

New Zealand Riding Clubs



Riders Round Up

Issue December 2013

Merry Christmas



What is going to be under your Christmas tree this year??

Wishing you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Wow its nearly Christmas.

Time seems to go so much faster, the older I get!!!

Ive had some big changes in the last couple of months and that is why I missed an issue of RRU. I have got a new job and William and I have moved over to Waipawa, in the Central Hawkes Bay. William had his 5th birthday before we left and has now started school and Im very pleased to say that he loves it. He is doing very well so far. Ive had some ups and downs with the new job and its taking some adjusting to settle in and get used to the new hours. I work 4 days on and 4 days off. I drive for around 10 hours at work plus 40 minutes each way to and from work. A big change from the five minute walk to work.

I hope you are all enjoying the sunshine and longer days and getting out there and riding lots.

Have a great Christmas and Happy New Year.

Four sacks of carrots,
a lorry load of pony
nuts and 2 tonnes of
chaff. Of course he's
been good....|



someecards
user card



Atlanta Botanical Gardens; Plants larger than life

Email from John Moore.

Well members, just about Christmas again, I hope you have had a good year .

I know of many clubs around NZ that are really doing well with membership and events, to me that means very good management committee.

I still feel that the communication between committee and all riding clubs of NZ needs to improve, point of fact ,how many of the committee have write ups in the newsletter of what they are doing for NZRC.

In the minutes of the last AGM, we read of some great ideas, yet five months later we have not been told what has really been done from all the talk, and lets face the fact the travel bill for committee to the AGM was very high.

Thats one of the reasons I feel we do not need such a large committee to run the NZRC but think it time that the sec /treas & the riders round up editor be given an honorarium for all the work they do in putting clubs in the picture.

On that note I would like to see more clubs sending write ups to Heather for the newsletters.

So come on members we have a really good organisation and lets all get into action and enjoy great club involvement and friendship.

I again thank all that give me help and friendship all around NZ, over many years. I remember some really good times.

Life is very short so go and enjoy as you will always see someone worse off than you, So don't complain too much.

God Bless,

John Moore ,

Life member and Patron

Found on the web...



Currently in the last stages of construction after nearly 7 years of development, the Kelpies are a pair of gargantuan horse heads by public artist Andy Scott that now tower over the Forth & Clyde canal in Falkirk, Scotland. The sculptures measure some 30 meters tall (99 ft.) and are meant as a monument to the horse-powered heritage of Scotland.

The sculptures were modeled on two actual Clydesdales from Glasgow City and were constructed from structural steel with a stainless steel cladding, creating structures that you will soon be able to stand inside of. Although construction is nearly complete, the Kelpies will not open to visitors until April 2014.

Want to see more pictures of this? Check out the following link.

<http://www.thisiscolossal.com/2013/11/giant-kelpies-horse-head-sculptures-tower-over-the-forth-clyde-canal-in-scotland/>

Teleconference

Your place

10 September 2013

Conference Opened 7.30pm

PRESENT: John Flintoff, Bev Birkett, Evelyn Cooper, Donna Harley, Andrea Parker, Christine Christian, John Moore, Vicky Siddall, Jennifer Howard, Rosemary Lee-Oldfield, Heather Cooper.

APOLOGIES: Noeline Jeffries, Judy Williams, Glenda Schumacher, Mark Kinaston-Smith, Sarah Hazelwood,

MINUTES: Previous minutes were read before conference.

Corrections: Financial – Riders Roundup Expenses should read \$71.19 not \$380-00

Moved/Seconded: Rosemary/Heather

MATTERS ARISING:

Nil

Financial:

NZ Riding Clubs main account \$6471.17

NZ Riding Clubs Savings Acc \$2518.37

Term Deposit \$5166.90

Bridleways of NZ Main acc \$ 65.24

Bridleways of NZ Savings acc \$5353.52

Moved/Seconded: John M/John F

Expenses:

Expenses for this teleconference have been approved.

Moved/Seconded: Vicky/Heather

Correspondence

John Moore's letter. John has found some rules are not being followed or have been changed. Committee members are not fully informed what the original rules were. John is still going through these boxes. He has not got around to destroying anything yet. John will wait until we are together at a meeting before he will give his opinion on what needs to be done.

Evelyn has stated that at the back of the constitution there should be amendments etc. John states that some of these have fallen by the wayside. John will let us know how this will affect us. Vicky suggested that if there is anything in particular that is concerning John, then if he forwards this to Andrea she can then pass it onto the committee.

One thing that has cropped up is NZRC was amalgamated to the British Riding Clubs but this seems to have been discontinued over time.

Also, anything interesting could be sent to Heather to include in the Riders Roundup.

Christine thanked John for all the hard work that he has been putting in.

Moved/Seconded: Andrea/Bev

General Business

Bev – Equidays have declined her spot for this year. It was very expensive to have a site. Maybe we could look at this for next year. We need to plan this now and work out where we will get the funding for this. Rosemary suggested that PowerPoint presentations would be very helpful.

The fee for a site inside is \$1300.00 but a shared site would be cheaper. Rosemary suggests we could apply for funding for this. Applications with different trust are available all year. Maybe we could approach Banks as well. Rosemary will have a talk to someone about ASB Bank funding.

Evelyn requested photos for her to include in the updated Brochure. She has had no response. She would like to know how much we would like to spend on this Brochure. Bev will send a photo to support Bridleways. Plain paper has been approved for the Brochure. We need to have hard copies printed as well. We need to have the Brochure in pdf format as well.

An introductory pack, which will include, Ribbons, Rulebook, Road Code, Brochure and the link for the Riders Roundup. Evelyn will get a quote to print 1000 Brochures.

There has been no response for clubs to do the Modules so these need to be taken off the website.

Reports from Committee contact with local clubs.

Far North and Hamilton Area.

John Moore has attended Coastal's AGM and found that very interesting. Some suggestions were we should try and get NZRC and Clubs on Country Calendar. Maybe we could invite them to NITE or/and SITE.

New Plymouth club is going well. They have a very active club as well.

Bev reported that Noeline has kept her up to date with what's going on.

Taupo – There has been no response from Castlecliff but will keep trying.

Wairarapa- Donna has contacted FARC and they mainly just do trekking and run a Fun day once a year.

Top of South Island. - Rosemary has been keeping the newsletters going out. She has contacted Golden Bays and they have said that they will affiliate again with NZRC. The Masters Games will be held next month. Rosemary would like the banner for this, as this will be a great time to advertise NZRC. The Games start on the 5th October and the Equestrian day is 6th October.

Rosemary has put together some information about Bridleways, which she will hand out.

Christian contacted Belfast Riding Club. North Loburn has not had a meeting but will contact her when they are next having a meeting. Jennifer will attend this meeting, as she knows the club well.

Jennifer would like to do something but not sure how. If anyone has jobs for her she is more than willing to help.

Vicky was unable to report as we lost her because of storm and power cuts.

We need to have contacted all the clubs by the end of the year. The committee is to report back at our next meeting.

Maps have not been sent out to all committee members.

Andrea to make a list of North and South Island Clubs and send this out to the committee.

Bev will ring Noeline and find out if she has made any progress with this.

John Flintoff has received an award for his contribution to Pony Clubs for the many years he has been of service to them. Well-done John.

AGM 2014 Masterton Adult Riding Club will host this in Wellington at the venue previously used.

Christine would like to see the structure of the AGM changed. This will not be possible for 2014. Maybe have a guest speaker, workshops etc. The organization of AGM should be the responsibility of NZRC not the host club. We also need to get clubs attending the AGM'S.

Even if we managed to get one member from every club. We need to approach clubs and try to entice them.

Rosemary asked if we could have profiles of potential committee members sent out to all clubs so they know whom they are voting for. Andrea has expressed that this will need to be done at least a month or two out from AGM so clubs have time to take these to their meetings.

NITE. Andrea commented that the club is keeping in constant contact with her and they seem to be doing fine. They have asked Masterton Adult Riding Club to run the Teams Ride Phase. The Marc Committee has confirmed they can run this.

Rosemary will send out to the committee what she has on the new rules for the Derby. Once the committee has agreed what the rules are, then they can be sent out to clubs.

Bev has heard from Horowhenua Adult Riding Club. They would like some templates from NITE from her. Bev has forwarded this request onto Jenny Pearce who will be able to help.

Evelyn would like a list of cups and trophies and who has donated them listed in the NITE Brochure. Andrea has this information. We need this in the NITE Brochure each year.

SITE

Rosemary has her letter already written. She just needs to send it.

North Loburn will help and so will Springston. Rosemary is coming to Christchurch shortly to organize with these clubs details about the running of SITE 2014. She is looking into prizes and funding. The venue will be McLean's

Island on the 26th and 27th April 2014.

Bridleways

There is a big pipe at the National Equestrian Center that says "Support Bridleways". There is a large development at this site underway. New yards and an Indoor arena. Bumper stickers have been made. Headlines in the paper have made people aware of the need for Bridleways. She has had emails from people offering to help. Bev is still keeping in touch with Jan Mossman. She is confident that she has a voice now and will be heard. Bev has been doing a brilliant job. Well done.

Conference Closed: 8.36pm

Next Meeting: 26 January 2014. Andrea to contact the club about a venue for this.

Christine thanked the committee for their time.

Lifestyle or life sentence -

By Rachel Wise

(Story courtesy of the Hastings Leader)

It was foggy when I went out the back door the other morning at about 6am, bowl of chook-scrap in hand, heading out to feed Random the Rooster and his family. But no amount of fog could obscure that which I saw when I stepped onto the deck.

Pony bums. Two. One black and hairy, one white and hairy. Both enjoying their new sleeping arrangement: On the deck, nice and dry and out of the mud.

I walked around to the front side of the two offenders and asked them sternly what the heck they thought they were doing and would they please vacate the premises? No replies were forthcoming and there was a decided lack of enthusiasm for getting off the deck.

I tried to bribe them with the contents of the chook-scrap-bowl, but they weren't in the least tempted by the cabbage stalks, spud peelings and bread crusts...Hang on.

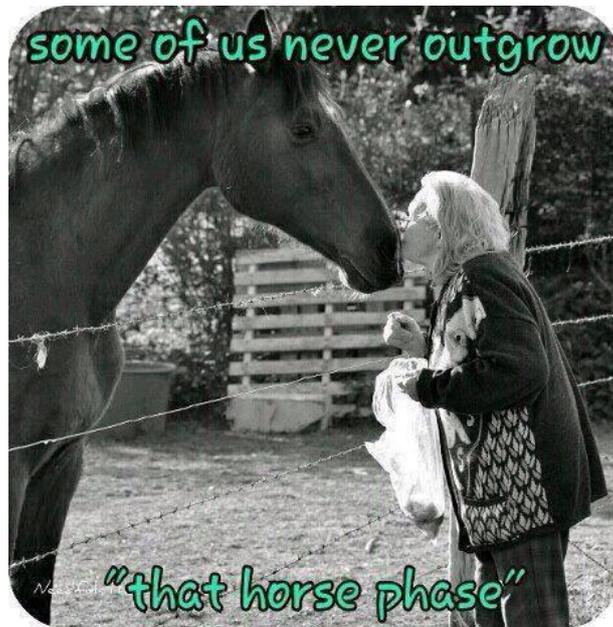
Ponies are never not tempted by food. The penny dropped and I rushed over to look in my hayshed. Yes, the little horrors had travelled to the deck via the hayshed, but not via the hay_ nooo, that would have been far too easy for me to clean up. They'd chosen instead to upend three bags of horse-feed (four if you count Rikki the Racehorse's expensive vitamin supplement). They'd eaten and trampled their way through a bag of sugarbeet, a bag of copra and a bag of oats. Now, had a real horse eaten that lot, they would have been dead by lunchtime, or at least financed my vet's next Pacific Island holiday. I looked at the culprits. They didn't look sick. In fact, they looked very content with their lot.

I'd fix that.

I bundled them very rudely off my deck, stuffed them back in their paddock, woke my sleeping daughter and requested she keep a close eye on them then I fed the chooks and went to work.

Neither pony was dead by lunchtime. In fact, they still looked smug when I got home that evening. They obviously hadn't read the chapter on colic in my How to Look After your Horse book. Just like the great Dane we owned who didn't know grapes were meant to kill her and that opening the lid of the breadmaker and eating the hot contents should have at the very least burned her tongue. Or the Australian terrier who ignored the fact that chocolate is fatal to dogs. He stole so much chocolate from the children that he owed them all of his pocket money for years. I think it's quite unfair to make animal health rules if the animals refuse to abide by them. But in the case of the pigging-out ponies, I am most grateful that they didn't cost me a vet bill. They did, however, cost me a new bag of Rikki the Racehorse's expensive vitamin supplement. I shall take it out of their pocket money.





"On the way to Giverny we stopped to talk to this lovely old lady here who told me how she brings apples for this horse every day..."

Photo and caption by blogger 'Whirling Whisk' (Toronto) from "My Trip to Paris" posted June 15, 2011

(thank you Mary Rooney for the info!)

[http://someneedfulthings.blogspot.com/...](http://someneedfulthings.blogspot.com/)

Below are a couple of articles that Alison Cunningham found in the Times racing pages. They are from The Age in Australia but still relevant here in New Zealand.

Thank you to The Times for letting me reprint here.

Despite advances in medical technology, a broken leg still means the end for horses, writes Dr Glenn Robertson-Smith, founding partner of the Melbourne Equine Veterinary Group.

While Tuesdays Melbourne Cup was a triumph for the connections of Fiorente, it was the opposite for the connections of the French international mare Verema when the horse was destroyed after breaking a cannon bone in the race. The result was disappointing to anyone who follows racing and begs the question why horses still get destroyed in this modern age of medical technology.

The answer relates to the anatomical and physical makeup of the thoroughbred.

Racehorses are powerful, fast animals, weighing about 500kg and racing at about 50km/h.

This means that racehorse injuries are akin to those sustained in a car accident because of the forces involved.

Anatomically, racehorses have strong muscular bodies but very fine, brittle legs – with the extremities composed of only skin, tendons and bone.

This anatomical design requires that horses cannot lie down for long periods, and cannot rest on one leg.

They have been designed to remain standing most of the time.

In other species, including humans, the patient is often immobilised and does not use the broken leg for many weeks – with people advised to stay in bed, then use crutches, and finally a walking cast arrangement.

This type of post-operative plan and management cannot be afforded to the equine patient.

Surgery needs to be completed pretty quickly – generally within three hours – so there are no post-anaesthetic complications. Then the unconscious horse is locked in a padded box to wake from the anaesthetic.

Sometimes these horses have a violent recovery and re-injure the damaged leg. How-ever, it is far to dangerous to stay in the recovery stall with the horse.

This is such a concern at a large US University clinic that a purpose-built swimming pool and raft system were designed so horses could recover while floating, and therefore could not re-injure the leg.

The most striking difference between horses and other species is the blood supply. To heal any broken bone there must be a vibrant, healthy blood supply to facilitate healing. Sometimes the blood supply to the bone is augmented by surrounding muscles and other soft tissue. The leg of the horse has no muscle to supply extra blood and quite often in these high-velocity racing injures the bones are so badly damaged the bone's blood supply is also destroyed.

A damaged blood supply means the injury cannot heal even if there is surgery to repair the bone. In human surgery, this is the scenario that leads to amputation. As horses need to stand evenly on all four legs, amputation is not a realistic or viable option.

Perhaps the most frustrating thing about these broken legs is they can be unpredictable.

While fractures sometimes happen in horses with a history of soreness, equally catastrophic fatal fractures can happen in those with absolutely no problems at all – as was the case with Verema.

While they are a common injures, they are not a problem to trifle with and need to be well managed to insure a good resolution by Dr Glenn Robertson-Smith, founding partner of the Melbourne Equine Veterinary Group.

The news on Tuesday was that It's a Dundel was withdrawn from todays race, the Caulfield Stakes, because of a foot abscess. Yet earlier in the week Chief Steward Terry Bailey said the foot abscess had burst and everyone was hopeful the champion horse could race.

What does this all mean? And how does a foot abscess develop?

To explain this one needs to understand the anatomy of the horses hoof. It is akin to the fingernail or toenail of the human body – except that the hoof or keratinised tissue – the *nail* - completely encapsulates all the other structures – that is the soft tissue, tendons and bone. This provides the horse with a tough, durable structure that's absorbs some of the concussion when galloping.

A foot abscess develops when there is penetration to the hard hoof tissue, which allows bacteria to get inside the hoof and establish an infection in the sensitive internal tissues. These infections usually take one to three days to develop and are accompanied by a serious progressive lameness – to the extent that when the infection is forming an abscess, often the horse will not take any weight on the affected leg. The human equivalent would be an infected ingrown toenail.

As the hoof is strong it is also resistant to penetration and hoof abscesses are more common in the paddock than in a stabled racehorse. Occasionally in racehorses an abscess can be associated with shoeing and a horseshoe nail penetrating the sensitive tissue beneath the hoof.

Hoof abscesses can be difficult to treat and the treatment involves allowing the infection to develop into and abscess,*come to a head*, then the abscess can be localised and drained. Often these abscesses track along a path of least resistance and burst out at the junction between the top of the hoof and the skin.

Generally a hoof abscess is not a serious problem and once the abscess has developed and burst the lameness quickly resolves. However, we are still talking of the order of up to two weeks before the horse is back to normal and can resume exercise. Thus one of the issues involving a hoof abscess in a racehorse is that the horse cannot be exercised or trained while the abscess is being resolved.

Occasionally the infection becomes more serious and involves more significant structures inside the hoof, such as the bone or joint. In these cases one can quickly move from a frustrating simple hoof abscess to a life-threatening infection requiring surgery. So while they are a common injures, they are not a problem to trifle with and need to be well managed to insure a good resolution.

While the abscess is developing it is common to encase the foot in a *poultice* bandage. These bandages usually contain a lot of moisture that is absorbed by the hoof, softening it and allowing the abscess to develop and burst.

Once the abscess has burst or been drained, the horse can go on a course of antibiotics to resolve the infection and allow training to resume.



WORKING TROT



MEDIUM TROT



EXTENDED TROT



WHOA DAMMIT

The Following article was supplied by Jennifer Howard (our SI Patron) and will be printed over three issues of RRU

Cavalry in The First World War
By Jennifer Howard
Part 2 and 3

“On October 8th we marched through Amiens, and beyond, 21 miles, and shortly after were joined by 3 Lieutenants, 210 men and 260 horses - a most welcome reinforcement. It was midnight before the reinforcements were drafted to the squadrons and men and horses settled down for the night. Our Tidworth horses were now in such hard condition that perpetual motion was part and parcel of their existence, but we looked with misgivings on the sleek rounded forms of the fresh arrivals, and trembled for the results of 30-mile marches, repeated day after day.” On the next three days they marched 16, 12 and 28 miles respectively.

The routine was that each day a different regiment of the Brigade led the way towards Arras. In the Regiment a different squadron was on duty in turn for three days. This was the advance guard, providing patrols and other duties as far as it could. All fit horses and men, together with machine-gun detachments, marched with the regiment, and a few extra horses were led along to replace casualties. Behind these came the wagons and four light carts per regiment. “Which we had collected at various times but which were really unauthorised additions.” Throughout October the Regiment was on the march every day, sometimes manning trenches, which at the start were very shallow, not many digging tools being available.

“The First Flanders battle for **Ypres** began in with incessant bombardment, constant attacks against heavy rifle fire, a toilsome retreat, a hot sun and no sleep for two nights. Then came orders to take over a line of trenches from the remains of two infantry regiments; about 400 yards of line with a support trench 200 yards in the rear of the front line. This relief amounted to about 200 rifles, and as there was no one to help us we had to spread out a lot to cover the ground. C Squadron was mostly along a very open bit of ground, but B had nice cover behind hedges and in good dug trenches. The whole Regiment had to be awake for the third night in succession. We had those trenches for two nights and days, and were relieved about 7pm on the second evening. We marched back to where our horses had been brought, and rode to our billet, which we reached about 10pm, to rest in a field and a very dirty house. We had been on the go with practically no sleep, fighting hard most of 88 hours out of the last 96. We had come in for a lot of shelling all day, and had 4 men killed and 11 missing. In addition 3 Officers and 24 other ranks wounded. A new draft of 23 men and 48 horses helped to replace casualties, but we were still very short.”

For the next front line duty...”We left our horses and floundered on through a ruined village and some heavily wooded country, the last mile or so it was up to one’s knees in liquid mud. The enemy’s trenches were pretty close, only 50 yards away in some places, but thick undergrowth and fallen pines gave fair cover. The more open ground in rear of the trenches was a good deal more dangerous than the actual trenches themselves”....”November 18th - The mass of smoke and fire arising from the town of Ypres produced a scene which few will forget.”

Cold showers turned first to sleet and then to snow. Up till now we had counted on getting straw from neighbouring ricks to cover the bottom of the trenches and keep ourselves warm with at night, but the rain soon rendered the straw valueless. Sleep was impossible. It snowed hard all one night. Eventually a thaw set in, and only slosh remained. There were a lot of dead Germans and some of our own troops, and as it was impossible to bury them they made the air very tainted and life a little more unpleasant than usual.”

“We were relieved after three days by the 16th Lancers, at 8 pm, and after an exciting half-hour’s crawl and crouch across a bullet-and-shrapnel-swept zone we reached shelter. Our led horses were waiting for us at some cottages. We had ridden up safely three nights before, and had sent them away as soon as we had dismounted. This time they had a long wait for us.....just as we were mounting several shrapnel shells

burst at the east end of the column and some twenty horses were knocked out. Worse than this, one private was killed, and four more wounded, one so seriously that he later died of his wounds. We were very grieved at losing these men just as we were getting out of danger.”

“It took some hours in the darkness to get along the Ypres Road, as the horses of the whole Brigade were there. It was a long march, some twenty miles by the road we had to use, wandering along where at times the surface was as slippery as polished glass, and at 2.30 the next morning we got back to our farms.”

Mid October produced a major German offensive. The battle continued with days of trench warfare, being subjected to heavy cannonades of light and heavy guns, machine-gun fire and infantry attacks, sometimes going on reconnaissance patrols, sometimes defending a unit's retreat, or very occasionally simply waiting in reserve at some farm. Once the Regiment took over a line of trenches manned by an Indian Army troop of Sikhs which was being exceptionally brave, causing considerable damage to the enemy. The whole countryside was lit up by the light of that furious battle. By now C Squadron was reduced to two troops, from the original four.

By the end of November fighting had become static; the weather and water-logged ground made trench warfare impossible, so a stalemate held until the end of February 1915, and the regiment occupied a number of farms on a part of that country which “Bore the only resemblance to a hilly district which that part of Flanders could provide” and was an improvement on the low-lying land both north and south. . The barns would house a whole troop, cook houses and saddle shelters were built, as were stables, made of hop-poles with thatched roofs. The horses' fields were “Veritable quagmires; the mud was something awful, one could never get away from it and many a man got wet and remained so for days at a stretch.”

Eventually winter training was practised; schemes and route marches, digging trenches, throwing dummy bombs, musketry, signalling and machine-gun training. Some afternoons football was played on awful grounds. On December 3rd they lined the road while H.M. the King walked down the ranks of the Regiment and other units of the Brigade. “Letters reporting our progress at various dates were sent to H.M. the Queen, whose gracious replies showed us how much interest she took in her Corps. In addition to letters, many boxes of cigarettes, chocolates and other ‘comforts’ so much appreciated by temporary exiles, reached us from Her Majesty”.

On February 23rd 1915 the Regiment moved back towards the front line, this time in motor buses, and by Feb 28th they took over front line trenches and for a while did not suffer many casualties, though there was considerable action with tunnels and mines being exploded. Other regiments had lost a lot of men to frost bite, but Squadron Commanders made sure that all ranks made use of anti-frost bite mixture, smearing it over their legs and feet, and by compelling men to change their socks, so saving any casualties. On March 4th they returned to their farm billets and their horses, which had been cared for by the Life Guards during their absence. Unfortunately the horses had developed ‘lice’ during the winter and it took some time to get rid of them. At the end of April they returned to the front again, where the Germans had launched a disastrous gas attack against the **Ypres Salient**.

Trenches were dug, again, at night, to avoid sniper fire, shrapnel and the severe daytime shelling. Front line action alternated with brief returns to their farm billets. Trenches varied from shallow to very wide, with high parapets and obstructed by roofed-in dug-outs, with no lateral communication or support trenches. It was 11pm before they reached their designated section of the front line on May 12th.

The shelling from heavy howitzers which began at 3.30am next morning, and continued for 7 hours, was the most intense ever experienced, annihilating much of the forward trenches. Intermittent shelling continued till dark. A black pall hung over the small remains of the trenches. “Behind these were about a hundred men out of the three hundred who had occupied the trenches the night before. The Officer Commanding was in the front trenches around 8.00 am, to cheer up the men, and received a direct hit in the head from a shell fragment and was killed instantly. Conditions were vile, driving rain and a gale blowing from the north east. The actual trenches originally

occupied were useless, and the replacing Dragoon Guards had to dig a fresh line of a narrower and more suitable type.

Twelve Officers and nearly 300 men had gone into those trenches 24 hours before, and that night the regiment had lost half its strength. Two officers killed, 6 wounded, 146 men killed, 103 wounded, and 24 'un-accounted for'. Many more were damaged by concussion from shell-fire. Those remaining rested that night nearby, then marched back through Ypres, now turned to rubble, for three days rest at their hutments.

On May 23rd a long-expected draft of 8 officers and 160 men arrived from England, and an hour later the regiment consisting of 12 officers and 280 men, most of whom had marched straight through from base camp in England, marched off to take over some front line trenches at the ruined **Hooze Chateau**, where they arrived about 9 pm to relieve the Dragoon Guards. The trenches were very wet, some portions near the lake were up to the knees, but the rest of the line was good.

All was quiet until around 2.45 am, when again the Germans released deadly chlorine gas. The fumes, aided by a north east wind, were deadly, asphyxiating, sweeping in thick banks of yellow-greenish fog across the trenches. The gas protectors issued were of little protection and even breathing in very small quantities appeared to completely prevent all breathing. Most of the front line were either killed by the poisonous fumes or so badly incapacitated that they had to be removed. A thin line of remaining troops in deplorable condition sent an urgent appeal for reinforcements, which managed to arrive by about 6 a.m. Communications with Brigade were down, all staff having been driven out by poison gas. The Germans had gained ground on the north side and were pushing forward, then being able to shoot directly along the British trenches and about 9 am what was left of the regiment and reinforcements withdrew about half a mile to the south side of the **Menin Road**.

Heavy gunfire continued, despite un-successful British infantry counter-attacks. The Brigade Colonel, Colonel Burnett (my godfather) spent hours trying to track down small parties of men, but between the effects of the gas and other casualties he could only collect a few and these had mostly to be sent off to hospital for treatment. By 1 am, the small group of 57 men returned to their rest quarters, out of the 273 who had gone up the previous night.

Out of the total number of Officers with the regiment on the 24th May 1915, 3 died of gas poisoning and wounds, 3 were wounded and died later, and 6 suffered from gas poisoning. My father, Lieut. Frank Stobart, was one of these last. 14 NCO's and men died, 73 were wounded or suffered from gas poisoning, and 101 men were missing. Out of these missing, only 17 remained un-accounted for, so have to be added to those feared killed. Only 11 later re-joined the regiment, so the remainder of that group have to be added to the list of those wounded or suffering from gas poisoning. What weighed heaviest on the spirits of the survivors was that so many men had lost their lives, pitch-forked practically direct from England, without a halt, no chance to even make friends of their companions, but into a wet trench some 30 yards from an inhuman foe, to be assailed at half-past four in the morning by warfare which had all the devilish horrors of the unknown.

This day finished the fighting for what was left of the regiment for a considerable time. Practically all cavalry was withdrawn from the trenches towards the end of May and a few days later they were driven back to the farms where their horses had been stationed. My father was in hospital for some time, when he got back to England, and when fit to re-join the regiment he was put on the staff as A.D.C to G.O.C 1st Mounted Division in England, just before Christmas '15, and returned to the regiment 26th September 1916.

Meanwhile the regiment as part of the Cavalry Division was ordered to concentrate in the rear of the fighting line to be ready for a new offensive. A total of 13 Officers, 236 other ranks joined from the Base in less than six weeks, which practically brought the Regiment up to strength. The planned break-through did not happen, however, some officers and men proceeding to help clear the battlefield. In November the regiment moved to permanent winter billets south of Boulogne. The horses remained there for seven and a half months, until the end of June 1916 when they were once more called into action for the Somme

offensive. The dismounted troops were taking part in trench warfare, and digging parties. In that time they lost 1 Officer and 12 other ranks killed and 39 wounded.

On June 24th 1916 the Regiment began to march forward to concentration areas, waiting for a 'break through', "which meant mobility to the *n*th power, and hence a good deal of discomfort".

Operations kept being postponed on account of the weather, which was very bad. Finally the order was cancelled and the cavalry marched into winter billets.

