



MHG NEWSLETTER

No 30

Rebecca Brewin

This is the story of Rebecca Brewin, who featured in the last newsletter as a teacher at Jacques Academy

Rebecca lived with her father, Simeon Brewin, a draper, and her mother Rebecca Brewin nee Wale, at No 30 Market Place. Her three siblings were Simeon who died in childhood, Iliffe, who died from consumption at the age of 17 and Robert who became a Wesleyan Methodist minister. Iliffe and her father both died in 1857 when Rebecca was only twelve. Four years later Rebecca was in charge of Jacques Academy next door at No 28 Market Place. She went to live with her Aunt Sarah (her mother's sister) at No 28 when her mother died in 1862.

Charles Mitchil, a baker, lived in what is now No 32 & 34 Market Place. He and his son John were local Wesleyan preachers and John trained as a minister in Manchester at Didsbury College. In September 1863 at the age of 25 the now Reverend John Mitchil, under the auspices of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, accepted the post of Principal of the Education Department in Jaffna, Ceylon. He returned to Mountsorrel from Manchester before sailing to Ceylon in November 1863. In Mountsorrel he spent some time with his next door neighbour and childhood friend, Rebecca Brewin, when they enjoyed a boating excursion on the river and Rebecca listened to him preach. They had been friends since childhood, Rebecca often accompanying him when he delivered bread to outlying villages for his father.

He could not take up his duties in until May 1864, the ship having been run into and caught in a cyclone off Mauritius. When he eventually reached Ceylon he wrote to Rebecca asking her to marry him and to join him in Ceylon, telling her he still had the forget-me-nots she had given to him on their river outing.

In the same year, 1864, Rebecca decided to leave her teaching job at No 28 and travelled to Birmingham to look after a sick relative, Mrs Pinches. A few days after closing the school, on 19 July 1864, just as she was leaving with a party of friends for a day in Bradgate Park she was handed a letter. It was John Mitchil's proposal of marriage. After discussing it with her brother she accepted. Rebecca continued looking after her sick relative corresponding regularly with John in Ceylon until Mrs Pinches died in the spring of 1865.

Rebecca then went to stay with her brother in Exeter. In August, with her brother, she visited the Lake district, and on the way back she stayed with her uncle Mr William Wale in Leicester..

On Friday morning 14 December 1865 she was standing on Leicester station waiting for the train back to Exeter talking to Miss Mitchil and Mr and Mrs Wale when a minister stepped out of the train. He took Mr Wale to one side and told him that John Mitchil had died in Ceylon from Asiatic Cholera. The journey was abandoned and Rebecca stayed with the bereaved family in Leicester, to where they had recently moved, until January the next year when she moved back to Exeter. In one of her letters she wrote *My grief was painfully renewed when I received one of my own letters returned to me by the last mail with the word 'Dead' written on the envelope. For several days I have scarcely been able to look up*

When her brother moved to London in 1867 she went with him and followed him the following year to Louth. In the spring of 1869 she was back in London on a visit where she listened to a speech by a Mr Wakefield at a Methodist meeting. The speech was accompanied by rounds of applause and the waving of hats and handkerchiefs. Rebecca recalled it was something she would never forget. She listened to several other speeches by the Rev Thomas Wakefield while in London and on 2 December 1869 she married him in Louth. At the end of February the next year they set sail for a missionary's life in East Africa. They arrived in Zanzibar at the beginning of June 1870 and in October Rebecca gave birth to her first child, Nellie



Rebecca Wakefield nee Brewin

In January they left Zanzibar and moved to their permanent home in Ribe where their son, Bertie, was born on 8 June 1873. During her time in Ribe she suffered successive attacks of fever and four days after the birth of her son she became ill again. The symptoms included *'exhausting fever, accompanied by long continued delirium, painful and virulent abscesses, paralyzing rheumatism, pain and swelling of the face, and excessive weakness'*. Her son Bertie also became ill and he died on July 12. On Monday, July 14th, very early, Rebecca had gone back in thought to her early home at Mountsorrel, and fancied that once more she was surrounded by her old friends there. After a time the illusion was dispelled. She died two days later at the age of twenty eight.

Nellie returned to England and was looked after by her uncle, Robert Brewin. It was five years before she saw her father again on one of his trips back to England.

She married Amos Jacques, the grandson of Robert Pearson and Sarah Jacques.

The story of Rebecca Brewin is largely taken from 'The Memoirs of Mrs Rebecca Wakefield by her brother Robert Brewin. Below are a few quotes from the book

Mountsorrel Its long, wide, clean street of varying granite and brick houses is bounded on the western side by rugged overhanging hills where on the hot summer days, sleek red and white cattle hold undisturbed possession, as they look dreamily down upon the thatched and slated roofs and luxuriant gardens below. Beyond the orchards and gardens which skirt the opposite side of the long, quiet street lie rich and fertile meadows, with their tempting footpaths, shady lanes, quaint old stiles, and high, bushy hedge-rows, where great elms and pale, drooping willows look down upon the gentle Soar. Its population is scarcely two thousand souls.

The house in which her early years were spent (*30 Market Place*) was a comfortable, old-fashioned dwelling in the Market Place, a little to the left of the market Cross Behind the house was a large orchard-garden, and beyond this a pleasant field stretching back toward the high, rocky front of Broad Hill. The garden was one of luxuriant fruits and flowers. In its ivy-covered walls the song-birds made their nests without danger or fear .

Yesterday was a great day in Mountsorrel. It was the Temperance Gala and Fete. More than a thousand people came from Leicester. It was a very pretty sight from the top of Castle Hill to see the crowds of people thronging the various roads and paths from Sibley Station. There were three continuous streams of passengers, namely, along the fields by the mill, along the lane, and by the river side, all coming toward Mountsorrel, and in the afternoon thousands of people were enjoying themselves on the hills. Tea was provided in Mr. Castledine's yard, and after tea there were many merry games in the large home stead. I presided at one of the tea-tables."

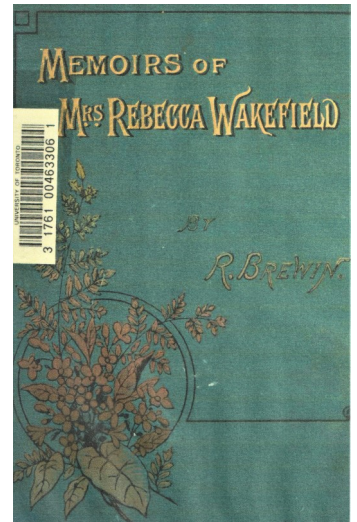
Birmingham She attended the Birmingham School of Art, where she executed some very good drawings. On her way to and from chapel, assisted by Mrs. Pinches benevolence, she supplied the cabmen with interesting literature for Sunday reading.

The Voyage to Zanzibar What should I have said a month ago had any one told me that after fourteen days at sea I should still be too weak to hold a cup or spoon, or feed myself. Sunday, April 24th. Our ninth Sunday on the wide, lone ocean. When shall we get to Zanzibar ? I sat down to breakfast at the table this morning, for the first time since we put out to sea.

Zanzibar My first walk into the country behind Zanzibar reminded me very much of a walk through the meadows at Mountsorrel.

Zanzibar to Ribe In January, 1871, worn by the exhausting climate, weakened by successive attacks of fever, yet anxious to remove to her home at Ribe, and devote herself to Missionary work, Mrs. Wakefield, accompanied by her husband and infant daughter, left Zanzibar, never to see it again. They proceeded by sea in a native dhow to Mombasa, about a hundred and twenty miles ; then for about twelve miles in a small boat, up a creek and river, and finally, over land for six miles, to the Mission station at Ribe, where Mrs. Wakefield remained till the day of her death.

I never met anything to equal it in my life, for lack of all comfort. It was wretched to the last degree. For several days I lay cramped up in a wretched place, the roof of which was far too low to allow of one s sitting upright, the boat itself pitching and tossing on the raging sea with every wave, and the most abominable stench from bilge- water arising the whole time. When, on reaching Mombasa, Nellie and I emerged from our dark cell, I was almost too weak to stand, not having tasted food for about four days. Next a chair, to which two poles were attached, and in this chair, borne on the shoulders of four men, it was intended that Nellie and I should perform the last stage of our journey ; at length I sat in this strange vehicle. Nellie quite enjoyed the shake, shake, but I was in constant fear of our being pitched over on one side or the other ; for, in the first place, the bearers were some tall and some short, and in the second, the path was only wide enough for one person,



The Methodist mission in Ribe was the beginning of methodism in Kenya. In 2019 year there was a split in the Methodist Church of Kenya. The splinter group defied a court injunction by ordaining Bishop Wellington Sanga as their regional President in the Thomas Wakefield Memorial Church in Ribe.

Sarah Smith

This is the story of Sarah Smith who led a very different life from Rebecca Brewin, although they both died at the age of twenty eight

An inquest was held on the body of Elizabeth Wood on the 19th and 21st December 1831, at the King's Head Inn, Mountsorrel. Various witnesses were questioned, including Sarah Smith. After a few moments' deliberation the jury returned a verdict of Wilful Murder against Sarah Smith, and she was committed to take her trial at the next assizes.

The trial was held on Saturday 24th March. Sarah Smith of Mountsorrel, aged 28, was charged with the wilful murder of Elizabeth Wood, of the same place, by mixing arsenic with her tea. Mr. Sergeant Goulburn, Mr. Clinton, M.P., and Mr. Miller, conducted the case for the prosecution: for the prisoner no Counsel were retained. The trial lasted for twelve and a half hours.

When the trial started there was not a seat or standing-place vacant. There were present a considerable number of the ladies and gentlemen of the county. The bloodless features and dull half-closed eyes of the accused formed a striking contrast with the blooming cheeks and sparkling eyes of the ladies in the 'audience'

The first witness to be called was Hamlet Vernon:

Hamlet Vernon of Mountsorrel known as the Little Doctor who visited the poor. He was previously apprenticed to a surgeon. He was called by Sarah Smith to her house to attend Elizabeth Wood on Friday 9th December. He attended her for several days during which he bled her and prescribed a fever mixture. On one occasion Smith gave him a small parcel of arsenic for killing mice and asked if he would prepare it, which he did mixing it with some breadcrumbs. On Thursday evening Wood's husband came to fetch him to attend Elizabeth Wood. She died while he was there and the doctor, Samuel Wright, was called.

Samuel Wright, surgeon lived at 4 Loughborough Road, the home of Mountsorrel doctors for the next 150 years. He went and examined the body between eleven and twelve o'clock on the evening that the deceased died. The body was still warm. He took Constable Benjamin Brown with him as he had heard that Sarah Smith had been buying arsenic. He found a quantity of arsenic which he gave to Constable Brown.

On Sunday 17th he carried out a post mortem assisted by John Simpson and Richard Wilcox from Rothley, and the next day he analysed the white powder found in the stomach. (*this will be of no interest to most but as a one time chemist I had to check it out and he definitely knew what he was doing*) He first dissolved the powder with a small quantity of potassium carbonate. He then poured portions of the solution into six different wine glasses. To each he added a different chemical and recorded the results. To the first he added copper sulphate resulting in a green precipitate (*of copper arsenite or Scheele's Green once used as a pigment in paint*). In another he bubbled hydrogen sulphide through and got a yellow precipitate (*arsenic sulphide*). *I'll stop there*. He then made up a solution of arsenic and applied the same tests with the same results. He told the court he had carried out many other tests but the court said he had supplied ample evidence of the presence of arsenic in the stomach.

[When Samuel Wright's house was sold it contained 150 volumes of medical and other works]

John Simpson of Mountsorrel, surgeon and apothecary, stated that Sarah Smith purchased a pennyworth of arsenic and an ounce of laudanum at his house about ten o'clock on the day in which the deceased died. He was present when the body was opened on Sunday the 17th. He took out the stomach, in which there was no appearance of any food. It contained two ounces of brown-coloured mucus, holding a white powder in suspension. When the head was opened they found it very much injured from large quantities of laudanum.

Mary Ann Wood a child 12 years of age was the sister of the deceased. She lived in Loughborough apprenticed to a straw bonnet maker. On Saturday 10th December Sarah Smith came to fetch her to Mountsorrel saying her sister was ill and wished to see her. Mary stayed with her sister at Sarah Smith's house until her sister died. She was a key witness at the trial telling the jury how her sister was starved by Smith

Joseph and Sarah Mountney had a grocer's shop on The Green (*somewhere near the current site of the Park Dental Surgery*) They said that they sold two ounces of laudanum to Sarah Smith

Samuel Fisher stocking man who lived on The Green. Elizabeth Wood asked for someone to pray with her. Smith said she didn't know anyone like that but she would ask Fisher, who came on two occasions.

Sarah Smith in a long rambling speech told the court her husband told her to buy the arsenic and that he administered it to Wood.

The jury found her guilty and the judge sentenced her to be hanged on Monday next adding 'and your body be given to the surgeons for dissection,'

At an early hour on 26th March Leicester was crowded by people from all surrounding villages to witness the execution of Sarah Smith. Twenty five thousand spectators were assembled, many women and children. At 10 o'clock she was led onto the platform, being so weak she required support on each side while the executioner fixed the rope to the fatal beam. Being a light diminutive woman her struggles continued longer than usual. There were convulsive movements of the arms and legs for several minutes After hanging the usual time the body was cut down and removed to the Infirmary for dissection.

The hangman, Samuel Haywood from Appleby Magna, was an agricultural labourer and also a poacher. Whilst imprisoned he volunteered to flog another prisoner. The governor offered Haywood the vacant position of hangman for Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. He died of influenza on the 11th of March 1848 at the age of 70 having executed at least 44 people



Once the 'Kings Head'



4 Loughborough Road

Wildlife

Swifts

We have been fortunate for many years to have Swifts visit the village during the summer. This year our numbers are severely down on what we've historically had but they are still here. Some of the decrease will be down to habitat loss and perhaps global warming but a specific this year has been severe weather that they've encountered on their migration route.

Historically there appears to be two or possibly three groups centred on; Danvers Road, Market Place and North End and even with diminished numbers that still seems to be the case this year.

The RSPB have produced a wealth of useful information about Swifts and along with Swallows and House and Sand Martins (all of which are in the village during summer). They've also recently produced a Swift Mapper app which you can either download or use on-line without downloading. Details of the Mapper and more about Swifts is at https://www.rspb.org.uk/our-work/conservation/conservation-and-sustainability/safeguarding-species/swiftmapper/?utm_source=notes_on_nature_july_2020&utm_medium=email&utm_content=13&utm_campaign=notes_on_nature

Wildflower Meadow

The recent heat has brought out a further mixed flight of butterflies over and around the Meadow including Meadow Brown, Ringlet, Red Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell, Large White and Small White.

Peace Garden

Noel's bench is now in the Peace Garden



VE and VJ Day

VE and VJ DAY
75th Celebration
PICNIC IN THE PARK – bring your own picnic and chairs

Join us on the Memorial Playing Fields for a picnic and music to celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE and VJ Day

Friday 14th August 2020 3 – 7pm
Free admission

Live music from **The Hip Cats** Bring your own picnic and chairs

Collections on the day towards the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

ENQUIRIES TO MOUNTSORREL PARISH COUNCIL, TEL: 0116 2303809, EMAIL: clerk@mountsorrelparishcouncil.co.uk

John is thinking of arranging another work party, but we need to know if there will be sufficient volunteers, so if willing could you please email me - Thanks



Jean Alexander has offered some cotoneaster plants for the Peace Garden

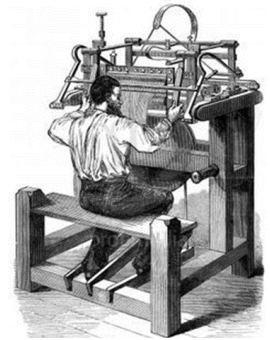
The Battle of Waterloo 15th June 1815

This year saw the 205th Anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo the result of which that set the political scene for Europe for the following 100 years. A huge battle which involved several nations and more importantly to us, men from Mountsorrel.

There are two that we know a little about, first Benjamin Brown who served in the Grenadier Guards (then still simply 1st Foot Guards) and whom we wrote about last year. The other, Jonathan Dancer, served both at Trafalgar in the Royal Navy and then throughout the Peninsula Campaign with the 95th Rifles before arriving at Waterloo.

John Dancer

John Dancer was born in Mountsorrel and christened at St Peter's church (then known locally as the North End Chapel) on 21 April 1783. The elder son of Edward and Lucetta Dancer he originally worked as a Framework Knitter. The family name is spelt in various forms through the records as Dansor, Danzor and latterly Dancer.



Royal Navy Service

John joined the Royal Navy around 1802/3, possibly due to the downturn in the framework knitting trade but also possibly due to the actions of a Press Gang, as in the Royal Navy records he is listed as a "Landsman", a term reserved for those serving aboard but with no previous sea training or experience. Certainly his first ship was HMS Salvador del Mundo, a 120 gun three deck line of battleship captured from the Spanish at the Battle of Quiberon Bay in 1797. Badly battered in that action by 1803 she was being used as a "receiving ship" for new sailors (pressed or not!) in Plymouth.

At the Battle of Trafalgar in October 1805 he served in the crew of HMS Tonnant but how he got there is itself an adventure. He had been serving aboard the Frigate, HMS Doris that had arrived at Quiberon Bay on 11 January 1805 to bring news to the Royal Navy squadron blockading the bay, of a French squadron at Rochefort, preparing to set sail. When she arrived the Blockade Squadron was no longer in the bay so the next morning Doris set sail to search for the fleet in worsening weather. Returning to the bay to for shelter, Doris hit a rock and took on water but the crew was able to get her nearly clear of water, in part by stretching a sail over the hole in her side and then pumping. On the afternoon of 15th January the schooner HMS Felix arrived with news that the French Squadron had sailed and Doris's Captain felt it imperative that he get the news to the blockade squadron and set sail but as he did the holes in the hull opened and despite her crew's efforts to save her she began to sink rapidly. The crew evacuated to Felix and a passing American merchant schooner having set fire to the remains of Doris to prevent her use by the enemy. The crew were later transferred to HMS Tonnant.

Trafalgar 21st October 1805

HMS Tonnant was an 84-gun ship of the line and sailed at Trafalgar in Admiral Lord Collingwood's Division joining battle as the third ship behind the Admiral's Flagship, HMS Royal Sovereign.

The Battle is described as seen from HMS Tonnant by Captain Frederick Hoffman, in his book, "A Sailor of King George" (freely available on-line through the Gutenberg Project) who was serving aboard her.

During the Battle she captured the 74-gun French ship Algésiras but lost 26 officers and men killed and 50 officers and men wounded including her Captain. After immediate post battle repairs in Gibraltar to her badly damaged rudder she sailed for England and underwent a refit at Portsmouth between January and June 1806. It is presumed that at this point John Dancer, like many other sailors, was discharged from service there as surplus to requirements.



The Army

He must have stayed around the south coast as on 1st April 1809 at Hastings, aged 27, he enlisted in the 95th Rifles a new and elite force formed originally in 1800 as an "Experimental Corps of Riflemen". Whilst on their initial formation the officers and other ranks came from drafts of a variety of regiments the Rifles had now been in a number of actions and losses were being filled by direct recruiting.

Posted to Captain Charles Beckwith's Company of 1st Battalion 95th Rifles (1/95th) John Dancer arrived in Portugal and took part in Sir John Moore's 1808/1809 campaign which ended with evacuation after defeating the French at Battle of Corunna.

1809 - 1814 1/95th returned to the Peninsula in May 1809 and remained there fighting their way across Portugal and Spain and eventually crossing into France during the winter of 1813/1814. In April 1810 they joined the newly formed Light Division under General "Black Bob" Crauford and fought under him at the Battle of Bussaco, which allowed Wellington to withdraw his army into the previously fortified Lines of Torres Vedras. From there the Rifles and others harried the French with hit-and-run attacks.

At the start of 1812 they were part of the Siege of Ciudad Rodrigo where on 8th January they stormed and took the Grand Teson redoubt and on 19th, together with 3rd Division, they stormed the city. The assault, which started 07:00 with Dancer's 1/95th forming the "Forlorn Hope" that led the assault on the northern breach in the city walls, was completely successful. Victory was marred, both by the death of "Black Bob" Crauford and the sacking of the city despite the efforts of the officers.

Throughout that summer and autumn they fought across Spain and then back into Portugal for the winter. The next spring Wellington advanced driving the French back northward towards their frontier and as the French withdraw across the Pyrenees the Light Division followed them fighting at the battles, in July, of the Pyrenees, in October, of Bidassoa and in November at Nivelle. The winter weather of 1813/1814 brought a halt to the fighting until early March when all three battalions of 95th successfully fought a fierce action as a unified force at Tarbes. This was followed on 10th April 1814 by the last engagement of the war, the Battle of Toulouse where 1/95th are back in a skirmishing role holding ground between the bridges at Minimes and Matabiau.



1815 With the escape of Napoleon from Elba and the collapse of the French Royalist regime the remaining Companies at Hilsea crossed the channel and landed in Belgium in April 1815 and joined up with their colleagues who had been previously sent to Brussels.

Quatres Bras At dawn on the 16th June The Rifles marched out and at 15:00 hrs, having marched through the blistering heat of the day the 20 miles to Quatre Bras, went straight into action on the left flank to prevent encirclement by the French. Driving

Waterloo 1/95th under Brigadier Kempt was assigned to 5th Division whilst the other battalions were together in 3rd British Brigade assigned to the 2nd Division. They deployed to hold the centre of Wellington's battle line along a sunken lane which crossed the main Charleroi - Brussels road at the top of the ridge above La Haye Sainte farm. Three Companies occupied a small knoll and sandpit opposite the farm, a hundred yards down the slope up which the French were expected to advance on Brussels. Here they were visited just prior to the battle commencing by Wellington and his staff who drank tea arranged by the battalion's Adjutant, Captain John Kincaid, to revive his men after the torrential downpour of the previous night. Kincaid later wrote a description of the battle as seen by 1/95th:

"From the moment we took possession of the knoll, we had busied ourselves in collecting branches of trees and other things for the purpose of making an abatis to block up the road between that and the farm-house..... when the whole of the enemy's artillery opened, and their countless columns began to advance under cover of it. The scene at that moment was grand and imposing.....seemed to consist of about ten thousand infantry. A smaller body of infantry and one of cavalry moved on their right; and, on their left, another huge column of infantry and a formidable body of cuirassiers, while beyond them it seemed one moving mass.....Our rifles were, however, in a very few seconds required to play their parts and opened such a fire on the advancing skirmishers as quickly brought them to a stand-still.

But their columns advanced steadily through them..... and our post was quickly turned in both flanks, which compelled us to fall back and join our comrades behind the hedge..... When the heads of their columns showed over the knoll which we had just quitted they received such a fire from our first line that they wavered and hung behind it a little. But, cheered and encouraged by the gallantry of their officers..... they at last boldly advanced to the opposite side of our hedge and began to deploy. Our first line, in the meantime, was getting so thinned that Picton found it necessary to bring up his second, but fell in the act of doing it.

The command of the division at that critical moment devolved upon Sir James Kempt, who was galloping along the line, animating the men to steadiness. He called to me by name.... and desired `that I would never quit that spot.' I told him that he might depend upon it: and in another instant I found myself in a fair way of keeping my promise more religiously than I intended. For, glancing my eye to the right, I saw the next field covered with the cuirassiers, some of whom were making directly for the gap in the hedge where I was standing.....the next moment the cuirassiers were charged by our Household Brigade; and the infantry in our front giving way at the same time under our terrific shower of musketry, the flying cuirassiers tumbled in among the routed infantry, followed by the Life Guards, who were cutting away in all directions.

We now resumed our post, as we stood at the commencement of the battle, and with three Companies again advanced on the knoll..... Our division got considerably reduced in numbers during the last attack; but Lord Wellington..... sent Sir John Lambert to our support with the Sixth Division; and we now stood prepared for another and a more desperate struggle. Between two or three o'clock we were tolerably quiet, except from a thundering cannonade; and the enemy had, by that time, got the range of our position so accurately that every shot brought a ticket for somebody's head..... Between three and four o'clock the storm gathered again in our front. Our three Companies on the knoll were soon involved in a furious fire. The Germans (King's German Legion) occupying La Haye Sainte expended all their ammunition and fled from the post. The French took possession of it; and, as it flanked our knoll, we were obliged to abandon it also, and fall back again behind the hedge

The loss of La Haye Sainte was of the most serious consequence, as it afforded the enemy an establishment within our position. They immediately brought up two guns on our side of it and began serving out some grape to us. But they were so very near that we destroyed their artillerymen before they could give us a second round.

I shall never forget the scene which the field of battle presented about seven in the evening. I felt weary and worn out, less from fatigue than anxiety. Our Division, which had stood upwards of five thousand men at the commencement of the battle, had gradually dwindled down into a solitary line of skirmishers.

The Twenty-Seventh Regiment were lying literally dead, in square, a few yards behind us. My horse had received another shot through the leg, and one through the flap of the saddle, which lodged in his body, sending him a step beyond the pension list. The smoke still hung so thick about us that we could see nothing. I walked a little way to each flank to endeavour to get a glimpse of what was going on. But nothing met my eye except the mangled remains of men and horses, and I was obliged to return to my post as wise as I went.....I had never yet heard of a battle in which everybody was killed; but this seemed likely to be an exception, as all were going by turns. We burned with desire to have a last thrust.....

It was a private Rifleman in one of the 1st Battalion's dwindling squares on the shot-ridden ridge who saw the Duke emerge from the smoke-charged air as he went calmly about his business of restoring the morale of his all-but broken centre in the penultimate crisis of the battle. Riding up to the square, which had lost all its officers, he himself gave the command characteristically using the correct Rifleman's order "95th, unfix your swords, left face and extend yourselves once more; we shall soon have them over the hill!" Then, the Rifleman recalled, "he rode away on our right, and how he escaped being shot, God only knows, for all that time the shot was flying like hailstones".....

About five minutes after we went into action I succeeded to the command of the Battalion in consequence of our three Field Officers being severely wounded. We were now attacked in square by Lancers and Cuirassiers supported by 18 guns which played onto our square at one hundred yards distance. We repelled this attack but suffered severely..... We were attacked again four different times, but my little Battalion maintained their ground. Soon after Napoleon advanced with his Imperial Guard and commenced a heavy attack. Lord Wellington rode up to me and ordered I should attack them immediately. I moved on with the 52nd and 71st Regiments on my right and such a carnage never beheld. The roaring of guns was so great that the man next to me could not hear my orders.

Presently a cheer which we knew to be British commenced far to the right and made every one prick up his ears. It was Lord Wellington's long wished for orders to advance. It gradually approached, growing louder as it grew near; we took it up by instinct, charged through the hedge down upon the old knoll, sending our adversaries flying at the point of the bayonet. Lord Wellington galloped up to us at the instant and our men began to cheer him. But he called out, 'No cheering, my lads, but forward, and complete your victory!'

This movement had carried us clear of the smoke, and to people who had been for so many hours enveloped in darkness, in the midst of destruction and naturally anxious about the result of the day, the scene which now met the eye conveyed a feeling of more exquisite gratification than can be conceived. It was a fine summer's evening, just before sunset. The French were flying in one confused mass. British lines were seen in close pursuit and in admirable order, as far as the eye could reach to the right, while the plain to the left was filled with Prussians."



LA HAYE SAINTE FARMHOUSE & SANDPIT AT 11 AM

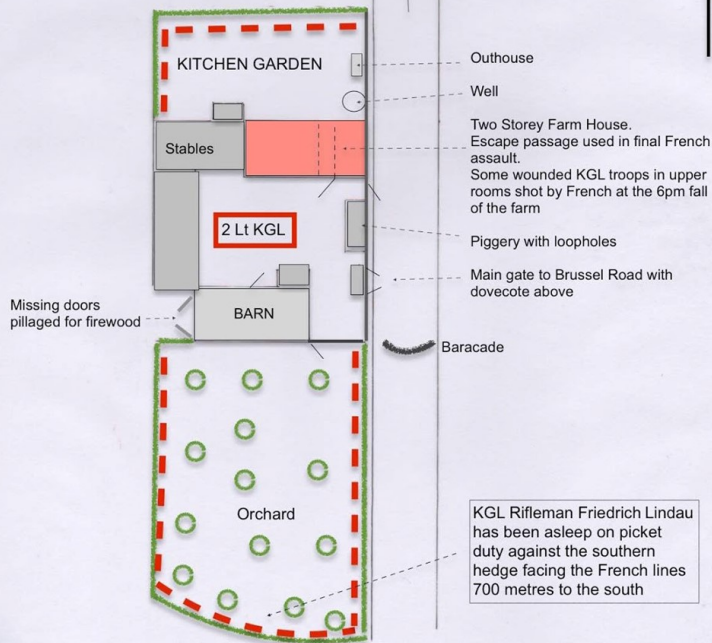
Farm garrisoned by 400 KGL Riflemen under Major Baring
 Approximately:
 70 troops in the kitchen garden
 130 in the farm complex
 200 with Private Friedrich Lindau
 in the southern orchard

Capt Kincaid with 1 Coys of 1/95 Riflemen

KNOLL

SANDPIT
 2 Coy's 1/95
 200 Riflemen

Brussels cobbled road
 200 metres to Mount St Jean
 ridge and Allied lines



Aftermath

1st/95th left for Waterloo 589 men strong their losses were

Quatre Bras 1 officer & 8 men killed, 4 officers & 51 men wounded

Waterloo 1 officer & 20 men killed, 11 officers & 124 men wounded

Amongst the wounded were both Dancer, wounded in the thigh and his Company commander, Charles Beckwith, who had four horses shot from under him and lost a leg.

Despite the pressing financial need to reduce the size of the army after the end of the Napoleonic Wars the unique skills of the 95th were considered too valuable to lose so the 95th was taken out of line of the British Army and became, on 23 February 1816, the "Rifle Brigade" (The Regimental number was reassigned in 1823 to the newly formed county regiment, the 95th (Derbyshire) Regiment of Foot). They were still in France and it was not until October 1818 that they sailed from Calais.

Canada

In 1826 John Dance, now a Sergeant Major, sailed with 1st Battalion, The Rifle Brigade, for Canada where two years later he retired due to chronic rheumatism. His discharge papers note that ".....his general conduct as a soldier has been most exemplary" he had served throughout the whole of the Peninsular Wars and had been wounded at the storming of Ciudad Rodrigo and later at Tarbes. He had also been a member of the "Forlorn Hope" that led the storming of the citadel at Badajoz.

Retirement

On his return to England he joined the Yeoman Warders of the Tower of London with whom he served until his death in 1850. In his will he left money to his son Edward Joseph but the bulk of his estate, some £180 together with all their goods to his "Dear wife Maria". Records do not survive to show when he married Maria however in the 1851 Census she is shown as having been born in France.