



THE "VIMY" BUGLE and THE REGIMENTAL BUGLER

References: Article by Cliff Bowering, staff writer, Kingston Whig Standard (linked).

GENERAL

<http://www.middlehornleader.com/Evolution%20of%20the%20Bugle%20--%20Section%202.htm>

1. The Archivist maintains an article in the archives about a 14th Battalion Bugle found in England in the 1970's. Colonel Brit Smith went to collect it; but nothing was known about how it got to be left in England.
2. The museum curator advises the silver regimental bugle was found in England; there is no mention in the accompanying article of the bugle having been used by the 21st Battalion, nor at Vimy Ridge.
3. From Colonel Smith (HCol 17 September 1974 – 30 November 1985): The bugle was found in an Aldershot antique shop by a former English soldier. He traced the badge to the PWOR and wrote to us. "I met him in the London Fusiliers mess of the Tower of London the presentation made some London papers with pictures". It is theorized the bugle may have been pawned by some 21st soldier while the unit was in the United Kingdom while waiting for return to Canada at the end of WWI. The badge on the bugle is the 1878 helmet plate for the 14th Princess of Wales' Own Rifles.

TERM "VIMY" BUGLE

4. It would appear the Bugle's provenance is almost impossible to determine, other than the fact it can be traced to the 14th Princess of Wales' Own Rifles. It may have gone off to War with a company bugler of the 21st. If so, it may have played at Vimy and even Hill 70. The suspicion is that the nick-name "Vimy Bugle" comes more from the fact, in the 1980s, it was played during the annual Vimy Parade.

PLAYING the BUGLE

5. In keeping with the long standing Army tradition, the Pipes and Drums of the Princess of Wales' Own Regiment will ensure when possible, there is a qualified member of the Band to perform the duties of a Bugler. The priorities for the Regimental Bugler shall be as follows:
 - Playing of Last Post on Remembrance day, and for the Vimy Memorial night
 - Playing of Last Post for other memorial services
 - Playing of Last Post for military and veteran funerals
 - Playing other bugle calls when required (General Salute, Alert)
 - Playing any other ceremonial event as requested
6. The Pipe Major and Drum Major will provide a list to the Band Officer of those authorized to sign out the Bugle for use on Ceremonial duties, this will include up to two weeks prior to an event for rehearsal and the bugle will be returned at the end of the ceremonial event on the day of the event.
7. The Bugler will be dressed as a member of the Pipes and Drums, and will adhere to all CF



dress regulations while performing the duty of bugler. See PWOR Unit SO PWOR Band Uniform guidelines.

A silver bugles comes home -- but where has it been?

By Cliff Bowering, staff writer, Kingston Whig Standard as transcribed 3 July 2016.

A beautiful silver bugle has come home, at last. And it's all quite a mystery. Nobody knows where it's been, who took it where and when, or whose hands it has passed through over the years. In fact, hardly anybody knew it was missing. But it is back home, sage and shine in the hands of the Princess of Wales' Own Regiment, here in Kingston.

And therein lies the tale. Walter R. Gentry of Ilford, England, is an avid collector of military artifacts and a former member of the Royal Fusiliers (London Regiment). He spends a great deal of time browsing through antiques and second-hand stores, always on the lookout for items to add to his collection.

One day last summer, his hobby led him to a second-hand store in Aldershot -- that famous (or infamous, as the case may be) English garrison town known to just about every British and Commonwealth army veteran throughout the world.

There on a dusty shelf, he found the bugle -- blackened, tarnished through years of disuse and neglect. He should see there was some sort of crest on the instrument, but not much else. So -- purely on speculation -- he bought it.

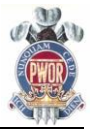
Back at his Ilford home, Mr. Gentry scrubbed and polished, polished and buffed. And there, gleaming in its dazzling silver plating was the bugle -- almost as it had come from the manufacturer.

The words on the crest leaped out: "14th or Princess of Wales' Own Rifles Canada." Naturally Mr. Gentry had no idea as to the whereabouts of the 14th Rifles in Canada -- if indeed the unit existed at all in 1978. So he did some checking through military channels. No, he discovered, there was no such unit at the 14th or Princess of Wales' Own Rifles in Canada any longer. But there was, indeed, a Princess of Wales' Own Regiment and it was located in Kingston, Ontario.

At one time in this area there were seven independent rifle companies. In 1863, these were amalgamated to form the 14th Rifles and in 1868 Princess Alexandra gave her royal permission to change the unit name to Princess of Wales' Own Rifles.

After the First World War, in 1920, in order that the unit might carry the regimental colours of the 21st Battalion, CEF, it was re-designated the Princess of Wales' Own Regiment. (Rifle regiments do not carry colours.)

Mr. Gentry wrote to the Kingston militia unit offering to turn the bugle over to the regiment. He said he knew how little it meant to others, but how much it would mean to the regiment to have it back. He would hand it over if somebody could come to England to collect it.



That task fell to A. Britton Smith, Kingston lawyer and developer who was then Honorary Colonel of the Regiment. But it wasn't until earlier this month (February 1979) that Col. Smith -- by this time his (first) term as honorary colonel had expired -- was able to travel to Britain.

Mr. Gentry had one small "string" attached to his offer: The bugle must be handed over at his former regiment's museum in the famed Tower of London.

The bugle was received by the Kingston regiment's representative on Feb. 13 in a brief ceremony at the Tower museum. In that museum, by the way, is a prized relic which, in a very real sense, links forever the London Fusiliers with Canada: The swords of General James Wolfe, retrieved by a member of the Fusiliers from the Plains of Abraham, a battle in which the British unit played a major role.

"It was very impressive," Col. Smith said on his return to Kingston. "Mr. Gentry is a very generous, completely unselfish gentleman and he was interested only in restoring the bugle to its rightful owners and home. He would accept nothing for it, although we did give him a pewter mug with the PWOR crest on it as a token of our appreciation. He even went so far as to buy a rifle-green cord which he affixed to the bugle prior to the ceremony."

Col. Smith said that expert examination of the bugle revealed that it was made by Potter in about 1880. But there is nothing on the bugle to identify it properly. Just how it found its way into the store in Aldershot will forever remain a mystery. However, there are several possibilities about which it is interesting to speculate:

- It could have been lost by some member of the Princess of Wales' Own Rifles who represented the Kingston unit at the Golden Jubilee parade for Queen Victoria in 1887;
- It could have been misplaced by a member who took part in the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in England in 1897;
- It could have gone astray as a detachment from Kingston headed for the South African War;
- It could have been lost during the First World War when the 21st Battalion and the 2nd Battalion both contained components of the Kingston unit;
- Then again, perhaps sometime during that historic period a member of the Kingston regiment down on his luck in England -- pawned or flogged it for a few bob. Or maybe even lost it in a game of cards;
- Or, perhaps, some pert young English miss was given the bugle as a souvenir. Nobody knows or is ever likely to know for sure.

"But we are fairly certain that nobody was ever court-martialled for losing a bugle," Col Smith said with a smile. The important thing, however, is that the bugle has come home. And, save for special occasions when it will be "on parade", home for the errant bugle will be the regiment's museum room at Fort Henry.



One other thing: The old bugle sounds just as sweet as the day it was first played. Col. Smith said that a trumpeter of the Honorable Artillery Company, which shares the Tower with the Fusiliers, played it for him. "He called it magnificent," Col. Smith said, "and told me that you could get one more note on it than on an ordinary bugle -- six instead of the normal five."

But then, that's not surprising, for this is no ordinary bugle.



The Princess of Wales' Own Regiment