



West Kent Yeomanry

HISTORY OF THE KENT YEOMANRY REGIMENTS

In 1794 local volunteer troops were raised for the first time to assist the civil power when required. These volunteer troops were given the status of volunteer Yeomanry Regiments. In West Kent a similar body of volunteers was raised with Troops at Cobham, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, Chislehurst, Farningham, Tunbridge Wells and Coxheath near Maidstone. Each Troop was about 50 strong with three officers (Captain, Lieutenant, Cornet). These volunteers were expected to provide their own uniforms and mounts while the government supplied their arms and ammunition. These volunteers were only paid when they were mobilised. The motto of both Kent Yeomanry regiments was "**Liberty, Loyalty, Property**". In 1797 both regiments were mobilised and sent to the Isle of Sheppey to put down an uprising (mutiny) of sailors. The East and West Kent Yeomanries continued in service after the Napoleonic Wars, with the remit of assisting the civil power as and when required. In 1827 the government decided to disband the Yeomanry Regiments in those districts where they had not been mobilised in the previous 10 years. Both Kent Regiments were stood down and their equipment was returned to the regular military authorities. But for this gap in service, the Kent Yeomanry formations would have been the most senior Yeomanry Regiments in the country in terms of the date of acceptance of its senior troop - the Cinque Ports Cavalry.

In 1830 the East Kent Yeomanry was re-formed with 6 troops established at Ashford, East Wingham, West Wingham, Hythe, Sittingbourne and Faversham. The West Kent Yeomanry was also reformed with troops at Cobham, Chislehurst, Dartford, Oxenheath, Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks and Maidstone. During this period the Yeomanry was the only armed force available to assist the civil power. The Kent Police Force was not established until about 1830.



West Kent Yeomanry

Lt Col J.F Edmeades (Commanding Officer 1863-1907)

Lt Col The Earl of Darnley (Commanding Officer 1869)

Quartermaster E Durrant 1888

Farrier Sergeant E Hollingham

Sergeant Major J. Whiley

Colonel The Marquess of Abergavenny (Colonel of Regiment) 1875-1890

Quartermaster George Arnold 1875-1902

Corporal H Passmore 1892

Sergeant George Glanville (Tunbridge Wells Troop) 1890

Sergeant Harry Payne

Lt Col Sir Fitzroy Maclean Bt

In 1856 the East Kent Yeomanry was armed with rifles for the first time and its name was changed to the **East Kent Mounted Rifles** (REKMR). In 1858 the East Kent Mounted Rifles was awarded the title Royal and became the **Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles**. In 1864 the West Kent Yeomanry was awarded the title Queen's Own and became known as the **Queen's Own West Kent Yeomanry**.





The Boer War

During the South African War 1899 - 1902 (Boer War) were not liable for service because their personnel were not expected to serve overseas. Instead, volunteers were called for to serve within new volunteer formations known as the **Imperial Yeomanry**. The Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles provided 2 contingents for service in South Africa - the **33rd (East Kent) Company** which was placed at the disposal of the **11th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry** and the **53rd (East Kent) Company** which served in the **14th Battalion, Imperial Yeomanry** commanded by Captain Claude Marks. The Queen's Own West Kent Yeomanry raised 1 further volunteer formation - the **36th (West Kent) Company** which was attached to the **8th Infantry Division** a regular army formation commanded by Captain the Hon Egremont Mills DSO later by Lt R.B Pott. The 33rd (East Kent) Company was engaged at Biddulphsberg where the British lost over 170 men. The 36th (West Kent) Company which was attached to the 8th Division was involved in the advance on Pretoria. In July 1900 at Brandwater Basin they oversaw the surrender of over 4,000 Boers. All Kent Imperial Yeomanry companies saw considerable small scale fighting until late July 1900 when they were involved in the surrender of General Prinsloo's Boer formations. After this they formed part of the garrison of Frankfort which they held for over 5 months. The 33rd and 53rd (East Kent) Companies, Imperial Yeomanry returned to the UK in May 1901. The 36th (West Kent) Company, Imperial Yeomanry finally returned home to the UK in June 1901. The Kentish Express newspaper listed a few men who lost their lives in South Africa:

Private A BREWER (Cameronian Highlanders) of Fordwich near Canterbury

Private GOODSMARK (2nd Army Service Corps) of Ashford

Colour Sergeant W.J FOUNTAIN (Northumberland Fusiliers) of Buckland,
Dover

Trooper Isaac WILDASH (33rd East Kent) Company, Imperial Yeomanry of
Faversham

Trooper A.T BEECHING. Kent Imperial Yeomanry of Tonbridge (son of the
Lloyds Bank Manager)

Private William HUCKSTEPP of Ashford (Died of enteric fever on route home on
the ship "Idaho").

The Territorial Force was formed in 1908. The Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles and the Queen's Own West Kent Yeomanry were both placed in the South East Mounted Brigade.



The Great War

On the outbreak of war in August 1914 both Kent Yeomanry Regiments were immediately sent to the Canterbury area where they contributed to the Kent coastal defences. In September 1915 they sailed for Gallipoli, Turkey, where they served as dis-mounted infantry for the last 3 months of the campaign. In March 1917 the two Kent Yeomanry Regiments were amalgamated and became the 10th (Yeomanry) Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Further details of it's movements can be obtained by referring to the Buffs pages on this website. The 10th Buffs was attached to the Broken Spur Division - 74th (Yeomanry) Division. The new battalion formed part of Genral Allenby's successful Palastine offensive against the Turkish Army and took part in the 2nd Battle of Gaza and the Battle of Beersheba on 31st October 1917. In December 1917 the 10th Buffs played a major part in the capture of Jerusalem. The heavy casualties of the Western Front in France and Belgium necessitated the withdrawal of infantry divisions from Palastine to France in May 1918. By the end of July 1918 the 10th Buffs was in action at Merville on the Somme in France. The 10th Buffs lost 152 men killed in action from it's late formation in 1917. They were awarded 12 battle honours. After the Great War the 10th (Yeomanry) Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) was disbanded. It's colours were placed in the Warriors Chapel in Canterbury Cathedral for the last time.





After the First World War

In 1920 the amalgamation of the Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles and the West Kent Yeomanry was made permanent. The 10th Buffs had already been disbanded. It was decided that the East Kent Mounted Rifles would become the **385th (Duke of Connaught's Own) Yeomanry** and **386th (Duke of Connaught's Own) Yeomanry**. The West Kent Yeomanry became the **387th (Queen's Own) Yeomanry** and the **388th (Queen's Own) Yeomanry**. All Kent Yeomanry units were attached to **97th (Kent Yeomanry) Army Brigade , Royal Field Artillery**. This change must have been very confusing for those men who had served as infantryman, suddenly they had become Artillery men overnight! In 1938 the unit was re-designated the 97th (Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery -





97th (Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery

385th (Duke of Connaught's Own) Battery
Canterbury

386th (Duke of Connaught's Own) Battery
Ashford

387th (Queen's Own) Yeomanry
Maidstone

388th (Queen's Own) Yeomanry
Bromley

In 1939 a further Second Line Territorial Force Yeomanry unit was formed - 143rd (Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery. 386th and 388th batteries were taken away from the 97th (Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery to form this new Artillery (Yeomanry) Regiment.





143rd (Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment,
Royal Artillery

386th (Duke of Connaught's Own) Battery
Ashford

388th (Queen's Own) Yeomanry
Bromley

This left the 97th (Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery with the remaining batteries –



97th (Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment,
Royal Artillery

385th (Duke of Connaught's Own) Battery
Canterbury

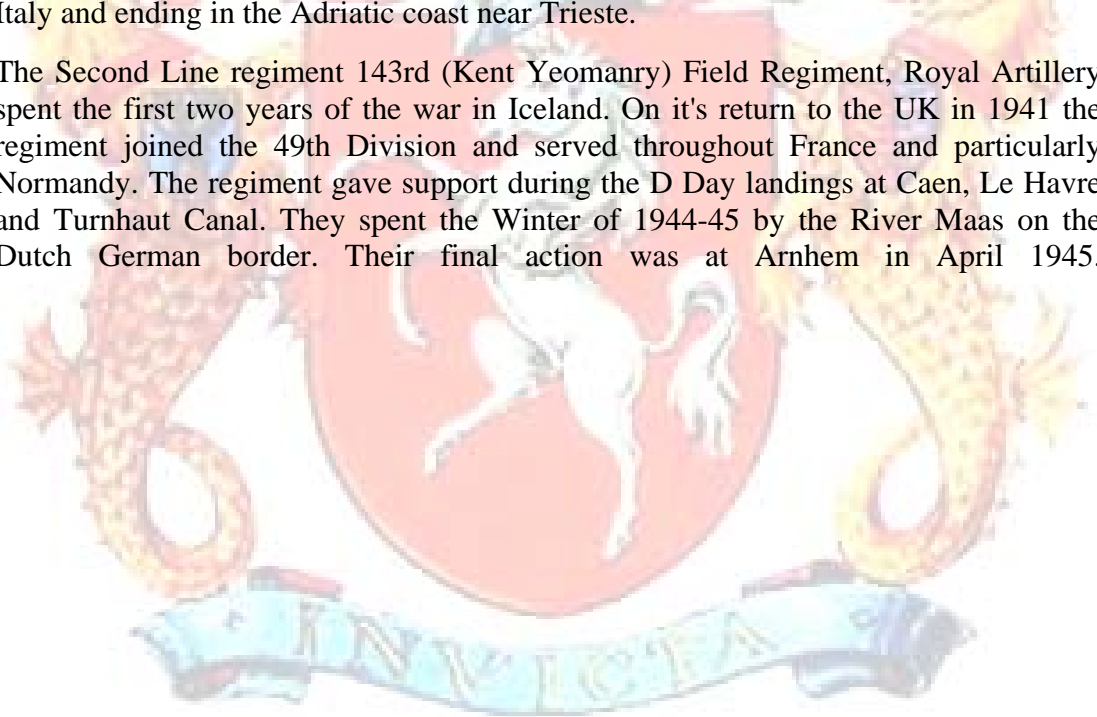
387th (Queen's Own) Yeomanry
Maidstone



THE SECOND WORLD WAR 1939 -1945

Upon the outbreak of the Second World War, the 97th (Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery was immediately mobilised - It moved immediately to France as part of the British Expeditionary Force and in 1940 was evacuated from Dunkirk with the rest of the British Army. In 1941 the regiment was sent to Iraq with the 10th Indian Division. The division went into the Western Desert, where it suffered badly in the retreat of Alam El Haifa, and the 7th Armoured Division at El Alemein. It remained in the desert until the capture of Tobruk and Adem. After garrison duty in Cyprus, Palestine and Syria the Kent Yeomanry moved to Italy in March 1944. They served in Italy for the remaining duration of the war advancing up the North West of Italy and ending in the Adriatic coast near Trieste.

The Second Line regiment 143rd (Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery spent the first two years of the war in Iceland. On its return to the UK in 1941 the regiment joined the 49th Division and served throughout France and particularly Normandy. The regiment gave support during the D Day landings at Caen, Le Havre and Turnhout Canal. They spent the Winter of 1944-45 by the River Maas on the Dutch German border. Their final action was at Arnhem in April 1945.





Kent & County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters)

In 1947 the Kent Yeomanry units were formed into the 297th (Kent Yeomanry) Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery in 44th (Home Counties) Division. It was equipped with 40mm Bofor anti-aircraft guns. In 1961 the 297th (Kent Yeomanry) Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery and the 3/4th County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters) were amalgamated to form the Kent & County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters).





1/1st West Kent Yeomanry

(South East Mounted Brigade)

(4 August 1914)

Headquarters

Union Street, Maidstone, Kent

Lt Col C.J Sofer-Whitburn T.D (Commanding Officer)

Major Marquis Camden T.D (Second in Command)

Captain F Nixon (Adjutant)

Major R Knowlden (Quartermaster)

A Squadron

Major Sir Samuel Scott (Squadron Leader)

Bromley Troop

Catford Detachment

Woolwich Detachment

B Squadron

Major Lord Sackville T.D (Squadron Leader)

Dartford Troop

Rochester Detachment

Gravesend Detachment

Sevenoaks Detachment

Woolwich Detachment

C Squadron

Major R.B Pott (Squadron Leader) (Boer War Veteran)

Tunbridge Wells Troop

Tonbridge Detachment

Hawkhurst Detachment

D Squadron

Major Marquis Camden T.D (Squadron Leader)

Lieutenant Charles Ponsonby (Second in Command)

Maidstone Troop

West Malling Detachment

Westminster (London) Detachment

Woolwich Detachment



1/1st West Kent Yeomanry

(4 September 1914)

"D" Squadron had been broken up and all personnel were distributed between A,B,C Squadrons

Headquarters Squadron

Sturry House, Broad Oak, Canterbury, Kent

Lt Col C.J Sofer-Whitburn T.D (Commanding Officer)

Major Marquis Camden T.D (Second in Command)

Captain F Nixon (Adjutant)

Major R Knowlden (Quartermaster)

A Squadron

Sturry, Canterbury, Kent

Major Sir Samuel Scott (Squadron Leader)

B Squadron

Fordwich, Canterbury, Kent

Major Lord Sackville T.D (Squadron Leader)

C Squadron

Westbere, Canterbury, Kent

Major R.B Pott (Squadron Leader)




War Diary

By Lt Col Charles Ponsonby

(Andrew Melrose Limited, London 1920)

(Giving movements of both the 1/1st REKMR and the 1/1st West Kent Yeomanry)

- 5 August 1914 - Mobilized and concentrated at Maidstone
9 August 1914 - Arrived at War Station, Sturry, Fordwich and Westbere near Canterbury
April 1915 - Inspected by H.M The King
23 September 1915 - Sailed from Liverpool on the "Olympic"
2 October 1915 - Arrived Mudros
7 October 1915 - Arrived Cape Helles, Gallipoli
31 December 1915 - Left Cape Helles
1 January - Arrived Mudros
5 February 1915 - Arrived Sidi Bishr near Alexandria, Egypt
16 March 1915 - El Kubri (Suez Canal)
13 April 1915 - Suez Canal
18 May 1916 - El Shatt (Suez Canal)
1 July 1916 - El Ferdan (Suez Canal)
27 July 1916 - Sidi Bishr
6 August 1916 - Marsa Matruh (Western Front) (Egypt)
14 January 1917 - Sollum Egypt
1 February 1917 - **Almagamation of 1/1st West Kent Yeomanry with 1/1st Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles**
16 March 1917 - Sidi Bishr
11 April 1917 - Deir el Belah
18 April 1917 - **Second Battle of Gaza** (74th Division held in Reserve)
22 April 1917 - Tel-el-Jemmi
29 April 1917 - Shellal and Hisea
28 May 1917 - Wadi Levi
9 July 1917 - Dorset House
7 August 1917 - Deir el Belah (fig grove)
28 August 1917 - Sheikh Hamuda
6 September 1917 - Regents Park and Samson's Ridge (near Gaza), Egypt
20 September 1917 - Sheikh Hamuda
25 October 1917 - Abu Sitta
28 October 1917 - Tel el Fara
30 October 1917 - Khasif



31 October 1917 - **Battle of Beersheba**
1 November 1917 - Wadi Saba
3 November 1917 - Muweileh
6 November 1917 - **Battle of Sheria**
10 November 1917 - Karm
18 November 1917 - St James Park
23 November 1917 - Deir Seneid
25 November 1917 - El Mejel
26 November 1917 - Nahr Sukereir
27 November 1917 - Junction Station
28 November 1917 - Latrun
29 November 1917 - Beit Nuba (52 miles from St James Park)
2 December 1917 - New Kent Road (near Ammam) (now capital of Syria?)
7 December 1917 - Wadi Moya (near Kubeibeh)
8 December 1917 - Battle of Jerusalem
9 December 1917 - Beit Iksa
15 December 1917 - Beit Hanina
21 December 1917 - Wadi Moya
27 December 1917 - Beit Izza
29 December 1917 - Ram Allah captured (now West Bank of Israel)
3 January 1918 - Beit Izza
5 January 1918 - Beit Likia
9 January 1918 - Beit Sira
18 February 1918 - Kurbeha Ibn Harith
4 March 1918 - Balua Lake (near Ram Allah)
9-12 March 1918 - Advanced towards Nablus (Yebrud and Burj Badawile occupied)
13-26 March 1918 - Turmus Aya outpost line
7 April 1918 - Burj Badawile (leaving Palestine)
8 April 1918 - Near Beitunia (Leaving Palastine)
9 April 1918 - Beit Sira (marching to leave Palestine)
10 April 1918 - Kubub
11 April 1918 - Sura Fend near Ludd
14 April 1918 - Kantara
1 May 1918 - Sailed Alexandria, Egypt
7 May 1918 - Arrived Marseilles, France
11 May 1918 - Foret L'Abbaye
22 May 1918 - Buneville
25 May 1918 - Izel-les-Hameau
25 June 1918 - Enquin les Mines
10 July 1918 - Ham in Artois
11 July 1918 - La Pierriere
23 July 1918 - La Miquellerie
4-24 August 1918 - Operations in Merville Sector (Collone St Floris, St

Venant)
24 August 1918 - La Pierriere
26 August 1918 - Cotes
29 August 1918 - Entrained at Lille and arrived Heilly (near Amiens)
31 August 1918 - Maricourt
1-24 September 1918 - Advanced towards the Hindenburg Line
25 September 1918 - Aubigny (Villers Bretonneaux)
27 September 1918 - Heilly
28 September 1918 - Allouayne
1 October 1918 - Basse Rue
8 October 1918 - Lattre
11 October 1918 - Near Sainghin
13 October 1918 - Fournes
16 October 1918 - Quinquibus Farm
18 October 1918 - Wattignies
19 October 1918 Engrain
20 October 1918 - Baisieux
25 October 1918 - Orcq
29 October 1918 - Marquain
30 October 1918 - Hertain
8 November 1918 - Faubourg-de-Lille
9 November 1918 - Entry into Tournai
11 November 1918 - Hostilities Ceased (moved to Montreuil-au-Bois)
12 November 1918 - Escalette
14 November 1918 - Herquecies
18 November 1918 - Barry
7 December 1918 - Visit of H.M The King
15 December 1918 - Fresnes
17 December 1918 - Thollembeek and Vollezeel, Belgium
26 January 1919 - Review at Brussels, Belgium by H.M The King of
Belgiums
27 February 1919 - Grammont
17 June 1919 - Consecration of colours at Canterbury
21 June 1919 - Colour handed for safe custody to the Dean and Chapter of
Canterbury
21 June 1919 - 10th (Yeomanry) Battalion, The Buffs **DISBANDED**



"Yeoman Service"

By Lt Col Franklin Lushington

(Published by The Medici Society Limited, London 1947)

1/1st Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles

The commanding officer in 1908 was Colonel Lord Harris GCSI, GCIE, TD, ADC. In 1909 Colonel E Frewen took over command. The Adjutant was Captain F.J Dupre. The yeomanry battalions were originally formed to supplement the regular cavalry divisions but in most cases they were dismounted and served as infantry.

The REKMR which formed part of the **South East Mounted Brigade**, was commanded by **Lieutenant Colonel The Earl of Guildford** when orders to mobilize were received on 4 August 1914, and to concentrate in the Broad Oak area of Canterbury. **Vicount Milner** (the Secretary of State for War) resided at **Sturry Court, Broad Oak, near Canterbury, Kent**. Vicount Milner (1st Earl Milner) bought the house in 1906. Milner agreed to turn the house and grounds over to the 1/1st Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles for military purposes. In 1916 Earl Milner took over as Secretary of State for War from Lord Derby. In 1921 Earl Milner married Violet Maxe widow of Lord Edward Gascoyne-Cecil, and mother of George Cecil. After Milne's death in 1929 Sturry House was used extensively by King's School, Canterbury.

On the outbreak of war the sole equipment of the Mounted Rifles consisted saddles, rifles, and two machine guns. Horses started to arrive in the middle of August, but it was not until October 1914 that the Regiment was fully equipt with weapons and transport. By this time many men had left the 1/1st Regiment to form the Second Line 2/1st Regiment and to take up commissions. In the beginning of 1915 the Regiment moved from Sturry House to the **Polo Ground at nearby Canterbury**. It remained at the Polo Ground until 22 September 1915. On that date the Regiment (513 strong) entrained at Canterbury for Liverpool, embarking on the "Olympic" on 23 September 1915, for an unknown destination. The secret destination turned out to be Lemnos via Alexandria, Egypt where the Regiment was to prepare for field deployment on the Gallipoli Peninsular. Three days after the Regiment arrived at Lemnos, it was transhipped and landed on the Gallipoli Peninsular at Cape Helles where it was continuously in action from October 1915 to January 1916 when the Regiment was evacuated (alongside all remaining British and Imperial forces). On 11 February 1916 the Regiment was at Sidi Bishr in Egypt. From the day the Regiment had left Canterbury it had been dismounted and was tasked with fighting as a traditional infantry Regiment. Once back in Egypt after the Gallipoli fiasco hopes were running high that the Regiment would be re-mounted. It was a very bitter dissapointment

therefore to all ranks to learn that the **South East Mounted Brigade** was to be amalgamated with the Eastern Mounted Brigade (Norfolk Yeomanry, Suffolk Yeomanry and Welsh Horse) to form a new dis-mounted Brigade - **3rd Dismounted Yeomanry Brigade!**

It was about this time that the Regiment suffered the loss of Lieutenant Colonel. The Earl Guildford who was evacuated to the UK suffering from disease. Command of the Regiment was given to **Lieutenant Colonel O. Moseley-Leigh**. After service in the Suez Canal Zone, the Regiment moved to Sollum on the Western border of Egypt in July 1916. Shortly after this move the three squadrons were formed into two companies of dis-mounted infantry -

1 Company

Chatham Troop (Formerly West Kent Yeomanry)
Dover Troop (Formerly REKMR)
Gillingham Troop (Formerly West Kent Yeomanry)
Rochester Troop (Formerly West Kent Yeomanry)
Thanet Troop (Formerly REKMR)
Waldershare Troop (Formerly REKMR)

2 Company

Ashford Troop ((Formerly REKMR)
Canterbury Troop (Formerly REKMR)
Faversham Troop (Formerly West Kent Yeomanry)
Folkestone Troop (Formerly REKMR)
London Troop (Formerly REKMR)

In the beginning of 1917 the REKMR with the [West Kent Yeomanry](#) was formed into the [10th \(Yeomanry\) Battalion, The Buffs \(East Kent Regiment\)](#). The Buffs unit became part of the **74th (Yeomanry) Division** on 21 March 1917. The new Buffs battalion left Sollum Egypt 23 March 1917 travelling by sea to Alexandria where it disembarked for Sidi Bishr. Early in April 1917, the Regiment left Egypt for Palestine, marching via Kantara, Sheik Zawieh, and Belah to the vicinity of Gaza. The **74th (Yeomanry) Division** was placed in Reserve for the **Second Battle of Gaza**.

From April 1917 to October 1917, the Battalion had a strenuous time with little fighting, but much digging and even greater discomfort. Wadi Ghuzzi, Wadi Nukabir, Wadi Levi, Tel-el-Fara and Khan Yunis are names which the Yeoman of 1917 will never forget. They will always bring back memories of intense heat by day, extreme cold by night, shortage of clean water, and a superabundance of dust, flies and every form of torment!

At the end of October 1917 the Battalion took part in the **Battle of Beersheba**, after which it was withdrawn to Karem for rest and re-equipment. Then began the job of pushing "Jonny Turk" northward through the Plain of Sharon, Esdud, Hamsukerieh, Kutrah, Latron and Beit Nuba. On 7 December 1917 the Battalion reached Kubeibeh and took part in the **Battle of Jerusalem** which was finally captured on 9 December 1917. Northwards again towards Beit Manana and onto Ramillah after which the Battalion was withdrawn to Moiya Wadi near Bethlehem where it spent Christmas 1917. Christmas parcels from home didn't arrive until the following February (1918)!

During the early part of 1918 the Battalion was employed on road making, a strenuous and back-breaking job in such intense heat. In March 1918 the Battalion went back into the line to relieve the **231st Brigade** in front of Yebrouk. The following day the Battalion attacked and captured the town of Yebrouk and advanced to a high ridge over-looking the Nablus Road. Pushing on, Et Tell was reached, after which the battalion was withdrawn to Reserve. This was the last action the 10th Buffs took part in in the Palastine theatre. On 13 April 1918 the Battalion marched to railhead at Ludd where it entrained for Kantarah via Gaza. From Gaza the Battalion marched to Alexandria, Egypt where it embarked on the P&O liner "SS Malwa" for France and the Western Front. They reached Marseilles France 6 May 1918.





2/1st Queen's Own (West Kent Yeomanry) (2nd Line Territorial Force)

Lt Col Lord Hythe (Commanding Officer) Lt Col R.B Pott. (1917)

Colonel F.S.W Cornwallis (Second in Command)

Major Cordy Simpson (1917)

Lt Col O Moseley Leigh (Adjutant)

Lieutenant A.W Way (Quartermaster) (30 years with regiment) (former RQMS)

Colonel F.S.W Cornwallis (A Squadron Leader)

Major E.J Mills DSO (B Squadron Leader)

Major E.J Davison (C Squadron Leader)

The 2/1st Regiment (2nd line Yeomanry) was formed at the end of August 1914 by Lieutenant Colonel Lord Hythe TD, and in a response by him in the press, 300 recruits were immediately obtained. Many of them had been in service in other wars most notably the 2nd South African (Boer) War of 1899-1902. Training was carried out at Maidstone under the difficult circumstances, such as lack of uniforms, arms and equipment. At the beginning of September 1914 a large draft of men were sent to the 1/1st West Kent Yeomanry and the second line regiment quickly replaced them with new recruits drawn locally from all areas of Kent. In January 1915 the 2/1st Regiment moved to Hounslow Barracks, Middlesex where it was fully equipped and mounted. The Regiment spent the next few months training in Richmond Park and adjacent areas. In June 1915 the regiment left Hounslow for Maresfield in Sussex where it took over horses of the Canadian Dragoons and Strathcona's Horse. In July 1915 it moved to Wrotham in Kent. where it spent time digging trenches alongside volunteers from the Volunteer Training Corps (Kent Volunteer Fencibles). These trench fortifications were constructed as part of the London defences. The high ground above Wrotham was chosen because it could be defended easily. In October 1915 the regiment went into hutments at Westbere near Canterbury where it remained until July 1916. During its time at Westbere the regiment sent numerous drafts to the first line regiment (1/1st). A draft of 27 men were sent to Salonika (Greece) in the Autumn of 1915. As time went on it was decided that the regiment would not leave the UK and that it would be used for home defence purposes only. This came as a huge disappointment to the men who were looking forward to fighting as a unit abroad. In October 1916 the regiment was told to hand its horses to the Dorset Yeomanry and to change to a Bicycle unit! In November 1916 two drafts totalling 237 men were sent to the 7th Royal West Kent Regiment in France. The regiment's end came at the end of 1916 when the remains of the regiment were amalgamated with the 2/1st Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles. The two yeomanry regiments were re-designated the **9th Yeomanry Cyclist Regiment**. This change was not welcomed by anyone. The 9th Yeomanry Cyclist Regiment had its headquarters at Woodbridge in Essex. Its main purpose was to contribute towards the defence of the East Coast (Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk). In

April 1917 the amalgamation was quashed and the 2/1st West Kent Yeomanry reformed under the command of Lt Col R.B Pott. The regiment's second in command was Major Cordy Simpson. Both these officers had been invalided home from the first line (1/1st). In the meantime, numbers were made up by the inclusion of what remained of the 3/1st line regiment which had been disbanded. In April 1918 the regiment moved to Dublin Ireland where it was entrusted with the defence of Dublin Castle. In July 1918 it moved to Claremorris County Mayo and in March 1918 it was moved to Renmore Barracks County Galway. It remained in Renmore Barracks for the remaining duration of the war.

The following former members of the 2/1st West Kent Yeomanry are reported as being killed in action with other units (**note - this list is vastly incomplete**) -

Lt Bonham-Carter (Grenadier Guards)

Lt R Field (10th Hussars)

Royal West Kent Regiment

Sgt E.J Coombes

L/Cpl R.W Cutbush

R.H Fisher

A.T Francis

Lt B Fuller

J.C Graham

A.E Hills

H.E Humphrey

C Oxley

F Pankhurst

F.K Stonham

W Triplow

Sgt F Wood

Captain S Skelton (killed in Mesopotamia with 1/5th Buffs)





3/1st Queen's Own (West Kent Yeomanry) (3rd Line Territorial Force)

Colonel Lord Henry Nevill and Major C Leveson Gower (Commanding Officers)

The 3/1st regiment was formed at the end of 1914 as a draft finding depot unit. It was based at Maidstone during August and September 1914. In June 1915 the regiment moved to Canterbury and was attached to 3rd and 6th Dragoon Guards. The three units formed the **3rd Reserve Cavalry Squadron** at Canterbury. In May 1916 the regiment moved to Crowborough in Sussex and in July 1916 was moved to St John's Common (?). In November 1916 the regiment found itself at Southborough near Tunbridge Wells in Kent. In January 1916 the regiment sent a draft of 78 men to the first line (1/1st) in Egypt. In the first half of 1916 it is recorded that the 3/1st found 560 drafts for various units in France. A large proportion of these men went to the 13th Middlesex Regiment. In February 1917 the regiment was disbanded and all remaining personnel went to the second line (2/1st) West Kent Yeomanry (that had been saved).

The following former members of the 3/1st West Kent Yeomanry are reported as being killed in action with other units (**note - this list is vastly incomplete**) -

13th Middlesex Regiment

F.G Bubb
R.H Budgen
G.T Clark
A.J Coulter
T Darby
G.F Dowling
A.E Ellis
A.E Fermor
C Gilbert
E.A Glover
T.W Hopkins (Ashford)
S Ingram
A Latter
J Leary
M.L Lemon
E.T Lower
H Noakes
F.L Smith

P.C Smith
H.J Taunt (Tenterden)
J.S Turner
S.Y Wonnacott
G Wood
E Saunders (7th West Kent's)
H.S Shearing (24th R. Fusiliers)
Lt. L.B Stansell MM (Royal West Kent's)

