good fit of the men's tunics



I



2



3

- 1 Private, Holland Regiment, 1684
- 2 Officer of Pikemen, 1572
- 3 Caliverer, 1603



I



2



3

- 1 Sergeant, 1702
- 2 Private, 1743
- 3 Grenadier, 1751



I

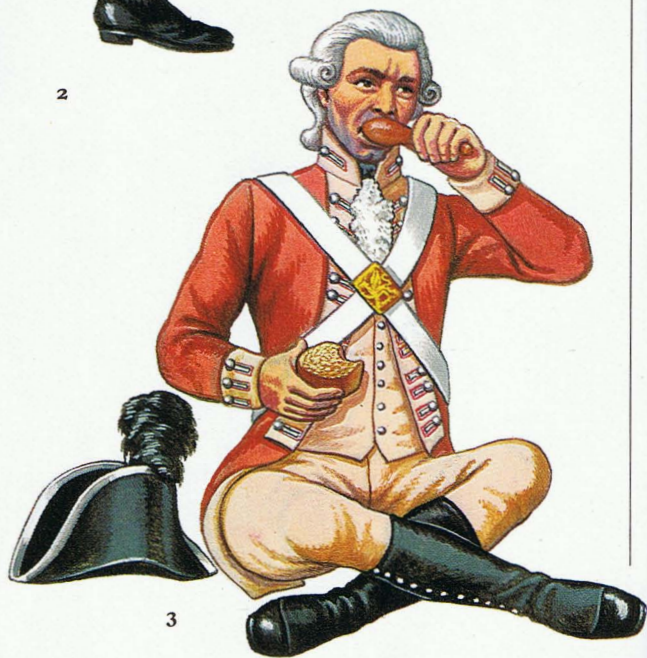
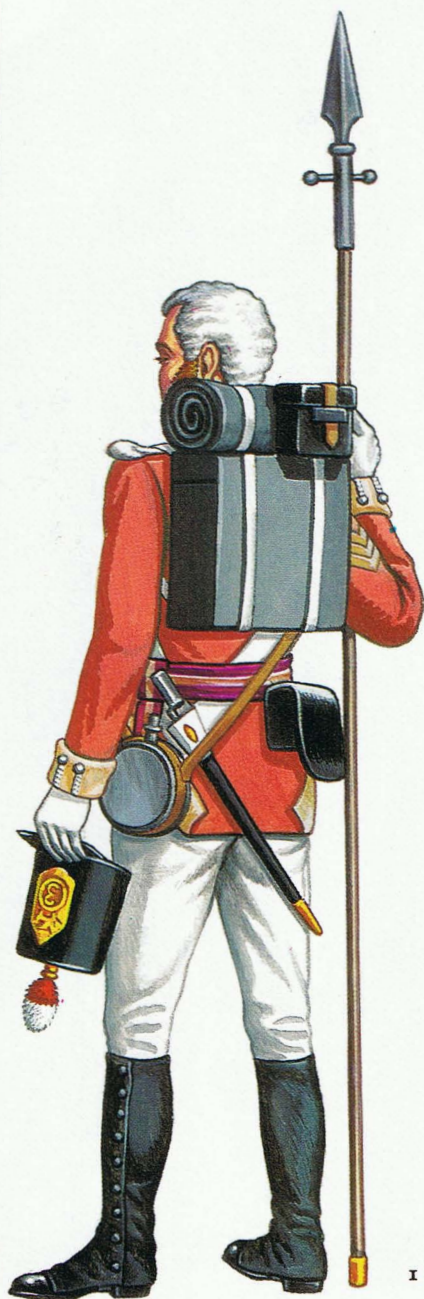


2



3

1 Drummer, 1751
2 Grenadier, 1768
3 Officer, 1792



- 1 Sergeant, Battalion Company, 1803
2 Officer, Battalion Company, 1803
3 Private, 1792



1

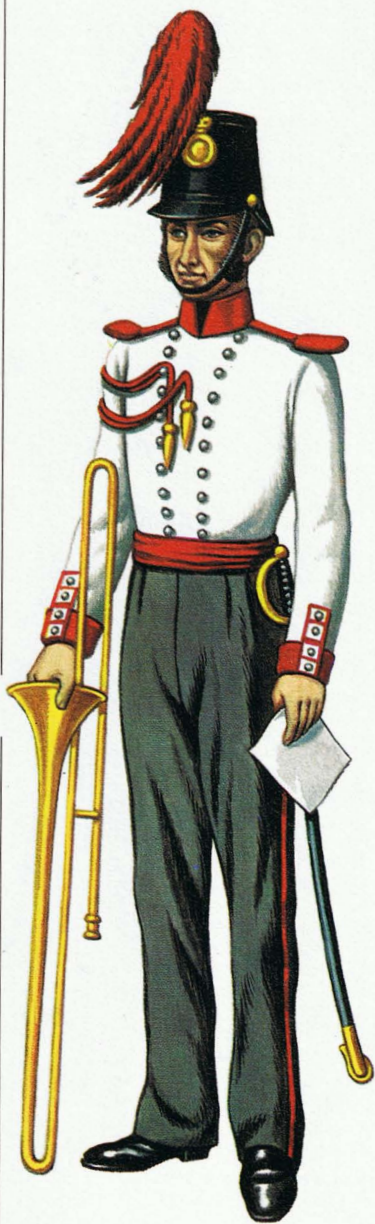


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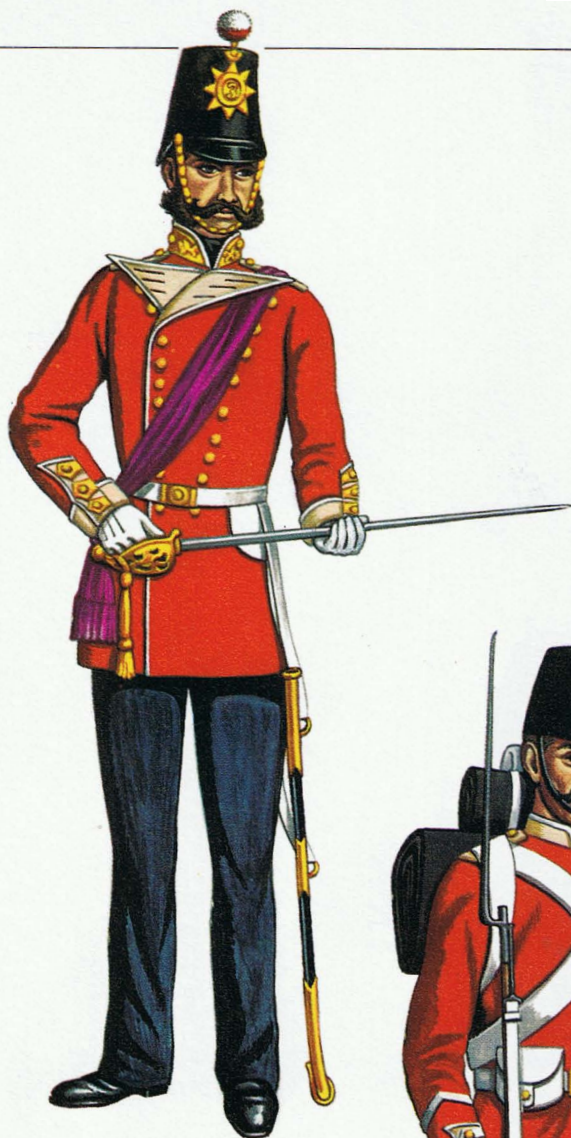


3

- 1 Private, 1814
2 Officer, Battalion Company, 1822
3 Officer, Grenadier Company, 1844



I



2



3

- I Bandsmen, 1852
2 Officer, 1855
3 Private, 1867

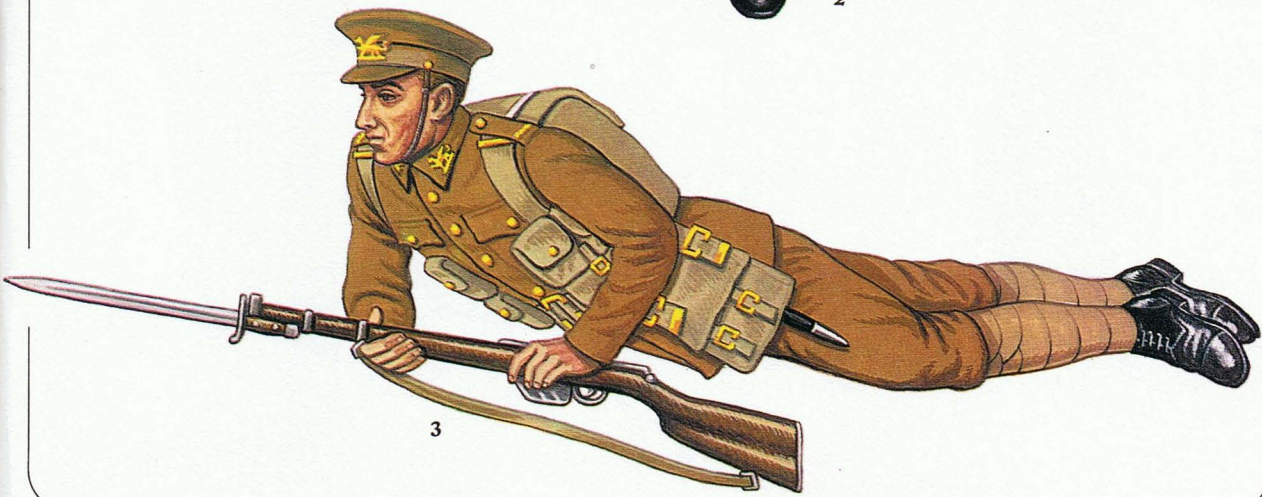


I

- 1 Officer, 1875
- 2 Sergeant, 1904
- 3 Private, 1930



2



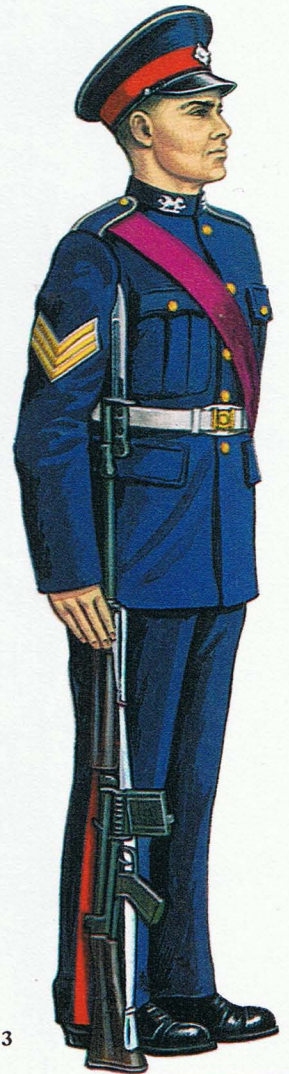
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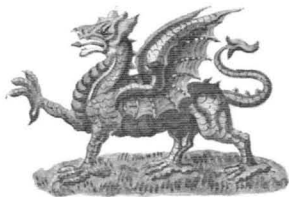
1 Sergeant, 1955
2 Drum-Major, 1931
3 Sergeant, 1961

Denmark was appointed Colonel-in-Chief of The Buffs. This renewed a link broken by the death of Prince George of Denmark in 1708; it was never again to be broken, King Christian X and King Frederik IX accepting the same appointment on succeeding their fathers in 1912 and 1947. It was in the full dress of the Buffs that King Frederik VIII attended the funeral of his brother-in-law, King Edward VII.

In 1908 the Buffs gained added strength by the conversion of the 1st and 2nd Volunteer Battalions into the fully integrated 4th and 5th Battalions, Territorial Force. At the same time the Militia was converted into the Special Reserve, which relegated the 3rd Buffs to the role of a reinforcement unit.

The 2nd Buffs had meanwhile begun another overseas tour. They returned to South Africa in 1905 and moved thence to Hong Kong in 1908-9, to Singapore at the end of 1910, and to India at the start of 1913. The 1st Buffs moved to Dublin in October 1910, after three busy years at Aldershot, and in September 1913 they moved to Fermoy, County Cork. It was from these stations that they were to set out for the most horrific of all wars.

The First World War



When war came in August 1914 the 1st Buffs were mobilized at Fermoy as part of the 6th Division. This division was held back from joining the B.E.F. through fear of a landing on the East Anglian coast, and the Buffs did not reach France until 11 September, after spending a month at



A Man of Kent as painted by Lady Butler in 1919

Cambridge. They came into action on the Aisne, where they promptly repelled an attack, and in mid-October they were moved to the area of Armentières. Starting with a sharp clash at Radinghem, their first spell in the line here lasted for thirty-four days, during which they staved off attacks by huge numbers of Germans.

The Buffs fought in khaki service dress and bore no distinctive features other than the dragons in their peaked caps and in their collars. The 1st were joined in February 1915 by the 2nd, who came with other regulars released by the despatch to India of territorial battalions, the 4th and 5th Buffs among them. Part of the 28th Division, the 2nd Buffs spent a bleak Christmas outside Winchester and on their move to Flanders were consigned to the worst of all sectors for troops from India, the freezing and water-filled trenches around Ypres.

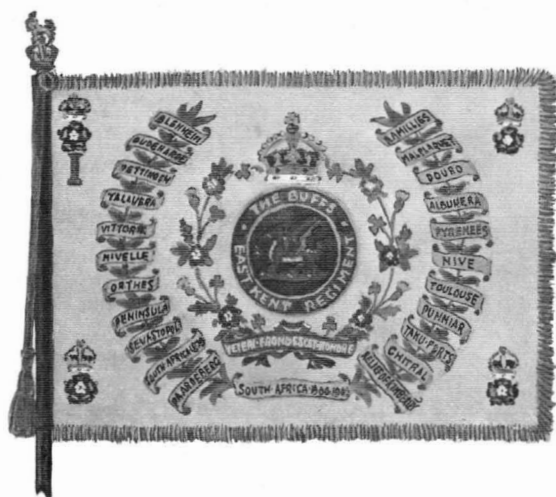
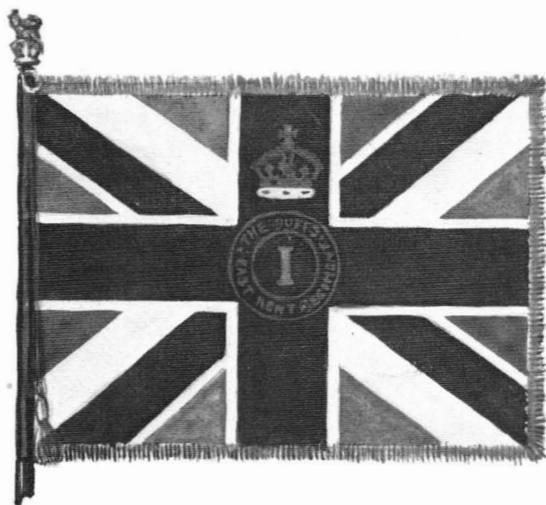
After much suffering here, the 2nd Buffs

happened to be out of the line when the Germans launched their first gas attack on 22 April 1915, cutting a four-mile gap in the Allied line. To plug this gap a scratch brigade was formed under the Buffs' commanding officer and named the Geddes Detachment after him. It succeeded in this task, at heavy cost to the Buffs, whose casualties included Geddes himself, killed just as his task was completed. They had to endure a further three weeks of hectic hanging on against an enormous weight of manpower and artillery before their part in this Second Battle of Ypres was done.

Between June and September 1915 three battalions of Kitchener's New Army, the 6th, 7th and 8th Buffs, came to France respectively with the 12th, 18th and 24th Divisions. The first two were broken gently to the art of trench warfare. The 8th were plunged straight away, after five days of marching, into the attack at Loos. In the course of a few hours they lost 24 officers and 614 men. On the following day (27 September) the 2nd Buffs were thrown in, to endure some grim close-quarter fighting that brought their casualties to 1,868 since their arrival in February. The 28th Division, still including the 2nd Buffs, was now removed to Macedonia.

The 6th Buffs were committed to a final fling at Loos and also suffered terrible losses for no gain. In the following March they were still in this area, grappling for a hold on the Hohenzollern Redoubt, when a local attack was made, in which Corporal Cotter gained an amazing Victoria Cross. With a leg blown off and both arms wounded, he wriggled forward fifty yards and for two hours inspired his men to repel a series of counter-attacks, even hurling bombs himself. He died a week later.

Wearing the newly issued steel helmets, the 7th Buffs were in the opening attack on the Somme, on 1 July 1916, with the successful right wing, and the 6th came in on 3 July in a vain attempt to redeem the failure on the left. The 8th entered the battle in August, attacking at Delville Wood, and the 1st in September, meeting tribulation at Flers and success at Morval. The 6th and 7th returned to endure the fury of Thiepval, Le Transloy, Ancre Heights, and the River Ancre. It ended in November with an attack by the 7th through mud, sleet, and a hail of machine-gun bullets,



The new colours as presented to the 1st Battalion on the parade ground of the Honourable Artillery Company by the Lord Mayor of London, the Right Honourable Walter Vaughan Morgan, 1906. The only difference from the former colours is the addition of the Indian Frontier and South African Honours, and the use of the Tudor Crown instead of the Crown of the Stuart and Hanoverian sovereigns

which none the less gained the objective. The fortitude of these men is a thing to be marvelled at.

For the 6th Buffs the Battle of Arras opened well enough in April 1917 with an attack by the River Scarpe, but both they and the 7th Buffs had further terrible experiences in the attempt to enlarge the gains. The 8th Buffs had a worthy share of Plumer's success at Messines and were in at the opening of the Third Battle of Ypres. The 7th came in for the agonizing ending in the mud of Passchendaele. The 1st and 6th Buffs had better luck. They mopped up behind the tanks in the attack towards Cambrai on 20 November, advancing four miles into the Hindenburg Line, but the 6th in particular had to fight desperately for survival when the Germans launched their counterblow.

The Territorials had meanwhile been fighting the Turk. From August 1915 to February 1916 the 4th Buffs stood at the gates of Aden, suffering more from disease than from the guns of the foe. They then returned to India. The 5th Buffs went to Mesopotamia in December 1915, forming part of the 35th Indian Brigade. They suffered heavily in the vain attempt to relieve Kut. In December 1916 they joined the advance made by Sir Stanley Maude, who was a son of the Buffs' first V.C. They had a brilliant success in February 1917, smashing the Turks' defences on the Dahra bend of the Tigris and hastening the fall of Kut. On 11 March they led Maude's army into Baghdad, after crossing the Tigris in native boats. This was the great climax for the 5th Buffs, and the remaining nine months of their campaigning were tedious by comparison.

In February 1917 two Yeomanry regiments in Egypt, the East Kent and the West Kent, were converted into infantry and amalgamated as the 10th Buffs. Joining the 74th Division, they took part in the gloomy closing stage of the Second Battle of Gaza. In October they formed part of the right hook whereby General Allenby won Beer-sheba and Gaza, and in December they had a stiff fight up a muddy ridge in the battle that drove the Turks out of Jerusalem. When about to continue the advance in early April 1918, they were ordered to embark with their division for France.

The 8th Buffs had been disbanded in February 1918, leaving only the 1st, 6th and 7th to contend



The Buffs taking the Château de Flandres, 8 October 1914. This picture appeared in the *Sphere* and was the work of Christopher Clark, who reconstructed the scene from eye-witness accounts

with the great offensive launched by the Germans in March. It smote the 7th in the forward zone of the Fifth Army's right corps. Two isolated companies held out for two days, while the remainder made a fighting withdrawal, which ended with refuge behind the French and a return to halt the Germans by the Avre. The 1st, in Third Army, met the onslaught in reserve positions and absorbed much of its momentum without themselves being swamped. The 6th Buffs were rushed from the First to the Third Army in time to stem the advance on the line of the Ancre.

When the first great counterblow was struck on 8 August, the 6th and 7th Buffs fought with the only British corps engaged. They subsequently hounded the Germans back over the bitterly familiar Somme battlefields in a most staunchly sustained offensive. In September the 10th Buffs joined in, after initiation on a quieter sector, and for the Battle of Epéhy, which began the collapse of the Hindenburg Line, the 1st Buffs were brought in from Ypres. All four battalions went into the attack on 18 September and battled on, with much tribulation, into the Hindenburg Line.

The 2nd Buffs were also advancing in Macedonia, after suffering more from malaria than from the Bulgars in the Struma valley. Their war ended on 30 September. In France there was still stiff fighting for every gain, by the 1st Buffs from Cambrai to the Selle, by the 7th from the Selle to beyond the Sambre, by the 6th up to the River Escaut, and by the 10th into Tournai on 8 November. There the fighting ended for the Buffs, with their roll of honour 5,688 names long.

Royal Regiment



The First World War removed the glamour from soldiering. The only uniform authorized for the infantryman on its conclusion was the khaki service dress, which made him inconspicuous when lying in the mud. It could, however, be made to look very smart, with the tunic well fitted and the trouser leg folded over the top of the puttee in a razor-sharp box-crease, and with flashes gleaming from the brass dragon in the cap, the dragons in the collar, the shoulder titles, and the nine dragon-crested buttons. But full dress remained in abeyance, and the ordinary soldier was no longer able to display the combination of buff and scarlet which had been famous as the uniform of his regiment ever since its earliest days as the Holland Regiment, if not earlier.

Full dress, however, was still worn by drummers and bandsmen when parading on their own, and certainly the drum-major, with magnificent buff sash, buff wings to his epaulettes, and a mace with a silver dragon on its top, kept alive the splendour that had once permeated the Regiment as a whole. Scarlet and buff were also to be seen as the mess kit of officers. It consisted of a short scarlet jacket with buff collar and cuffs, buff waistcoat, and blue, red-piped overalls.

Frock coats failed to survive the war, and blue patrol became the only authorized form of undress. It could be worn by other ranks at their own expense and was obligatory for sergeants. A blue side cap or scarlet-rimmed peaked cap was worn with it, and the buff piping on the side cap was the only display the men could make of the colour by which they were named.

Such was the attire evolved by the Buffs as they resumed their peacetime duties. The 1st Battalion

returned to Fermoy in 1919, having served briefly on the Rhine and taken over duties in Ireland from the 3rd Battalion, which passed into suspended animation. After some unpleasant warfare against the Sinn Feiners, the 1st Buffs returned to England in January 1922 and in April of that year they were despatched with all speed to Turkey, there to join the meagre force deployed around Chanak, with which General Harington succeeded in dissuading a resurgent Turkish army from reoccupying its capital.

The 2nd Buffs had already been to Turkey, having spent the first six months of peace at Constantinople. Following a brief recuperative period in England, they returned to India in November 1919. A year later they were moved to Iraq, to soothe the rebellious Kurds, and in 1922 they went on to Aden, spending a year here before returning to England in April 1923. In September of this year the 1st Buffs moved to Gibraltar, having taken over the role of overseas battalion, and in March 1927 they began their fifth and last tour of India. They were transferred to Burma in October 1930 and here took part in the suppression of a rebellion that broke out on Christmas Day. They returned to India in February 1935, being stationed at Lucknow.

In June 1935 the Buffs was made Royal, being among one cavalry and three infantry regiments so honoured by King George V in celebration of his Silver Jubilee. It could be claimed that the title was overdue, for Charles II had in fact con-



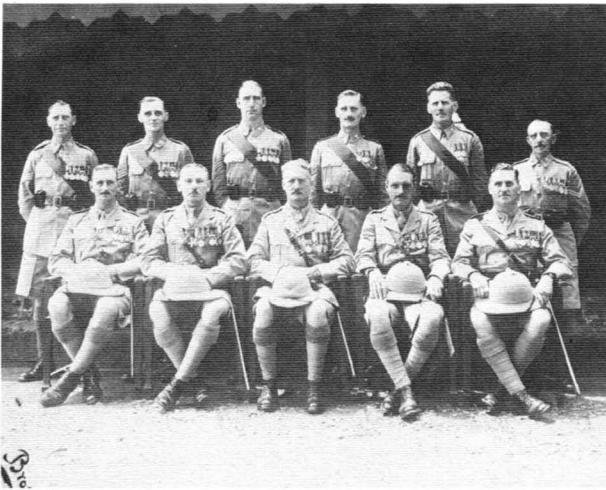
The Ancient Privilege – led by the Drums, the 2nd Buffs march past the Lord Mayor at the Mansion House after receiving their new colours from him in July 1928



Warrant officers and sergeants of the 2nd Buffs, with senior officers, Aldershot, 1929. It will be noted that moustaches are going out of fashion

ferred the status of 'royal' (i.e. 'of the King') by his use of the word 'Our' when commissioning the Holland Regiment, and the award of a royal badge in 1707 enhanced this status. But now that the King had graciously bestowed the mark of his favour there were complications, which were resolved by just as gracious a mark of favour. In place of the royal blue that should now have become the Buffs' distinctive colour, buff was allowed to be retained, and the title of 'The Buffs' was allowed to remain unadorned, the 'Royal' being put in the brackets that enclosed 'East Kent Regiment'. If it was a new precedent to allow a Royal regiment to retain its old colour, it was not unique, for it was conceded to the Buffs' colleagues in honour, the Northumberland Fusiliers and the Norfolk Regiment.

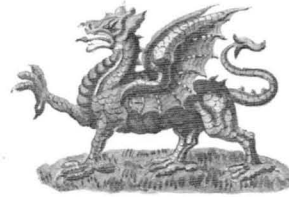
Rebellion in Palestine brought the Buffs back



Veterans of the 1st Buffs, India, 1934 - all are members of the battalion who had been serving at the outbreak of war in 1914

on active service. The 2nd went there from England in the autumn of 1936, returning after two months, with the rebels apparently quelled. They were in fact far from quelled, and in October 1938 the 1st Buffs were brought over from India to guard a railway line against constant attempts at wrecking. Having achieved this dangerous task with some loss, they were moved to Egypt in the summer of 1939 in order to strengthen the frontier defences at Mersa Matrûh.

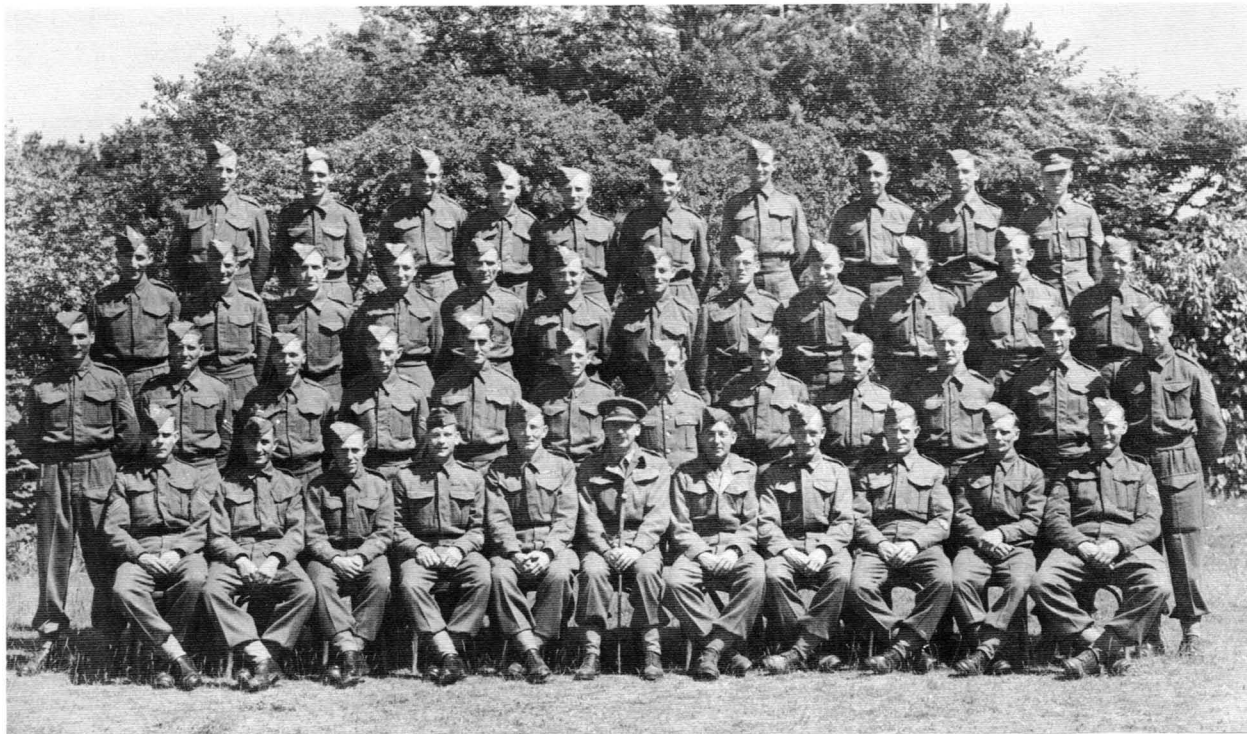
The Second World War



Being at an isolated station, the 2nd Buffs went to war in September 1939 as a pioneer battalion of the B.E.F. They were still wearing their service dress, in which the large number of reservists were clearly distinguishable from the serving regulars because they had no collar badges and had General Service buttons in place of regimental ones. On their heads, when not in steel helmets, the men wore unsightly khaki side caps. The officers sported their blue bobby ones. By Christmas the service dress had been exchanged for the baggy blouse and trousers of battle dress. It was an inelegant army.

The 4th Buffs came to France in November, and were assigned lines of communication duties; the 5th Buffs, who had been disbanded in 1921 and resuscitated in June 1939, arrived with the 12th Division in April 1940, also to be assigned menial employment.

At the start of May the 2nd Buffs joined a territorial division, the 44th Home Counties, and when the Germans invaded Belgium, they marched



The drabness of war – the commanding officer of the 11th Buffs with his warrant officers and sergeants soon after the battalion's raising in 1940. Most are regulars or reservists

to the River Escaut, where they had a stiff fight, which ended with their extrication from encirclement. The 5th Buffs had meanwhile been rushed northwards from the rear area and deployed around Doullens, without artillery support, to stem the panzer onrush. They were overwhelmed in a matter of hours, after a brave but hopeless fight. Only a few small groups managed to escape. The 2nd made a stand on the St Omer–La Bassée line, in which they did good work in a counter-attack but lost their headquarters group, cut off by a communications failure. They were evacuated from Dunkirk some 200 strong.

The 4th Buffs did not come into action until the Germans advanced on the Seine. With their flank turned, they carried out a hazardous withdrawal and were evacuated from Le Havre and Brest, except for two companies that were cut off. In October this battalion was sent to the defence of Malta, making a dash through the Mediterranean by battleship. There were seven newly raised battalions of the Buffs guarding the England they left.

The 1st Buffs had their first battle in June 1941,

on their return to Egypt after another visit to Palestine. Forming part of 22nd Guards Brigade, they stormed Fort Capuzzo and were later pulled out at speed because of failure elsewhere; their commanding officer was almost the only man killed. They subsequently joined the 4th Indian Division and were brought in to exploit Auchinleck's hard-won gains from his November offensive. Having made one successful attack, they took up a position by Alem Hamza, which the Germans succeeded in isolating. The Buffs repelled a strong attack on 14 December, but next day were attacked by forty tanks and a brigade of infantry and completely overwhelmed, after their artillery had been knocked out, gun by gun. Although only the quartermaster with thirty echelon details and the doctor with forty wounded escaped, the battalion was swiftly re-formed.

The 2nd Buffs reached Egypt, with the 44th Division, in July 1942. They fought at Alam el Halfa, making a costly attack in an attempt to throttle the German retreat. At El Alamein the 1st Buffs fought as the motorized infantry of the 8th Armoured Brigade, and after much grim

toiling through the minefields they at last burst out in their half-tracks and carriers to pursue a beaten enemy. The 2nd took part in a diversion on the left flank and went no further.

On 8 November 1942 the 5th Buffs, now with the 78th Division, landed on the Algerian coast and advanced into Tunisia. They had no joy in an attack on Green Hill (Jebel Azzag) in January 1943, but at the end of this month they smashed a powerful armoured attack made by the Germans in the Robaa Valley. The 1st Buffs meanwhile were well to the fore of Montgomery's advance towards Tunisia. They led his army into that country on 8 February, and in March joined the left hook round the Mareth Line and swept down upon its defenders with devastating effect. They then continued round the Akarit position. It was now the First Army's turn to attack, and the 5th Buffs scored a brilliant success by seizing the dominant Jebel Bech Chekouai in the hills above the Medjez Plain. They then showed equal dash in gaining the last peak of the formidable Long-stop Hill. Ten days later the enemy army, 250,000 strong, capitulated.

Having fought in their little motorized groups, the 1st Buffs displayed many eccentricities of dress, just as Wellington's men – and more so his officers – had done in the Peninsula. Now the desert fighters from the east had linked up with the hill fighters from the west, and as part of the process of making them look alike, all were issued with a new type of cap, an inelegant cross between beret and bonnet known as the cap G.S. (general service).

The 5th Buffs went to Sicily for the second phase of its invasion and fought for the high-perched town of Centuripe and for Monte Rivoglia. On 4 October 1943 they landed on the mainland of Italy, at the Adriatic port of Termoli, and survived a shock from German tanks. During the following two months they made an assault crossing of the Trigno and carried out some costly patrolling beyond the Sangro, at which point they were relieved.

Having upheld the morale of Malta under siege, the 4th Buffs were taken further east to the Greek island of Leros, suffering serious loss *en route* aboard a sinking destroyer. On 12 November the Germans invaded Leros from the sea and air,

having command of the latter. The Buffs fought with courage and distinction and were still clinging to their positions when on the 16th the Germans overran force headquarters and obtained the surrender of the island. The 4th Buffs ceased to exist.

Now part of the 18th Lorried Infantry Brigade, the 1st Buffs came to Anzio in February 1944 as reinforcement for the seriously diminished 1st Division. They did much to stabilize a tottering line. The 5th Buffs came to Cassino in March and endured heavy and incessant fire. When at last Cassino fell and the Anzio bridgehead erupted, both battalions joined the advance on Rome. The 5th continued far beyond Rome and pierced the Trasimene Line before being relieved for a rest in Egypt. The 1st returned after a local rest and were the first to enter Florence. They were then switched back to their parent division, the 1st Armoured, and enlarged the gains into the Gothic Line. The 5th were brought back for the closing phase of this battle, to meet tribulation in the bleak Apennines.

In the final battle in Italy, which began in April 1945, the 1st Buffs, now in the 56th Division, made a landing across the flooded shore of the Comacchio lagoon to lever open the Argenta Gap. More than half the assault troops were wiped out, but one important objective was seized and many prisoners taken. The 5th Buffs also played their part in forcing the Argenta Gap and in destroying the German army south of the Po, which gave the troops in Italy the first victory celebration.

There was no battalion of the Buffs in the battle for north-west Europe, but the dragon was to be seen in the black berets of the 141st R.A.C., into which the 7th Buffs had been converted. They were in it from start to finish and gained a great reputation for their close support work with flame and petard from their Churchill tanks.

The 2nd Buffs meanwhile had continued the itinerary that began with France, Belgium and Egypt. Leaving the 44th Division after El Alamein, they served with the 26th Indian Brigade in Syria, Iraq and Persia, in the last for ceremonial duty at the Tehran summit conference. They went on to India and in December 1944 were flown into Burma to join the 36th Division in its advance on Mandalay.

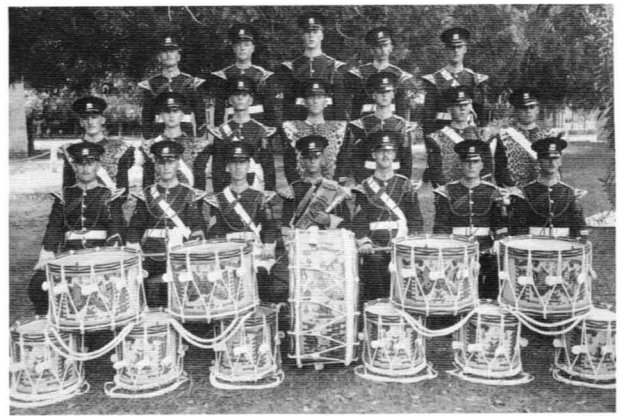
Having advanced against light opposition to the River Shweli, they made a crossing of this wide and fast-flowing river on 1 February 1945, believing the far bank to be unheld. The Japanese sprang to life after the first company had crossed and shattered two that attempted to follow. A very shallow bridgehead was held against some determined attacks and was successfully evacuated just before dawn on the 2nd. The river was subsequently crossed with greater deliberation at a different place, and, having helped beat off a counter-attack, the Buffs advanced as far as Mandalay, whence they were withdrawn for an operation that was to be forestalled by peace, the invasion of Malaya.

A further 2,990 officers and men of the Buffs lost their lives in this war. Their names, like the names of those killed in the First World War, are inscribed in a Book of Life that rests in Canterbury Cathedral.

The Final Years



Peace brought some rude shocks. Having moved from Italy to Greece, the 1st Buffs received a shattering order in March 1947 placing the battalion in suspended animation. It accompanied the introduction of the Group System, under which officers and men of the Buffs were made eligible for service with any of the six other regiments forming the Home Counties Brigade. This brought measures of standardization, of which the most irritating for the Buffs was a veto on the three sleeve buttons that they asked for on the new number 1 dress that was to replace the blue patrol. They also submitted to the colour of scarlet as the standard background of the cloth shoulder titles on battle dress, which was the only uniform in general use.



The Corps of Drums could still provide a touch of pageantry, seen here in Khartoum in 1950

The 2nd Buffs reached Singapore in November 1945, and in January 1946 were detached for five months in quelling the Indonesian rising in Java. In January 1947 they moved to Hong Kong, where they wore olive-green drill (or battle dress in winter) and white equipment, with the men still in the cap G.S. and officers in berets. In September 1948 the 2nd changed its title to the 1st, on the arrival of a cadre with the 1st's colours; officially the two battalions amalgamated. After a spell of frontier duty, opposite the army of Red China, the Buffs moved to Khartoum. They were there from January to December 1950, when they returned to England.

They arrived with their equipment proclaiming them to be the Buffs, being coloured by a mixture made, in the tradition of Connellan, at regimental expense while they were in Hong Kong. This, typically, had now to be replaced by a greener-coloured blanco of an approved army shade. However, there were two embellishments at this time: the cap G.S. was replaced by a blue beret, and officers had new-style baratheia peaked caps, adorned with silver dragons in place of the bronze ones that had matched the dullness of khaki since its introduction.

The scarlet and buff full dress could still be caught sight of on occasions, for it was worn by the Corps of Drums at the Regiment's expense. The official wear for both Band and Drums was the blue number 1 dress, with yellow decorated wings and lanyards which were not at all pleasing to the eye of a Buff. An issue of it was made before the Buffs took over public duties in London in the



On public duties, July 1951. The Buffs have just handed back the Palace to scarlet-clad Guardsmen. The only post-war embellishment was the issue of blue berets

summer of 1951. The remainder of the battalion had to wear their battle dress, making weird contrast with the scarlet of the Guards they relieved.

An emergency call sent the Buffs to Egypt in November 1951, there to be frequently fired upon (with five officers among those hit) by Egyptian policemen attempting to remove the British garrison. Having subdued the policemen, they returned to England in October 1952, and in April 1953 they went off to deal with another emergency, the Mau Mau rising in Kenya. Wearing olive-green uniform, they slew many Mau Mau at minimal loss to themselves. They returned to England again in December 1954 and in May 1955 received new colours from their last Colonel-in-Chief, King Frederik of Denmark, on the Canterbury county cricket ground. The dress for this notable parade was again battle dress, but buff and scarlet were in evidence at the evening celebrations, officers' mess kit having been reintroduced.

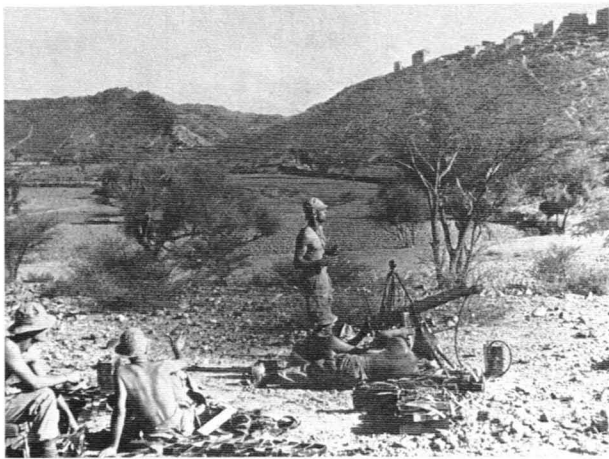
The Buffs then went to Germany and there, in July 1957, they received the gloomy news that the regular element was to amalgamate with the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment. This



Honoured in Nairobi. Having brought their campaign against the Mau Mau to its end, the Buffs march through the city by invitation of the Mayor. November 1954



Canterbury, May 1955 – new colours from the Colonel-in-Chief, King Frederik IX of Denmark



The last operation – machine-gunners in action in Dhala, Aden Protectorate, April 1958

was not to happen, however, until the second phase, and in February–March 1958 the Buffs moved to Aden and its Protectorate, where they had some action against rebel tribesmen in Dhala. They returned to Germany in 1959 and on 14 October they had to remove the dragon from their caps and put in its place the Saxon sword and crown devised as the badge of the Home Counties Brigade. To alleviate this indignity they put dragons on their battle-dress collars, obtained at regimental expense.

The 1st Buffs made their last return to England in November 1960, to be greeted at Folkestone by many veterans, and on 1 March 1961 they were joined together with the Royal West Kent to form The Queen's Own Buffs, The Royal Kent Regiment. A ceremonial parade was held at Shorncliffe to mark this event, and the men at last had an issue of the number 1 dress to wear for it,

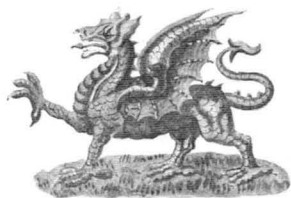
with buff piping (which was to remain) round their epaulettes. This was because it was again a volunteer army – and this in turn was the sad, ironical reason why the Buffs' one remaining regular battalion could not retain its separate entity.

Nevertheless, the two territorial battalions were still alive, retaining the individuality of the Buffs; the 5th had again been disbanded in 1946 and had been resurrected in a different locality in 1959. They had a day of glory in July 1960, when they too received new colours from the Colonel-in-Chief at Canterbury; but they could not survive the reorganization of the Territorial Army decreed by the Minister of Defence, Denis Healey, in 1965, and on 1 April 1967 they were merged into the newly formed Queen's Regiment, of which the Queen's Own Buffs had already become part. It was the end of the Buffs, but their traditions live on, embodied in the dragon, which forms the central badge of the Queen's Regiment.



The last of the Buffs – territorials of the 5th Battalion, who together with the 4th kept the Regiment alive for six years after the departure of the 1st Battalion

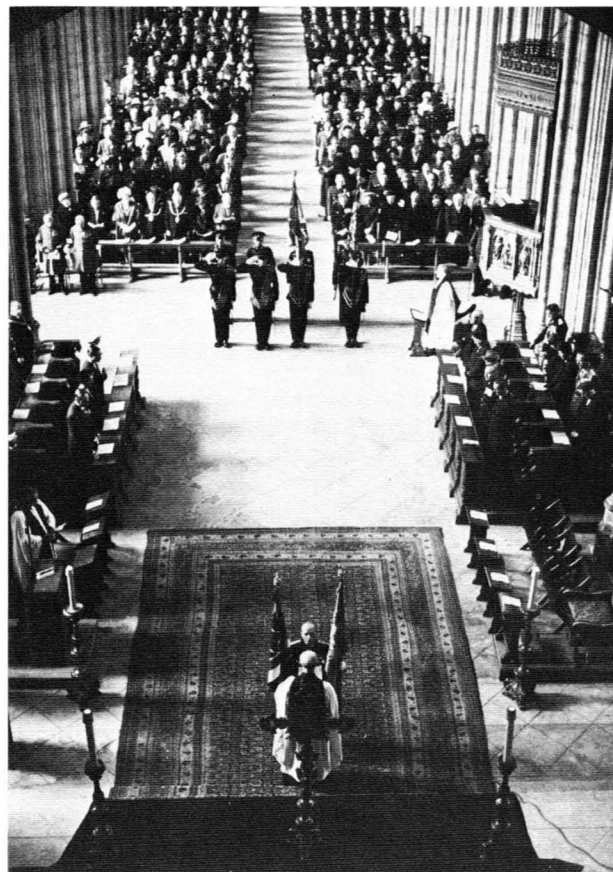
The Plates



A1 Private, Holland Regiment, 1684

After the contingent of which Morgan's Company had been the nucleus returned from service in the Netherlands, King Charles II, in 1665, formed them into a single regiment, which he named 'Our Holland Regiment of foote'.

No direct evidence has been discovered as to how the men were clothed, although one report



The last rites – the colours of the 1st Buffs are handed over to the Dean for safe-keeping in Canterbury Cathedral

of 1667 states, 'red jackets lined with yellow', and Nathan Brooks's *Army List* of 1684 describes the uniform as 'coated red, lined with a flesh colour'. This 'yellow lining' and 'flesh colour' were presumably different descriptions of the same colour – the buff which had been in evidence since 1572.

This private's red jacket would indeed have been lined with buff-coloured material, and the same colour appears for his strong kersey breeches. He also wears a white neck-cloth and a broad-brimmed black felt hat. Among his equipment each musketeer carried a bandolier of twelve cartridges, a powder horn and priming flask.

A2 Officer of Pikemen, 1572

In 1572 Captain Thomas Morgan picked 300 men from the Trained Bands of the City of London and enrolled them as 'pikemen and shot' into a company under his command. The uniform worn by these men varied considerably, but records suggest that men of the Trained Bands wore buffalo leather jerkins, and thus similar jerkins of rough raw-hide buff may have been worn by Morgan's Company. Over their jerkins the pikemen wore breastplates, of which they had good need as it was their duty to protect the musketeers while reloading. The breastplates had shoulder-straps, or 'pauldrons', edged with red. It is difficult to say exactly what head-dress was worn at this time, but there seems little doubt that as well as being issued with a black felt hat, 'murrains' or steel helmets as worn by gunners appear also to have been worn by pikemen. The buff kersey stockings and neat leather shoes of the pikemen of the Trained Bands have also been retained, and all pikemen carried a sword suspended from a buff sling as well as the 18-foot pike.

A3 Caliverer, 1603

The caliverers, or gunners, were so named because of the make of light musket they carried. These 'calivers' were designed so that they did not require an aiming rest. Details of dress are again subject to variation, and these variations are due not only to a possible dissimilarity between the several corps of the Trained Bands, but in the difference in equipment and clothing worn by 'pikemen and shot'. However, this caliverer is shown wearing the most likely form of uniform:

steel murrain; doublet and breeches of buff; boots in place of the neat shoes worn by pikemen. Accoutrements would necessarily include a powder horn and priming flask suspended from the waist-belt, a spare match, cleaning rod and a sword.

B1 Sergeant, 1702

Very little difference appeared between the uniform of officers and men at this time, 'Sergeants and corporals are to be clothed in the same manner as soldiers, but everything is to be better of its kind . . .' quoted one reference. This sergeant wears a coat of a slightly different shade of red, and it is adorned with his crimson sergeant's sash. Also denoting his rank is the white worsted epaulette on the right shoulder, and the halberd he carries was issued only to sergeants. Both cuffs and breeches are buff once again, while the felt hat has been modified slightly by fastening it up at both sides. This was the early stage in the development towards the tricorne. As it was worn by a sergeant, this hat would have been edged with silver lace.

B2 Private, 1743

The first authentic picture of the uniform worn by the Regiment appeared in this year. The hat has now been fastened up, or 'cocked', on three sides to form the tricorne, and this is edged with white tape. The coat is still buff-lined and is long. In about 1740 the front skirts were ordered to be turned back so as to facilitate marching, and the buff lining can clearly be seen for the first time. There are large gauntlet cuffs of buff, with embroidered lace edging, and the front of the coat is similarly elaborately lapelled and faced around the buttons with buff. Both waistcoat and breeches are now also red, the former again buff-lined. White leggings with black garters are worn over the stockings, this being an innovation earlier in the century. Shoes are black.

Accoutrements differed from those of the 17th century, and a private would wear a large buff waist-belt and an even wider buff shoulder-strap for his cartridge pouch or cartouche. This contained ammunition for the flintlock musket introduced in the latter part of Queen Anne's reign.

According to records the Buffs were the first regiment to be issued with this leather equipment, said to be of buffalo hide.

B3 Grenadier, 1751

In April 1678 a grenadier arm had been introduced into the Regiment. Each man carried a flintlock musket with a sling, a bayonet, hatchet, cartridge box, a pouch containing three hand-grenades, and a match-case attached to his cross-belt. The dress of the grenadiers had always differed from that of other ranks, and this became even more noticeable with the wearing of a mitre cap and winged epaulettes. In 1751 a Royal Warrant was issued by which all infantry were to wear lapels, which either buttoned across or were thrown open, and the same Warrant also standardized the colour of the facings to be worn by regiments. In the case of the 3rd Regiment, or Buffs, this was confirmed as 'buff'. The skirts were still turned back at the front, and the coat and cuffs edged with black, crimson and yellow binding. The Buffs were among the few regiments authorized by the Warrant to display badges, and then it was only the grenadiers whose mitre caps bore the green dragon. The badge rested against a buff background with below it the white horse of Hanover and the motto *Nec Aspera Terrent*.

C1 Drummer, 1751

By the Royal Warrant of this year, both musicians and drummers of the Buffs were to wear uniforms of reversed colouring – buff coats with scarlet lining and facings – laced with black, crimson and yellow on a white background. All drummers wore the grenadier cap, bearing the Royal Cipher and Crown, white horse of Hanover and regimental badge. The green dragon also adorned the drums, and the same device displaying the regimental number appeared on the drums as on the regimental colours. Breeches, long white leggings and shoes are exactly as worn by the grenadiers.

C2 Grenadiers, 1768

In 1768, by a Royal Warrant, the mitre cap of the grenadiers was abolished and black bearskin caps were substituted for both officers and men. In the Buffs the King's Crest and motto and the

dragon were worn on the front of these caps, whilst a grenade appeared at the back. As a further result of this Warrant, the infantry coat underwent alterations. It became shorter and tighter, the collar higher in the neck following Prussian influence, and the front was cut away instead of being fastened back. Lapels were now permanently turned back to reveal the buff facings, and buttons were stamped with the numeral '3' and looped across the lapels with yellow, black and crimson regimental lacing. This was to remain the Buffs' distinctive lacing. White gaiters have been replaced by black.

C3 Officer, 1792

Since 1770 the old three-cornered hat had been taking a new shape. By 1790 the back and front peaks were turned up so high that they had to be laced into position. The black feathers were purchased at the men's own expense, and, according to an Inspection Report of 1791, cost 'from 10 pence to one shilling each'. Officers' hats were bound with silver tape, whereas those of the men were bound in white. The uniform of officers and men differed very little: a scarlet coat cut back like morning dress and fastened with silver or white metal buttons; buff facings, cuffs and waistcoat, and breeches worn with black gaiters and shoes. In the case of an officer, all lace on the coat is silver, and his rank is further denoted by the wearing of a single silver epaulette, a silver gorget – worn only on duty – and a crimson sash around the waist. All officers carried a sword, and the sword-belt appears to have changed from buff leather to white since the Warrant of 1768. The white metal belt-plate carries the regimental number and motto, *Veteri frondescit honore*.

D1 Sergeant, Battalion Company, 1803

From 1796 to 1802 a number of changes in the dress of the infantry soldier took place. In 1803 the infantry coat of N.C.O.s and men of the Buffs had become a single-breasted coatee with short tails, cut to the waist in front and to the seat behind, with high buff collar, cuffs and bars of buff across the front. Breeches and gaiters continued to be the general form of dress, though tight-fitting pantaloons were sometimes worn. On 24 February 1800

the wearing of a peaked stove-pipe cap, copied from the Austrian infantry shako, was authorized, and only officers continued to wear a cocked hat. This shako was at first made of black lacquered leather, 7 inches high and about 6½ inches wide across the top. A brass plate at the front bore the regimental badge, and the cap was further adorned by a worsted plume, this being white for the Grenadier Company, green for Light Companies and red-and-white for all other companies. Epaulettes have been abolished for sergeants and corporals, and chevrons can now be seen on the right upper arm.



The Drum-Major's sash. He wore this when marching at the head of the battalion as if its herald. The emblems shown down the centre are, from the top: the 'Sun in Splendour', which was the badge of Oglethorpe's Holland Regiment; the Dragon; the Rose and Crown; the White Horse of Kent; the cipher of the Royal House of Denmark, and the White Horse of Hanover, carried of old by grenadiers. On either side of these devices appear the Battle Honours

D2 Officer, Battalion Company, 1803

While other ranks were wearing the short coatee, officers, when in full dress or off duty, retained the uniform coat with long tails. The coatee as worn by N.C.O.s and men was worn only when the officer was on duty. Officers also retained their cocked hats, and these were now worn cross-wise. White breeches and knee boots are worn in normal dress, as well as white or blue pantaloons with hessian boots, while on ceremonial occasions an officer would wear white breeches with black gaiters.

D3 Private, 1792

There is little difference between this and the officer's uniform of the same period, except that possibly the private's coat would have been of poorer quality cloth. His hat was edged with white tape in place of silver, and, similarly, instead of silver lacing on his coat the regimental yellow, black and crimson lace appears. Neither gorget, sash nor epaulette are worn, of course, and cross-belts replace the officers' single sword-belt.

E1 Private, 1814

Blue-grey trousers are now the standard issue for the men. The red, single-breasted coat with regimental lace, buff collar and cuffs, and white cross-belts is still worn. Up to 1800 the greatcoat was not a general issue, but after the campaign in Holland in 1806 it was decided that all N.C.O.s and men should be provided with a greatcoat of a stout grey material, fitted with a cape. This can be seen rolled on top of the pack of this private of 1814, and fastened with white tape. The stove-pipe-pattern head-dress worn by the men was so similar to that worn by the French that, in order to avoid confusion in battle, it was changed to the Wellington shako in about 1811. This was made of black felt and was 7 inches high at the front, sloping to about 6 inches at the back, with coloured plumes as for the previous style of shako, and further ornamented with cap-lines of gold and crimson for officers and white for other ranks. None of this ornamentation can be seen on the private's shako, as in service dress he wears a waterproof cover over his head-dress.

E2 Officer, Battalion Company, 1822

Yet another change has taken place in the form of head-dress. This officer is wearing the highly ornate 'Regency' shako, authorized on 22 August 1815. Made of black felt, it was 7½ inches high, 11 inches across the top and ornamented with a white plume 12 inches high, gold cap-lines and a plate bearing the Battle Honours to which the Regiment was entitled. Grenadier and Light Company troops continued to wear the bearskin cap. Short, service-dress coats have now been abolished, and officers appear wearing buff-fronted, double-breasted coats with wide lapels. This period was one of great elaboration in uniform, and buttons, epaulettes, gorget and lace are now all gold or gilt.

E3 Officer, Grenadier Company, 1844

Officers now wear scarlet tunics in battle in place of the blue frock coat worn in the 1820s, the distinctiveness of which had caused so many men to be killed in Afghanistan. The only visible sign of the facing colour appears on the cuffs. All other lace and braid is still gold. Trousers could be either dark blue, black or grey. As a grenadier, this officer wears a bearskin cap in place of the 'Albert' shako introduced in 1844.

F1 Bandsman, 1852

While the wearing of plumes had been abolished for other ranks in favour of pompon tufts, the bandsman is still resplendent with full plume on his 'Albert' shako. This form of head-dress was introduced on 4 December 1843 and made of black 'beavor' with small peaks at front and back. The white coat was introduced shortly after 1830 for both bandsmen and drummers, and this was worn until 1873 when they were clothed in scarlet.

F2 Officer, 1855

This figure shows the first pattern of double-breasted tunic introduced about 1854 to replace the coatee. This was a big and important change in uniform history. The jacket is of uniform length, below the hips, and of a fairly loose fit. Buff is displayed on the lapel facing as well as on collar



Lieutenant C. P. Lloyd, the Buffs, photographed at Hong Kong, May 1882. This photograph shows the forage cap with the dragon and figure '3'. The '3' had been removed by an Army Order of 1881, but this order had probably not been received in Hong Kong when this photograph was taken. The uniform jacket is the 'patrol' pattern as worn at the period

Lieutenant W. H. Booth, the Buffs, 1883. The forage cap with the '3' removed. He also wears the 'patrol' pattern jacket



and cuffs. These lapels could be worn closed or with the tops turned down. White piping edged the collar, cuffs, slashes and shoulder-straps. Epaulettes went out with the coatee and have been replaced by a complicated system of shoulder badges and lace. At the same time a small shako with chinstrap was issued, and blue trousers replaced the grey or white ones. This officer's crimson sash has now moved from around the waist, and is worn over the left shoulder where it is kept in place by a narrow crimson cord. The shoulder-belt which officers had worn for many years to carry their sword has been abolished, and replaced by a waist-belt of enamelled white leather with slings from which to suspend the sword. The belt was fastened with a round clasp bearing the regimental badge and number.

F3 Private, 1867

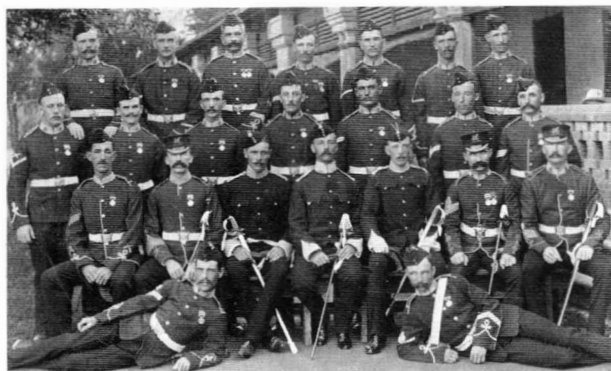
In 1856 the loose, double-breasted jacket was replaced by a closer fitting tunic, single-breasted with a tight collar. This was to remain the standard form of full dress for as long as this was worn. The private of 1868 wears this jacket, trimmed with white piping and with buff collar and cuffs. His short leather gaiters were ordered to be worn in wet muddy weather, and he still wears the grey-black trousers in place of the dark blue issue now standard.

G1 Officer, 1875

The shako shown in this illustration was the last of the French pattern, worn up to 1878, when a blue cloth spiked helmet was introduced. Again, this shako differed only slightly from the previous design. For the men it had white piping around the top and bottom and down the sides, while for officers, as shown here, the shako was edged in gold. The tunic is of the scarlet Indian pattern, and dragon badges now appear on the collar. Trousers are the dark blue tweed issue of 1873.

G2 Sergeant, 1904

An entirely new form of head-dress has appeared. The year 1878 saw the introduction of the blue cloth helmet with large gilt eight-pointed star and centre plate. Made of cork and covered with blue cloth, those worn by officers and N.C.O.s bore a



A company group, officers and N.C.O.s, 1st Buffs, India, 1899. The buff cuffs and collar of the officers' tunics show them to be scarlet undress. Note that the soldiers' tunics have looped piping in place of full buff cuffs, being the lightweight Indian pattern. All wear the Frontier medal, and Corporal Smith, in the centre of the back row, also wears the Victoria Cross

gilt helmet plate bearing the star surmounted by a crown, the Garter and motto, and within the Garter the dragon badge. This sergeant is in full dress and wears a tunic of scarlet serge, with a crimson sergeant's sash. Buff appears on collar and cuffs only. With the coming of the First World War full-dress uniform was sadly to go into abeyance in favour of khaki.

G3 Private, 1930

At the close of the First World War the only uniform authorized for the infantryman was the khaki service dress, with field service or side cap. Up to about 1925 the khaki drill was of a sandy shade or light brown. Later it was changed to a greener shade. The jacket is buttoned to the neck, and the collar bears two small bronze dragon badges, one on either side. Trousers are worn with short puttees.

H1 Sergeant, 1955

After the Second World War, khaki battle dress continued to be the general dress of the infantry soldier. The collar is now turned down and has lapels, and the khaki shirt is worn with a collar and tie. The unpopular cap G.S. of the early 1940s has been abolished, and in its place is a blue beret adorned with a silver dragon. Officers at this time wore peaked caps.

H2 Drum-Major, 1931

By pleasant contrast with the dullness of khaki, the full-dress uniform was still worn by drummers and bandsmen when on parade, and the drum-major with magnificent buff sash, or 'baldric', winged epaulettes and mace bearing a silver dragon re-created the splendour that had once permeated the Regiment as a whole. The scarlet jacket once again bears the regimental facing colour on collar and cuffs.

H3 Sergeant, 1961

The blue number 1 dress as worn on 1 March 1961 at the ceremonial parade to mark the amalgamation of the Regiment with the Royal West Kent to form The Queen's Own Buffs, The Royal Kent Regiment.

This uniform is based on the style authorized in 1947 as 'walking out' dress for officers, and a similar style for men. Previously, the blue patrol jacket and trousers were only worn by officers at social functions or when on duty without troops, and by such N.C.O.s and men who cared to *buy* it.

The new uniform jacket had a high 'patrol' collar, two breast pockets with box pleats and buttons, side pockets and a cloth belt with a brass buckle. The trousers had a narrow red band down the side seams and black shoes were generally worn with dark blue socks. By 1958 the wearing of this uniform had extended down the ranks to corporals, and at the end of this year yet another number 1 dress was produced. This even smarter uniform is that worn by the sergeant in 1961. The jacket is of a finer material, rather longer, and cut more on civilian lines. All piping is buff, as is the waist-belt. The uniform head-dress is a smart peaked cap with red band, and the cap badge is now that of the Home Counties Brigade. This badge, bearing the Saxon sword and crown, was ordered to be exchanged for the dragon when the Regiment served in Germany in 1959. At regimental expense the dragons were retained on the collars of the battle dress, and from then on were worn there in all forms of dress.

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GREGORY BLAXLAND held a regular commission in The Buffs for fifteen years; then, in 1954, he was forced to retire through illness, and turned from soldiering to writing. Among the many articles and books he has written on varied subjects, those dealing with political and military affairs include *J. H. Thomas: A Life for Unity*; *The Farewell Years: The Buffs, 1948-67*; and *Amiens 1918*. His most recent work is a detailed history of the British Army from 1945 to 1970 entitled *The Regiments Depart*.

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