

About the divisional artillery in 1 and 2nd London Division, Territorial Force, 1914-1915

Introduction

The extensive restructuring that the British Army's volunteer reserve units underwent in connection with the establishment of the Territorial Force per 1 April 1908 is i.a. referred to in my articles On The London Regiment, Territorial Force, 1914 and On 24th County of London) Bn. The London Regiment (The Queen's), 1914-1918.

The change also included artillery units, which must be discussed here with reference to the two infantry divisions that were based in London. One of the purposes of the restructuring was, already in peacetime, to create a fixed structure for the voluntary units, so that the organizational units were present in the right amount and in relation to each other.

The main emphasis in the description is on the 47th (2nd London) Division, which was the first of the divisions to enter battle as a unified unit.

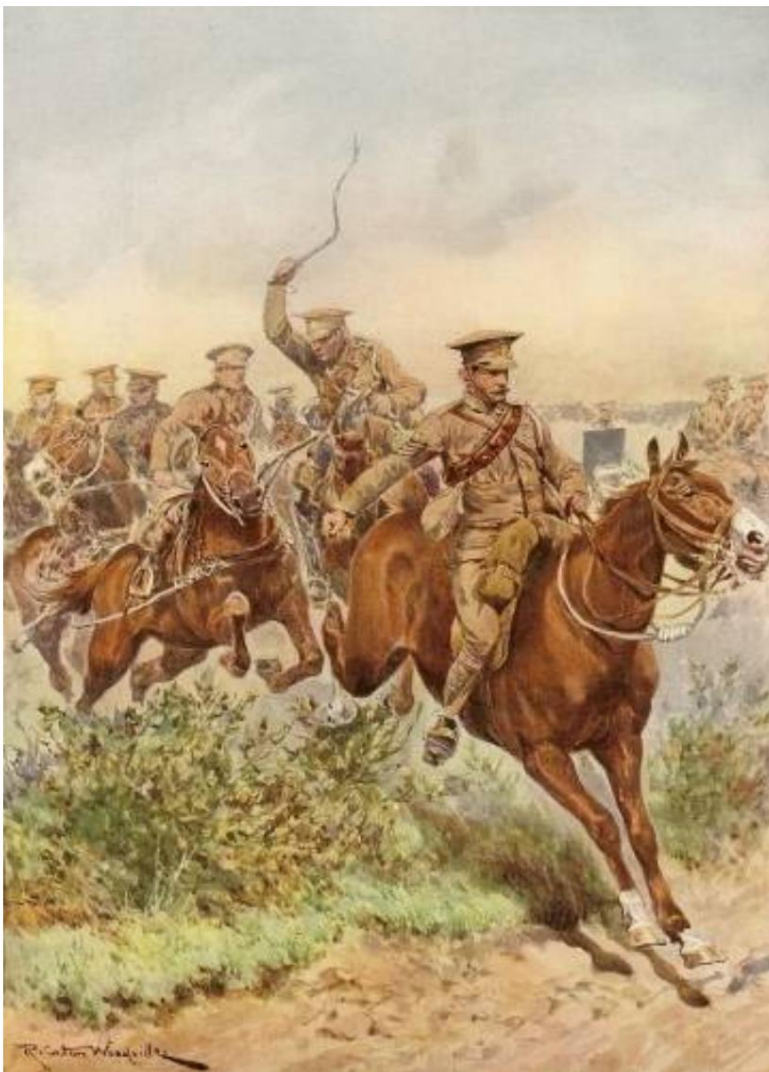
Royal Artillery, 1st London Division

Designation before 1 April 1908 (Volunteers)

1st City of London Royal Garrison Artillery (Volunteers)
3rd Kent Royal Garrison Artillery (Volunteers)
2nd Middlesex Royal Garrison Artillery (Volunteers)
2nd Kent Royal Garrison Artillery (Volunteers)
1st London Engineers (Volunteers)

Designation after 1 April 1908 (Territorial Force) (TF)

1st London (City of London) Brigade, Royal Field Artillery
2nd London Brigade, Royal Field Artillery ((RFA)
3rd London Brigade, Royal Field Artillery
4th London Howitzer Brigade, Royal Field Artillery
1st London Heavy Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery (RGA)



Royal Field Artillery, Territorial Force, c. 1911.

After drawing by Richard Caton Woodville.

The reproduction originates from a plate,

1st London (City of London) Brigade, RFA (TF)

- 1st (City of London) Battery
- 2nd (City of London) Battery
- 3rd (City of London) Battery
- 1st London (City of London) Brigade Ammunition Column

2nd London Brigade, RFA (TF)

- 4th (County of London) Battery
- 5th (County of London) Battery
- 6th (County of London) Battery
- 2nd London Brigade Ammunition Column

3rd London Brigade, RFA (TF)

- 7th (County of London) Battery

- 8th (County of London) Battery 9th
- (County of London) Battery 3rd
- London Brigade Ammunition Column

4th London Howitzer Brigade, RFA (TF)

- 10th (County of London) Howitzer Battery 11th
- (County of London) Howitzer Battery 4th
- London Brigade Ammunition Column.

1st London Heavy Battery, RGA (TF)

As an administrative measure, the 1st and Brigade, 2nd London Heavy Battery [1](#)) merged into London Heavy Royal Garrison Artillery, which in peacetime belonged to the 1st London Division. During the mobilization, the batteries were included in the respective divisions.

Royal Artillery (Territorial Force), 2nd London Division

Designation before 1 May 1908 (Volunteers)

3rd Middlesex Royal Garrison Artillery (Volunteers) 5th London Brigade, Royal Field Artillery

1st City of London Royal Garrison Artillery
(Volunteers)

1st City of London Royal Garrison Artillery
(Volunteers)

2nd Kent Royal Garrison Artillery (Volunteers)

1st London Engineers (Volunteers)

Designation after 1 May 1908 (Territorial Force)

6th London Brigade, Royal Field Artillery

7th London Brigade, Royal Field Artillery

8th London Howitzer Brigade, Royal Field
Artillery

2nd London Heavy Battery, Royal Garrison
Artillery



Royal Field Artillery, Howitzer Battery, Territorial Force, c. 1911.
After drawing by Richard Caton Woodville.
From Source 1.

5th London Brigade, RFA (TF)

- 12th (County of London) Battery
- 13th (County of London) Battery
- 14th (County of London) Battery
- 5th London Brigade Ammunition Column

6th London Brigade, RFA (TF)

- 15th (County of London) Battery
- 16th (County of London) Battery
- 17th (County of London) Battery
- 6th London Brigade Ammunition Column

7th London Brigade, RFA (TF)

- 18th (County of London) Battery

- 19th (County of London) Battery
- 20th (County of London) Battery
- 7th London Brigade Ammunition Column

8th London Howitzer Brigade, RFA (TF)

- 21st (County of London) Howitzer Battery
- 22nd (County of London) Howitzer Battery
- 8th London Brigade Ammunition Column.

2nd London Heavy Battery, RGA (TF)

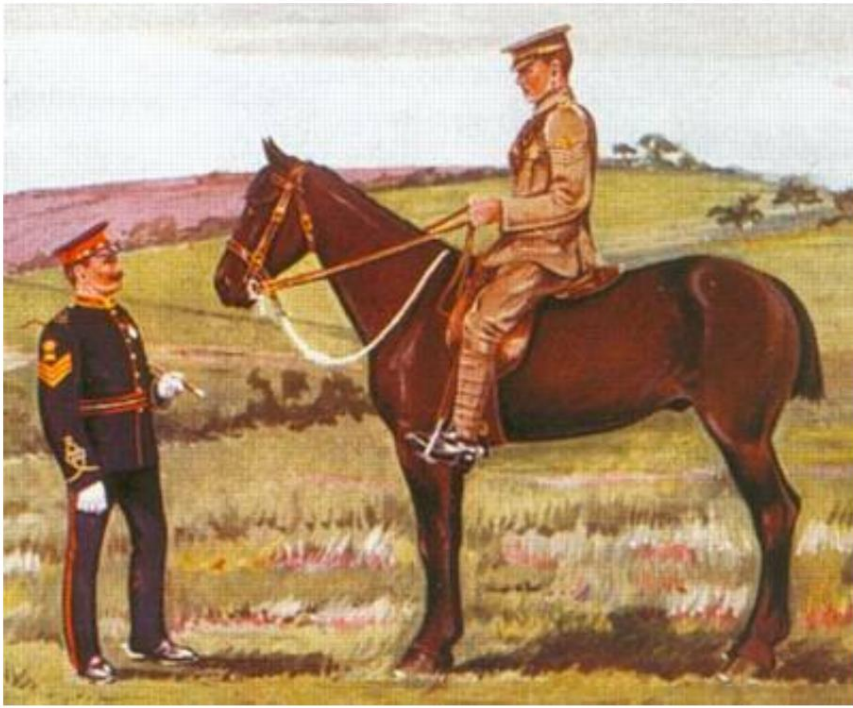


5th London Brigade, Royal Field Artillery, TF.
From Source 6.

Uniforms

In terms of uniform, the London artillerymen were distinguished from regular army artillery units only by a regimental badge with other inscriptions.

Volunteer units only came to wear the same badges of honor as the regular army after the First World War. Therefore, the universal *battle order* UBIQUE (*Everywhere*) was replaced by the unit's number, and the motto QUO FAS ET GLORIA DUCUNT (*Wherever right and honor lead us*) was replaced by the unit's name.



7th (County of London) Brigade, Royal Field Artillery, Territorial Force.
From Source 6.

The figure on foot depicts a *Battery Sergeant-Major* in exit uniform. Immediately above the three angles is a cannon (as in the regimental badge) and a crown. From 1915, the cannon and crown were replaced by a slightly larger crown.

The mounted sergeant in field uniform carries a flaming grenade above his angles.

A small staff of professional soldiers was attached to each of the volunteer units - 1 officer (the adjutant) and a number of non-commissioned officers (instructors). In the next picture, the adjutant (captain) can be seen surrounded by the permanent non-commissioned officers.



The permanent staff from one of the two volunteer artillery divisions in London, approx. 1911.
From Source 10.

The non-commissioned officer on the left in the picture is the highest-ranking of the permanent non-commissioned officers - *Acting Sergeant Major* - seen on the left of the picture.

On the forearm he leads four angles, with the point upwards; in addition, a cannon and a crown are carried.

The cannon is of the type *BLC 15-pdr Field Gun*.

The pamphlets

The field artillery batteries in the regular army were from 1904 equipped with 18-pdr field guns or 4.5" howitzers, but before the war there were neither sufficient pamphlets nor the means to provide such, so that the batteries in the Territorial Force could also be similarly equipped .

The volunteer batteries instead had to make do with a modernization (conversion) of an older 15-pdr field gun as well as the phased-out 5" howitzer. Some batteries had their pamphlets replaced before coming to the front, while others - for example the divisional artillery in the 2nd London Division [from 11 May 1915 47th (London) Division] - were sent to the front with the older types. It was not until November 1915 that the older pamphlets were replaced by the latest model. Similarly, the heavy batteries of the Territorial Force were equipped with 4.7 " field gun, while the regular army used the 60-pdr field gun. During the war, most of the heavy guns were also replaced by older models.

Apart from a number of pamphlets for educational purposes, they were not issued to the units in peacetime, but remained in storage. It was thus, in principle, only during the annual remaining exercise (*camp*) of 14 days' duration that the soldiers really had the opportunity to experience their equipment in full operation.



BLC 15-pdr Field Gun, 1914.

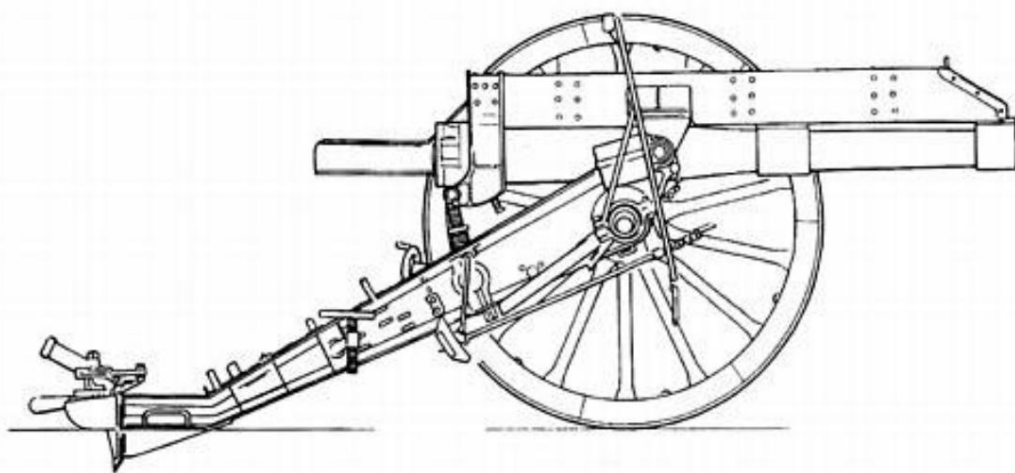
From a simultaneous postcard.

BLC 15-pdr Field Gun

The pamphlet was a conversion, hence the C in the designation, of an older 15-pdr field gun.

The firing range of the pamphlet was approx. 5 km.

Behind the somewhat peculiar-looking tube, above the barrel, is the recoil brake.



Carriage - BLC 15-pdr Field Gun Mk. 1.
From Source 7.

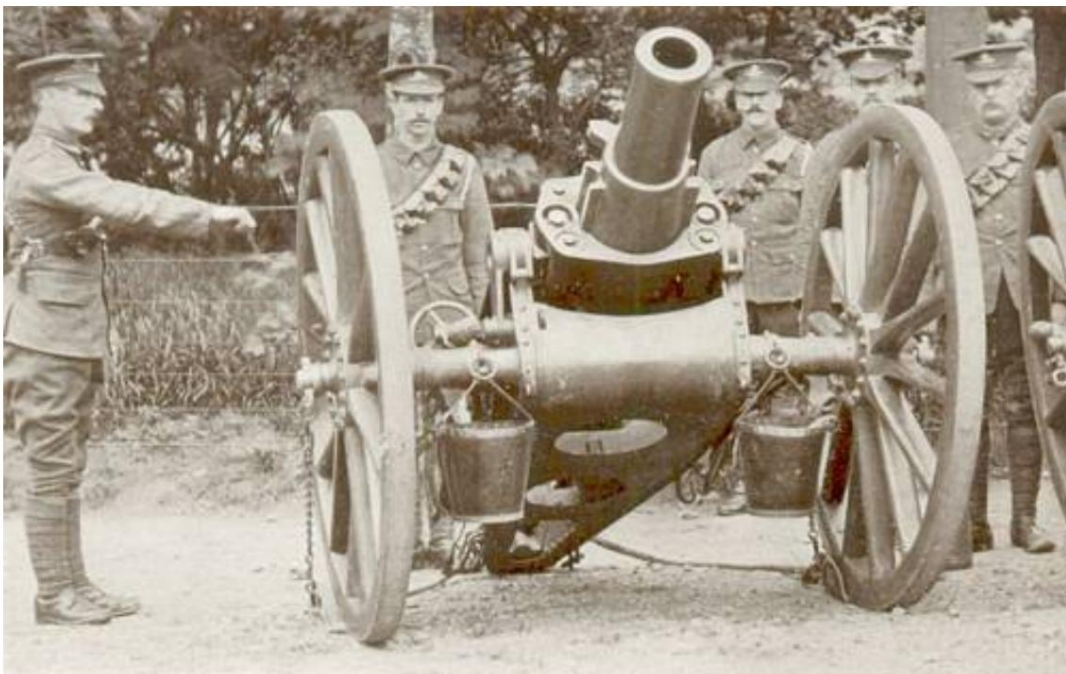
Example

The batteries in the 5th, 6th and 7th (London) Brigade, RFA, were each equipped with 4 pcs. 15-pdr field gun (76.2 mm).



BLC 15-pdr Field Gun, approx. 1914.

From a simultaneous postcard.

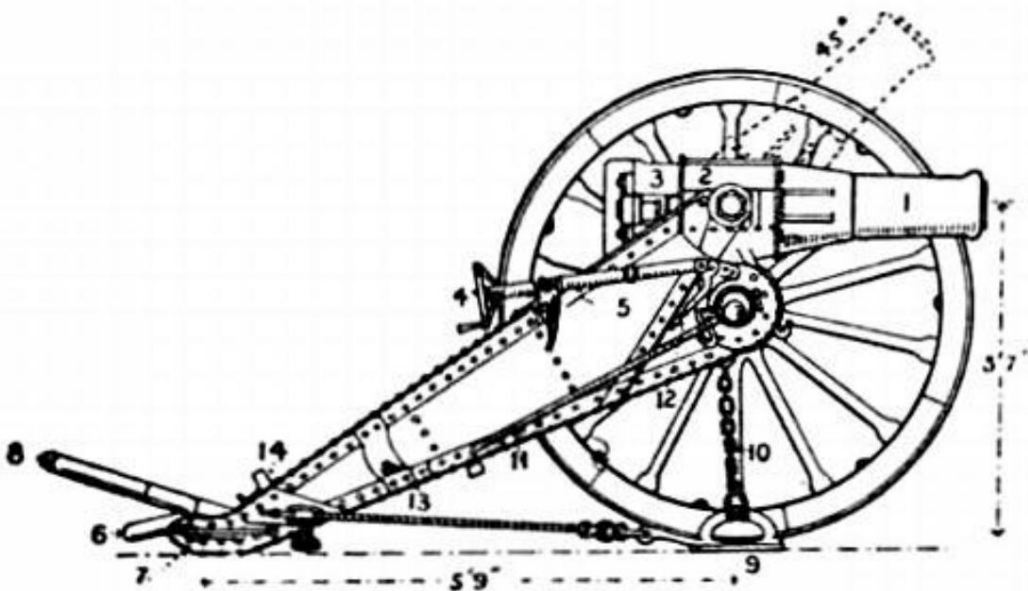


BL 5-inch Field Howitzer in Action, approx. 1910.
From Source 8.

BL 5-inch Field Howitzer

The pamphlet was used in the regular army howitzer batteries from 1896 to 1908, after which it passed to the Territorial Force.

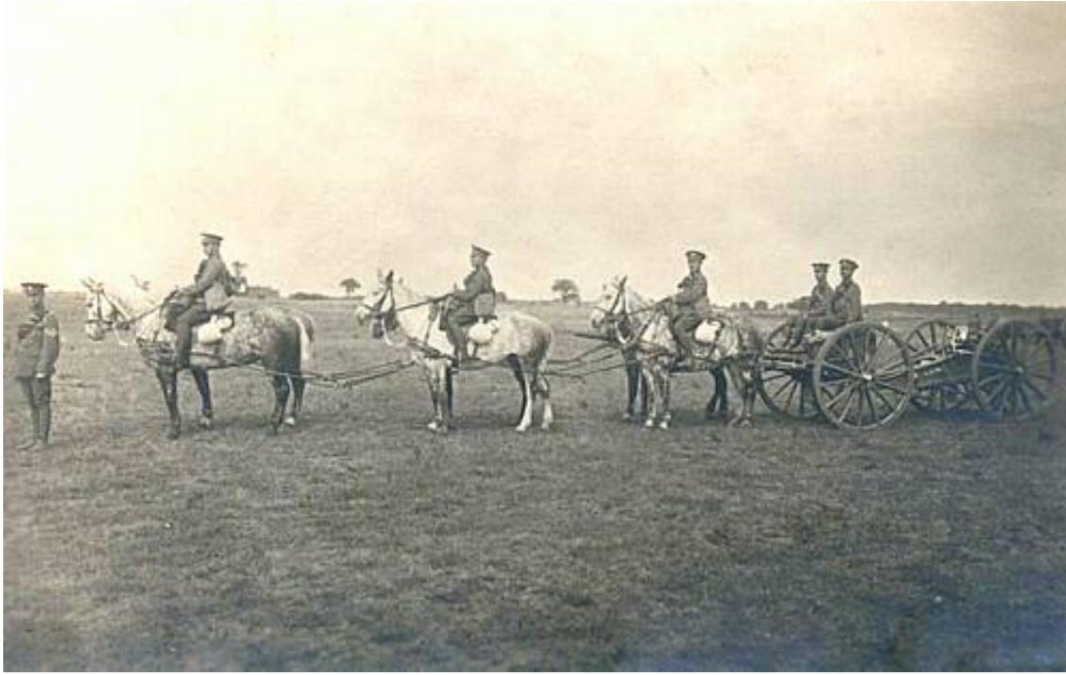
The firing range of the pamphlet was approx. 4 km.



BL 5-inch Field Howitzer.
From Source 8.

Example

Each battery in the 8th (London) Howitzer Brigade, Royal Field Artillery, was equipped with 4 pcs. 5" howitzer (127mm).



BL 5-inch Field Howitzer, approx. 1910.

From a simultaneous postcard.



Ammunition wagon, approx. 1914.

From a simultaneous postcard.

The ammunition columns

The task of the ammunition columns was to:

1. Supply the division's batteries 2.

Supply the four infantry battalions of the infantry brigade to which the division was attached small arms ammunition.

However, the ammunition column in the howitzer section of the divisional artillery had only the first task.

Materielnorm, Brigade Ammunition Column, Territorial Force, approx. 1914 Ammunition

for the division's three batteries

- 12 pcs. ammunition wagons (each drawn by 4 horses)

Small arms ammunition for four
infantry battalions

- 9 pcs. wooden wagons (each drawn by 4 horses)
- 7 pcs. small arms ammunition carts (each drawn by 2 horses)



Trained by an artillery unit, lined up with printed vehicles, approx. 1914.

From a simultaneous postcard.

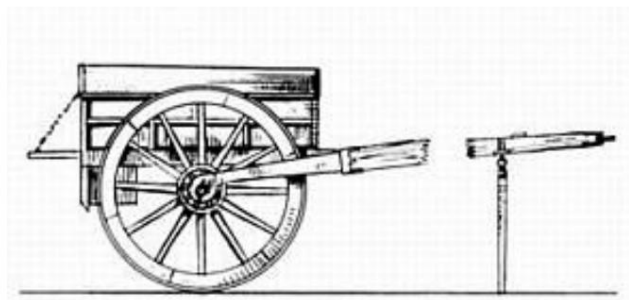
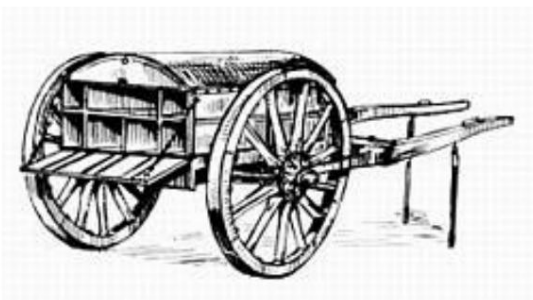
Added to this was the ammunition column's own supply and baggage train.

The ammunition columns in the Territorial Force had to match the materiel norm with printed vehicles on mobilization. The result was therefore often a collection of many different types, painted in all the colors of the rainbow.

However, the unit in the photograph seems to have been somewhat luckier than average and the carriages here present a fairly uniform impression, although the carriages may not be quite as neat as actual train carriages 2).

Small Arms Ammunition Carts

The small arms ammunition cart was introduced around 1880 and was then pulled by only one horse.



Carts, Small-arms Ammunition, Mk I.



Training units from the 7th Division on the square in Thielt, 12 October 1914 4). —

The Mk III version, which appeared in 1903, on the other hand, was pulled by 2 horses. Gradually, this special vehicle was replaced by wagons of the type *General Service Limbered Wagon* 3), which could solve several different tasks. —

The vehicle on the left of the picture is a small arms ammunition cart - *Cart, Small-arms Ammunition, Mk III*.

Photographs of ammunition carts are extremely rare. The one shown here probably belongs to the 2nd Bn. Gordon Highlanders, which was then the only Highlander battalion in the 7th Division.

Mobilization

The units' strength targets for the mobilization were in principle thus 5): —

Cannon Division The divisional staff consisted of 3 officers and 24 non-commissioned officers and privates.

The three gun batteries each numbered 5 officers as well as 140 non-commissioned officers and privates.

An ammunition column numbered 5 officers as well as 153 non-commissioned officers and privates.

Howitzer Division The divisional staff consisted of 3 officers and 24 non-commissioned officers and privates.

The three howitzer batteries each numbered 5 officers as well as 133 non-commissioned officers and privates.

An ammunition column numbered 3 officers as well as 83 non-commissioned officers and privates

Heavy battery

The battery consisted of 6 officers and 208 non-commissioned officers and privates, of which 1 officer and 48 men belonged to the battery's own ammunition column.



6th (County of London) Brigade, RFA, marching through Hemel Hempstead, c. 1914.
From Source 2.

Source 2 describes in detail the mobilization of the divisional artillery in the 2nd London Division.

On Sunday 16th August 1914, a bitterly hot day, the detachments marched to Hemel Hempstead, approx. 45 km north-east of London - something of an ordeal for the still unhardened soldiers.



Territorials - Unloading bread, circa 1914.
From a simultaneous postcard.

The rendering is here to serve as an example of a civilian vehicle, issued for military service.

However, the scene most likely depicts a civilian baker delivering bread, during peacetime training at the Territorial Force.

The soldiers on the left and right are wearing sleeve badges from the pioneer division of a light infantry battalion.



Horse Lines, B Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, 11 September 1906.

From a simultaneous postcard.

Various repair commissions were responsible for providing the approx. 700 riding and draft horses to be used in each department.

It was then up to the units to train and cooperate with the horses in buckets, so that they could pull cannons as well as various wagons.

Correspondingly, saddlery and harness for the horses also had to be printed; here, too, the result was quite varied.

Education

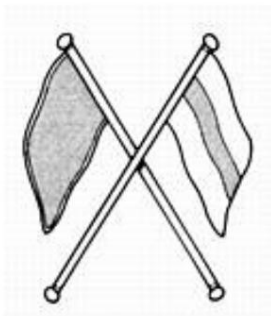
After being quartered in the area around Hemel Hempstead, they got down to training the soldiers in earnest.

In addition to the purely artillery technical skills that the majority had to master, a number were selected for a no less important discipline, namely signal service.



*Signal Team of the Wiltshire Royal Field
Artillery, Territorial Force, Traws-fynydd (Wales), July 1913 6).*

The three soldiers wear on their left forearm the function marking for signalmen 7), two crossed signal flags - one blue and one white, with a light blue cross.





Field cable trolley, approx. 1911.

From a postcard, sent "On active service" 16 April 1917 by the father of "Master TG Hinton" in Brighton, with the following greeting: "Daddy is the soldier on the box seat!! With love from Daddy."

At departmental level, it included 12 men and 2 train constables who drove the department's field cable car.

The signal group in the batteries' staff division consisted of 7 men, who were all trained in signal flags and field telephones.

The ammunition column had 5 signalmen, who, however, were only trained in signal flags.

The following text is printed on the back of the card:

To record adequately the important part played by telegraphy in the Great War is impossible here for lack of space. It is the special work of a highly skilled department (underlined by the sender) of the service; work often performed under great risk and with the utmost difficulty. That the result is prompt, effective and reliable "goes without saying".

The field cable cart was most recently used in the Territorial Force until approx. 1911, when it was replaced by a field cable car, which consisted of a stage and a prod car. (Source 14)



ARMÉE ANGLAISE. — Téléphone de campagne.

Field Telephone, Royal Artillery, c. 1914.

From contemporary Belgian postcard.

At departmental level included (Source 13):

- 6 field telephones - *Telephone, portable, D, Mk. II* approx.
- 9,600 m field cable (transported on the field cable car and in train cars) approx. 500 m
- field cable (transported by mounted signalmen).

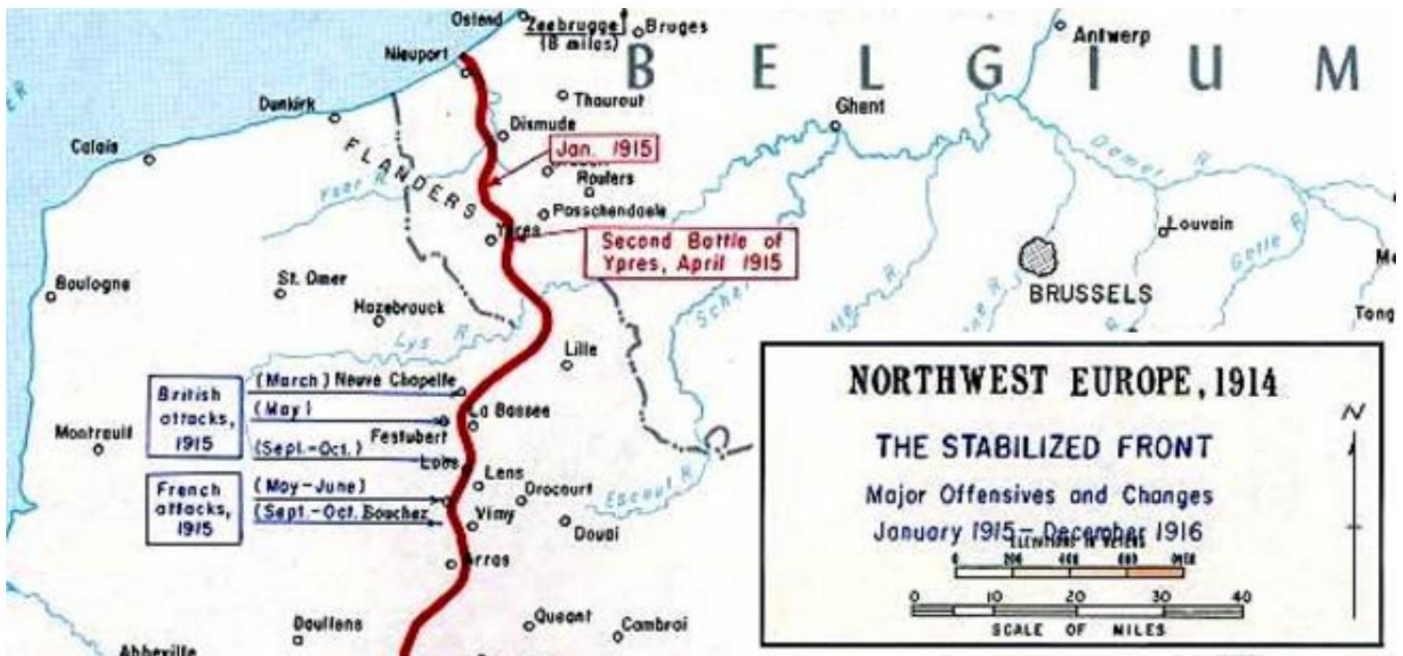
At battery level included:

- 4 field telephones - *Telephone, portable, D, Mk. II* approx.
- 1,300 m of field cable (transported by mounted signalmen) approx.
- 1,600 m of field cable (transported in train wagons).

The heavy batteries were rated as divisions, and the two half-batteries as field artillery batteries.

At the front

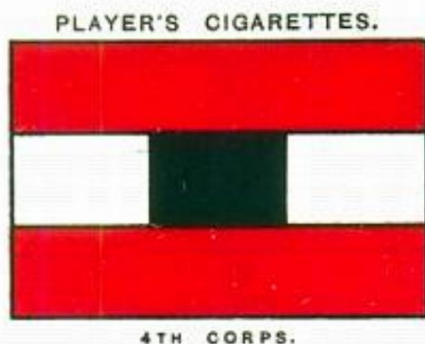
The 47th (London) Division's first action in the war was at the Battle of Festubert - 15 to 25 May 1915. These battles are briefly discussed in [About 24th County of London\) Bn. The London Regiment \(The Queen's\), 1914-1918.](#)



Excerpt from the map Northwest Europe, January 1915 - December 1916, which can be found on The History Department at The United States Military Academy's website.

Battle of Loos

However, it was during the Battle of Loos, 25 September 1915, that the 47th (London) Division really got into battle, and was supported by, among others, his own divisional artillery. The division was deployed as part of IV Corps (Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Rawlinson), which consisted of: 1st Division, 15th (Scottish) Division, (London) Division and 47th 3rd Cavalry Division.



th 4 Corps. Card No. 52 in Player's cigarette card series Army, Corps and Divisional Signs 1914-1918, Series 2.

The text on the back of the cigarette card reads as follows:

The Corps' armlet is illustrated, which painted on vehicles, did duty as a sign. In the earlier days of the Corps' existence, the number 4 was shown on the white bar. This was eventually prohibited, and a black patch was placed over the offending mark.

Some of the actions in which the Corps participated are - 1914, Defense of Antwerp (reached Ghent and Bruges), Ypres; 1915, Neuve Chapelle, Aubers Ridge, Festubert, Loos; 1916, Vimy Ridge; 1917, Ancre, Hindenburg Line, Bullecourt, Cambrai; 1918, First and Second Somme, Hindenburg Line, Pursuit to the Selle, the Final Advance in Picardy, Battles of Selle and of the Sambre.

The Battle of Loos was the first major English offensive on the Western Front and it was here that the first English use of war gas was seen 8). The division, including the divisional artillery, solved its tasks with

bravura, although the battle as a whole was not a success. Most of the attacking divisions captured their objectives, but the fresh divisions that were to follow up the attack were positioned too far back to continue the attack before the enemy could launch a counterattack.

It would go too far here to describe the battle in detail; instead refer to e.g. *The Battle of Loos 1915* (Source 15) and the book *Most Unfavourable Ground: The Battle of Loos, 1915* by Niall Cherry (Source 16).



5th and 6th London Territorial Infantry Brigade - On parade at Bourley Camp, Aldershot, 1912.

From a simultaneous postcard.

The photograph was taken during the annual camp.

In 1915, the 5th London Brigade was renamed the 141st Brigade, while the 6th London Brigade became the 142nd Brigade.

Sources

1. *His Majesty's Territorial Army - A descriptive account of the yeomanry, artillery, engineers and infantry with the army service and medical corps, comprising the 'King's Imperial Army of the Second Line'* by Walter Richards, Virtue & Co., London (ca. 1911).
2. *The London Gunners Come to Town - Life and Death in Hemel Hempstead in the Great War* by Bertha and Chris Reynolds, CODIL Language Systems Ltd., Tring, Hertfordshire 1995, ISBN 0-9526552-0-9.
3. *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.
4. *British Artillery Weapons & Ammunition 1914-1918* by Ian V. Hogg and LF Thurston, Ian Allan Ltd., Surrey 1972, SBN 7110-0381-5.
5. *British Artillery 1914-19 - Field Army Artillery* by Dale Clarke, Osprey, New Vanguard Nr. 94, London 2004, ISBN 1-84176-688-7.
6. *The British Army of August 1914 - An illustrated Directory* by Ray Westlake, Spelmount Limited, Tunbridge Wells, Kent 2005, ISBN 0-86227-207-7.
7. *Early British Quick Firing Artillery (Field and Horse)* by Len Trawin, Nexus Special Interests, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, ISBN1-85486-154-9.
8. *ABC of the Army* by Captain J. Atkinson (ed.), Gale & Polden, Aldershot, 1910.
9. *The Hertfordshire Batteries Royal Field Artillery - An Illustrated History 1908-1920* by JD Sainsbury, Hart Books, Welwyn 1996, ISBN 0-948527-04-8.
10. *Discovering Horse Drawn Transport of the British Army* by DJ Smith, Shire Publications Ltd., Aylesbury/Bucks. 1977, ISBN 0-85263-403-X.

11. *The Dress of the Royal Artillery* by D. Alastair Campbell, Arms and Armor Press, London 1971, SBN 85368491-X.
 12. *Regulations for the Territorial Force and County Associations, 1908* published in 1908 by The Army Council. Republished in 2003 by Naval & Military Press, ISBN 1-84342-574-2.
 13. *Field Service Pocket Book (1914)*, published by the General Staff, War Office, London 1914, Reprint by David & Charles Reprints, London 1971, ISBN 0-7153-5225-3.
 14. *From Pigeon to Packhorse - The Illustrated Story of Animals in Army Communication* by Allan Harfield, Picton Publishing, Chippenham 1989, ISBN 0948251-42-5.
 15. *Most Unfavourable Ground: The Battle of Loos, 1915* by Niall Cherry, Helion & Company, London 2005, ISBN 1-87462-203-5.
 16. 47th Division and The Battle of Loos 1915 from The Story of the British Army in the Great War of 17. 1914-1918
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Notes:

- 1) See About 1/2nd London Heavy Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery, Territorial Force.
- 2) The term *færdselevogn* is the contemporary Danish military term for a printed (train) vehicle. Pictures of train cars are, among other things, reproduced in Britains Figures - Horse-Drawn Trains, Part 1.
- 3) See Britains Figures - Horse-Drawn Trains, Part 2.
- 4) From *Ypres - The First Battle, 1914* by Ian FW Becket, Pearson Education Limited, Harlow 2004, ISBN **0-582-50612-3** .
- 5) Prepared from *the Regulations for the Territorial Force and County Associations, 1908* (Source 12). However, new strength targets were set in 1911, i.a. described in Source 9. For the gun batteries, the measurements are the same, but may vary slightly for the other units.
- 6) Reproduction of contemporaneous photograph, published in *Battle* magazine, September 1977.
- 7) The mark was introduced in 1866, when signals were sent using only one signal flag. This swing flag was available in two versions - one blue and one white, with a light blue cross. The blue flag was used against a light background, and the white flag against a dark background.
- 8) Analogous to the first German use of war gas - chlorine gas was also chosen on the English side as the first chemical warfare agent.