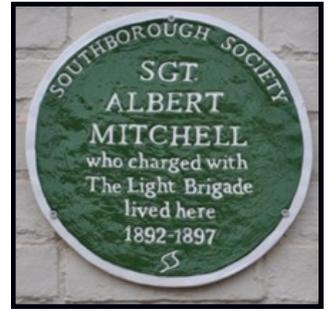


SERGEANT ALBERT MITCHELL

Charger with the Light Brigade

by A M Macfarlane

Location of plaque — Taylor Street, Southborough.



Albert Mitchell was born at Tonbridge, Kent, in 1830. He worked as a baker for some years before enlisting, on 2 March 1850, in the Army (Cavalry) in London. Just ten days later he was posted to Dundalk, in Ireland, to join the 13th Light Dragoons.

In 1854 he went with his regiment to the Crimean War and on 25 October 1854, as a Trooper, he charged with the Light Brigade under Lord Cardigan at Balaclava, in a mad rush against the Russian guns. All around him officers and troopers were falling until his own horse was killed by a shell and fell on him. He struggled free and stood, sabre in hand, until a comrade pulled him into the shelter behind a dead horse.



Lord Cardigan, who had gone clean through the Russian guns, came galloping back and told him to go back to avoid capture. On the way he met the remnants of the 13th, only 13 men still mounted out of the 100 who set out.

He served right through the Crimean campaign of 1854-56 and was awarded the Crimea medal with four clasps, for the battles of Alma, Balaclava, Inkerman and Sebastopol. He was promoted Corporal in November 1855 and later Sergeant. On 1 September 1862 he was given an Honourable Discharge from the Army after more than 12 years service, but without a pension.

On 16 February 1863, he applied to join the Kent County Constabulary and was enrolled on 21 February 1863.

In 1871 he married, and a son was born in 1872, but sadly his wife, about whom nothing is known, died in 1875.

He retired from the Kent County Constabulary on medical grounds in 1885, with a pension of 13/-d (65p) a week. He worked for a time for Lord Cranbrook until ill-health forced him to give that up. He lived for a time at 2 Norton Road, Southborough, but finally moved to 2 Taylor Street, Southborough, to live with his sister.

He fell on hard times and a fund was started for him by local people, but before he could benefit from that he died on 16 January 1897. He was buried with full military honours in the churchyard of St Peter's Church, Southborough. His coffin was borne by four sergeants of the 15th Hussars, and a gravestone was erected by that Regiment.