

TROOOOP!!!!

By Colin Dean

The cancellation of the Sovereign's Birthday Parade has variously been caused by the rain, court mourning, the Kaiser, Hitler and the railway unions, but the tragic circumstances of the Chinese virus failed to stop the Household Division honouring the colonel-in-chief of its seven regiments.

Birthday Parades had taken place in the Quadrangle of Windsor Castle for Queen Victoria in 1889 and 1895 so there was precedent, even if it pre-dated the Welsh Guards by twenty years and more. There was also an important Birthday Parade held there on 21st April 1942 when HRH The Princess Elizabeth reviewed the Grenadier Guards on her 16th birthday, about two months after having been appointed as the Colonel. Despite being wartime, all battalions were represented, along with the regimental band and corps of drums, and all on parade wore khaki. This would have been one of the first major parades for Lieutenant 'Fred' Harris, who had been commissioned as the Director of Music in January that year.



The 1942 parade - Grenadier Guards

As Queen Elizabeth II received the royal salute in the same location in 2020 it bears reflecting that she has served the Grenadier Guards as Colonel and, from 1952, Colonel-in-Chief for more than 78 years from that first parade.

More of the parades for Queen Victoria later but for 2020, Garrison Sergeant Major Andrew (Vern) Stokes, Coldstream Guards, was given the task of devising a parade with just a small number of guardsmen while playing the game of keeping everyone 6'6" apart.

This was based around a turnout of the Windsor Castle Guard, provided by 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, with the Queen's Colour in the hands of the Ensign throughout. It was commanded by the Commanding Officer as Field Officer in Brigade Waiting, with the Second-in-Command, Adjutant and Regimental Sergeant Major also on parade.



A composite band of 2 Directors of Music and 40 other ranks was drawn from the five regiments in seven ranks of six, with six drummers from 1st Battalion Welsh Guards forming the rear rank and with the Senior Drum Major, Drum Major Damian Thomas, Grenadier Guards, and Drum Major Christopher Rees, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards at the head. The conducting was shared between the Senior Director of Music, Lieutenant Colonel Simon Haw MBE, and Major Stewart Halliday, Welsh Guards.

The television coverage began with the Windsor Castle Guard being inspected outside the guardroom in the castle's lower ward, with the band playing *David of the White Rock*, *Trumpet Voluntary* (Jeremiah Clark), *Rondo from Abdelazar* (Purcell) and *God Bless the Prince of Wales* (Richards).

The band, in two sections each with a frontage of three, then led the Guard up the hill to the Quadrangle, beginning with the march *Piccadilly*, composed by Arnold Steck, otherwise known as Major Leslie Statham MBE of the Welsh Guards, then *The Guards' Colours* by one-time Scots Guards musician William Hughes. Finally, part of the *Auxiliary Territorial Service March* which had been suggested in order to acknowledge Her Majesty's own wartime service with the ATS, as it was HER regimental march.

It also marked 75 years from when the march was chosen for them by the lady we knew as Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother. On 1st May 1945 the Band of The Royal Military School of Music (at that time still based in Churchill House, Aldershot) travelled to Wellington Barracks as recorded in the school's diary: 'At 2.35pm the band paraded and marched to the gardens of Buckingham Palace where five marches were played over on the march to H.M. The Queen who chose that composed by Student E.G. Spooner, Royal Fusiliers. HM The King, Princess Elizabeth, The Princess Royal and several senior officers of the ATS were present. The King and Queen inspected the band and each Student was presented to them by the Commandant and by the Director of Music. The band marched off at 3.50pm.'

The composer, Edwin George Spooner, was appointed Bandmaster of 2nd Battalion The Manchester Regiment after the war (taking over from none other than the afore-mentioned Leslie Statham) and transferred to the 1st Battalion when the 2nd was disbanded.

The Windsor Castle Guard took up position on the east side of the quadrangle, with the band behind, and as the parade waited for 11.00am the incidental music began with *Welsh Airs and Graces*, arranged by the late Major Terry Davis, Director of Music of the Welsh Guards for just a short while before his untimely death just a few weeks before this arrangement was played on the 1998 parade. This was followed by Purcell's *Trumpet Tune and Air* (Henry Purcell arr. Paul Carroll and Simon Haw) and *Men of Harlech*.

The Queen was received with a Royal Salute, after which the Guard marched away to the south side of the Quadrangle to *The Rising of the Lark*, making way for the band's troop, beginning with *Les Huguenots*. In order to keep up the 6'6" interval during the countermarch the band used the familiar 'Prince of Wales feathers' routine. No Birthday Parade would be complete without a spin wheel and this was achieved in a remarkable 180 degree turn with the band pivoting on its own centre as part of the quick troop, to the march *Triple Crown*, arranged on Welsh melodies by Terence Brien, pen name of Ernest Waites, a one-time bandsman in The Green Howards.



The Spin Wheel keeping 6'6" dressing

The Guard returned to its original position for a short 'Trooping the Colour' ceremony and final Royal Salute, before marching past to *The Rising of the Lark* and returning to the lower ward with the melodies of Wales resounding off the castle walls, arranged as *The Welshman* by Lieutenant Colonel Peter Hannam MBE, BEM, and *Arms Park* by Major Derek Taylor MBE, both former Welsh Guards Directors of Music.

Most of the music had previously been selected for Horse Guards Parade. The other marches that would have been heard in London were the slow march *Cardiff Castle*, composed by yet another former Welsh Guards Director of Music, Major Arthur Kenney, *Shrewsbury Fair* by Lieutenant Colonel Paul Neville OBE, MVO, of the Royal Marines (nothing whatever connected with the Director of Music Welsh Guards and the Garrison Sergeant Major both hailing from that area!), and George Gay's *Bravest of the Brave*.

The inclusion of the march on themes from *Les Huguenots* gives a nice connection with the parade held in the same location back in 1889 as it was also played on that occasion with the arranger, 2nd Lieutenant Dan Godfrey (right), on parade as Bandmaster of the Grenadier Guards. It was something of a family occasion musically as the band led the Guards into the Quadrangle playing the *Outpost March*, composed by his son, the future Sir Dan Godfrey.

It should be remembered that the birthday parade is, in essence, an augmented version of what was the normal daily guard mounting parade and it was not until 1901 that King Edward VII began the custom of the sovereign attending in person. Queen Victoria never attended officially in London, although her diary reveals that she once watched incognito, but for her 70th birthday in 1889 the Brigade of Guards Magazine reported: '*Her Majesty having expressed a wish to see the ceremony of Trooping the Colour, a special parade was ordered in the Quadrangle at Windsor Castle on Friday 24th May*'. It went on to state that the parade had been '*performed to the satisfaction of Her Majesty who expressed her entire approval*'.

The parade was described in the Court Circular as follows: '*Today being the Queen's birthday, Her Majesty witnessed the ceremony of Guard-mounting with trooping the Queen's colour in the Quadrangle of the Castle at 11 o'clock.*'

Two squadrons of the 1st Life Guards, with two standards and band, under command of Colonel Needham, were formed up on the west side of the Quadrangle, and four companies of 2nd Battalion Grenadier Guards, under the command of Colonel Crichton-Maitland, were formed in line facing the south front. The Queen was received with a Royal Salute, after which the usual Guard-mounting and trooping of the Queen's colour took place.'

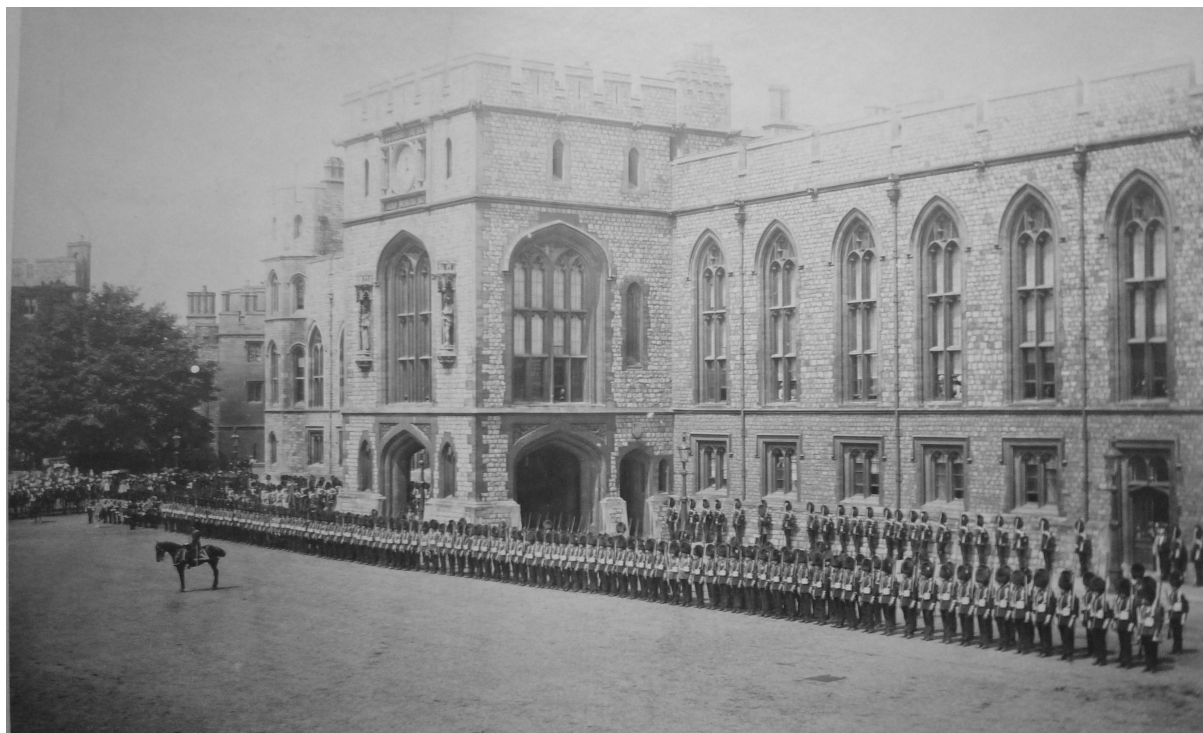
The music for the troop was *Les Huguenots* followed by *Hoch Habsburg* (Johann Kral), after which the normal music for 'Trooping the Colour' was played, followed by the march past by the 1st Life Guards and Grenadier Guards to their respective regimental marches.



Six years later, on 24th May 1895, a similar parade was held for the Queen's 76th birthday, this time with two squadrons of the 2nd Life Guards, with two Standards and Band, and six companies of 1st Bn. Scots Guards with the regimental band under Mr. Henry Dunkerton (left).

This time the Queen inspected the parade from a carriage to *Triumphal March* (Lindpaintner) and the music for the troop was *La Mousme* by Louis Ganne and *Adjutanten* by Kohout. The Scots Guards marched past in slow and quick time to *Garb of Old Gaul* (Reid) and *Highland Laddie*, and the parade marched off to *Marche des Petits Pierrots* (Bosc).

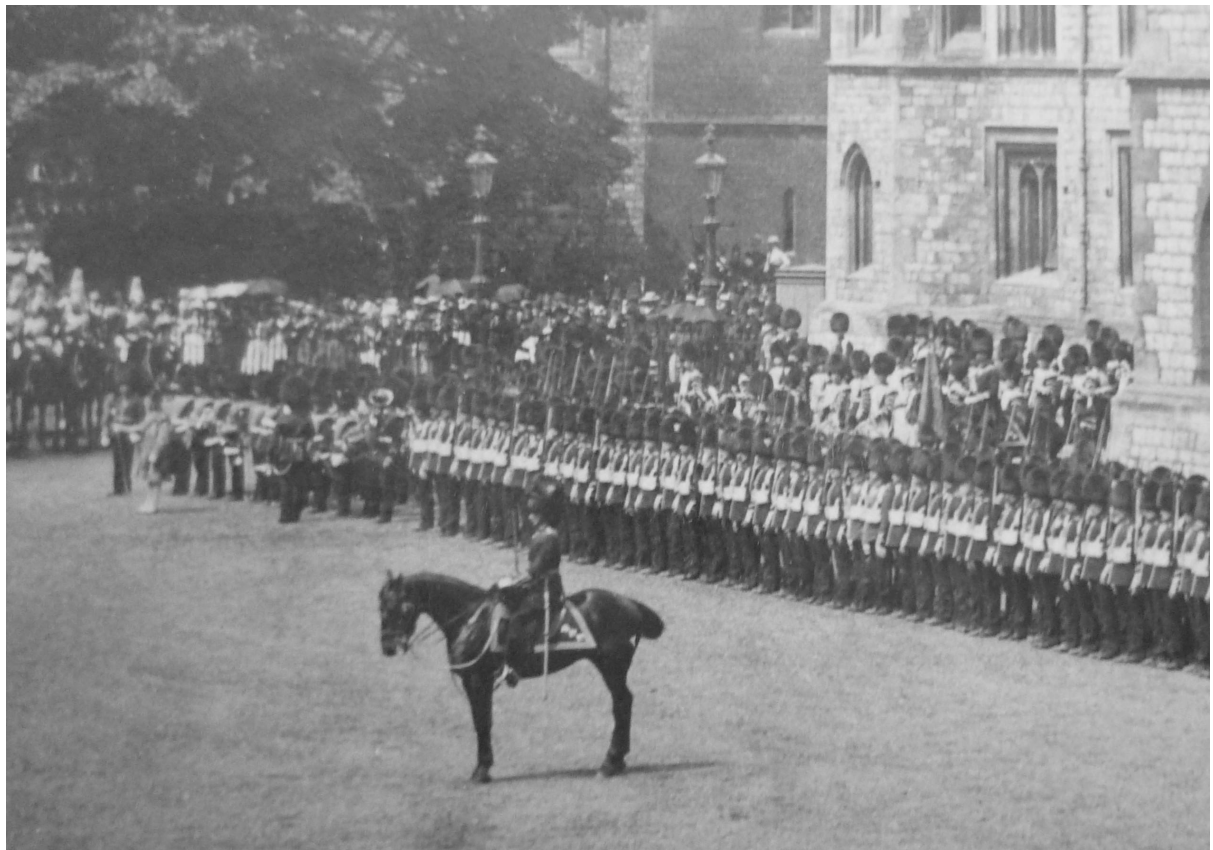
Pictures from the Victorian parades at Windsor



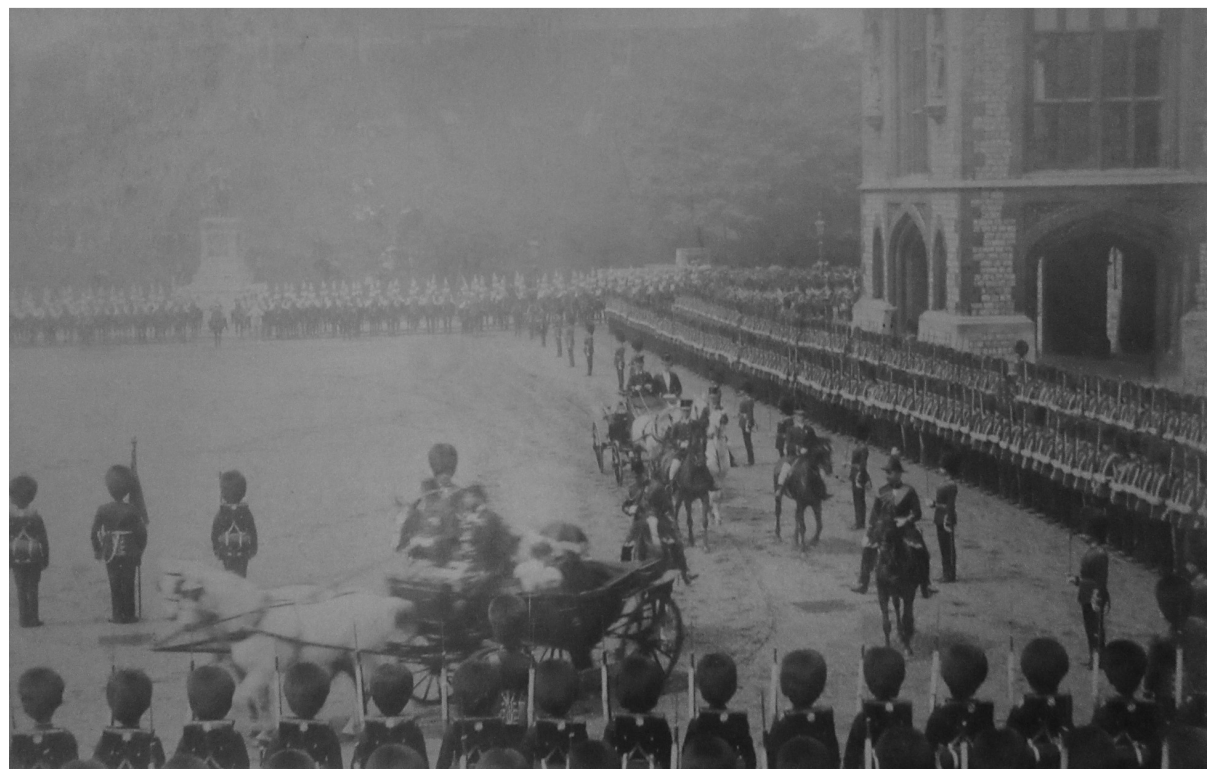
Queen's Birthday Parade 1889 - Grenadier Guards



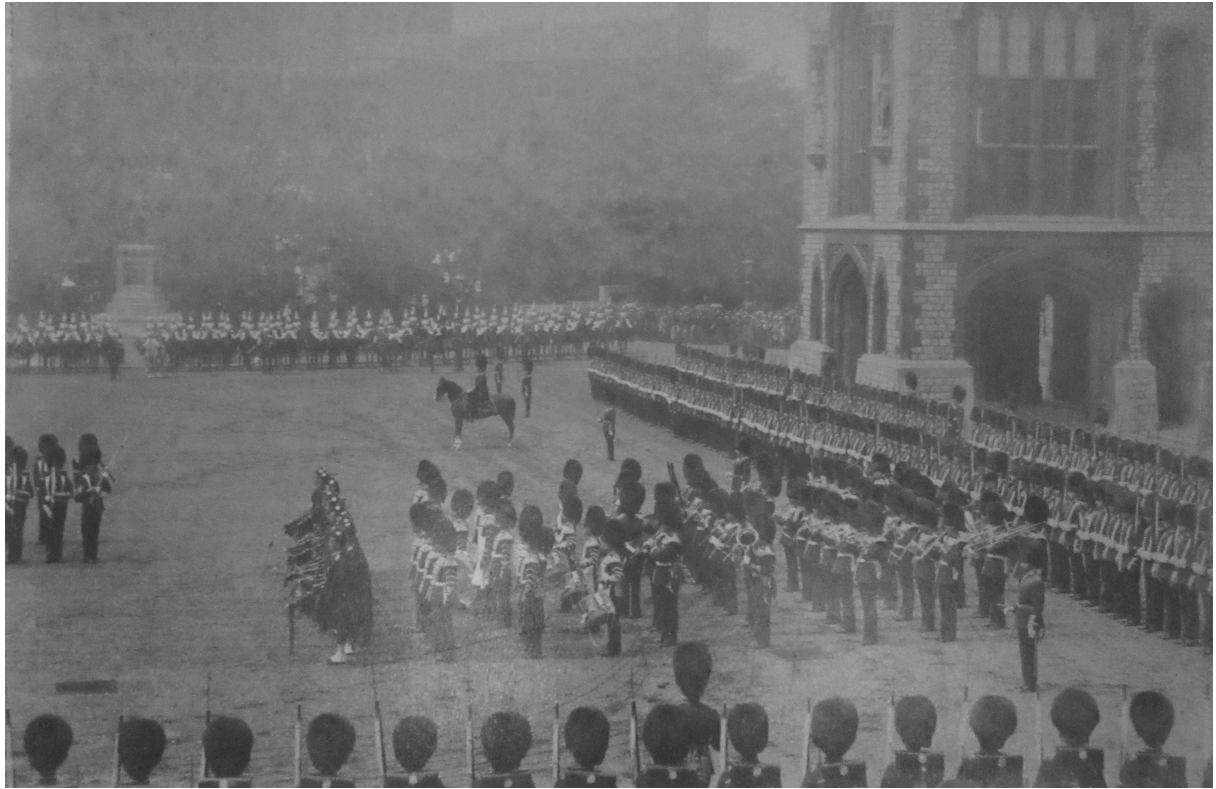
Queen's Birthday Parade 1889 - Grenadier Guards - showing 1st Life Guards Band



Queen's Birthday Parade 1889 - Grenadier Guards - showing Grenadier Guards Band



Queen's Birthday Parade 1895 – Inspection



Queen's Birthday Parade 1895 - showing Scots Guards Band plus drums and pipes from 1SG