

# 31st Infantry Division and The East Yorkshire Regiment, 1914-1918

## Introduction

While reading *The Trench - The Full Story of the 1st Hull Pals* by David Bilton, the interest arose to know more about the *31st Division* and The East Yorkshire Regiment - organisation, uniforms, markings etc. and the following is what my immediately available sources offer.

## Organization per 1 July 1916

### 92nd Brigade

10th Bn. The East Yorkshire Regiment (1st Hull)  
11th Bn. The East Yorkshire Regiment (2nd Hull)  
12th Bn. The East Yorkshire Regiment (3rd Hull)  
13th Bn. The East Yorkshire Regiment (4th Hull)  
92nd Brigade Machine Gun Company  
92nd Brigade Trench Mortar Battery

### 94th Brigade

11th Bn. The East Lancashire Regiment (Accrington)  
12th Bn. The York and Lancaster Regiment (Sheffield)  
13th Bn. The York and Lancaster Regiment (1st Barnsley)  
14th Bn. The York and Lancaster Regiment (2nd Barnsley)  
94th Brigade Machine Gun Company  
94th Brigade Trench Mortar Battery

**Divisional Train, Army Service Corps 2)** [221st](#)  
Company  
222nd Company  
223rd Company  
279th Company

### Royal Engineers

210th Field Company (Leeds)  
211th Field Company (Leeds)  
223rd Field Company (Leeds)  
31st Divisional Signal Company

### 93rd Brigade

15th Bn. The Prince of Wales's Own (1st Leeds)  
16th Bn. The Prince of Wales's Own (1st Bradford)  
18th Bn. The Prince of Wales's Own (2nd Bradford)  
18th Bn. The Durham Light Infantry (1st County)  
93rd Brigade Machine Gun Company  
93rd Brigade Trench Mortar Battery

### Royal Field Artillery 1) [\\_\\_](#)

165th (2nd County Palatine) Brigade  
169th (2nd County Palatine) Brigade  
170th (2nd County Palatine) Brigade  
171st (2nd County Palatine) Howitzer Brigade  
31st Divisional Ammunition Column

### Royal Army Medical Corps

93rd Field Ambulance  
94th Field Ambulance  
95th Field Ambulance

### Army Veterinary Corps

41st Mobile Veterinary Section

### Pioneer Battalion

12th Bn. The King's Own (Yorkshire Light Infantry) (miners)

Further information about the division's units as well as changes in the organization can be found, for example, on the website *The Long, Long Trail - The Story of the British Army in the Great War of 1914-1918: 31st Division*. ([www.longlongtrail.co.uk](http://www.longlongtrail.co.uk))

# Division Marks



*Division badge for July 1917.*  
From Source 4.



*Division brand units from York.*  
From Source 4.



*Division brand units from Lancaster.*  
Produced on the basis of Source 4.

The geometric divisional mark, the symbolism of which is unknown, was replaced in July 1917 by a mark alluding to the division's geographical affiliation - namely the white and red rose, symbolizing the counties of York and Lancaster.

The brand was available in two versions, which differed by which rose was at the top. Units from York as well as divisional units, except the divisional artillery, wore the white rose at the top, while units from Lancaster as well as the divisional artillery wore the red rose at the top.

## Brigade and battalion marking

31 <sup>st</sup> Division		
92 <sup>nd</sup> Brigade	93 <sup>rd</sup> Brigade	94 <sup>th</sup> Brigade
<b>Divisional Pioneer Battalion</b>		

In line with the other English divisions, *the 31st Division* also established a system of marks by which the individual units could be recognized without the enemy immediately having the same opportunity.

The brigade badges were typically worn on the headgear and on the uniform jacket.

On troop helmets the marks were made of fabric, while on steel helmets marks were painted on; if the helmet was fitted with a cover (often made from sandbags or, in the case of some officers, a specially tailored version) a fabric badge was used, worn either on the front or on the side. Available imagery does not suggest what was customary in the division or its divisions.



Soldier from 18th Bn.  
The Prince of Wales's Own (West  
Yorkshire Regiment) (2nd Bradford  
Pals), 93rd Brigade, 31st  
Division, Egypt,  
1915.

From Source 4.

The individual battalions were identified by different cloth badges - brigade badge and battalion badge, which were most often worn on the back, just below the collar, and as shoulder badges. The badges showed the battalion number within the brigade.

Since we are talking about English soldiers, there are of course countless varieties of marks and ways of wearing them, which reflect the distinctive character of the individual unit, so that the way mentioned reflects the idea of the system.

The plan has been produced on the basis of information in Source 4.

The soldier wears the brigade badge on the helmet and on the back, just below the collar. On the shoulder are worn the three horizontal red bars identifying the unit as the brigade's third battalion.

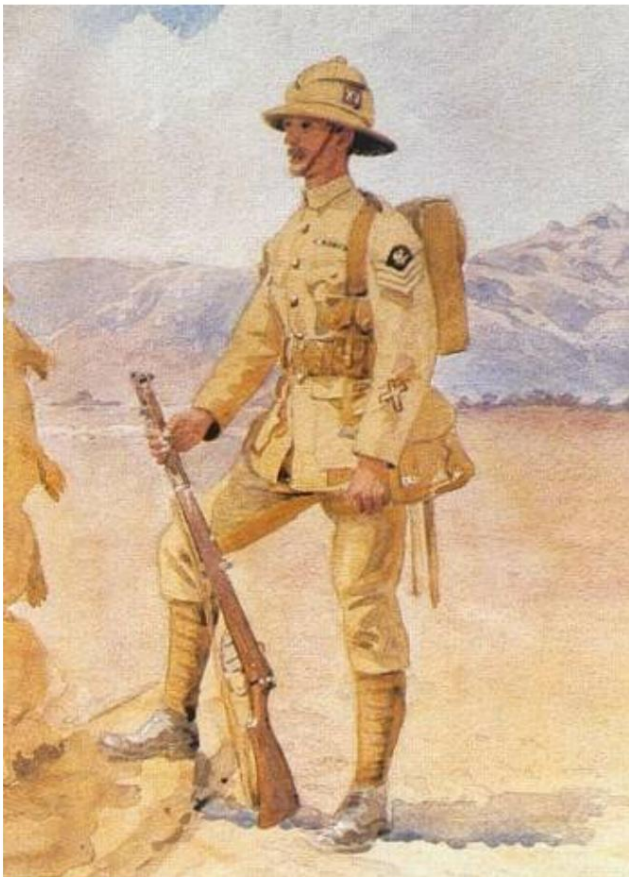
In addition, the regimental badge (brass) is worn on the shoulder pads.

## East Yorkshire Regiment



*East Yorkshire Regiment, 1914-1920.*

Extract of uniform planche drawn by Richard Simkin. From Source 6.



*East Yorkshire Regiment, 1920s.*

Uniform planche drawn by M. Tipping. From Source 6.



*Regimental Badge,  
The East Yorkshire Regiment.*

According to Source 6.

The regiment's two regular battalions served in Egypt, India, Iraq, China, Palestine and Turkey in the interwar period.

The uniform itself also gives an impression of how *the 10th (Service) Battalion (1st Hull Pals), East Yorkshire Regiment* fared when in Egypt in 1915-1916.

The badge on the soldier's troop helmet is the regimental number, on a black background.

## Sources

1. *Kitchener's Army* by Ray Westlake, Spellmount, Staplehurst/Kent 1998, ISBN 1-873376-98-7.
2. *History of the Royal Regiment of Artillery - Western Front, 1914-18* by Sir Martin Farndale, Royal Artillery Institution, London 1986, ISBN 1-870114-00-0.
3. *Army Service Corps 1902-1918* by Michael Young, Pen & Sword Books, Leo Cooper, Barnsley/South Yorkshire 2000, ISBN 085052-730-9.
4. *British Battle Insignia (I): 1914-18* by Mike Chappel, Osprey Men-at-Arms 182, London 1986, ISBN 0-85045-727-0.
5. *Divisional and Other Signs* by Vincent Wheeler-Holohan, Naval & Military Press, London 2001 (reprint of 1920), ISBN 1-84342-095-3.
6. *The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire 1881-2000* The journal Regiment Nr. 45, 2000, ISSN 00819-8277.

Per Finsted

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## Notes

1) The division's original artillery units *168th (Huddersfield) - 155th (West Yorkshire), 161st (Yorkshire), 164th* 1) The division did not go with them to Egypt. The artillery divisions were transferred to *(Rotherham)* and *the 32nd Division* this division to France. (Source 2)

2) The division's original three companies remained in Egypt, where they formed part of the *52nd (Lowland) Division*. A new training battalion was raised in France by units from the *32nd Division (221st - 223rd Company)* and *11th Division (279th Company)*. (Source 3)