

*The Queen's Colours*



*The College Colours*



## **Ad Portas**

The ceremony Ad Portas is a development from the official welcome accorded to the examiners from New College on their arrival for the annual visit to elect Scholars to our sister foundation in Oxford. In 1615 Mrs Letitia Williams, a lady with strong Wiccamic connections (her brother was First on the Roll in 1605) and Royalist sympathies, had instituted a payment of 13s 4d to the Scholar who delivered the speech. Members of the Royal family and the Bishops of Winchester had also been greeted over the centuries with formal speeches "at the gates".

In 1873 the practice of delivering a speech to the New College examiners came to an end. Nevertheless, in the same year the Lord Chancellor, Lord Selborne, was received in similar style. In 1881 the practice of Ad Portas was formally revised, and that is the pattern we use today. It became from that time the highest honour that the College bestows. A significant feature of the revision was the inclusion of the 'Oratio ad Portas' by the Aulæ Præ.

A ceremony that has enjoyed such a curious history of necessity, formality and contrivance inevitably has at times given honorands pause for thought, particularly when they were expected to reply to the Prefect of Hall's speech in Latin. In 1911, for example, the Bishop of Winchester complained that 'the feeble fame of canine Latin prevents my use of it'; and in the previous year the Earl of Selborne declared, whilst responding in English: 'Had my reply been in Latin you would have had an opportunity of observing how far it is possible in mature life to forget those studies which occupied so large a portion of one's boyhood'. There have been forty-nine Receptions Ad Portas since 1873: in the course of these there have been eighteen responses in Latin, one in Latin and Greek, twenty in English, one in Marathi and ten in English and Latin.

## **Order**

11.58 Bugle Fanfare, The Honorands, preceded by the Warden's Staff and accompanied by the Warden, Fellows and Headmaster, move from Outer Court into Chamber Court.

The Aulæ Præ., F T M Legge, speaks.

Lt Gen Robin Brims and Lt Richard Watkins respond.

The Sen. Co. Præ., M C Michaelides (C), calls for three cheers for The Honorands.

A bugler calls retire

The Aulæ Præ advances and shakes hands with Lt Gen Brims. They then move with the Honorands, accompanied by the Warden, Fellows and Headmaster, through Middle Gate and proceed directly to War Cloister, followed by their guests and rest of the School.

### **The Prefect of Hall's Speech commences:**

Summa laetitia, summa modestia, summa animi elatione vos salutamus, quinque et viginti Wiccamicos, viros militares, intra portas nostras hodie ingredienti ut summum accipiatis huius ludi honorem, insigne decus et praemium dignum pro munere officioque quod nobis et toti reipublicae praestitistis, omnia pro patria periclitantes, omnia pro amicis.

*[It is with great joy, great humility and great pride that we receive you today at our gates, twenty-five sons of Wykeham, officers and gentlemen. We offer you this School's greatest honour, a fitting accolade and worthy tribute for the duty and service you have done for us and for the whole nation, risking all in the service of your country and for the sake of your fellows.]*

### **Lt Gen Brims begins his reply:**

Domine Custos, Domine Informator, Domine Aulae Praefecte, summum nobis redditis honorem qui nos sic hodie ad portas vestras salutatis. Omnes sumus viri militares, alii signa adhuc sequentes, alii otium quietemque modo adepti; omnes in Afghanistan, ut dicitur, vel in Iraq, vel in utraque regione intra hos annos stipendium meruimus; omnes praefecti sumus, quos oportuit milites nostros in pericula ducere quae atrocissima compluribus cognovimus lustris. Adsumus hodie, alii milites, alii nautae; omnes tamen hoc uno vinculo in unum consociamur, quod hoc in loco educati Wiccamici sumus.

*[Mr Warden, Mr Headmaster, Mr Prefect of Hall you pay us the greatest honour by giving us the very special privilege of being received Ad Portas. We are all current or recently retired members of the British Armed Forces, and we all have served in Afghanistan or Iraq – in some cases both these countries – in the last few years. We are all commissioned officers and it has been our duty to lead British Servicemen in some of the toughest operations experienced by our Armed Forces for several decades. We represent our different Services and Regiments, but we are bound together because we are all Old Wykehamists.]*

### **Lt Watkins concludes:**

May this College, the birthplace of the servant of the state, armed with pen or sword, continue to produce leaders for another six hundred years to come.

Summum honorem, Wiccamici, nobis offertis sic hodie ad portas salutatis. Plurimas vobis gratias agimus omnes.

*[Fellow Wykehamists, in receiving us today Ad Portas you bestow on us your highest honour. We are all very deeply grateful.]*

## Honorands

Lieutenant General (Retired) R V Brims CB CBE DSO, late Light Infantry, now The Rifles (K)

Major General J J C Bucknall CBE, late Coldstream Guards (A)

Brigadier N P Carter CBE, late Royal Green Jackets, now The Rifles (H)

Brigadier J F Watson MBE, late The Devonshire and Dorset Regiment, now The Rifles (K)

Surgeon Captain (Retired) W M Edmondstone, Royal Navy (B)

Colonel N A Hoad, Late Royal Army Medical Corps (Coll)

Lieutenant Colonel S E R Bedford, The Rifles (B)

Lieutenant Colonel N J Kitson, The Rifles (H)

Lieutenant Colonel R H G Mills, Grenadier Guards (G)

Lieutenant Colonel H T S Ricketts, Royal Engineers (F)

Lieutenant Colonel G G E Stibbe OBE, The Life Guards, (K)

Lieutenant Colonel H A Watson MBE, The Light Dragoons (F)

Lieutenant Commander T F Boughton OStJ, Royal Navy (Q)

Lieutenant Commander E J A Morgan, Royal Navy (F)

Major (Retired) N Entwistle, Queen's Royal Hussars (H)

Major A P Speed, Scots Guards (F)

Captain C E D Burrows, Adjutant General's Corps (Coll)

Captain D J J Currie, Coldstream Guards (C)

Captain L J Hoare, Army Air Corps (C)

Captain C P Macdonald, Royal Marine Reserve (D)

Captain A L Sebba, Royal Green Jackets, now The Rifles (G)

Captain (Retired) A I Matheson, Royal Scots Dragoon Guards (C)

Captain (Retired) C T R Salmon, Royal Green Jackets, now The Rifles (C)

Captain B A Shuttleworth, The Rifles (K)

Lieutenant R J M Watkins, Coldstream Guards (A)

Captain J P Axcell, Royal Horse Artillery (C) (*in absentia*)

Lieutenant Colonel G A Atkinson-Willes TD, Mercian (A) (*in absentia*)

Captain J G Stewart, Royal Scots Dragoon Guards (I) (*in absentia*)

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The front cover illustrates the new stand of Colours granted to Winchester College CCF by Garter King of Arms on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2008