

**AUSTRALIAN JOINT COPYING PROJECT**

**SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE REGIMENT**

**Records, 1804-1905**

**Reel M815**

**Staffordshire Regiment Museum  
Whittington Barracks  
Whittington  
Lichfield Staffordshire WS14 9PY**

**National Library of Australia  
State Library of New South Wales**

**Filmed: 1971**

## HISTORICAL NOTE

The 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot was raised by Lord Henry Paget in 1793, largely from members of the Staffordshire Militia who were tenants of his father, the Earl of Uxbridge. It immediately saw action in Flanders and the Netherlands and it was part of the British force that expelled Napoleon from Egypt in 1801. In 1802 it absorbed the Staffordshire Volunteers and from then on was called the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment (Staffordshire Volunteers). The Regiment served in India from 1803 to 1817.

In May 1836 a detachment of the Regiment, led by Major Narborough Baker, left Gravesend as the guard on the convict ship *Lady Kennaway*. It arrived in Sydney in October 1836 and 25 further detachments followed as convict guards in the next two years. In March 1837 Baker was given command of the Regiment and was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. The regimental colours arrived in July 1837. The headquarters of the regiment were initially at Windsor and in 1841 they were moved to Parramatta. The troops were deployed widely, with detachments sent at various times to the Illawarra, Berrima, Wingello, Newcastle, Liverpool, Port Phillip, Bathurst, Cox's River, Emu Plains, Moreton Bay, Portland Bay and Port Macquarie. Some troops continued working as guards on convict road gangs. Under the command of Major James Nunn, other soldiers were assigned to the Mounted Police and some took part in the massacre of indigenous Australians at Waterloo Creek in January 1838.

In 1839 Major Thomas Bunbury led a detachment to Norfolk Island to serve as the garrison. Following a minor mutiny, he was recalled to Sydney in the same year. In 1841 Bunbury was sent to New Zealand. His detachment, which numbered from 80 to 100 men, was employed on various manual tasks, such as timber-cutting, bricklaying and carpentry. The soldiers built the first stone barracks at Auckland. Bunbury was also responsible for taking the Treaty of Waitangi to the South Island and Stewart Island and gathering signatures. In June 1840 at Cloudy Bay he took possession of the South Island in the name of the British Crown. The detachment returned to Sydney in 1844.

In 1844 Sir Maurice O'Connell, who was commander of the Australian military forces, was appointed colonel of the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment. He held the post until his death in 1848. In August 1844 the Regiment left Australia and sailed to India. Baker retired in 1845 and was succeeded by Bunbury as commanding officer. The Regiment served in the First Sikh War (1845-46), the Second Burmese War (1852-53), the Central Indian Campaign (1858) and the Zulu Wars (1879).

In 1881 the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment merged with the 38<sup>th</sup> (1<sup>st</sup> Staffordshire) Regiment (which had originally been raised in Lichfield in 1705). The 80<sup>th</sup> formed the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion in the South Staffordshire Regiment. In 1959 the Regiment merged with the North Staffordshire Regiment to form the Staffordshire Regiment. In turn, the Staffordshire Regiment was absorbed into the Mercia Regiment in 2005.

Reference: W.L. Vale. *History of the South Staffordshire Regiment* (Aldershot, 1969)

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#### **1. Digest of the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment, volume 1: 1793-1897 (259pp)**

The digest appears to have been first written in about 1881, with additions bringing it up to 1897. It is a narrative recording the formation and movements of the Regiment and its service in campaigns and battles in many countries. Its service in Australia and New Zealand in 1836-44 is dealt with on pages 27-41. As well as recording the movements of the headquarters and detachments of the Regiment, the digest lists the ships which brought the Regiment to Australia in 1836-37 and lists the officers serving on 16 July 1841. It also reproduces a few orders or letters from commanding officers of the regiment.

#### **2. Digest of the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment, volume 2: 1793-1899**

This volume appears to be a slightly updated copy of the first digest. The account of the service of the Regiment in Australia is identical with that in the first volume.

#### **3. Nominal and descriptive roll of the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 1804-81**

Arranged by date of enlistment, from 1804 to 1881, the roll gives the name of every soldier in the Regiment, his age at the time of enlistment, height at the time of enlistment, previous occupation and place of birth. The final remarks column, which is not always legible, gives the date of death or discharge. There are other columns for religion and physical description, but they were seldom used until about 1855.

#### **4. Record of stations, 1793-1905**

The volume records the arrival and departure dates of the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment at each station from its formation in 1793 until 1905 (by which time it was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the South Staffordshire Regiment).

The pages at the end of the volume were used for a different purpose, as they give details of promotions, retirements and exam results of officers of the Regiment in 1887-97.

#### **5. Miscellaneous item, 1859**

Letter from Major R.H.W. Fowler (Melbourne) to Commanding officer, North Staffordshire Regiment, 24 July 1853: sends an old letter discovered in a creek at Warrandyte, Victoria. (copy)

Letter from Military Secretary (London) to Lt. General Monteith (Indian Army), 31 May 1859:  
Commander –in –Chief has appointed Stafford Vardon as an ensign by purchase in 98<sup>th</sup> Foot.  
(original)

Note: The 98<sup>th</sup> (Prince of Wales) Regiment of Foot, raised in 1824, amalgamated with the 64<sup>th</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup>  
Staffordshire) Regiment in 1881 to form the North Staffordshire Regiment. It did not serve in  
Australia.