THE EXCEPTIONAL BOER WAR PHOTOGRAPH ALBUM AND DIARY BELONGING TO A LIEUTENANT, 3RD VOLUNTEER BATTALION, WEST YORKSHIRE REGIMENT (THE LEEDS RIFLES) DETAILING HIS SERVICE IN SOUTH AFRICA MARCH 1901-MAY 1902



The Photograph album and diary belonged to Lieutenant B A Hirst, 3rd Volunteer Battalion, West Yorkshire Regiment (The Leeds Rifles). His Battalion did not serve in South Africa as a unit during the war but sent two companies to supplement the 2nd Battalion on campaign. Hirst arrived in South Africa in April 1901, during the Guerrilla war phase of the conflict and it is this phase of the war that is the subject of both diary and photograph album.

The diary, which measures 23x18cm, is entitled *"With the 2nd (Price of Wales Own) West Yorkshire Regiment in South Africa Extracts from my daily diary March 15th, 1901, to the 25th of June 1902"* and runs over approximately 120 fully filled page sides (see pics for examples). Throughout the diary Hirst describes daily duties and events with the addition of extremely well drawn maps, drawings and construction diagrams relating to the blockhouse system. Clearly a talented artist, Hirst was also very good at putting pen to paper, his descriptions giving great detail of the service of a company officer on campaign during this phase of the Boer War.

To add to the diary is a large hardbound photograph album, which measures 31x26cm and contains approximately 174 photographs, all relating to Hirst's service in South Africa. The content of the album is exceptional and starts with photographs of Hirst's voyage to South Africa aboard the S.S. Kildonan Castle in March 1901 and (as throughout the album) features various original items ephemera fixed into the album; these fold out without obscuring photographs. The album starts with a list of other officers aboard the S.S. Kildonan Castle during the voyage, a couple of menus and *'The Kildonan Record, being a souvenir of the 7th outward voyage'* of the troopship. The latter runs to several pages and details the voyage, units and strengths aboard, concerts, orders, deaths etc, this edited by Lance Corporal Hy Holoran. The album then moves on to images of service in South Africa, of Pretoria, many superb images of duties in the field; construction of blockhouses and defences, The West Yorks on the march, artillery, cavalry, lots of shots of officers, Boer prisoners, operations Hirst was involved in etc etc. The album ends with Hirst's voyage home from Durban on 31 May 1902 and as well as various photographs of his voyage, is a list of awards to officers of the 2nd Battalion and

another of overall casualties the battalion suffered. The second last page has a pamphlet for a service a York Minster, dated 13 October 1904, commemorating the fallen from the Regiment (all battalions). The final page has a photograph of President Kruger, with the caption *'In Memoriam. The cause of all the beastly mess'* !



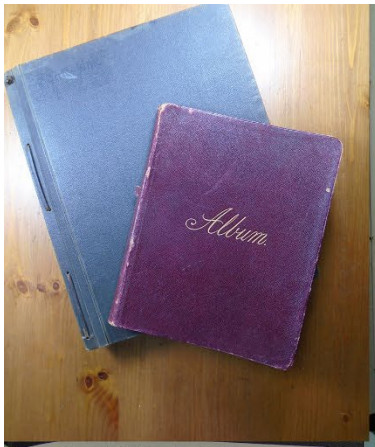
Almost every photograph has a caption or a name and a number have a detailed description. There are also various Army Telegraphs and Signals forms, detailing orders given to Hirst in the field, a 'in field' receipt for delivery of 4 Boer prisoners, a Xmas 1901 South African Field Force Hyme sheet. Additionally, as with the diary, there are some superb hand drawn maps of the area of operations Hirst was involved in. In particular, the maps of blockhouse locations are of huge use in tying everything together.

https://www.bwm.org.au/blockhouses.php

There are far too many details within the diary and photograph album to give a detailed description of everything. However random sample diary pages from throughout Hirst's service in South Africa have been added to the listing, as well as a large number of the album pages. These with a few close-ups, should give a good idea of content

Hirst appears in multiple photos throughout the album, labelled as 'B.A.H.'. He was entitled to the Queens South Africa Medal with clasps Cape Colony and Orange Free State and almost certainly the Queens South Africa Medal with the two dated clasps.

Boer War photograph albums are of course extremely scarce but the content of this album, along with the quantity of original ephemera and the diary, this is truly an exceptional collection. Indeed, between diary and album, there is great research potential and the making of a book for anyone of that mind.

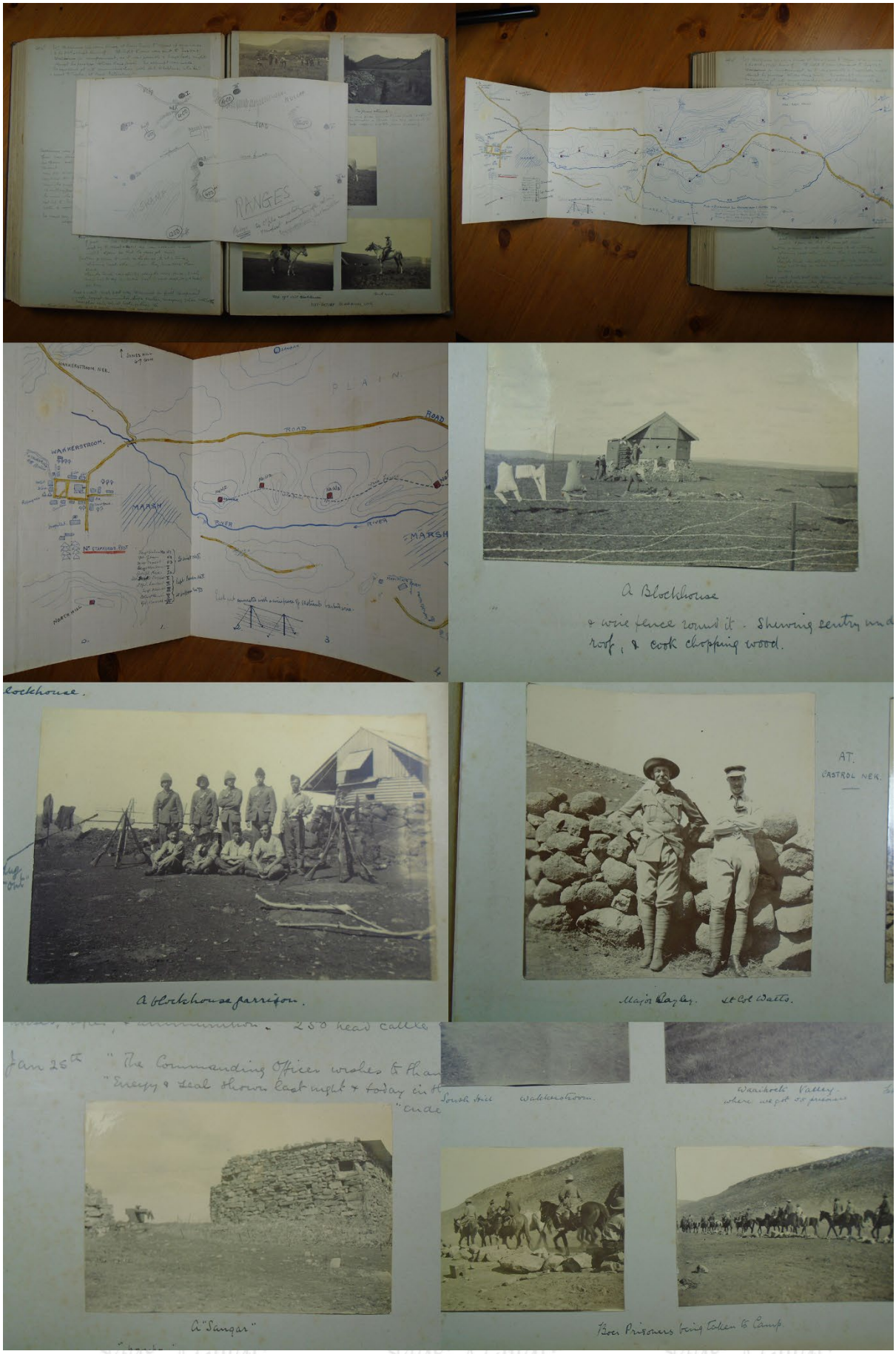


With the 2nd (Prince of Wales' Own)
WEST YORKSHIRE REGIMENT
in
South Africa.

Extracts from my daily diary. B.M.
March 15th 1901 — June 28th 1902.

March 15. left York, where I said farewell to Father, & went up to London with all my kit. Must do something as my last night in England ~~[illegible]~~, so went to the Pavilion Theatre & saw "The Messenger Boy". Ran down Green Park & Hyde Park Corner & Sloane Street & Victoria Station & Victoria Street & Westminster Bridge Road & Waterloo Station & Waterloo Bridge & Strand & Fleet Street & Ludgate Hill & St Paul's Cathedral & Cheapside & Bank & Mansion House & Queen Victoria Street & Blackfriars Bridge & Blackfriars Road & Westminster Bridge & Westminster Abbey & Houses of Parliament & Whitehall & Trafalgar Square & Charing Cross


WITH THE 2ND WEST YORKSHIRE REGT
IN
SOUTH AFRICA
Leaving Queenstown
THE UNION-CASTLE LINE
S.S. "KILDONAN CASTLE"
THE "KILDONAN RECORD,"
SOUVENIR
Seventh Outward Voyage
SPORTS ON BOARD.
Dent's Central Hotel.
East London.
GRAND HOTEL.
PRETORIA.
ARMY TELEGRAPHS AND SIGNALS.
TO
FROM
PRETORIA.
ARMY TELEGRAPHS AND SIGNALS.
TO
FROM


RANGES
WAKKERSTROOM NEK.
PLAIN
ROAD
WAKKERSTROOM.
MARSH
RIVER
A Blockhouse
& wire fence round it. Shewing sentry und
roof, & cook chopping wood.
A blockhouse garrison.
AT.
CASTROL NEK.
Major Bayley. Lt Col Watts.
Jan 25th
"The Commanding Officer wishes to than
"Energy & Zeal shown last night & today in th
"ende
South Hill
Wakkerstroom.
Waaihoek Valley.
where we got 55 prisoners
A "Sangar"
Boer Prisoners being taken to Camp.



luxury.



Lt. Bird. BAH.

Left Pretoria July 1st
Arrived Vel July 2nd
Trekked up with Col Lloyd Clemens
for 2 days, built Bloomers.
Left Vel July 5
Arrived Pol Stephanson July 7.
Left Pol Stephanson July 9
Arrived Freemansfield July 9.
Trekked up toward Rustenburg
& built swampies Hochtown.



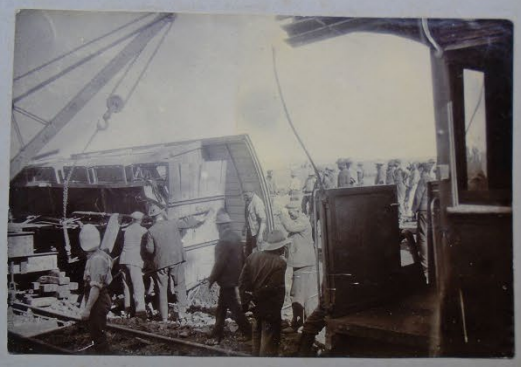
Troops travelling by train.







A halt. (Vol: Coy:)



ort Nels.

West Yorks Regt
8 killed
4 wounded.

West Yorkshires marching. Lt Duffand.



T Battery Royal Horse Artillery on the March.



A naval 12 pdr.



Royal Horse Artillery finding danger.



Capt Pearson.
& Regt: & transport halted.

Prisoners leaving the "cage" – escorted by West Yorks. – for transpor



Collecting barbed wire
for entanglements.



Boer Prisoners waiting to be escorted to Durban for India.
At the "Cage". Pretoria



XMAS, 1901.

South African Field Force.

HYMN 66.

HYMN 68.

HYMN 99.


LIST OF MILITARY OFFICERS.
Supplement to the Kildonan Record.
Building a "Sangar".
Pretoria.
NATAL.
Colenso.
Colenso Bridge blown up. New one being built.
Colenso Railway Bridge wrecked.
Gravel pans going over Tugela to Colenso on pontoon bridge.
ARMY TELEGRAPHS AND SIGNALS.
Army Book 295 A (i).
Office of Origin and Service Instructions.
TO
FROM
The above may be forwarded as now corrected.
Censor of Army Telegrams.
Signature of Addressor or person authorised to telegraph in his name.
My tent. No 5 B House.
Pretoria.
TRANSVAAL
NATAL


A Surrendered Boer Family.
AT
No 2 Wakkerstroom
My hut.
Kitchen
Blockhouse
No. III
Wakkerstroom
Christmas Presents.
AT.
CASTROL NEK.
Lt. Wilshman DSO.
Durban Harbour
Las Palmas.
Loading at Las Palmas.
GOING HOME.
Sailed from Durban May 31st
Arrived Cape Town June 6th
Sailed Cape Town June 8th (evening)
Arrived Las Palmas June 16th
Sailed from Las Palmas June 17th (evening)
Arrived Southampton June 25th
"Funeral Music."
Let us Pray.
Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.
OUR Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.
Priest. O Lord, shew Thy mercy upon us.
Answer. And grant us Thy salvation.
Priest. O Lord, save the King.
Answer. Who putteth his trust in Thee.
Priest. Send him help from Thy holy place.
Answer. And evermore mightily defend him.
Priest. Let his enemies have no advantage against him.
Answer. Nor any wicked power to hurt him.
Priest. Give peace in our time, O Lord.
Answer. Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only Thou, O Lord.
Priest. Be unto us a strong tower,
Answer. From the face of our enemies.
Priest. O Lord, hear our prayer,
Answer. And let our cry come unto Thee.
The Memorial will then be Dismissed by
Lieut.-General the Hon. Sir Neville Lyttelton, K.C.B.,
Chief of the General Staff,
and entered by THE DEAD.
Let us Pray.
ALMIGHTY God, with Whom live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord and who do judge the souls of the faithful after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh: We humbly pray Thee that the holy Angels may lead us into paradise; that we, who put our trust in Thee, may not suffer with the wicked when they receive their just punishment, but may be received into everlasting rest and dwell in the land of the living, where the blessed saints shall be comforted, and rejoice for ever in the sight of Thy glorious Majesty; there to be partakers of everlasting life and joy with those whom we have loved and lost awhile. Grant this, O Lord, we beseech Thee, for the honour of Jesus Christ our Advocate. Amen.
O MERCIFUL God, we desire to commend to Thy keeping Thine own servants (specially the Officers and Men of this Regiment) who have professed their faith before many witnesses, and have endured the trials of battle and sickness; give them patience and true courage in danger, and in the hour of death. Receive them to the great glory of the Resurrection to eternal life, through the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Comfort their brethren in peril and adversity. And as Thou dost grant unto Thine elect everlasting joy, so grant us grace, meanwhile (if consistent with Thy will) to live in godly love one with another, and with all men in the bonds of peace, that we may rejoice together in the eternal kingdom of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
O HEAVENLY Father, Who hast adopted us as Thy children in Holy Baptism, and hast sealed us with the sign of the cross to show that we should not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldiers and servants unto our lives' end. Grant that we, Thy servants, may so run the race that we may not lose the prize, so fight the fight that we may finally win the crown of Thy heavenly kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
Hymn
GOD is our refuge in our pain,
Our God, our mother and
Love's long and many wanderings cease.
O Thou mind, Thy rove to rest.
Thou seamen under sun's alone,
Thy God is with you still.
No traffic troubles thine,
Thy trade are safe with Him.
No more by lands nor seas,
No more by man Separated,
With Christ, your Captain, thou prevailed,
And it is your all eternal.
They have the Reached of their Lives,
The Cross by which he died,
They walked with faith's steady mind
For Him, the Crucified.
From they suffered them on pain,
Obedient to His Will:
They sufferings they counted gain.
Now every pang is still.
They did their duty in the past
Choose for them he Him,
The Captain of God's glorious host
Of Men and Seraphim.



Lt. Hoffman. Capt Pearson. B.A.H.

Back at York.

June 27th 1902.

2nd Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment

Awards for Services

Major GENL. W.F. Kitchener

C.B. .... Lt-Col Fry.

Bt Lt Col ... Major Watts.

V.C. .... Capt. Mansel-Jones.

D.S.O. .... { Lieut Boyle
" Crossman
" Middleton
" Wetherman
Majr Leyton.
Lieut Francis.



Embarking the "SYRIA" on a fine Steamer.

On board.

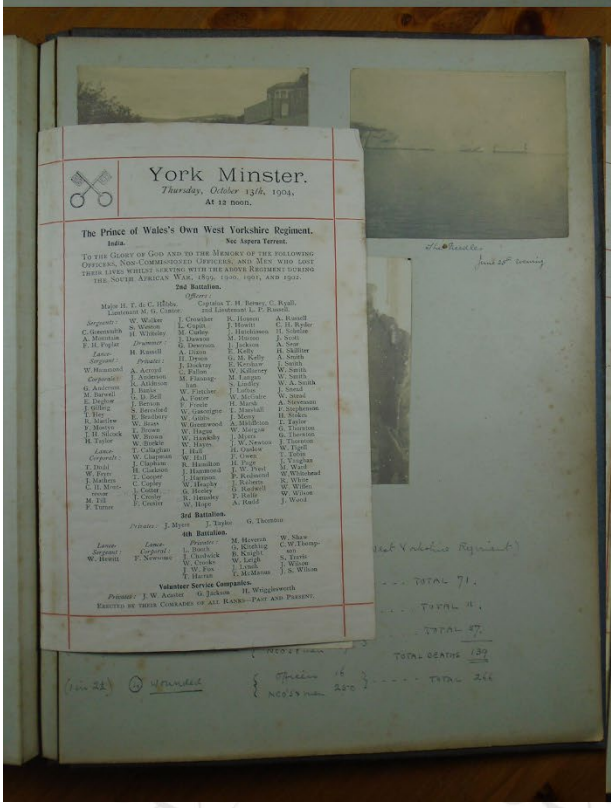
Steerage Hold Forward.

Las Palmas.

Coaling at Las Palmas.

GOING HOME.

Sailed from Durban May 31st
Arrived Cape Town June 6th
Sailed Cape Town June 8th (evening)
Arrived Las Palmas June 19th
Sailed from Las Palmas June 19th (evening)
Arrived Southampton June 28th



York Minster.

Thursday, October 13th, 1904,
At 12 noon.

The Prince of Wales's Own West Yorkshire Regiment.
India.
Nec Aspera Terrent.

TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND TO THE MEMORY OF THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS, NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS, AND MEN WHO LOST THEIR LIVES WHILST SERVING WITH THE ABOVE REGIMENT DURING THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR, 1899, 1900, 1901, AND 1902.

2nd Battalion.

Officers:

Major H. T. de C. Hibbs, Captain T. H. Renny, C. Ryall,
Lieutenant M. G. Cuzen. and Lieutenant L. F. Russell.

Sergeants: W. Walker, S. Weston, H. Wibsley.
Lance-Sergeant: M. Russell.
Sergeant: W. Hammond.
Lance-Corporals: G. Anderson, M. Barrell, E. Daglow, J. Gilling, T. Hey, R. Marlow, F. Mosley, J. H. Monck, H. Taylor.
Lance-Corporals: T. Dodd, W. Fryer, J. Hudson, C. H. Mosscrop, M. Pill, F. Turner.

J. Crowther, M. Cuthey, J. Dawson, G. Dewsnon, A. Dixon, H. Dyson, J. Dunlop, G. Fallon, M. Fleming, W. Fletcher, A. Foster, J. Foster, W. Gillespie, W. Gibbs, W. Greenwood, W. Hague, W. Hawkins, W. Hayes, J. Hall, W. Hall, R. Hamilton, J. Hammond, J. Hannon, W. Heaphy, G. Hosley, R. Housley, W. Hoyle.

R. Houson, J. Howitt, J. Hutchinson, M. Hinton, J. Jackson, E. Kelly, G. H. Kelly, E. Kershaw, W. Kilkenny, M. Lanigan, J. Lawler, J. Lawler, W. McCabe, H. Marsh, T. Marshall, J. Merry, A. Middleton, W. Morgan, J. Myers, J. W. Newton, W. Pigott, G. Quaker, T. Owen, H. Page, J. W. Peel, J. Rathmell, F. Rathmell, T. Reilly, A. Reid.

A. Russell, C. H. Ryder, H. Seldon, J. Scott, A. Sear, H. Skittler, A. Smith, J. Smith, W. Smith, W. A. Smith, J. Stead, W. Steel, A. Stevenson, F. Stephenson, H. Stiles, T. Taylor, G. Thurston, G. Thurston, J. Thurston, W. Tigg, T. Tinghan, M. Ward, W. Whitehead, R. White, W. Wiles, W. Wilson, J. Wood.

3rd Battalion.

Private: J. Myers. J. Taylor. G. Thornton.

4th Battalion.

Lance-Sergeant: W. Hewitt.
Sergeant: F. Newsome.
Corporal: J. Chadwick.
Private: W. Cooke.

M. Hewitt, G. Kitching, B. Knight, W. Leigh, J. Smith, T. McManus.

W. Shaw, C. W. Thompson, S. Trevis, J. Wilson, J. S. Wilson.

Volunteer Service Companies.

Private: J. W. Acaster. G. Jackson. H. Wrightsworth.

ERECTED BY THEIR COMRADES OF ALL RANKS—PAST AND PRESENT.



Las Palmas. June 19th

Lt. Wheeler. June 28th evening

On S.S. Syria.

TOTAL CASUALTIES OF THE
2nd Battalion Prince of Wales Own (West Yorkshire Regiment)

(Vide 19) (1) Killed in action { Officers 4, NCO's & men 67 } ..... TOTAL 71.
(Vide 20) (2) Died of wounds { Officers 1, NCO's & men 10 } ..... TOTAL 11.
(Vide 21) (3) Died of disease { Officers nil, NCO's & men 47 } ..... TOTAL 47.
TOTAL DEATHS 129
(Vide 22) (4) Wounded { Officers 16, NCO's & men 250 } ..... TOTAL 266