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BRITISH CAVALRY.



CAVALRY in the last century was not the dashing force we know now; it trotted calmly up to the enemy, and fired a volley, when, if the foe showed signs of confusion, the troopers drew their long swords and went at them; but if they stood firm, the squadrons wheeled and tried for better luck in another quarter! At one period the horses had their ears cropped and their tails docked and cut into a species of knob, and it is said that in Germany they were so maddened by the flies, which they were unable to whisk off owing to that barbarous regulation, that they were sometimes rendered unmanageable, and consequently useless as a force. An insight into the cavalry of that period may be obtained by a few curious anecdotes of Ligonier's Regiment, then called "The Blacks," and now the 7th Dragoon Guards. It was on the Irish establishment for thirty years, and was so popular with the younger sons of good families, that they often paid from twenty to thirty guineas for the privilege of becoming a trooper. Suddenly ordered on service in the summer of 1742, when the horses were at grass and the men's uniforms in the last month of wear, they were reviewed on Hounslow Heath by George II., and placed between the Blues and Pembroke's Horse, then newly clothed and splendidly mounted. The contrast was marked, and their colonel in despair. "Well, Ligonier," said the King, "your men have the air of soldiers, but their horses indeed look poorly. How is it?" "Sir," replied Ligonier, "the men are Irish, and gentlemen—the horses are English." At Dettingen, where they only mustered 180 strong, they charged the French gendarmes, who were drawn up six deep,

and lost six officers and fifty-six men, having to fight their way out against heavy odds. Cornet Richardson, carrying the standard, received thirty-seven wounds, and returned with the color pole slashed in many places. When asked how he managed to preserve it, he said, "If the wood of the pole had not been made of iron, the color would have been cut off." The standard was presented to him for his gallantry when new colors were given to the regiment the following winter. At Fontenoy the "Blacks" mustered their full strength, although they had left a man behind in Brussels, shot through the thigh in a duel; for thirty-seven recruits had just joined, being one more than was required, and the distress of the odd man was so great that Sir John Ligonier kept him at his own expense until there should be a vacancy. They had a strange court-martial at Ath, on a trooper who, his horse being shot in the morning at Fontenoy, had not joined until after the battle. The regiment was so enraged that they were for summarily dismissing him; but he demanded to be heard, and brought Lieutenant Izard, of the Welsh Fusiliers, as a witness, who stated that the dismounted trooper had come to him and requested to be allowed to carry a firelock during the battle in the grenadier company, and, after fighting valiantly all day, was one of the nine men of that company that came out of action. He was instantly restored to his troop with honor, and next day the Duke of Cumberland gave him a commission in the Welsh Fusiliers—one of the few creditable acts on record of the "Butcher of Culloden." It is further said that from the time of the regiment leaving Ireland until its return, not a single case of desertion occurred, not a man or horse was taken by the enemy, only six men died natural deaths, and thirty-seven troopers were promoted to commissions—a very rare thing in those days of purchase and privilege, when a few years later a lieutenant-colonelcy of horse cost £4,940, and an ensigncy in a foot regiment £405.—Cassell's Family Magazine.