
1800-1850

THE MAHRATTA WAR

1802-05

The 74th was present, under Sir Arthur Wellesley, (later Lord Wellington) throughout the campaign and took part in the battles of Ahmednagar (1803), Assaye (1803), Argaum (1803), Gwalighur (1803) and others. The 74th returned home in 1805, having been awarded the Assaye Colour, the insignia of the elephant on the Regimental Colour and having been described by Sir Arthur Wellesley as 'My fighting Regiment'. Later the Regiment became known as 'The Assaye Regiment' for its epic stand at the battle.

SOUTH AFRICA

1805-06

71st at assault landing at the Cape of Good Hope and the battle of Blauberg (1806). The Cape of Good Hope was thus taken from the Dutch.

SOUTH AMERICA

1806-07

71st in assault and capture of Buenos Aires. Later surrendered with Honours of War, when the British Government decided not to support the expedition, thus giving the Regiment no alternative but to surrender. Returned intact to England in 1807.

NAPOLEONIC WARS - SICILY - EGYPT - ITALY - PONZA

1806-14

1/21st based on Sicily to protect the island against the French. Joined the expedition to Egypt (1807). Fought in Italy (1809). Repulsed French attacks on Sicily (1810). Grenadier company landed at Alicante, Spain (1811). Two companies landed on the island of Ponza (1813). Advanced through Italy (1814) and was present at the fall of Genoa (1814). Thereafter embarked for America

1804-16

2/21st after being stationed in Scotland and Ireland (1804-1813) crossed to the continent (1813) and took part in the battle of Bergen-op- Zoom (1814). Returned to Scotland (1815) and disbanded (1816).

FIRST PENINSULAR CAMPAIGNS

1808-09

First Peninsular campaign under Sir Arthur Wellesley and later, under Sir John Moore. The 71st was present throughout, and took part in the battles of Rolicca (1808), Vimiera (1808), Corunna (1809). The Regiment was part of the rearguard action during the retreat to Corunna.

71st BECOME LIGHT INFANTRY

1809

On 22nd March 1809, the 71st were designated Light Infantry being styled the 71st (Highland Light Infantry) Regiment. This was a mark of esteem as the Light Infantry regiments were regarded as a crack corps, trained to fight in open order with great emphasis on the intelligence and spirit of the ordinary soldier.

WALCHEREN

1809

The 71st took part in the Walcheren Expedition of 1809 and were in action at the capture of Veer and Flushing.

SECOND PENINSULAR CAMPAIGN

1810-14

The 74th arrived in the Peninsula in January and the 71st in May 1810. Both Regiments were present throughout the remainder of the campaign until Napoleon abdicated in 1814. One or other, or both, were present at every major action except Albuera and Talavera.

They fought in many battles including:-

71st

Sobral (1810) Fuentes D’Onor (1811) Arroyo des Molinos (1811) Almaraz (1812) Vittoria (1812) Maya (1813) Pyrenees (1813) Nive (1813) Orthes (1814) Aire (1814)

74th

Busaco (1810) Fuentes D’Onor (1811) Ciudad Rodrigo (1812) Badajoz (1812) San Christobal (1812) Salamnca (1812) Vittoria (1812) Pyrenees (1812) Nivelle (1813) Orthes (1814) Toulouse (1814)

In all these battles, the Regiments played a distinguished part but the 71st's conduct in the battle earned them the title of 'The Heroes of Vittoria’, and the 74th’s part in the storming of Badajoz had a profound effect on the course of the war. No other Regiment had more Peninsular War Battle Honours on its Colours.

WATERLOO

1815

The 71st returned to Ireland in 1814 under orders for America. The escape of Napoleon from Elba caused these orders to be cancelled and the Regiment took the field in Adam’s Brigade (52nd,71st and 95th) and took part in breaking the last charge of the Old Guard.

THE WAR WITH AMERICA

1814-15

The 1/21st was part of the force which defeated American troops at Bladensburg (1814) and entered Washington, where the Regiment ate the Presidential banquet prepared to celebrate its defeat. Later the 21st was in action at Baltimore (1814) and New Orleans (1815), and returned to Europe, joining Wellington’s Army, after peace was declared in 1815.

THE LONG PEACE

The forty years between Waterloo and the Crimea were known as ‘the long peace’ but there were riots in England, rebellion in Ireland ,whilst the British Empire required considerable attention. During this period , the Regiments served as follows:-

21st

Army of Occupation, France 1816 : England 1817-18 : West Indies 1819-26 : England and Ireland 1827-32 : Australia, in charge of convicts 1833-38 : India 1839-47 : England, Scotland and Ireland 1843-53.

1/71st

Army of Occupation, France 1815-17 : England and Ireland 1818-23 : Canada 1824-30 : Bermuda 1831-33 : Scotland and Ireland 1834-37: Canada, suppressing rebellion and preventing American infiltration attempts 1838-42 : West Indies 1843-46 : England, Scotland and Ireland 1847-52 : Corfu 1853-54.

2/71st

Re- raised 1842 - Canada 1843-54 - Amalgamated with 1/71st 1855.

74th

Ireland 1814-18 : Canada and Bermuda 1818-29 : Ireland 1830-33: West Indies 1834-40 : Canada 1841-44 : England,

Scotland and Ireland 1845-50 : South Africa 1851-53 : East Indies 1853.

1851-53

The 74th arrived in South Africa in 1851 and campaigned for three years against the Kaffirs, sustaining fairly heavy casualties. The major actions fought included Amatola Heights (1851) and the Waterkloof (1851). The war finished with the defeat of the tribes and the establishment of Basutoland as a Protectorate. The battle honour, South Africa 1851-2-3 was awarded.

During the war, in 1852, the transport Birkenhead carrying reinforcements was wrecked and sank. The senior officer and largest draft aboard were the 74th and the courage and discipline displayed by the soldiers, under the orders of Lt. Col. Alexander Seton, 74th, aroused the world's admiration. 1850 - 1914