

THE QUEEN'S CHAPEL

It is not entirely clear when the connection between Holy Trinity and the Queen's Regiment was established, but it came to define the decoration and function of this part of the building. The Queen's had been raised in 1661 to garrison Tangier, part of Queen Catherine of Braganza's dowry on marrying Charles II; its emblem became the paschal lamb which appeared on the Portuguese standard. The regiment was linked to West Surrey in 1880 following Edward Cardwell's national legislation giving regiments geographical home areas, primarily to help recruitment. The regimental depot for The Queen's was set up in Guildford.

In the new east end, designed and built for Holy Trinity church in 1888 by Arthur Blomfield, the chancel was flanked by two side chapels. George Abbot's monument was moved into the South chapel, which subsequently held the organ as well. In the North chapel was installed a stained glass window of 1881 showing the Resurrection, given in 1879 by the grieving rector Canon Trimmer in memory of his wife Sophia, and originally placed in the chancel apse. The altar rail was given in 1891 in memory of Mary Jane Sedgewick. However, initially the chapel had no distinctive focus within the church. New colours were presented to the regiment by the Countess of Lovelace in 1889, and in 1893 Lieut.-Col. Davis decided that the old colours should be preserved in Holy Trinity. A special service marked the occasion, attended by the Mayor William Wells and the Aldermen. These included John Bullen, a man of many roles, including parish clerk, who had also been present when the colours were first presented; a postcard of about 1909 shows the colours displayed in the Queen's Chapel.

Shown in the adjacent photograph, the regimental colours of the 5th Battalion were also laid up in the chapel in 1903 framing the Resurrection window by Clayton and Bell.



A faculty for a memorial to officers of the Queen's "in the North East chapel in the church" was sought in 1893 and it may be that a growing national and local urge for visible recognition of the consequences of the Boer War led to the title being attached to the chapel where regimental memorials were already sited. A parish history of 1949, suggests the chapel was formally dedicated to the use of The Queen's in 1902; but there is no contemporary mention in magazines or annual reports describing such a ceremony. A farewell service had been held in Holy Trinity in March 1901 for the second volunteer battalion going out to South Africa. Commenting on

crowds in the High Street, the rector wrote "the ringing cheers the flaming torches and clanging bells vividly recalled the scene of the corresponding night of 1900, when we were celebrating the relief of Ladysmith." By June 1901, Mr Moon, a local mason, was already designing a memorial for all local men who died in the war, whatever their regiment. This was to be placed on the east wall of the nave, balancing the pulpit (seen on the right in the contemporary photograph below). It was dedicated by the local MP and Secretary of State for War, Sir John Brodrick in August 1902. It cannot have been entirely well received as an estimate was soon sought from James Powell and sons for replacement slabs "in a whiter material incising about 1450 letters" but it is not clear whether this work was carried out.

A brass memorial framed in alabaster, naming the dead of the 2nd Battalion in the Boer War, was planned for the chapel. An alabaster frame with a pediment displaying the regimental lamb was made by Moon and Sons for £45. Ultimately the memorial had to be placed on the north wall of the nave, just outside the chapel, because of its size. In the photograph below, the memorial is seen to the left of the picture. It tellingly shows the 139 recorded deaths: only 19 men were killed in action, 21 died of wounds, but 99 succumbed to disease.



Subsequently the Boer War Memorial had to be moved further west along the north wall of the church, adjacent to the North Door (see photograph on the next page), to make room for the Queen's Regiment's First World War memorial. This long wood panelled memorial frames Books of Remembrance to the dead of the First World War, and later the Second World War, and was erected in the 1920s along the above section of the north wall taking a much more prominent place on the approach to the Queen's Chapel.



The Boer War Memorial

Other Boer War memorials were successfully accommodated in the Queen's chapel; perhaps the most striking being the reredos behind the altar, made of opus sectile. Dedicated on 8 October 1904, "To the Glory of God and in Memory of all ranks of the Queen's who fell in S. Africa 1899 - 1902", erected by the officers of the whole regiment, it shows Abraham on his return from victory receiving bread and wine from Melchizedec (Genesis XIV). Opus sectile was made from waste glass, ground down, coloured and heated sufficiently to be pressed into tiles. Jigsaw pieces could then be cut from these to form pictures fixed into plaster or on to thin panels of slate. Powell and Sons of Whitechapel made the memorial.

The reredos is flanked by alabaster panels dedicated to the men of the 3rd battalion and to Colonel Davis, colonel of the 3rd Battalion and regimental historian.



The 250th anniversary of the regiment had been marked in 1903 by the gift of stained glass for the Venetian window on the north wall of the chapel. It showed military saints; St Martin sharing his vivid red cloak with a beggar between studies of St Alban and St George.



In 1909, officers of the regiment gave a screen for the chapel, echoing the main chancel screen, in memory of fallen comrades. In the May edition of the parish magazine a year later the rector noted that the regiment had promised to pave the chapel floor with black and white marble, similar to the pavement which had recently been laid in Archbishop Abbot's chapel. As senior retired members of the Queen's died, the names were added to panels on the north and west walls. More recently, an altar frontal and wall hanging, designed and made by local textile artist Elaine Thompson, and three long kneelers in front of the altar have been given by the Princess of Wales Regiment. The blues, greens and soft yellow of the textiles tone with the existing memorials. The frontal includes groups of standards, some lowered in remembrance, and sheep echoing both the paschal and regimental lamb. The commemorative hanging, *The Mists of Time*, shows shadowy small groups of figures representing past soldiers of the regiment.

Successive army reorganisations have merged the Queen's further and further with other regiments. The process began in 1959 when The East Surrey Regiment amalgamated with the Queen's to form The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment. A charity established by this force helped to maintain the fabric and memorials of the Queen's chapel until 2011, when the charity was dissolved and a substantial restricted fund made available to the parish for the future maintenance of the chapel and other regimental memorials in Holy Trinity.