

## POTTLE'S WAR

(b. 1788- d. 1876)

On July 19<sup>th</sup> 1847 Edward Pottle married Charlotte Ware (both previously widowed) at West Howe near Kinson, Dorset. Edward was aged 57 and by this time Edward had retired from the Army and working as a labourer. Charlotte his bride, was 35 years old and stated no occupation on her marriage certificate but very soon came to live and work in West Moors as a school mistress.

Edward Pottle was recorded as a Chelsea Pensioner in the 1861 Census and living in West Moors with Charlotte. The Chelsea Pensioner mention was unusual in the records of West Parley and West Moors and prompted some further investigation.

Edward, it seems had some amazing adventures, and had taken part in some of the most notable battles of the Peninsula War. The information below highlights some of the action he saw at that time.

Edward joined the army in 1808 (aged about 20) and was in the thick of it during the Peninsula war whilst serving in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Foot Regiment. His battles included the **Battle of Fuentes de Oñoro**), the **Battle of Vitoria**, the **Siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, Spain** and the **Battle of Salamanca** in which Wellington celebrated victory on the **22<sup>nd</sup> July 1812** over the French army of Marshal Marmont leading to the re-capture of Madrid.

In the **Battle of Fuentes de Oñoro (3–5 May 1811)**, the British-Portuguese Army under the Duke of Wellington checked an attempt by the French Army of Portugal under Marshal André Masséna to relieve the besieged city of Almeida.

During the **Battle of Vitoria**, the British, Portuguese and Spanish army under the Marquess of Wellington broke the French army under King Joseph Bonaparte and Marshal Jean-Baptiste Jourdan near Vitoria in Spain, eventually leading to victory in the Peninsula War.

At the **Siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, Spain, (7–20 January 1812)** the Viscount Wellington's Anglo-Portuguese Army besieged the city's French garrison under General of Brigade Jean Léonard Barrié. An earlier siege of Ciudad Rodrigo occurred in 1810 when the French captured the city from Spanish forces.

**The Battle of Salamanca** in which Wellington celebrated victory on **22<sup>nd</sup> July 1812** over the French army of Marshal Marmont during the Peninsular war, led to the re-capture of the city of Madrid.

Marshal Marmont, the French Army commander, tried to out manoeuvre the Anglo-Portuguese Army of the Duke of Wellington around the town of Salamanca; the Duke duly responded by adjusting his line. In the preliminary manoeuvres, when the French threatened to occupy a hill feature on the British right flank, the Duke gave the task of

guarding the hill to the Inniskillings. He reportedly said to Colonel MacLean, the Inniskilling Commanding Officer: '**You must defend this position as long as you have a man**'. Soon afterwards, the Duke adjusted his line so that its new position was at right angles to the old. At the correct moment, he ordered his Division to attack the column of marching Frenchmen, who were overwhelmed by the suddenness and ferocity of the British attack. **SALAMANCA** was granted as a Battle Honour to all four Regiments.

As a member of the British Army, Edward was awarded The Military General Service Medal (MGSM) for military actions from 1793 to 1814; a period covering the French Revolutionary Wars, the Napoleonic Wars, and the Anglo-American War of 1812. The medal was awarded retrospectively and approved on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 1844 and could not be claimed before this time. It had to be applied for and not just given out. Edward was entitled to four clasps for each battle he had served in.

Edward retired in 1830 and married his first wife. However, in 1841 he is recorded as serving again in the 20<sup>th</sup> Foot Regiment and was based in Limerick, Ireland in 1841 where there was '*an incident*' which resulted in him leaving army service for good.

The quiet backwaters of West Moors must have seemed very a peaceful place when compared to Edward's previous life, but at same time must have been a welcome relief to him. He was obviously in good health when he left the army as he is recorded as working as a labourer and died at the ripe old age of 88 which is quite an achievement for those times. He is buried in the cemetery at West Parley.

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