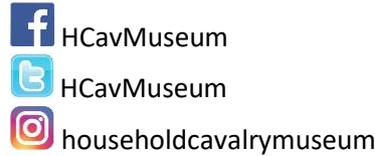




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Podcast 13 ~ HOUSEHOLD CAVALRY ANECDOTES

Hello, again. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Christopher Joll and, if you have listened to any of the podcasts preceding this one, you will know that I'm the Regimental Historian of the Household Cavalry and that each week – since the start of the Covid-19 lockdown – I have been recounting stories about some of the extraordinary men who have served in the Regiments of the Household Cavalry. This week, it is the turn of our priests and prelates...

ONWARD, CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS

Field Marshal HRH Prince Frederick, Duke of York & Albany was a Hanoverian Prince whose soubriquet, 'the Grand Old Duke of York', is today better remembered in the nursery rhyme than the man himself.

York was the second (and favourite) son of King George III and a soldier by profession, whose first military appointment, aged seventeen, was as Colonel of the 2nd Horse Grenadier Guards (later the 2nd Life Guards), an appointment he took up whilst also serving as the Bishop of Osnabruck, a post he had held since the age of one.

The bishopric of Osnabrück was a quirky See within the Holy Roman Empire that alternated between Protestant Princes and Roman Catholic priests; once elected, the Prince Bishop benefitted from a very large income from the diocese, which is why his parsimonious father had proposed his candidature in the first place.

The Duke of York was not, however, the first Household Cavalryman to have carried a sword at the same time as a crozier.



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One hundred years earlier, Henry Compton held a Cornet's commission in the Royal Regiment of Horse (later the Royal Horse Guards) before exchanging his sabre for a crozier and becoming, successively, Bishop of Oxford and then Bishop of London, Dean of the Chapel Royal and a Privy Councillor.

Although tutor to King James II's daughters, Princesses Mary and Anne, Compton was suspended from his various public and religious offices during the brief reign of the fervently Catholic King.

Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that Compton was one of the 'Immortal Seven' who in 1688 invited the Prince and Princess of Orange to replace King James on the throne of England, once again donned uniform during the Glorious Revolution (leading, with sword drawn, an Escort for Princess Anne of two hundred men of the Earl of Devonshire's Dragoons) and presided at the 1689 Coronation of King William III and Queen Mary II.

He was, however, later twice passed over – to his bitter disappointment – for the archiepiscopal See of Canterbury.

Another candidate for a top ecclesiastical job was Henry Howard, a scion of the ducal Norfolk family and a Lieutenant in the 2nd Life Guards, whose sole military distinction was to command a Section of his Regiment on the Escort at the accident-prone State Funeral of the Duke of Wellington in 1852.

Immediately following the Duke's interment, Howard resigned his commission and left for Rome where he entered the Academy of Ecclesiastical Nobles, emerging three years later as a Roman Catholic priest. Had he not died prematurely in 1892, Cardinal Howard, whose priestly career – after time as a missionary in Goa – was spent largely in the Vatican and included the posts of Archbishop of Neocaesaria *in partibus* and Archpriest of Saint Peter's Basilica, would have been a strong candidate to follow Pope Leo XIII who died in 1903.



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In addition to Bishop Compton, Bishop York and Cardinal-Bishop Howard, the Household Cavalry's religious ranks also more recently include a monk, who is still fondly remembered by his Life Guard contemporaries.

The late Captain Howard Schotter, was the Irish-American son of a Hollywood film producer. As Lieutenant Christopher Knox, also formerly of The Life Guards and now a Licensed Lay Minister of the Church of England, relates:

Howard left the Army in 1975 and returned to Trinity College Dublin where he prepared for ordination into the Church of Ireland. Ordained in 1977, he began his ministry on the staff of Limerick Cathedral before moving to Northern Ireland. In between, he spent some time at the Anglican Franciscan Monastery near Sherborne, Dorset: he always had High Church leanings, not something for which the Church of Ireland is noted.

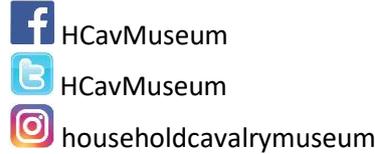
In the late 1980s, Howard abandoned the Church of Ireland and started training to become an Eastern Orthodox monk; for reasons I have never discovered, this all happened in a converted garage in North Wales. Once he had become a monk, he went off to the USA where he became famed for his strict adherence to all the teachings and rituals of the Orthodox Church. Quite a journey for a wealthy American ex-Life Guard who liked the good things of life. Howard died of a brain tumour in the late 1990s, but there is an odd postscript.

In 1999 I was telephoned by Colonel Peter Rogers [Lieutenant Colonel Commanding Household Cavalry] to say that an Eastern Orthodox monk had turned up in Haverfordwest, South Wales, claiming to be Howard Schotter and brandishing his commission and passport. On a wet and miserable Saturday, I set off for Haverfordwest with a friend to identify this person. He was holed up in a flat and we managed to contact the landlord who provided us with a key which, in the event, didn't work. So, we went to the police who were not in the least bit interested about a



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potential illegal immigrant. We then managed to get hold of the local representative of Social Services, a retired Major who was much more robust. Meanwhile, we bought a couple of crowbars so that we could, if necessary, break in. Eventually, the police turned up with a hand-held battering ram and, with a growing group of people gathered on the stairs to watch, knocked down the door.

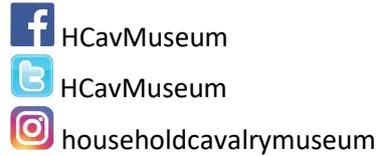
Inside was a rather pathetic individual who looked nothing like Howard. Apparently, he had travelled over on the QE2, where all British immigration formalities had been carried out on board. The man was arrested and we returned home. Sometime later, I was telephoned by the local Royal British Legion representative informing me that the imposter had been released as the police were more concerned about drunkenness in Haverfordwest than an illegal immigrant. The Social Services ex-Major then stepped in and the man was eventually re-arrested and taken to an immigration holding centre at Heathrow Airport. Enquiries revealed that he was one Michael O'Callaghan who was wanted for a million-dollar fraud in the US. He was eventually repatriated at the US government's expense.

These and other stories can be found, in an expanded form, in my book, *The Drum Horse in the Fountain*, available from Amazon. Next week I'm going to be talking about a Household Cavalryman who is, without doubt, suffering for all Eternity in the deepest circle of Hell.



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‘NOT A LOT OF PEOPLE KNOW THIS...’

**A weekly series of podcasts about the Regiments of the Household Cavalry
written and recorded by
Regimental Historian, Christopher Joll, formerly of The Life Guards**

**These anecdotes are drawn from
Christopher Joll’s recently published books:**

The Drum Horse in the Fountain: Tales of the Heroes & Rogues in the Guards
&
Spoils of War: The Treasures, Trophies & Trivia of the British Army

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