

The Loyal and Friendly Society of the Blew and Orange

In July 1680 the Second Tangier Regiment, otherwise known as the Earl of Plymouth's Regiment of Foot, was set up to defend the British Empire at Tangiers in North Africa, and initially its men were recruited from London and Plymouth. On returning home from Africa the Regiment became known as The Queen's Regiment and its first action in battle took place in 1685 at Sedgemoor in defending the throne of King James II against the Duke of Monmouth.

When William, Prince of Orange, landed at Torbay on November 5th 1688 the allegiance of The Queen's Regiment under Colonel Charles Trelawny to William was one of the first from the army and it is Regimental tradition that King William III for this gave them their badge which is the Lion of England. Subsequently the Regiment fought for King William at the Battle of the Boyne and took part in the sieges of Cork, Kinsale and Limerick as well as in Europe and it became known as King William's Regiment.

In 1715 there was another name change for the Regiment as it became an infantry regiment called The King's Own Regiment of Foot and later as the King's Own Royal Regiment. The Regiment fought against Bonnie Prince Charlie of Scotland at the Battle of Culloden in 1746.

In the nineteenth century the Regiment saw action against Napoleon in Europe, against the Americans in North America, in Crimea, in India and in South Africa. In 1881 the Regiment was attached to the city of Lancaster and it became known as The King's Own (Royal Lancaster Regiment) and later to The King's Own Royal Regiment (Lancaster), and the Regiment saw action on both world wars. Today the Regiment is called The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment.

In early 1915 near Ypres in Belgium two members of this Regiment had formal military burials at Prowse Point Cemetery after their remains were found by a farmer in a field a number of years ago. Researchers then spent five years in trying to identify them. Also found and buried at the same time were two members of the Lancashire Fusiliers who were based in Bury, and two others as yet unidentified.

Now what makes this Regiment of importance to members of the Orange Institution is that in 1733 or 1734 the officers of this Regiment founded a society called "The Loyal and Friendly Society of the Blew and Orange" and its purpose was to commemorate the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the accession of the House of Hanover to the throne in 1714. The strange spelling of the word "blue" is a simply a reflection of how the spelling of some words has changed over the years.

This early Orange society had four formal dinners a year and the last recorded meeting of the society was in 1801 in Egypt, and so it was in existence for well over sixty years. Membership was not restricted only to the Regiment and its members wore a gold medal of the order suspended by two narrow ribbons of orange and blue. On January 11th 1775 sixty eight members of the society dined to celebrate the birthday of the Queen. In August 1788 whilst the Regiment was in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Prince William Henry was present at a society dinner as the Superior of the Order, and the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York became members.

The diary of a Lieutenant Dyott who was a member of this society reads,

"Dublin, Nov. 4, 1785. Our great Blew and Orange Day. In the morning the Regiment first fired three rounds and the Duke (Charles, 4th Duke of Rutland, Lord-Lieutenant) promised to return to dine with the Society, as he was chosen Superior of the Order; but he was delayed by unavoidable business."

"Halifax, N.S. Nov. 6, 1787. He (H.R.H. Prince William Henry) came on shore about twelve, and was made a member of the Loyal and Friendly Society of the Blew and Orange.

"Nov. 10. We had a meeting of the Blew and Orange. As His Royal Highness gave a dinner to the Society that day at our mess-room and was chosen Superior of the Order."

"Aug. 26, 1788. His Royal Highness intended landing this day as a Prince of the Blood, to meet' '; the Loyal Society of the Blew and Orange at dinner, as Their Royal Highnesses, the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, were to honour the Society this day by being admitted members."



Further information can be found on the King's Own Royal Regiment Museum website where you will find a copy of its Constitution and photographs of some of its memorabilia: -

<http://www.kingsownmuseum.plus.com/blew&orange.htm>

It is therefore interesting that at the beginning of World War 1 when uniforms were in short supply the Regiment wore orange and blue shoulder markings as their identification, and one of these can be seen at the Regimental museum in Lancaster. Also in the museum can be seen a silver cup of the society and a German first world war drum with the 55th West Lancashire Division logo on it.





Bibliography: -

King's Own Royal Regiment Museum website

“The Influence of the Orange Lodges on Irish & British Politics 1795-1836” by Hereward Senior

“The King's Own: The Story of a Royal Regiment Volume 1 1680-1814” by Colonel Lionel I Cowper

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