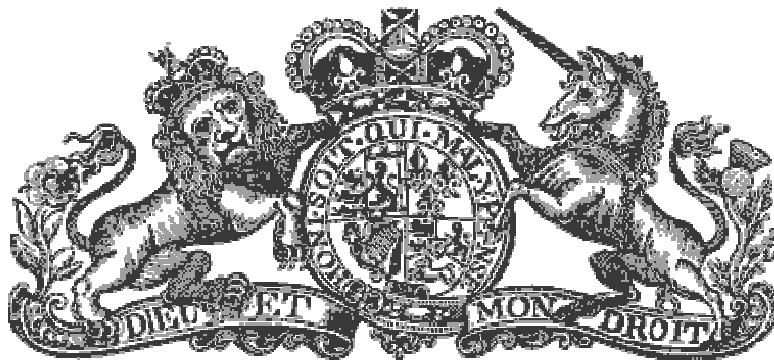


Royal Sussex Regimental Society

Soldiers' Manual

1st Battalion, the Royal
Sussex Regiment

1882-1885



Victorian Living History Authenticity and Field Guide. 2008.



As a representative of the Royal Sussex Society, I will always keenly observe a respectful and sober disposition while in the uniform, so that no dishonour or tarnish will ever besmirch the regiment, its history, and the memory of those who served in it.

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Welcome to the Royal Sussex! *This manual is to serve as an instructional authority for developing a quality impression, or living history theme, as appropriate for the Royal Sussex Society's Victorian venues. This manual attempts to be authoritative, but it cannot be totally comprehensive. Therefore, should the reader have any questions, the commanding officer or other members will be more than happy to address them and help as best as possible.*

Brief Regimental History

The 35th Regiment of Foot was raised in 1701 by the Earl of Donegall and called the Belfast Regiment. King William III granted the regiment his favor by granting them exclusive orange facings. The orange would remain so until the William IV was granted the title "Royal" and blue facings. It served in the War of Spanish Succession, the French and Indian War, the American Revolution, and the wars against Napoleon with great distinction. It's first Victorian conflict was the Indian Mutiny where it helped suppress the worse rebellion in British history. In 1882, the Royal Sussex was part of Wolseley's Egyptian campaign and later lead the way in the Nile Expedition to save Gordon. The regiment also saw extensive action in India on the North-West Frontier. Three battalions of the regiment served in the bitter Boer War of 1899-1902. The regiment served in Europe and in the East during the First World War. The regiment would again see action in the World War Two and the Korean War. The regiment participated in post-war colonial police actions until being amalgamated with the Royal Surreys, Royal Kents, the Buffs, and the Middlesex Regiment to form the Queen's Regiment in 1966. In 1992 it was amalgamated and is now part of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment.

Section I

Membership Requirements.

In accordance with agreement made and provision passed at the Society meeting at Dey Mansion in July of 2007, the following are the membership requirements for the Royal Sussex Society.

1) Dues.

A) Membership dues are, as of 2008, \$20 annually per household. Dues contribute towards the expense of liability insurance and are to be paid by check made out to "Royal Sussex Society" no later than March 31st.

B) Membership dues entitles a household to one year of membership and protection while serving in the capacity of the Society in an arranged living history event or reenactment.

C) Failure to pay dues negates insurance coverage by the Society and termination of membership.

2) Attendance.

A) In order to be considered active, a member must attend at least two events, excluding meetings, per year.

B) Payment of dues, but failure to meet attendance requirement will relegate a member to inactive status.

3) Personnel.

A) Women did not serve in the British Victorian army. However, if a woman can reasonably pass herself as a man in uniform, she shall not be obstructed from falling out with the regiment. All women are encouraged to join the Society's Ladies Committee.

B) Field Musicians such as drummers/buglers may fall out as young as 12 with parental supervision.

B) Soldiers must be able to legally possess and fire a firearm, be at least 18 years of age, or if younger, have parental supervision to fall out with the regiment.

4) Outfitting and Kit.

Members are expected to acquire their basic uniform and kit within a year of joining.

Section II

The Garrison or Primary Uniform.

Each soldier or musician in the Royal Sussex should strive to acquire the Primary Uniform first. This represents the uniform as it would have been in the 1880's and also on campaign in Egypt, 1882.

Glengarry* - black or dark navy blue. No dicing. Red *toorie* (pom-pom). Should have brass 35th badge. Worn angled, low on the side, almost touching the right ear.

Foreign Service Helmet - white "pith" helmet. Should be tall with straight sides, beware cheap knock-offs. Do not stain your helmet.

Puggaree - white gauze-like cotton material, worn wound and folded around the helmet size times.

Greyback* - grey army shirt with band collar.

Trousers* - period navy blue wool trousers with ¼" red welt down the sides.

Ammo Boots* - black British or Canadian army ammo boots with hobnails, no toe caps. Laces are "ladder" style.

Foreign Service Frock - plain, unlined scarlet wool jacket closed by brass General Service buttons. Two epaulets have Royal Sussex shoulder titles. "Jam pot" cuffs and short standing collar are navy blue. Collar dogs worn approximately 1½" from collar closure. Awarded medals or merits may be worn on this uniform only. Rank, if any, worn on the upper right sleeve. Musicians wear laced shoulder wings.

Waistbelt* - if undress, the waistbelt is to be worn with this uniform at all times with one ammunition pouch securely closed.

* Indicates "Basic Kit" to be acquired within one year of joining.

Section III

Field Service or Secondary Uniform.

Each soldier or musician in the Royal Sussex should strive to acquire the khaki Field Service Uniform once the Basic Kit is secure and the red Garrison Uniform is underway. In 1884, the Royal Sussex wore khaki uniforms into battle, notably the Nile Expedition into the Sudan as Gen. Gordon was trapped in Khartoum.

Glengarry - same as before.

Foreign Service Helmet - same as before.

Puggaree - white gauze-like cotton material, may be worn loosened to act as a neck curtain against the sun.

Greyback - same as before.

Trousers - period cut khaki cotton drill trousers, very plain.

Ammo Boots* - same as before.

Puttees - brown, tan, or khaki colored wool leg wraps. Start at the top of the boots and wind their way up to just below the knee.

Foreign Service Frock - plain, unlined khaki cotton drill frock. It is closed by five brass General Service buttons, has two chest pockets, and a small stand-and-fall collar. Two epaulets have Royal Sussex shoulder titles. No collar dogs. Awarded medals or merits may not be worn on this uniform. Rank, if any, worn on the upper right sleeve.

Spine Pad - optional item, a quilted pad which is worn on down the neck. Intended to ward off sun-stroke.

Waistbelt - if undress, the waistbelt is to be worn with this uniform at all times with one ammunition pouch securely closed.

This uniform was little changed during the Second Boer War, however, khaki helmet covers were worn in the late 1890's to hide the white helmets.

Section IV

Arms and Equipment, Engagement Rules.

The following is a list for all soldiers to follow. Engagement rules, for the most part, are common sense, however some points will be clarified herein.

ARMS AND EQUIPMENT

Martini-Henry Rifle - replaced the Snider-Enfield in 1871 as Britain's first lever-action, breech-loading cartridge weapon. The Martini is a .450-.577 black powder rifle, designed first with a short lever, later a longer lever. Either are acceptable. Rifle must have a white leather sling.

Bayonet - the P1876 is a triangular socket bayonet 22" long. P53 Enfield bayonets (Civil War) often were re-used with their sockets' diameter reduced or "bushed." Either is acceptable.

P1882 Valise - this is the leather gear which incorporates the waistbelt, bayonet frog, two ammunition pouches, and upon which the valise, mess kit, and blanket can be carried. The belt is closed with a brass General Service buckle and leather is to be whitened.

Oliver Pattern Waterbottle - sometimes called the Italian canteen, this is a wooden keg canteen with a sipping spout closed with a cork. It is carried in a white leather sling over the left shoulder, hanging on the right side.

Haversack - white canvas bag holds rations and personal items, slung over the right shoulder.

Goggles - optional, two-piece (that is, one piece per eye) shaded period goggles to protect the eyes against sun and sand. Often worn on the pith helmet when not in use.

Section IV Continued

ENGAGEMENT RULES

Any skirmish or reenactment battle does have certain risks... However, these dangers can be avoided by using common-sense safety techniques and by always following the guidelines specified below.

Absolutely no live rounds. Our events subject members to arms inspections. Be careful! If you have a live round, you will be instantly expelled, no exceptions. Leave them home if you have them.

Firing Range: In a mock battle, never fire a blank rifle or pistol directly at a person who is not more than 10 yards or 30 feet away. Blanks can cause severe injury and this range is very close. Always aim high or over the head when within 10-20 yards of your opponent.

Taking a hit: This is entirely based on the honor system. If you feel that the enemy has had a good shot at you, it is entirely your discretion as how to react. Be a good sport, however, and be fair.

Hand-to-Hand Combat: Should you close with your enemy, take all care as not to cause any physical injury. Remember, it is acting for all intents and purposes. Never strike someone. You will be held responsible for your own actions. Some events may forbid hand-to-hand.

Prisoners: If your opponent “surrenders” you may capture him and bring him to the attention of a superior. Since you’re a British soldier, be sure to treat prisoners with appropriate tact.

Section V

Standing Orders.

Drill Sessions - The unit, will undergo a roll call in the morning of each day of an event by the commanding officer or duly designated individual. This will be done at reenactments as well as living histories in which the soldiers are present and under arms. The roll call will be immediately followed by weapons inspection and drill session, in the Manual of Arms 1875. The exercises and drill should be approximately 20-30 minutes.

Military Courtesy - When a living history or battle reenactment is open to the public, officers and men of the Royal Sussex will observe appropriate military courtesies to maintain a sense of authenticity and *esprit de corps*. The Colours, if present, will also be shown appropriate respect at all times, as they are the embodiment of the regiment.

Authenticity - Whenever possible, members of the Society, while representing an historical figure, including Royal Sussex soldiers and civilians, steps will be taken to ensure the highest level of authenticity "inside and out." In order to attain and maintain the most accurate depiction of life in the past, no visible grievous anachronisms should be found on the person or in the camp site of the Royal Sussex Society. Wallets, wrist-watches, keys, cell phones (off or vibrate please), should be kept in a safe and secure place out of sight.

Hair - Queen's Regulations 1881 State: "The following directions in regard to the growth of hair are to be strictly observed by all ranks. The hair of the head is to be kept neatly cut and kept short. Moustaches are to be worn, and the chin and under lip are to be shaved.... Whiskers, when worn, are to be of moderate length." Moustaches and sideburns are not required, of course, but look the part very well.

Weapons - All weapons are to be kept clean and serviceable at all times. Never dry-fire your antique rifle! This is as much a safety factor as it is also preserving your investment.

Decorations - If a member of the Society is entitled to a decoration awarded by the unit, he may wear it on his scarlet garrison uniform only.

Canteens - Canteens must always be filled with water to prevent dehydration at events, especially the warmer ones. If you don't have a canteen, a full water bottle must be on your person. Drink frequently: dehydration is not readily noticeable but easily prevented. If you should ever feel ill at any time, let someone know and find a cool place to rest.

Blank Cartridges - Martinis should fire black powder only.

Section VI

The Colours, Awards, and Traditions.

The Colours are the embodiment of the spirit of the regiment. They are never referred to as “flags”. When on parade and the Colours approach, come to the Present Arms until they have passed. The Colours are never to fall into enemy hands as losing them was an unthinkable disgrace. The Colours may touch the ground in salute to the Sovereign or her representative. When in camp, the Colours will be posted outside the commanding officer’s tent. At night or in inclement weather, the Colours are covered in a canvas case.

Awards may be granted to soldiers of the Royal Sussex with the consent of the commanding officer and a majority of the membership determined by a vote.



Indian Mutiny: First issued in 1858 to those who had fought the mutineers. For the Society, these may be worn by those soldiers 42 years of age or older who have demonstrated excellent attendance and initiative for the unit's Victorian events and projects, after at least two years of membership.



Egypt 1882-1885: These were issued to the 1st Batt. Royal Sussex Regiment on 22 Feb. 1883. Egypt medal may be awarded to soldiers who demonstrate a keen and thorough understanding of the history of the time period as well as carry themselves with a deportment and bearing becoming of a soldier before the public and his peers.



Khedive Star 1882-1885: The Khedive of Egypt issued a bronze star to the British soldiers who preserved his throne by taking part in the war of 1882. Medal may be awarded to those soldiers who take the initiative in sponsoring a reenactment event. Medal may also be awarded to those who successfully recruit two or more soldiers of upstanding quality, following their completion of one full year of membership.



Long Service and Good Conduct (2 Years): These stripes were worn on the lower left sleeve, pointing up. They were granted to privates and lance corporals for long service and good conduct. A soldier may be awarded one LSGC stripe after demonstrating excellent attendance, a keen understanding and handling of drill, plus two years of full membership.

THE LOYAL TOAST

Stemming from the regiment’s earliest days of duty on board ships, the Loyal Toast is given sitting down, rather than standing. When receiving a rum ration or at mess, simply raise your glass and say for all to hear, “The Queen, God bless her!”