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## **The Early Years of the Royal Gloucester Yeomanry Cavalry**

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## THE EARLY YEARS OF THE ROYAL GLOUCESTER YEOMANRY CAVALRY.

By ROLAND AUSTIN.

**I**N the History<sup>1</sup> of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Gloucestershire and Monmouth by Major W. H. W. Quin, the great difficulty experienced in obtaining records of the earlier days of the various troops is referred to, and he states that he had to rely almost entirely on the reports in the local newspapers. Through the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Waller, of Gloucester, the original minute book of the Gloucester Troop has been placed at my service, and as the information in the History concerning its establishment is very meagre a useful purpose may be served by printing the facts now made available for the first time.

The minute book is a vellum-bound small quarto volume of which 81 pages have been used, the remaining leaves being blank.

The first mention of the expression "Yeomanry Cavalry" is attributed to William Pitt in a speech made in the House of Commons on the 5th of March, 1794, and in the same month proposals were submitted to the Lords Lieutenant of Counties for raising bodies of Cavalry for the suppression of riots or tumults within their own or adjacent areas. The first Troop raised in Gloucestershire was the 1st or Cheltenham Troop of Gloucestershire Gentlemen and Yeomanry, which, by the end of 1795, was some 60 strong. In 1796 two more troops were raised in

<sup>1</sup> The Yeomanry Cavalry of Gloucestershire and Monmouth. By W. H. Wyndham Quin, M.P., late Major 16th Lancers, and Adjutant, Royal Gloucestershire Hussars. Westley's Library, The Promenade, Cheltenham. 1898.

the Minchinhampton and Wotton-under-Edge districts though the only record of this appears to be in the *Gloucester Journal*. In 1797 the fear of French invasion caused anxiety and it was decided to put in force the Provisional Cavalry Act, passed the previous year, providing for a certain amount of compulsory service determined by assessments on the number of horses kept by individuals and classes of individuals. An amending Act exempted members of the Yeomanry from the conditions of the principal Act and in Gloucestershire it was found that the alternative of service in the Yeomanry Cavalry was preferred by farmers and others, for in 1797 five additional Troops were raised, one of them being the "City of Gloucester Troop of Gentlemen and Yeomanry." The only record of this in Major Quin's History is the appointment of officers, taken from the *London Gazette*; but the minute book gives the following report of the establishment of the Troop.

#### ROYAL GLOUCESTER YEOMANRY CAVALRY.

Bell Inn, Gloucester. 7th March, 1797.

WE whose names are hereunto subscribed sincerely desirous of manifesting our unfeigned Loyalty to our Sovereign, and our Attachment to the Constitution as by Law established in Church and State, our respect for social Order and our Determination firmly to resist both foreign and domestic Enemies do solemnly pledge ourselves to each other to observe the following regulations

THAT we will provide ourselves severally with a Horse and with all necessary Accoutrements and Arms at our own proper Expences

THAT we will meet every Sunday and Wednesday at a Place and Hour to be hereafter determined upon, and will apply ourselves diligently to learn the Exercise of the Cavalry under the Instruction of proper Officers during two Hours each time of Meeting

THAT we will be ready to serve on any Occasion which the Necessities of the Country may point out at any place within the Limits of the County of Gloucester

THAT we will avoid all unnecessary Expence in our Dress and other Accoutrements—likewise all expensive Meetings; our sole

View in this Association being to render ourselves capable of protecting and assisting our Neighbourhood.

IN case of failing to attend at the time appointed for the Muster we agree to forfeit each of us for each time two Shillings and sixpence ; And in case of our failing to attend during the whole time of Exercise the sum of Five Shillings.

OFFICERS failing to attend to pay double Fines

IN case any one shall be desirous of withdrawing himself from this Association he shall be at liberty to do so on paying a fine of TWENTY POUNDS

Rob. Morris	Thos. Fulljames
F. Price	James Wintle
S. Jeynes	Wm. Griffith
Richd. Helps	Thos. Herbert
Jn: Phillpotts, junr.	Wm. Herbert
Charles Church	Wm. Frankis, junr.
Jno. H. James	Ellis T. Farren
Saml. Roberts	Jno. Marshall
J. J. Hough	S. Smith
M. Davis	Jn. Cooke, junr.
Jno. Rea	John Heath
H. Wilkinson	W. Higgins
W. Lightfoot	Henry Eycott
Jno. Cooper	John Boulton
Josiah Tippetts	George Watson
H. Jordan	Willm. Butcher
Thos. Astill Davis	John King
John Jordan	Thos. Holder
Willm. Holtham	Richd. Draper
Thos. Okey, junr.	P. Maddy
Wm. Deane	Thos. Haynes
Chas. Smith	C. B. Trye
Jno. Tovey	Thos. Quarington
Wm. Frankis	Jas. Buchanan
Walter Price	Thos. Brown
Jno. Pleydell Wilton	Richd. Morton
Giles Arkell	George Piffe
Jno. Perring	John Spier
John C. Bower	William Cother
James Wintle	Jere Cother
Caleb Holder	John Greatwood
Thos. Pearce	Richd. Chamberlayne
Benjn. Sadler	James Wells

Thos. Ridler	Thomas Chanler
Stephen Sykes	George Marsh
Thos. Commeline	John Clark
Wm. Haviland	Thos. Freeman
John Spier	John White
James Yearsley	Jno. Mountain
John Piff	John Little
H. Wilton, junr.	Wm. Cowley, junr.
Thos. Washbourn	
W. V. Ellis	
William Roberts	
William Fendall	
William Rogers	

A second meeting on the same day was held when it was unanimously resolved that Robert Morris, Esq. be nominated as Captain, Thomas Price, Gent., as Lieutenant, and Samuel Jeynes, Gent., as Cornet. Robert Morris was the principal partner in one of the Gloucester banks (afterwards Turner, Turner and Morris) and represented the City of Gloucester in Parliament in 1805-16. He took the greatest interest in the Yeomanry movement and remained in command of the Gloucester Troop until his death in August 1816. The following were named as the Committee :

Mr. Morris	Mr. Cother
Mr. Price	Mr. Trye
Mr. Jeynes	Mr. Tovey
Mr. Fulljames	Mr. Wintle
Mr. Phillpotts, secretary.	

The appointments of officers were gazetted as taking effect from 1st April, 1797. There was not another business meeting until 10th March, 1798, when Mr. Fulljames was appointed adjutant, Mr. Trye as surgeon, Mr. Neale as chaplain, and Mr. Wintle as quartermaster.

Early in 1798 letters were addressed to Lords Lieutenant asking them to ascertain whether the Yeomanry forces would be willing to serve beyond the actual borders of their respective counties and general assent was given

by the Troops to this proposal, though the following minute shows some reluctance on the part of the Gloucester Troop.

GLOUCESTER. 19th MARCH, 1798

At a meeting of the Troop at the White Hart Inn it was resolved :

That Captn. Morris be requested to return an answer to Lord Berkeley's letter of the inst. to the following effect. That this Troop having armed & accoutered themselves at their own proper cost, without the aid of public subscription or expence to government, for the express purpose of protecting their property & their neighbourhood as is stated in the written conditions upon which their proffered services were accepted, & the Troop for the most part consisting of individuals extensively engaged in professional or commercial concerns, from which they cannot long absent themselves without incalculable loss & inconvenience. They fully hope that government will be entirely satisfied with & approve of their confining their services at present to the limits of their County. But that they by no means intend by this resolution to refuse in Case of extreme necessity to extend their services beyond the original limits.

Rob. Morris

Capn.

Additional regulations were agreed upon at a meeting held 5th May, 1798.

1st. That in respect of the admission of future Members—No person shall hereafter be received into the troop who shall not be proposed by some existing member of the same, and afterwards approved of by ballot of the committee, and that in such ballot, two adverse balls shall reject.

2dly. That in any future appointment of officers, the election shall be made by the troop in the following manner—

At a general Meeting of the troop, the names of the Gentlemen (members of the same) willing to serve in the required capacity, shall be written upon several tickets, setts of which shall be according to the number of Members present, & that each member shall deliver to the Captain, or other senior officer present, folded up, the ticket containing the person's name approved by him, & the person who has the greatest Number of such votes, shall receive the appointment.

3dly. That no member of the troop shall in future bring in any

fresh horse or mare under fourteen hands in height, or any of a Grey, Roan, or Dun Colour.

Rob Morris

Captn.

The appointment of certain officers on the 29th June, 1798, is followed by a memorandum to the effect—

These appointments were made unanimously, no other Gentleman being proposed to fill either of the Commissions. And it is at the same time observed that the foregoing appointments are by no means to be construed into precedents that officers are of right to succeed according to rank, it being now as it has been always the sense of the troop that their officers are to be elected out of the General Troop.

In March, 1799, it was agreed that the scale of fines for non-attendance should be altered to 2s. 6d. instead of 5s. for not attending the whole time of exercise, and 1s. instead of 2s. 6d. for not being present at roll-call. It is noted that no member should be allowed to join the Troop on any day of exercise unless he had paid up all fines. There were 53 members present at this meeting.

The next minute is dated 3d. March, 1799, evidently an error, as it refers to the resolution of the 5th of the month. At this meeting it was decided to allow £20 a year for providing two grey horses for the trumpeters and ordered That Circular letters be sent to each Member of the Troop stating the resolutions of the 5th March, the necessity for each Member to attend] to entitle him to exemption from the Hair Powder and Horse Duty and from Service in the Militia And that each Member be informed that the Troop will meet weekly on Tuesday Mornings at 10 o'clock till further orders.

On 30th January, 1800, the Troop was called to consider the propriety of meeting on foot during the remainder of the winter for the purpose of improving the Corps in carbine and sword exercise and in marching. Twenty-five members attended and agreed to the proposal. At the next meeting, 19th May, 47 members signed the minute book as being present. Evidently the question of irregularity in attendance on parade was discussed, for the following resolution was passed:

That in order to ensure as far as may be the regular attendance of every Member of the Troop the present Fines for Non-attendance—(viz) one shilling for not appearing on parade before the Roll is call'd and two shillings and sixpence if absent during the whole time of exercise—be strictly enforced on each Member except Medical Men without allowing any excuse three days out of four appointed for Exercise. And Medical Men be subject to the same Fines on two days out of four.

It is agreed that the time of calling the Roll shall be on Sundays at a quarter before 7 o'clock in the Morning and on Wednesdays at 4 o'clock in the afternoon and that the Troop shall march from Parade at 7 o'clock on Sunday mornings and at a quarter after 4 o'clock on Wednesday afternoons. The above Times to be decided by Saint Michael's clock.

If any Member of the Troop shall appear on Parade in Liquor he shall pay a Fine of half a Guinea for each offence.

The Quartermaster shall be answerable for all Fines.

Resolved—That copies of the original articles & the above resolution shall be printed & one sent to each Member of the Troop.

On one occasion, at least, irregularities of another kind necessitated drastic action, for we read :

WHITE HART. 17th OCTO<sup>r</sup>, 1800.

At a Meeting of the Troop held this day the conduct of Mr. Merrett, in absenting himself from the different meetings of the Troop, & the expressions he made use of when summoned to attend by order of the Magistrates were taken into consideration, & a ballot being called for, there appeared,

For his dismissal	..	..	..	38
For his continuance	..	..	..	1

He was therefore voted out by a majority of 37 and his name in consequence struck out of the book by the Trumpeter.

The dismissal of Mr. Wadley which took place in the field on Sunday last, was confirmed by this meeting & his name of course struck out by the Trumpeter.

Robt. Morris.

Following the signing of the Peace of Amiens on the 28th March, 1802, it was apparent that the services of the volunteer force might be dispensed with and the thanks of Parliament were accordingly passed, the Secretary for War intimating generally that Troops might be dissolved

without this being regarded as indicating less zeal for the objects which had impelled their formation. The Gloucestershire Troops were all disbanded except Cheltenham, which decided to continue service. A general meeting of the Gloucester Troop was, therefore, called for the 5th May, 1802, when it was reported that the fines collected and in the hands of the Adjutant amounted to £57 13s., and that £4 5s. was due. It appears that a grant of £20 15s. had been made to the widow of . . . Warwick, the late farrier to the Troop, and at this meeting it was decided that an additional £9 5s. should be sent to her. It was also agreed to give the Sergeant five guineas and to pay the balance to the Gloucester Infirmary. The thanks of the Troop were given to their Captain by the following resolution :—

Resolved that the thanks of the Troop be given to Captain Morris for the great Zeal, & Attention which he has uniformly manifested during the time he has commanded this troop, and for his readiness on all occasions to consult their conveniency, & give effect to their wishes.

The troop also desired to record their entire satisfaction in the Conduct of all the Rest of the Officers.

An account of the cash receipts and payments for the years 1801 and 1802 is entered.

Hardly a year had passed since the disbanding of the Gloucester Troop when, on the 12th May, 1805, war was again declared between England and France. To a man, the old " Fencibles " rallied to the support of the Government. Public meetings were held throughout Gloucestershire, among them being one convened for the purpose of raising a corps of *infantry* under the name of the " Royal Gloucester Volunteers." At this meeting it was resolved to open a public subscription in the city and neighbourhood for providing uniforms for those unable to bear the expense, and over £900 was quickly promised. Major Quin states (p. 42) that the fund was raised " to assist in equipping the county volunteers both horse and foot " ;

but it is clear from the advertisement in the *Gloucester Journal* of 1st August, 1803, that it was for the Gloucester Infantry only. Similar funds were opened for infantry corps at Cirencester, where over £1000 was given in the first response, and at Cheltenham, where nearly £900 was raised. It will be seen from the minute below that the Gloucester Yeomanry Cavalry equipped themselves at their own expense, as they did in 1797.

A meeting convened by public advertisement "for the purpose of re-establishing the Troop of Royal Gloucester Yeomanry Cavalry" was held at the Bell Inn, Gloucester, on the 27th of July, 1803, when there were present Mr. Robert Morris and 40 others whose names are duly entered. The following is the record of the proceedings :

PRESENT

Robert Morris Esqr.	Mr. Richd. Chandler
Mr. W. C. Ward	Charles Cole
J. H. James	Jno. Mountain
John White	Samuel Jeynes
Saml. Roberts	Thos. Price
Philo Maddy	C. B. Trye
James Heath	James Yearsley
John Cooper	John Cooke
Thomas Haynes	William Newman
Thomas Freeman	John Aston
Charles Smith	William Frankis
George Marsh	William Holtham
Mr. Edw. Herbert	
Samuel Smith	Subsequent additions
Benjamin Davis	
Thomas Turner	Mr. William Read
John Jordan	L. Charleton
William Clifford	John Heath, junr.
	William Butcher
	Thomas Hopkins
	Ellis T. Farren
	William Cowley
	John Tovey
	Samuel Butcher
	Octavius Howes
	William Cother

It was unanimously agreed that a Tender of our Services should be made to Government for the purpose of protecting our Shores against Invasion, and to preserve the internal tranquility of this City and County, subject to the provisions of the Volunteer Act. Which offer of Service was accepted 1803.

In consequence of this acceptance the Troop mustered for the FIRST TIME on Sunday, Sep<sup>r</sup> 25, 1803. They mustered also Tuesday y<sup>e</sup> 27th and adjourned to the Bell Inn at 11 o'clock in the forenoon of the same Day to fix upon the UNIFORM of the Corps—namely

BLUE JACKET, Scarlet Collar and Cuffs, full trimmed with Gold Twist, Raised Gilt Buttons, Gilt Chains, as Epaulets (with the addition of Bullion for the Commissioned Officers).

Helmets with Gilt Brass Furniture; Motto ROYAL GLOCESTER YEOMANRY; White Leather Breeches, Military Back Strap Boots, Steel Spurs (Officers excepted) Blue Cloth Overalls to be worn in Marching Order, and Blue Military Cloth Cloaks, with White Linings, all according to pattern. At this Meeting also it was unanimously agreed to nominate

Robert Morris Esqre Captain;  
 Thomas Price Gent Lieutenant;  
 Samuel Jeynes Gent Lieutenant;  
 William Roberts Gent Cornet;  
 Charles Brandon Trye Gent Surgeon;  
 Revd. John Neale Chaplain;

Mr. John Humphris James was nominated Quartermaster by a Majority of one Vote out of nineteen present (exclusive of Officers). It was also agreed that each Member should provide himself with a complete Military Saddle, mounted with Brass Furniture & Forage Rings; (Commissioned Officers excepted, who will have Plated Furniture without Rings) Portmanteau, Pad & Baggage Straps; Bridle, Brown Head Collar, Leather Girths and Surcingle.

A general muster of the newly constituted Troop took place on the Town Ham, Gloucester, on the 26th November 1803, when the following rules were agreed to and signed by all present. The signatures in the minute book number 65, though some are those of members admitted in later years.

ROYAL GLOCESTER YEOMANRY CAVALRY.

Nov. 26, 1803

WE whose Names are hereunto subscribed Members of the above Troop will observe the following Rules.

FIRST—We will provide ourselves with a Horse not lower than the regulation Height ; and with Arms and Appointments according to the patterns agreed upon, at our own proper Expence.

SECOND—That we will meet for the purpose of Exercise at such Times and places as the Commanding Officer shall appoint.

THIRD—That the following Fines be imposed :—For Absence at the Time of Roll-Call, One Shilling ; Absence during the Time of Exercise, Three Shillings.

FOURTH—That no Excuse for Absence be allowed, except Inability to attend in consequence of Ill-Health, to be certified, in writing, by some Medical Person ; or of Lameness or Illness of the Horse, to be ascertained by some person appointed by the Commanding Officer.

FIFTH—That every Member appearing on any Day of Exercise, not dressed and appointed in every Article according to the Rules and Regulations of the Troop ; or deficient in any respect as to neatness (of all of which the Commanding Officer shall be Judge) shall forfeit the Sum of One Shilling.

SIXTH—That any Member who shall speak in the Ranks unnecessarily (to be judged by the Commanding Officer) after the Word " Attention," or shall otherwise be guilty of Negligence or Disorder shall forfeit One Shilling for each Offence.

SEVENTH—That all Fines be applied to the general purposes of the Troop, at the discretion of the Commanding Officer.

EIGHTH—That the future Appointment of Officers and Non-commissioned Officers be in the Commanding Officer.

NINTH—That all future Rules be made with the Consent of the Majority of the Troop.

Rules 3 and 4 were altered subsequently, the fine for absence at roll-call being increased (June, 1805) to half a guinea for privates and to one guinea for commissioned officers. In 1806 this was reduced to one shilling and two shillings and sixpence respectively. At the same general meeting (5th Oct<sup>r</sup>., 1806) it was agreed that

Every Member should provide himself with an Undress Jacket, a pair of Linen Overalls ; An Undress Cap, Horse Cloth, Log and Nose Bag, according to pattern. The latter articles to be furnished by the Quarter-Master upon his receiving Seven Shillings and Six Pence for each set ; The surplus to be paid out of the annual allowance (of which £30 is appropriated to this purpose) and from the fines already collected.

Beyond the entries of appointments nothing of importance is entered until 1805, when the following interesting minute appears :—

DEC. 2ND, 1805

At an Inspection Muster, it was voted unanimously that the Fines now due be immediately collected, and that the amount thereof together with such further subscription as the Members of the Troop may think proper to make, be paid into the hands of the Trustees of the Patriotic Fund for the relief of the Widows and Orphans of the HEROES who fell in the Action off TREFALGAR—Which terminated in the Capture and destruction of Nineteen Sail of the Combined Fleets of France and Spain opposed to an inferior BRITISH FORCE: a Victory unprecedented in the annals of modern History.

From this date until the 17th October, 1823, the last date in the minute book, very little of interest occurs, the minutes relating to enrollments, names of those struck off for various reasons, and appointment of officers. Among the appointments dated 27th May, 1811, occurs :

Mr. John Carpenter Sergeant vice Herbert dismissed the Corps for unsoldierlike behaviour in the Ranks in refusing to change his station when ordered by the Captain.

Four members were struck off the roll on 4 June, 1819, by vote of the Troop for non-attendance when ordered by the magistrates to hold themselves in readiness to assist the civil power at Kingstanley.

The death of Captain Morris is noted by a special entry on the 30th August, 1815, and on the 29th November, 1816, Lieut. John Mountain was appointed to succeed him. From then until 1827, when most of the Yeomanry Corps were disbanded, it is probable that the activity of the Troop grew less and less. A list of the members in 1823 is printed by Major Quin in his History (p. 84), where, also, is given a full record of the services experienced by the Yeomanry Forces owing to the riots caused by the introduction of the Reform Bill in 1831.

## APPENDIX.

COMMISSIONED AND NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS OF THE  
GLOUCESTER TROOP, 1797—1823

The dates are those given in the Minute-book.

## CAPTAIN

Robert Morris, 7 March, 1797; re-nominated 27 July, 1803  
John Mountain, 29 November, 1816

## LIEUTENANT

Thomas Price, 7 March, 1797; re-nominated 27 July, 1803  
Samuel Jeynes, 29 June, 1798; re-nominated 27 July, 1803  
John Mountain, 27 May, 1811  
William Holtham, 29 November, 1816

## ADJUTANT

Thomas Fulljames, 10 March, 1798  
James Wintle, 29 June, 1798  
Shadrach Charleton, 11 February, 1806

## CORNET

Samuel Jeynes, 7 March, 1797  
Thomas Fulljames, 29 June, 1798  
William Roberts, 27 July, 1803  
John Mountain, 17 May, 1809  
William Holtham, 27 May, 1811  
Charles Smith, 29 November, 1816

## QUARTERMASTER

James Wintle, 10 March, 1798  
J. Phillpott, 29 June, 1798  
John Humphris, 27 July, 1803  
John Mountain, 11 December, 1803  
J. H. James, 17 May, 1809

## CHAPLAIN

Rev. John Neale, 10 March, 1798; re-nominated 27 July, 1803

## SURGEON

Charles Brandon Trye, 10 March, 1798; re-nominated 27 July,  
1803

## SERGEANT

Philo Maddy, 14 January, 1804  
William Holtham, 14 January, 1804  
Thomas Herbert, 14 January, 1804  
Shadrach Charleton, 25 May, 1805  
J. H. James, 24 February, 1806  
Charles Talboy, 5 September, 1807

Charles Smith, 17 May, 1809

George Marsh, 27 May, 1811

John Carpenter, 27 May, 1811

Benjamin Blackford, 29 November, 1816

CORPORAL

John James, 14 January, 1804

Shadrach Charleton, 14 January, 1804

Charles Smith, 14 January, 1804

William Bubb, 19 January, 1804

Samuel Roberts, 26 May, 1805

George Marsh, 3 April, 1807

William Monk, 23 July, 1807

John Carpenter, 17 May, 1809

Richard Morgan, 27 May, 1811

Benjamin Blackford, 27 May, 1811

John Herbert, 27 May, 1811

Thomas Bamford, 29 November, 1816

TRUMPETER

Michael Hayward, 14 January, 1804

William Monk, 14 January, 1804

FARRIER

..... Warwick

William Clutterbuck, 14 January, 1804

SECRETARY

J. H. James was appointed Secretary to the Troop on 5 September, 1807 at a salary of ten guineas a year.