

GRAVE No: E59

GRIFFITHS, Thomas. Drum Major of the 23rd Regt Royal Welsh Fusiliers



Inscription:

To the Memory of
THOMAS GRIFFITHS

Late Drum Major of the 23rd Regt Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

Who died 3rd September 1864 aged 88.

He served in the Peninsular War and Battle of Waterloo
And received the War Medal and clasp
Waterloo Medal.

And Medal for Long Service and Good Conduct.

'Prepare to meet thy God.'

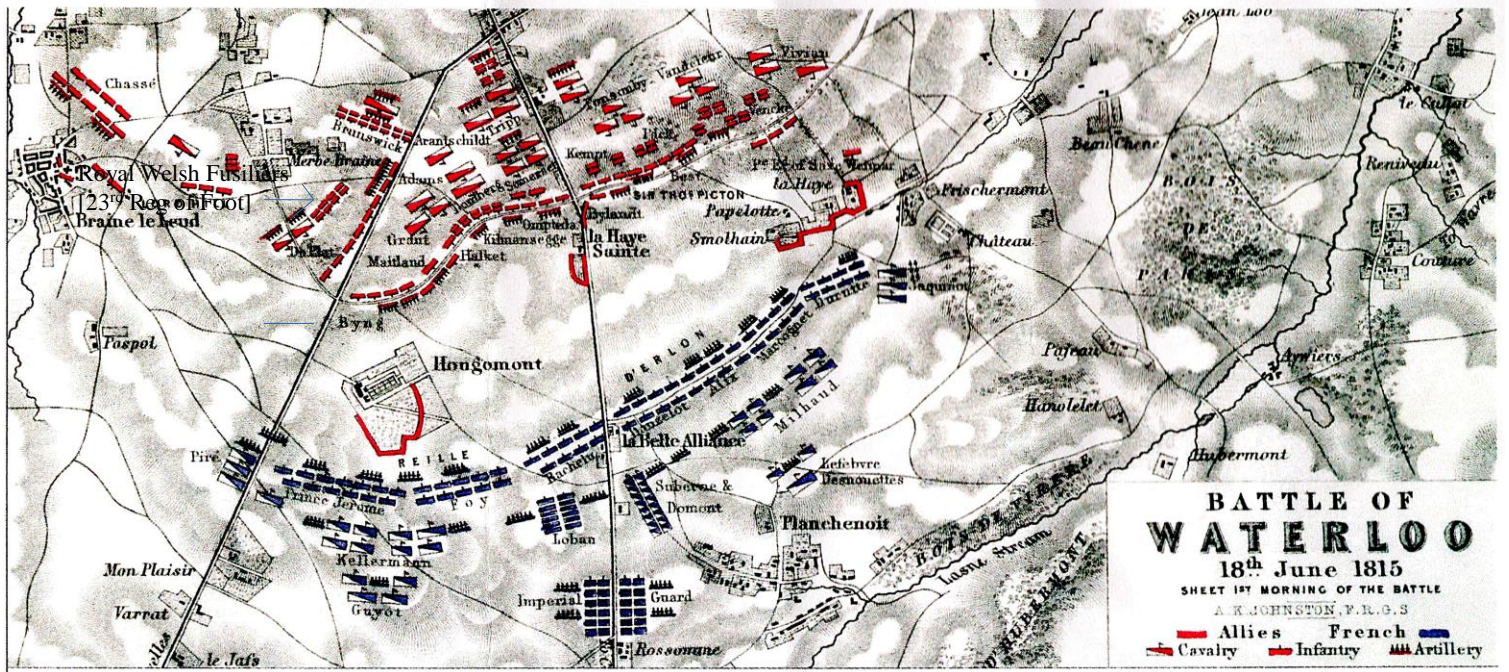
Thomas Griffiths was born in Caernarvon in Wales in about 1776, and was by trade, a cordwainer [shoe maker], until he attested for the 23rd Regiment of Foot at Norwich in Norfolk on the 30th September 1807 at the age of 20. After 25 days he was given the rank of Drummer and subsequently promoted to Corporal in April 1808.

In 1809, he was present under the command of General Sir John Moore at the battle of Coruna, in the Peninsular war, for which he was awarded the Military General Service Medal in 1848.

On 25th September 1810, he was promoted to the rank of Serjeant, as Drum Major, in which rank he served at the battle of Waterloo on the 18th June 1815. His Waterloo medal is impressed 'to DRUM. MAJ. SER. T GRIFFITHS. 23rd. REGIMENT. FOOT R.W.F [Royal Welsh Fusiliers.]'

He subsequently served in Gibraltar, and was finally discharged as unfit for further service due to chronic rheumatism on the 12th November 1831 after 26 years and forty days with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers.





At the battle of Waterloo on the 18th June 1815, the 23rd Regiment of Foot [Royal Welsh Fusiliers], a battle hardened unit in Colonel Hugh Henry Mitchell's 4th Brigade, was positioned on the British right flank and were known for their high discipline. Wellington described them as being *'The most complete and handsome military body I ever looked at'* They were also *veterans* of the Peninsular war 1808-1814.

They endured intense artillery fire and repelled multiple cavalry charges whilst in square formation near the Hougoumont and maintained their position throughout the day. [See above.]

They eventually moved to fill the gap in Wellington's centre when Maj Gen Sir John Byng's Guards Brigade advanced towards the Hougoumont. The regiment maintained a steady square formation, holding out against repeated French Cavalry charges and one infantry advance.

The battalion did not suffer extreme casualties compared with other battalions of the allied forces, although the Commanding Officer was mortally wounded and at least one lieutenant [William A Griffiths] was severely wounded in the thigh.



Waterloo, Peninsular, and Long service and Good conduct Medals

1851 Wales Census living at the Toll House, Llangenny, Breconshire.

Thomas Griffiths aged 70 late Serjeant Royal Welsh Fusiliers with daughter Jane Evans aged 44 a widow and toll keeper from Durham, Newcastle on Tyne and grandchildren Margaret 12 and Sarah 11 Evans both born in Brecon.

1861 Wales Census living in Black Rock, Maesygartha, Llanelly.

Thomas Griffiths aged 80 years a pensioner with daughter Jane Evans a widow and gate keeper aged 54 years born in Tyneside, Northumberland and granddaughter Sarah Evans aged 21 years born in Brecon.

1864 DEATH RECORD St Elli [Llanelly Parish Records]

3rd September Thomas Griffiths of Black Rock dies aged 85? years, and is buried on the 6th. [Daniel Lewis Curate.]

In 1836 there is a marriage by license between Jane Griffiths and Thomas Evans a blacksmith in the parish of St Davids, Brecon witnessed by Thomas Griffiths. Her occupation was a Toll Keeper.

In 2015 on the 200th anniversary of the battle of Waterloo a service for Thomas Griffiths was held around his grave in Llanelly Hill churchyard.

