

ART. XIII.—*A short Narrative of the Services of the 55th or Westmorland Regiment.* By Colour-sergeant NOAKES. Read in Carlisle Castle by Captain Osborne, Aug. 12, 1874.

**I**N the beginning of the year 1756, when England was preparing for what was afterwards known as the Seven Year's War, the 55th regiment was raised at Stirling, and shortly afterwards was sent to America, to take part in the struggle between the French and English for the supremacy of the North American Continent. Its maiden fight was at the unsuccessful assault of the lines and fort of Ticonderoga, on the 8th July, 1748, when it shared with the 42nd the honour of forming the reserve, and in the desperate engagement which ensued, left half its numbers dead or dying on the field. Next season, however, the fort fell into their hands, and during the campaigns of 1759-60, the 55th bore an honorable part in the operations which led to the captures of Fort Niagara, Crown Point, and other affairs, which culminating in the reduction of Montreal, secured to the British the whole of Canada, and put an end to French domination in that part of the world. The Indians, however, now took up the contest, and in a well planned conspiracy, nearly succeeded in driving the English from the Frontier forts, and in one of these,—Fort Detroit—a detachment of the 55th suffered a long weary siege of 18 months, until relieved by Colonel Bradstreet, in August, 1764. Next year the regiment left America for Ireland, but returned ten years later to take part against the revolted colonists, and shared in the whole of the operations directed by Sir William Howe and General Clinton in the Revolutionary War, until November, 1778, when it was sent to aid in defending the West India Islands against the French fleet, and in 1785 returned home to England. In 1782, the 55th was assigned the county title of "The Westmorland Regiment," with which  
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county it was directed to cultivate a connexion: this almost entirely severed its connexion with Scotland.

The French Revolution breaking out in 1793, it was sent to Flanders, under the Duke of York, and the battalion companies took part in the campaigns of that and the two following years, continuing with the army during the whole of the disastrous retreat through Holland, and eventually landing in England to be almost immediately placed under orders to join Sir Ralph Abercrombie's grand expedition to the West Indies, where its flank companies had been combating the French since early in 1794. After much chequered service in Saint Lucia, it returned to England in 1797, but in 1799, was sent, at the particular request of Sir Ralph Abercrombie, with the expedition to North Holland, taking a prominent part in the whole five battles successfully fought against the French and Dutch, and regaining their quarters in England late in the same year. After two year's rest it again proceeded to the West Indies, and remained on the island of Jamaica nearly ten years, the monotony of West Indian service being broken only by an expedition against the French in Saint Domingo, in 1809. Next year, four companies were sent home and joined the dépôt in Carlisle, whither the remainder of the regiment followed, and here they were quartered until October, 1812, when they left for the south of England, and after a good deal of marching and counter marching, at length embarked for the continent in Sir Thomas Graham's expedition to Holland. At Sir Thomas's unfortunate attack upon the strong fortress of Bergen-op-Zoom, the 55th bore a conspicuous part, and had the misfortune of having, after bravely and successfully assisting to cover the retreat of a large portion of the attacking force, to succumb to the superior numbers of the enemy. On this occasion the colours were saved from falling into the hands of the French, by the ensigns who carried them tearing them from the staves and wrapping them round their bodies, where they concealed them until the

the next day, when they were released on being exchanged. The regiment afterwards took part in the occupation of Antwerp, and on the proclamation of peace in 1814, returned to England; in the following year, when hostilities were renewed, it was again ordered to the continent, but its embarkation having been delayed until news had arrived of the total overthrow of Napoleon at Waterloo, it retraced its steps to London, and did not proceed abroad until December, 1821, when it embarked for South Africa. Here it remained until August, 1830, when it proceeded to India, and was quartered in the Madras Presidency until 1840 (having in the interval taken part in the Coorg War), when, on the eve of being sent home after 19 year's foreign service, it was put under orders to proceed to China, to participate in the measures about to be adopted against the Celestial Empire. During these operations, the 55th very greatly distinguished itself, particularly at the capture of Chusan, and the escalade of Lching Kiang Foo, where it was the first to mount the city walls, for which service it was rewarded with the privilege of bearing on its colours and appointments, a Chinese dragon, which it still wears. In 1844, the regiment returned home, and in 1851 proceeded to Gibraltar, where it remained in garrison until May, 1854.

War had now been proclaimed with Russia, and the 55th at once received orders to join the army under Lord Raglan, and was posted to the 2nd, or as it was afterwards called, the Fighting Division. Landing at Old Fort on the 14th September, it took part in the battle of the Alma, the action of the 26th October, and the battle of Inkerman, where it bore the first shock of the Russian attack. It performed trench duty during the whole of the siege of Sevastopol, and bore a prominent part at the capture of the Quarries, and the assault of the great Redan on the 8th of September, 1855; and received authority to bear on its colours the words Alma, Inkerman, and Sevastopol, as

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a recognition of its services in this arduous campaign.\* In May, 1856, it returned to Gibraltar, and in September, 1857, to England, remaining at home until October, 1863, when it proceeded to India. Here, in 1865, it had the honour of being specially selected by the Commander in Chief, Sir Hugh Rose, to bring the refractory Bhotas to reason, and having proceeded to Bhotan, and effected the destruction of Dewangiri, the enemy's stronghold, they returned to Calcutta, and were quartered at Dum Dum to recruit their shattered constitutions, which had been seriously effected by the poisonous exhalations of the swamps in the Bhotan Doars. Early in 1866, they returned up country, and after many changes, are now quartered at Roorkee, and Delhi, from whence it is expected they will soon return home.

Nothing remains to be added but that, under the Army Localization Scheme, the 55th has been linked with the 34th Cumberland regiment in the 2nd sub district brigade, the depôt of which is quartered in this castle;—and that judging from their past career and present reputation, we may confidently trust it to uphold its high character, and (should opportunity offer) to bring additional lustre to the glories which now appertain to the Cumberland and Westmorland Brigade.

In addition to the Chinese dragon, the Westmorland Regiment bears on its colours the following names :

CHINA WITH THE DRAGON.

ALMA.                   INKERMAN.

SEVASTOPOL.

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\* At the attack on the Redan, Lieut.-Col. Cuddy was killed at the head of the regiment, and during the war the regiment had 5 officers and 168 men killed in action, or died of wounds; 18 officers and 142 men wounded; and 6 officers and 234 men died of cholera and dysentery.

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