



HISTORY OF SIGNALLING IN 100 OBJECTS FAITH WINTER STATUE - “BILL AND BEN”



The bronze statue in the middle of the main entrance roundabout in Blandford Camp was originally located at the entrance to Vimy Lines in Catterick, then the home of 8th Signal Regiment. This Regiment had been responsible for Corps adult trade training until the move of all mainstream Royal Signals Training to Blandford in the period 1994 – 1997, when 8 Sig Regt was disbanded.

Ironically, the statue was, in fact, commissioned to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the move of Royal Signals Training from Maresfield to Catterick in 1925. It depicts two signallers; one from the 1920s and the other from the 1970s and was unveiled by Her Majesty the Queen on 10 July 1975 (Picture above left). The sculptor was Faith Winter, the wife of Colonel F M S Winter, a retired officer of the Corps. She went on to be an artist of some acclaim and her commissions included the statues of Lord Dowding and, more controversially, Bomber Harris on the Strand, as well as various works for the Royal Family. She died aged 89 in February 2017. The unveiling was captured in a painting by Mr Frances Russell Flint RWS, RSW, ROI, RSMA, commissioned by the officers of the Corps and intended at that time to hang in the Royal Signals Officers Mess in Catterick. It now hangs in the RHQ of 11(RSS) Sig Regt in Blandford Camp.

According to the minutes of the 106th Corps Council held in November 1974, the statue was paid for by what is now the RSBF Corps Fund (£1000), The Royal Signals Association (£1000) and the Training Brigade Royal Signals Fund (£600). In its day, this was considered such a large sum of money that the Chairman of the Royal Signals Institution, which was then responsible for Corps heritage, was personally required to countersign the cheque in payment!