

**1920 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE**  
**1st Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY**

**THE 1st BATTALION IN 1920.**

**REORGANIZATION, OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 1919.**

THE work of reconstructing the 43rd was now to begin; that is, the organizing and training for war of an infantry battalion, at the same time inculcating all ranks with the ritual of peace-time soldiering and imbuing them with the spirit of the Regiment.

The task rested with the few officers and other ranks who remained of the pre-war army, and was one which demanded unremitting attention for a long period in undisturbed conditions. Such conditions, it was hoped, would be found at Ripon.

The situation in the United Kingdom did not permit of this; within a little more than a month the Cadre was ordered to Ireland, where reconstruction was to take place; in the middle of January 1920 two companies were ordered on detachment in circumstances which amounted to active service under peace conditions; and by the middle of March the whole Regiment, which was still struggling for existence, was similarly employed.

At a conference held at the Depot, officers were posted to 43rd and 52nd according to their wishes, subject to War Office approval, and non-commissioned officers were also posted. It was arranged that the 43rd should take over half the paper strength of the 52nd in addition to the men who had been in North Russia.

Orders were received early in November for the 43rd to proceed to Ireland; and on the 25th the move to Cork was carried out, the marching-in strength being one officer and 9 other ranks, who were attached to the 52nd in Victoria Barracks, Cork.

Major C. F. Henley rejoined and took over command on 28th November, followed by Captain and Quartermaster A. E. Mason on 30th, while Lieut. H. E. F. Smyth (Adjutant), Lieut. R. C. Warren, and 2nd Lieut. C. A. Sawyer arrived a few days later.

On 10th December the Band, 45 strong, and 7 other ranks joined from the Regimental Depot. Having now collected a nucleus on which to form, four companies were prepared on paper, ready to receive drafts and transfers on arrival.

During December information was received that the station for the Battalion was Ballyvonare Hutments, near Buttevant, and that the move was to take place on the 8th January. In consequence, Lieut. C. H. Murray and 10 men as an advance party left Cork on 15th December to take over the huts.

**1920 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE**  
**1st Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY**

**1920. SERVICE IN IRELAND.**

The anticipation of difficulties of reconstruction foreshadowed at the end of 1919 was more than fulfilled.

The political situation in Ireland steadily grew worse, the railway service gradually wasted, and finally, except for mail service on the main lines, stopped altogether. This necessitated the carriage by road of all military personnel and material, with armed escorts on each vehicle.

The work of patrolling the city, alternating with escort duties, constituted an incessant demand for N.C.O.'s and men, and that in small parties only, so that the normal training of the soldier, except occasionally as an individual, became impracticable. The nature of the enemy and his methods of murder (war it cannot be called) were such as to place an almost intolerable strain on the self-restraint of a fully trained disciplined soldier. But the experience was not all bad, inasmuch as it impressed on all ranks the need of vigilance and self-reliance, and this is bound to have good effect on subsequent training.

The making of the Regiment went on, and though a battalion had not resulted, though drill and interior economy left much to be desired, yet there were four companies, and, in the words of the Brigade Commander, the spirit of the Regiment was practically that of the unit in 1914. That this spirit should have grown up in spite of unnecessarily harassing and dangerous work, in spite of a life spent in quarters long since condemned as unfit for Irish Militia and Irish paupers, overcrowded, and in every other discomfort, speaks well for the older ones of all ranks who taught the spirit, and for all the others who observed it.

The following is a summary of the Battalion Diary :—

*2nd January 1920.*—The advanced party of the Battalion under Major G. E. Whittall, M.C., with Captain and Quartermaster A. E. Mason, Lieut. G. J. Beckett, and 45 other ranks, left Cork for Ballyvonare Camp, near Buttevant.

*January 5th.*—Information received that Lieut.-Colonel F. H. Stapleton, C.M.G. (still in Mesopotamia), has been appointed to command the Battalion.

*January 7th.*—Leave details, under Major J. T. Weatherby, D.S.O., arrived at Ballyvonare.  
Strength, 150 other ranks.

*January 8th.*—The Battalion under Major C. F. Henley moved from Cork to Ballyvonare.  
Strength, 10 officers and 295 other ranks.

**1920 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE**  
**1st Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY**

*January 13th.*—The Battalion was formed, and officers were posted as follows :—  
Major C. F. Henley, temporarily in command.  
Lieut, H. E.F. Smyth, M.C., Adjutant.

*A Company.*—Major J. T. Weatherby, D.S.O.;  
Captain G. Naylor, M.C.;  
Lieuts. E. Holt, M.C., F. C. L. A. Lowndes, M.C., G. J. Beckett;  
2nd Lieuts. C. A. Sawyer, E. A. Oakeley  
(C.-S.-M, W. Headdon; C.-Q.-M.-S. A. Lawrence).

*B Company.*—Captain W. E. C. Terry;  
Lieuts. C. B. Crawford, J E. H. Neville, M.C., R. C. Warren, M.C., J. W. Shaw, K.  
S. Jefferson  
(C.-S.-M. W. Bowden; C.-Q.-M.-S. A. Preston).

*C Company.*—Captain K. Horan;  
Lieuts. D. C. Colvill, M.C., S. C. P. Slattery, W. T. Trengrouse;  
2nd Lieut. D. S. Newton-King  
(C.-S.-M. H. Hodgson; C.-Q.-M.-S. E. Grimshaw, M.M.).

*D Company.*—Major G. E. Whittall, M.C.;  
Captain D. Murphy;  
Lieuts. C. H. Murray, D. J. L, Lethbridge;  
2nd Lieut. J. B. Jarvis  
(C.-S.-M. F. Bovington; C.-Q.-M.-S. A. Weymouth).

Regimental S.-M. A. J. Cowley.  
Regimental Q.-M.-S. C. Moody.  
Orderly Room Sergeant G. Ridgway.

*January 13th.*—Lieut. J. S. Fenwick posted to the Battalion, joining 1st March (B Company).

*January 17th.*—C and D Companies (under Major G. E. Whittall, M.C.) to Strand Barracks, Limerick, on detachment.

*January 20th.*—Major A. E. Sanderson, D.S.O., posted to the Battalion.

*January 31st.*—2nd Lieut. E. T. A. Lumby posted to the Battalion on first appointment, joining 28th February (A Company);  
Major R. Stephens granted leave pending retirement  
During January, 2 corporals and 28 men joined.

*February 2nd.*—Lieut. E. McEvoy posted to the Battalion from attached R.A.F.

*February 11th.*—Lieut. A. B. Hamilton and 25 other ranks to Limerick.

*February 16th.*—Operations against Sinn Feiners: a party of B Company employed with party of East Lancs Regiment.

**1920 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE**  
**1st Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY**

*February 17th.*—Inspection and presentation of medals by Brigadier-General Coffin, V.C., Commanding Limerick Brigade.

*February 25th.*—Lieut. R. C. Warren, M.C., to be Assistant Adjutant; 54 Recruits joined from the Depot during February.

*March 9th.*—B Company to Tulla, on detachment.

*March 20th.*—Major J. T. Weatherby, D.S.O., took over temporary command from Major C. F. Henley, on sick leave.

*March 21st.*—Major A. E. Sanderson, D.S.O., rejoined.

*March 25th.*—Captain W. E. C. Terry to be Staff Captain (Q), 6th Division.

*March 29th.*—Major J. T. Weatherby, D.S.O., awarded *Legion of Honour*.  
Lieut.-Colonel C. G. Higgins, C.M.G., D.S.O., posted to the Battalion.  
Thirty other ranks joined or rejoined in March.

*April 2nd.*—Lieut. K. S. Jefferson joined the Battalion, and on the 6th proceeded to Tulla with 11 other ranks

*April 10th.*—Lieut. F. C. L. A. Lowndes, M.C., to M.G. Corps.

*April 24th-26th.*—B Company returned from detachment at Tulla.  
Forty-three O.R. joined or rejoined from the Depot in April.

*May 4th.*—Lieut. E. McEvoy on leave pending resignation.

*May 15th.*—2nd Lieut. G. C. Henderson, R.G.A., joined as Education Officer.

*May 25th.*—Major J. T. Weatherby, D.S.O., to Senior Officers' School, and Major A. E. Sanderson, D.S.O., took over temporary command.

*May 29th.*—Lieut. J. L. Choate joined the Battalion (B Company). Thirty-four other ranks joined from the Depot during May.

*June 5th.*—A Colour Party (Lieut. D. J. L. Lethbridge and 2nd Lieut. D. S. Newton-King) proceeded to Oxford to bring the Colours from the Depot  
The Battalion paraded to celebrate the Birthday of H.M. The King.

*June 10th.*—The Battalion paraded to meet and receive the Colours

*June 17th.*—Captain W. W. Wooding and Lieut. J. W. Shaw granted leave pending resignation.

*June 8th-28th.*—During this period the Battalion moved from Ballyvonare to Limerick, being quartered H.Q. and two companies in Camp, New Barracks, two companies in Strand Barracks, with a detachment at Castle Barracks.

**1920 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE**  
**1st Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY**

*June 22nd.*—A bicycle patrol of 25 other ranks, under 2nd Lieut. D. S. Newton-King, proceeded to Croom,

*June 26th.*—One N.C.O. and six men to reinforce Newmarket Fergus Police Barracks. During June, 56 other ranks joined or rejoined from the Depot.

*July 7th.*—Numerous bicycle patrols formed to protect the Judges coming from Ennis, and to block the lines of the River Shannon.

*July 12th.*—Lieut. J. L. Choate to act as Quartermaster during absence on sick leave of Captain and Quartermaster A. E. Mason.  
Captain J. J. Powell joined the Battalion, and took over the duties of Adjutant.

*July 17th.*—The following officers were cross-posted from the 2nd Battalion: Lieuts. N. G. Clarke, E. A. Packe, D.F.C., L. W. Giles, M.C., W. EL Coleman, E. K. Blyth, K. S. Wootten, L. R. Randall, A. Bennett, M.B.E., E. C. Simmons.  
One platoon of A Company to detachment Killaloe.

*July 22nd.*—Two platoons on three days cycle patrol.

*July 24th-26th.*—C Company to Limerick Workhouse; A Company to Castle Barracks; Battalion moved out of New Barracks Camp; H.Q. to Strand Barracks.

*July 29th.*—Lieut. W. H. Coleman seconded for service with West African Regiment (to date 9.2.20).

*July 30th.*—Cork Mail Escort, furnished by the Regiment, was ambushed by Sinn Feiners at Oola, 4 miles N.W. of Limerick Junction. No. 47297 Lance-Corporal Parker and No. 27862 Private Bayliss were killed, while Privates Snelling, Cornwall, and Steer were wounded.

2nd Lieut. M. H. Last was transferred from the 2nd Battalion in place of Lieut. L. W. Giles, M.C., whose posting was cancelled.

During July 72 other ranks joined or rejoined from the Depot,

*August 2nd.*—Lieut. H. E. F. Smyth, M.C., took over the duties of Assistant Adjutant. One platoon of B Company, under Lieut. D. J. L. Lethbridge, to Killaloe on detachment.

*August 3rd.*—Memorial Service in Limerick Cathedral for the late Lance-Corporal Parker and Private Bayliss.

Lieut. L. R. Randall joined and was posted to D Company.

*August 4th.*—No. 9700 Private Stonnell, C Company, was accidentally killed.

*August 5th.*—The posting of Lieut, E. K. Blyth was cancelled.

**1920 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE**  
**1st Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY**

*August 13th-14th.*—The following Lieutenants joined and were posted to companies as shown :—

M. H. Last (C), E. A. Packe, D.F.C. (A), A. Bennett, M.B.E. (C).

2nd Lieut. Timpson was posted "to the Battalion on first appointment, but this was subsequently cancelled.

*August 15th.*—Major C. F. Henley rejoined from sick leave, and resumed temporary command of the Battalion.

Curfew (10 p.m. to 3 a.m.) brought into force in Limerick.

*August 19th.*—Lecture on the condition of Ireland delivered to all officers and N.C.O.'s by Brigadier-General A. R. Cameron, C.B., C.M.G.

*August 20th.*—Lieut. K. A. Herbage, R.F.A., attached to the Battalion.

One platoon of D Company, under Lieut. A. B. Hamilton, to Killaloe on detachment.

Fifty-five other ranks joined from the Depot during August.

*September 1st.*—Major J. T. Weatherby, D.S.O., rejoined from Senior Officers' School.

*September 4th.*—A Series of Army Numbers (from 5373001 to 5429000) to replace Regimental Numbers.

*September 6th.*—One platoon C Company, under Lieut. Bennett, to Killaloe detachment.

*September 8th.*—Lieut. E. Holt, M.C., to Depot, Oxford, for duty.

*September 14th.*—Books of Battalion inspected by Brigadier-General Cameron.

Lieut.-Colonel F. H. Stapleton, C.M.G., joined and took over command of the Battalion.

*September 21st.*—Major C. F. Henley to Senior Officers' School, Woking.

*September 29th.*—Captain J. Blagrove posted to the Battalion (joined 15.10.21).

Lieut. A. Bennett, M.B.E., seconded for duty with Royal Signal Corps.

*October 4th.*—Lieut. C. C. Wykeham-Martin joined from Regimental Depot.

*October 5th.*—Lieut. N. G. Clarke was relegated to half-pay.

*October 15th.*—Captain and Quartermaster A. E. Mason rejoined from sick leave, and resumed his duties.

*October 17th.*—Presentation of 1914-15 Stars and other Medals by Brigadier-General Cameron, C.B., C.M.G.

Thirty-six other ranks joined or rejoined from the Depot.

*November 11th.*—Armistice Day Celebrations.

**1920 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE**  
**1st Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY**

*November 18th.*—2nd Lieut. M. H. S. Last, with one platoon of C Company, was sent out to guard an aeroplane which had made a forced landing near Cratloe. The party was attacked by Sinn Feiners, and No. 5373641 Private J. Spackman was killed, and No. 5373574 Private M. F. Roberts severely wounded. A roundup, by C Company, of the whole neighbourhood was carried out later in the day.

*November 25th.*—Lieut. G. C. Haggard was seconded to the Royal Air Force, and struck off the strength of the Battalion.

All officers living out of barracks were ordered to live either in barracks or at Cruise's Hotel. Officers were ordered to carry arms, and never to go out of barracks singly.

Fifteen other ranks from Regimental Depot in November.

*December 13th.*—Martial Law was proclaimed in Co. Limerick,

*December 15th.*—C Company in future to be known as Captain J. Blagrove's Company.

*December 19th.*—Information received that Lieut. B. Burt-Smith, M.C., had been posted to the Battalion on first appointment.

*December 22nd.*—Major C. F. Henley rejoined from Senior Officers' School

*December 24th.*—Information received that Mess Dress of pre-war pattern had been introduced, all officers to be in possession by 1st January 1922

*December 31st.*—State of the Battalion on this date: 37 officers, 8 warrant officers, 36 sergeants, 9 buglers, 825 rank and file. Total, 915.

The following is a list of officers of the Battalion:

*Lieut.-Colonel:* F. H. Stapleton, C.M.G.;

*Majors:* C. F. Henley, J. T. Weatherby, D.S.O., W. E. T. Morland, D.S.O., M.C.<sup>1</sup>;

*Captains:* A. E. Sanderson, D.S.O. (Brevet-Major), G. E. Whittall, M.C. (Brevet-Major), K. Horan, J. W. Meade,<sup>1</sup> G. Naylor, M.C., J. Blagrove, D. Murphy;

*Lieutenants:* J. S. Fenwick, C. B. Crawford, H. E. F. Smyth, M.C., B. Burt-Smith, M.C., E. Holt, M.C., C. G. Wykeham-Martin, E. A. Packe, D.F.C., J. E. H. Neville, M.C., R. C. Warren, M.C., D. C. Colvill, M.C., A. B. Hamilton, D. J. L. Lethbridge, S. C. F. Slattery, J. L. Choate, K. S. Wootten,<sup>2</sup> L. R. Randall, W. T. Trengrouse, K. S. Jefferson,<sup>2</sup> C. A. Sawyer;

*2nd Lieutenants:*

D. S. Newton-King, J. B. Jarvis, E. A. Oakeley, M. H. S. Last, E. T. H. Lumby;

*Adjutant:* Captain J. J. Powell;

*Quartermaster :* Captain A. E. Mason.

*Attached:* Lieuts. H. J. Parham, R.F.A. and K. A. Herbage, R.F.A.

<sup>1</sup>Depot, Oxford <sup>2</sup> Employed Physical Training Staff