

## The Army structure at the outbreak of World War 1

*Times History of the War - European Battlefields, p126- [Published 1914]*

For the infantry of the line, half of which was at home and half abroad, the period of service was seven years with the Colours and five in the Reserve. This division of the twelve years' liability had been found by experience to give the best mean between the length of service necessary to allow the drafts and reliefs to work well and the shortness of service necessary for the production of a large Reserve. After the South African War, which had been carried through, with a little assistance from India, chiefly by the home Army and the Reserve, the value of the latter had become so conspicuous that the drafting problem was allowed to fall into the background. Three years' Colour and nine Reserve service was introduced in 1902 for the express purpose of building up a great Reserve. But the conditions of a man's eligibility for service in India - (a) age 20; (b) service at least one year; (c) not less than four years to run before expiry of Colour service - obviously made it impossible for any soldier enlisted on these terms to be sent to India at all. It was hoped that between two-thirds and three-quarters of the men would voluntarily "extend their service," and had that hope been realized, and the working of the drafts broke down so badly that nine years' Colour and three Reserve had to be adopted in order to redress the balance. Finally, the former seven-five term was reintroduced.

But it was not only the years immediately concerned that were affected by these changes of terms. Until the last men enlisted on the three-nine year term of 1902 finally passed out of the Reserve in 1914, the routine smoothness with which the recruiting branch had been working in the nineties could not be restored, and just before the Declaration of War the recruiting system was being taxed to the utmost to make good the great efflux of both the nine-year men of 1905-5 and the seven-year men of 1906-7.

Inseparable from the question of drafts was that of establishments. The Indian battalion was on a war footing, 1,000 in round numbers, permanently, the home battalion on an establishment of about 750. Now when a battalion went abroad to relieve its sister battalion it had at the same time to increase its establishment, and as the battalion due to come home included, in the nature of things, very many soldiers in their last year of service, i.e., due for discharge, it could leave behind but few for the newcomers to take over. The battalion going out, therefore, would have to provide most of its own extra men. Further - and this was always the crux of the problem - it could not take with it men less than 20 years of age, nor recruits. If, therefore, it was to stand on its new footing in trained men over 19, it must have been over-filled with recruits two years beforehand, and - as the home establishment then governed it - serving soldiers must have been dismissed prematurely to the Reserve to make vacancies for these recruits. Under these rigid conditions it was possible, and even frequent, for a battalion at home to be below establishment and yet closed to recruiting, and, worse still, these premature discharges to the Reserve might have to take place at a moment unfavourable for recruiting - as was the case in 1912-1913, when in order to make room a very large number of men who would be trained and available for drafts in 1914-15 servicing soldiers were prematurely sent to the Reserve by the thousand, though recruiting was far from brisk at the time, hence there occurred a shortage in the Regular Army, which alarmed the nation not a little, but was, in fact, largely the result of the violent disturbance of the seven-five year term in 1902 and of the limiting conditions of establishment and qualification for Indian service.

Under these conditions the establishment of a home battalion was practically determined by the numbers of the annual draft for India. In the days of "volunteering," as we have seen, there was no large force of

units at home, and the units abroad were fed from depots. But after the battalions were linked, those at home found the draft for their "links," and as they were the only available expeditionary force it was impossible to regard them as mere depots. It was therefore settled that the home battalion should consist of three sets of men destined for three annual drafts of 150 each, to be sent out as each set becomes qualified, plus 300 men who would grow to maturity in, and remain throughout their service with, the home battalion, which without them would be in the condition described by Lord Wolseley as that of a "squeezed lemon."

All this administrative and actuarial work had been reduced to a science by the recruiting branch, and short of disturbing reforms the system worked with a certainty that would hardly be credible under an apparently haphazard system of voluntary enlistment, were it not that the laws of probability act with the greater certainty when the numbers dealt with are large and the causes influencing them manifold, diverse, and independent.

In the case of the Expeditionary Force as it stood at the Declaration of War in August 1914, the far-reaching effect of the previous disturbances was completely neutralized by two simple expedients - the lowering of the foreign service age limit to 19 and the abolition of the mounted infantry, which was replaced by additional cavalry, made available by the withdrawal of Imperial troops from South Africa in 1912-13. The latter step alone meant that perhaps 50 picked men per battalion remained with their units, and the former made available 100 to 200 men per battalion who would have been too immature for a tropical or sub-tropical war. Mobilization therefore was carried through without a hitch, and the Special Reserve battalions were at once ready to absorb the surplus Regular reservists.

In the case of the Guards, who were not employed on foreign service in peace, there was no draft question to complicate matters. The term of service therefore was three and nine years, and an enormous Reserve was thereby created.\*

*\*In all calculations of Reserve strength it is important to note on the authority of Sir C. Harris, the Assistant Financial Secretary of the War Office, that "wastage," year for year, was not appreciably greater in the case of reservists than in that of men with the Colours.*

The Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers were each of single corps. Men enlisted for Garrison Artillery could not be posted to mounted corps, and the Engineers there was an elaborate classification of men according to their trades. But apart from these complications drafting presented no problems for the scientific arms, indeed no Engineer units at all were stationed in India.#

*#Had some grouping of infantry regiments been practicable the example of the Royal Artillery shows that many if not most of the complications previously described would have been removed. But this reform, though suggested and supported by high authority, failed to penetrate the strong walls of the regimental castle.*

In the cavalry of the line men were enlisted for the "corps" of Hussars, Dragoons, &c., and allowed to express preference for particular regiments within these corps. This arrangement at once removed most of the complications of drafting, and as cavalry is an arm always maintained on a high peace footing, there were no serious changes of establishment to be prepared for when units went abroad. In consequence, the mobilization of cavalry regiments at home presented no special difficulty. Each regiment, on proceeding on active service, left behind it a reserve squadron which absorbed recruits and surplus reservists and continued to feed its unit throughout the war, in the same way as a special reserve unit of infantry.\* [\* There was no draft-finding Special Reserve Cavalry.]

In the horse mobilization of the mounted branches both of the Field Force and of the Territorial Army there was the same thoroughness and attention to detail. Whereas in the South African War the lack of system had been quite as marked in the matter of horses as in the matter of men, when the European War broke out it found the authorities in all grades prepared to deal with the situation, for the rapid growth of motor traction in the intervening years had drawn public attention to the horsing problem.

The peace establishments of the Army in horses had been increase, the system of "boarding out" had been introduced, first tentatively and then on a larger scale, civilian buyers had been appointed in readiness for emergency, and above all a really useful census of horses had been taken.

*# Boarded-out horses were Government-owned animals additional to the ordinary peace establishment, which were lent to farmers and others and maintained by them.*

Built up on these principles of organization, the Regular Army on October 1, 1913, was distributed as shown below:-

DISTRIBUTION OF THE REGULAR ARMY.											
	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Horse & Field Artillery.	Garrison Artillery.	Engineers	Flying Corps.	A.S.C.	Departments.	Colonial troops.	Indian troops in Imp. pay.	Total.
<b>ON HOME ESTABLISHMENT</b>											
United Kingdom .. .. .	51,442	10,573	13,640	6,728	5,978	822	4,848	5,161	—	—	99,192
Ireland .. .. .	14,409	2,052	4,072	733	1,277	—	899	850	—	—	24,282
Channel Islands .. .. .	1,355	—	—	299	35	—	11	35	—	—	1,735
<b>Total</b> .. .. .	<b>67,206</b>	<b>12,625</b>	<b>17,712</b>	<b>7,760</b>	<b>7,290</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>5,748</b>	<b>6,046</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>125,209</b>
<b>ON INDIAN ESTABLISHMENT</b> .. .. .											
	54,584	5,595	10,971	4,463	377	—	—	538	—	602	77,130
<b>ON COLONIAL ESTABLISHMENT.</b>											
Gibraltar .. .. .	1,830	—	—	1,887	396	—	85	179	—	—	3,877
Malta .. .. .	4,172	—	—	1,577	410	—	109	229	437	—	6,934
Egypt and Cyprus .. .. .	4,543	633	180	193	163	—	104	217	—	200	6,233
Ceylon, Straits Settlements and China Stations .. .. .	4,069	—	—	1,699	458	—	120	900	521	6,267	13,434
South Africa .. .. .	3,660	1,137	453	292	520	—	282	482	—	—	6,826
Various, on passage, &c. .. .. .	3,168	—	—	846	399	—	57	270	2,807	—	7,607
<b>Total</b> .. .. .	<b>21,442</b>	<b>1,770</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>5,994</b>	<b>2,346</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>1,677</b>	<b>3,825</b>	<b>6,467</b>	<b>44,911</b>
<b>Grand Total</b> .. .. .	<b>143,232</b>	<b>19,990</b>	<b>29,316</b>	<b>18,217</b>	<b>10,013</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>6,505</b>	<b>8,261</b>	<b>3,825</b>	<b>7,069</b>	<b>247,250</b>

The Army Reserve, the strength of which had fluctuated considerably in consequence of the various changes in the terms of colour service, consisted of :-

### STRENGTH OF THE ARMY RESERVE ON OCTOBER 1, 1913.

	A.	B.	D.	Total.
<b>Cavalry</b> .. .. .	—	<b>6,967</b>	<b>3,708</b>	<b>10,675</b>
<b>Horse and Field Artillery</b> .. .. .	<b>670</b>	<b>13,694</b>	<b>4,645</b>	<b>19,009</b>
<b>Garrison Artillery</b> .. .. .	—	<b>6,028</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>6,282</b>
<b>Engineers</b> .. .. .	<b>426</b>	<b>4,079</b>	<b>959</b>	<b>5,464</b>
<b>Infantry</b> .. .. .	<b>4,234</b>	<b>62,510</b>	<b>23,382</b>	<b>90,126</b>
<b>Various</b> .. .. .	<b>493</b>	<b>10,823</b>	<b>2,218</b>	<b>13,534</b>
<b>Total</b> .. .. .	<b>5,823</b>	<b>104,096</b>	<b>35,171</b>	<b>145,090</b>

Section A consisted of Reservists who had undertaken to rejoin the colours if required on an emergency short of general mobilization; Section B (with C) comprised all who had enlisted for short service (3-7 years) and had discharged their active duties. Section D consisted of men who after the expiry of their 12 years total term had re-enlisted for a further four years in the Reserve.

The Special Reserve, which consisted almost entirely of infantry,\* was created from the remains of the Militia to act as the "Regular Militia" battalions had acted in the Napoleonic wars, as feeders for the Line in war. All ranks were liable for foreign service in war, and the term of enlistment was six years. Incorporated with the Militia elements of the force was the "regular establishment," which carried on the work of the regimental depot and trained the recruits there.

*\*At one time a large force of Field Artillery Special Reservists was enlisted for the manning of ammunition columns. But these were no longer required when Army Service Corps motor transport took over this duty.*

This force, however, had in peace times failed to attract sufficient recruits. It was generally thought by the classes likely to join that pressure was brought to bear on "S.R." recruits while at the depot to enter Militia elements of the force was the "regular establishment," which carried on the work of the regimental depot and trained the recruits there. This force, however, had in peace times failed to attract sufficient recruits. It was generally thought by the classes likely to join that pressure was brought to bear on "S.R." recruits while at the depot to enter the Regular Army; and in fact many thousands of men annually joined the Special Reserve in order to bring up their physical and other qualifications to the Regular standard before passing into the Line, or in order to see "how they liked the life" before committing themselves finally. These men were, of course, potential Regulars, and not part-trained Reservists.

The Territorial Force since its reconstruction had had a troubled history. Upon it had centred many criticisms that might have been directed against the Army system as a whole. Its weaknesses were naturally more in evidence than those of the Special Reserve, or those which were the outcome of drafting difficulties in the Regular Army. Since it was pre-eminently the national army, embodying the idea of duty service, those who advocated and worked for compulsory military service focussed their efforts upon it. Whether this volume of criticism affected its material training is doubtful, but at times certainly it did affect the moral of the force, and from first to last it almost controlled the recruiting. Further, the local recruiting authorities were in many cases too much absorbed in the business administration of the units under their charge to be able to deal with recruiting in the more scientific spirit of the Recruiting Branch of the War Office; unnecessarily wild fluctuations of intake - alternate "booms" and "slumps" - were the result. In some years one-seventh, in others as much as one-third of the Territorial Force would be due for discharge, and the problem of making good the deficiency in advance of its occurrence was a hard one. In the result the force was considerably short of its peace establishment of 315, 438, though it was never much below 250,000.

The term of service in the Territorial Force was four years, re-engagements being allowed. The training liabilities were ten to twenty drills per annum, two weeks' continuous training in camp, and a musketry course. When the Territorial Force was created, it was intended to form a Reserve for it as soon as possible, and to that end re-engagements of time-expired men were at first discouraged. Owing, however, to inelastic regulations by which comparatively few men were qualified to pass into this Reserve\*, and to the sudden popularity of the new National Reserve, the Territorial Force Reserve was little more than a list of officers who, while leaving their regiments on change of residence, &c., wished to continue in the force against the day of mobilization. Far more satisfactory was the condition of two other auxiliaries of the Territorial Force, the National Reserve and the Voluntary Aid Detachments. The former numbered over

200,000 old soldiers and sailors divided into three categories, (1) registered for general service; (2) registered for home service; (3) not available for service under arms. The provision of officers for these various forces was regulated thus:-

In the case of the Regular Army, officers were appointed (a) from cadets trained at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich (for Artillery and Engineers), or at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst (for other arms), to which institutions they were admitted in some cases by Governmental or headmasters' nominations, in the rest by competitive examination; (b) from among University students, after examination and preliminary military training in the Officers Training Corps; (c) from Colonial candidates trained at the Royal Military Colleges of Canada, Australia, &c.

*\*Another branch of this Reserve, which was provided for but never formed, was the "Technical" Reserve, a register of men available as local guides, superintendents of works &.*

In the case of the Special Reserve and the Territorial Force, officers were appointed either after service in the Officers Training Corps or direct from civil life. The O.T.C. was composed of senior division contingents belonging to the Universities and junior division contingents belonging to the public schools. The total strength of cadets in the O.T.C. was approximately 25,000, of whom about 5,000 in the senior division were undergraduates of military age available for immediate service. The officers of the corps were drawn from the Special Reserve and the Territorial Force. There were practical and written examinations in military subjects for cadets, as well as drill and camp training.

In the general organization of the Army the principle had been adopted since the South African War of separating as far as possible command and training from administration. To that end the General Staff of the Army was made distinct from other branches of headquarters and staffs; the administrations, equipment, &c., of the Territorial Force was placed in the hands of a County Association, and that of the Regular Army in the hands of a special general officer subordinate to the Commands-in-Chief in each region, but endowed with wide powers of Administration.

**The central administration of the Army was divided into four main departments.** The General-Staff dealt with operations, the Adjutant-General's Staff with personnel, the Quarter-master's with materiel, and the Staff of the Master-General of the Ordnance with armament.

**The Army at home**, including the Special Reserve and the Territorial Force, was grouped by divisions and brigades into large "commands" under generals commanding-in-chief, each of whom had under him a general staff branch, under a brigadier-general in charge of Administration. The London district was separately organized. For recruiting on record purposes, or, so far as concerned the Regular Army and Special Reserve, the Commands, except Aldershot, were sub-divided into districts. Under the Army Council and directly reporting to it were the Inspector-General Oversea Forces (who was also Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Command, but had no jurisdiction in India). These officers with their staffs were charged with the duty of constantly moving about amongst the troops and satisfying themselves of the efficiency of their training for war.

Such being the general organization of the British Army at home, we now come to consider the fighting organization of its parts as constituted for military operations.

The unit of infantry was the battalion, commanded by a lieutenant-colonel. In 1913 the previous organization of eight companies of about 120 each had been replaced by one of four companies of about 240, commanded by a mounted officer, major or captain, with a second captain, and a subaltern in

command of each of the four "platoons" of 60 men into which the company was divided. The battalion included, further, a machine gun section of two guns, a section of signallers, medical officer and bearers, &c. Its first line transport, which immediately accompanied the troops on the march, comprised eight company ammunition mules and six ammunition carts (one of which was for the machine guns), two tool carts, two water carts, four travelling kitchens (one per company), and a medical cart. The armament was the "short Lee-Enfield" of 1903 and bayonet. The men's equipment was made not of leather but of strong webbing, of the same grey-green colour as the uniforms. The baggage and supply wagons of the infantry formed part of the Train. The brigade of infantry consisted of four battalions under a Brigadier-General, which had a small reserve of tools, and also a brigade ammunition reserve formed by assembling some of the battalion carts.

The cavalry regiment consisted of three squadrons each of about 150 sabres, divided into four troops, and a regimental machine gun section of two guns. The squadron was commanded by a major, with a captain as his second. The first line transport included squadron baggage wagons, squadron ammunition carts, and squadron tool carts, and for the regiment a wagon-carrying raft equipment for the hasty crossing of streams, and a cook's vehicle corresponding in cooking capacity to about two of the travelling kitchens used by the infantry.

The Cavalry Brigade consisted of three such regiments. The armament of the cavalry was sword, rifle, and in some cases lance. The equipment was light and stripped to bare essentials, but the cloth puttees worn by the men since the loose individual skirmishing of the South African War were less satisfactory for the knee-to-knee charge that was to be expected in European warfare. The Field Artillery unit was the so-called "brigade" (corresponding to the "group" of foreign armies and to be differentiated from the brigade in the larger sense). Each brigade, whether of 18-pounder q.f. guns or of 4.1in. q.f. howitzers, comprised a brigade headquarters with telephone equipment, and three six-gun batteries. For each gun there were two ammunition wagons, one of which, in action, was placed close beside the gun itself. Both guns and wagons were six-horsed flexible double carriages, composed of body (or gun-carriage) and limber, which gave them a balance, and therefore a mobility, which compared with that of the "General Services" wagon in much the same way as a hansom compares with a "four-wheeler."

In the Horse Artillery the "brigade" consisted of two batteries only. The distinctive mark of his branch was speed, owing to the lighter gun (12-pounder q.f.), and to the fact that most of the gunners instead of being carried on the gun, gun limber, or first wagon, as in the case of the Field Artillery, rode separately.

Heavy Artillery also accompanied the field army. A heavy battery consisted of four 60-pounder guns,\* manned by the garrison artillery and drawn at a walk or slow trot by eight heavy draught horses apiece.

*\*Not howitzers, as was almost always the case in the Continental heavy artillery*

To each "brigade" of field or horse artillery guns was attached a "brigade ammunition column," which provided a third full wagon for each gun, and also a reserve of rifle ammunition for the infantry. The howitzer brigade and heavy battery ammunition columns were similar, except that they provided no rifle ammunition. Another reserve of ammunition behind this was provided by the Divisional Ammunition Column, this also under artillery charge, and behind this again was the Motor Ammunition park, to be alluded to presently.

The field units of the Royal Engineers were:-

The "field squadrons" or field troops, the signal squadrons and signal troops attached to cavalry divisions

or brigades, the field companies and signal companies attached to divisions, and the bridging trains and signal sections at the disposal of commanders of higher formations. The details of the Signal Service cannot here be described, and it must suffice to mention that the units of this service included wireless telephone and telegraph operators with tier equipment, as well as flag and lamp signallers and dispatch riders, mounted on horses or motor-bicycles. Wireless was employed chiefly to connect General Headquarters with the fast-moving cavalry in advance; telegraphs (air-line or ground cable) were for general work, and telephones for communication on the battlefield itself.

The bridging trains were simply a great mobile reserve of pontoons and trestles, to be used by the field companies when the bridging equipment of the latter proved insufficient. The field squadrons, field troops, and field companies were the most important and generally useful of the engineer organizations. They provided for bridging, for demotions, for expert supervision of infantry working parties, and for water supply.

The Army Service Corps units in the field fall into two distinct branches, the horsed "trains" and the mechanical transport "columns."

The medical service in the field centred around the Field Ambulance. Each unit of that name included three "tent" and three "bearer" subdivisions, each self-contained and therefore separable from the rest for the benefit of outlying detachments, flying columns, &c.

Such were the constituent parts of the division. The division itself was commanded by a major-general, whose staff, like all higher staffs, was divided into a general staff branch, an adjutant-general's branch, an adjutant-general's branch, and a quartermaster-general's branch. It consisted of three infantry brigades, three [field artillery brigades, one field howitzer brigade and one heavy batter, with a divisional signal company, two field companies Royal Engineers, and one squadron of cavalry, in all 18, 073 men, 5,592 horses, 76 guns, and 24 machine guns.

The catalogue of the necessary auxiliaries to the fighting troops, in itself meaningless to readers unacquainted with the military system, included a complete and up-to-date organization, which we may briefly describe under the three headings of baggage and supply, ammunition, and medical aid. But before it is possible to do so a few words must be said as to the working of the lines of communication of an army.

Perhaps no Army in the world had its lines of communication services so well organized in peace as the British. The reason is simple enough, viz., that it was accustomed to fight in ill-developed countries where the Army must create the resources of civilization before it could use them. Duties on the line of communication were administrative, controlled by an Inspector-General of Communications; and defensive (for the protection of the line itself), controlled by the "commander of L. of C. Defences." At the safer end of the line lay the base, generally a port, and at frequent intervals along the line were small posts for traffic control. Sometimes an advanced depot was formed at some distance up the line, where emergency reserves of stores were accumulated, but the "line" extended far in front of it. At "railhead," the variable point at which railway traffic ceased, there were no accumulations of stores, a day's requirements being sent daily by train to be taken thence by the motor lorries of the "supply columns" to the troops.

This motor-transport was a new system, unlike that of any other army, and had been introduced in 1911. In it a complete break had been made with the traditions of the old horse-and-cart supply system. Horse

transport was now used purely for distributing, the conveyance of supplies to the areas occupied by the troops being performed wholly by motor transport.

The daily run of the motor lorry being taken at 90 miles, the army could advance to a distance from its railhead of 45 miles – or rather to a distance such that “refilling point,” where the horsed trains took over the contents of the lorries daily for distribution, should not be more than 45 miles. But if a new and nearer railhead could be chosen for the next day this distance could be by so much exceeded.\* The new system thus gave greater range and flexibility to the army’s operations. It also cleared the roads in rear of the troops of the vast convoys of horsed wagons which formerly gravely impeded the army’s manoeuvres.

\*As there were no stores accumulated at railhead, this point could be changed at four to five hours’ notice.

To give a practical example. On Thursday evening the men of an infantry battalion would have Friday’s bread and cheese in their haversacks (plus a preserved ration for emergencies), and the travelling kitchens (called “cookers”) Friday’s meat, groceries, &c. At that time the wagons of the train allotted to the service of the unit would be empty, waiting to meet the motor “supply columns” on Friday. These supply columns themselves would be at railhead, waiting for the rations to be railed thither from down the line. At 3 a.m. or so on Friday these railway trains would have discharged their contents and the lorries would be on their way at a speed of ten miles an hour to meet the empty wagons of the train at “refilling point.” Thus for the first time in the history of war it had become possible for fresh meat and bread to be supplied to a distant army. The meat that our battalion would eat on Friday evening was probably alive on Wednesday morning 100 miles away down the line.

This, however was not the only, or indeed the principal, method of supply. As far as possible the resources of the country traversed by the army were utilized by requisitioning. Until a few years before the war the British Army, with its 18<sup>th</sup>-century tradition of regarding the civilian as a spectator in the Government’s wars, and its experience of wild colonial campaigns, had been quite unfamiliar with this resource; but latterly much study had been devoted to it and ample provision of motor-cars had been made for the requisitioning officers.

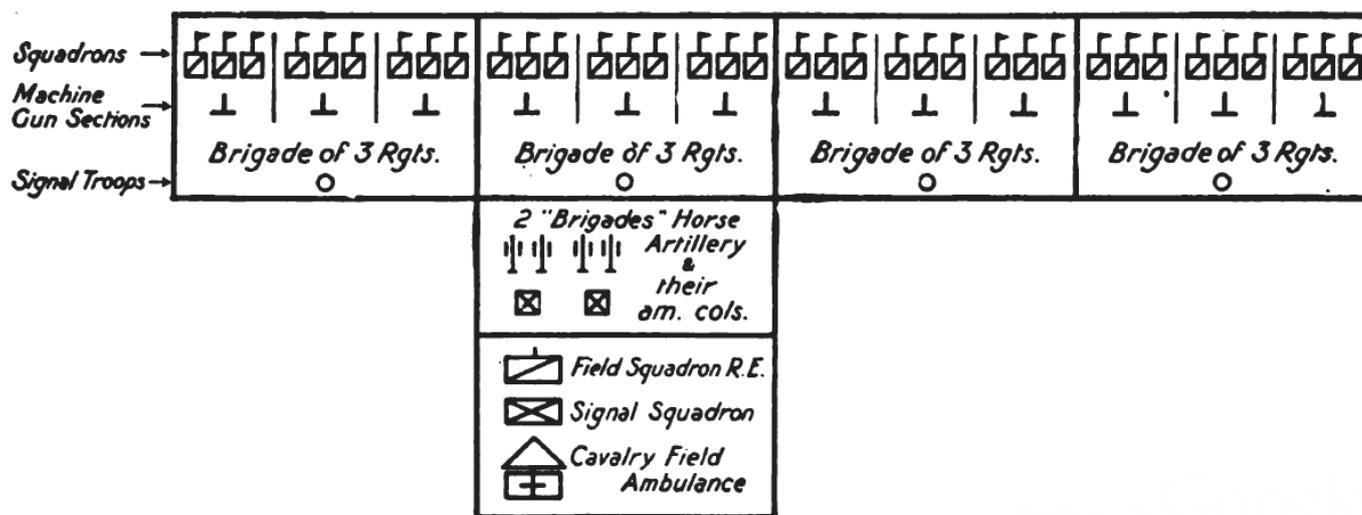
The replacement of ammunition was conducted upon a somewhat similar system. At various posts along the line of communication were depots of the Army Ordnance Corps, which forwarded ammunition as required to railhead, where the motor-lorries of the divisional ammunition park took it over for conveyance to the horsed distributing agency (corresponding to the trains above-mentioned) called the Divisional Ammunition Column. This column, which were the actual issuers to batteries and to infantry brigades.

In both these cases the governing principle was that no one should have to go back for food, and no one to retire to fetch ammunition. In the medical service the same thing is observable – persistent effort to keep the front in working condition. In this case the principle was that of “evacuation.” The nearer a hospital to the front, the clearer it was kept. This of course served both the interests of the army, which, in theory, should never be compelled to forgo its field ambulances in an advance after battle, and those of the wounded man, who was removed as far as his condition would allow from the area of conflict and hurry, to recover in quiet. The working of the organization was briefly this:- A wounded man\* was taken by the regimental stretcher-bearers (the bandsmen of peace time) to the “aid post,” where the regimental medical officer

\*Every soldier had a “first field dressing” in his pocket.

Attended him. To these aid posts came up the bearer subdivisions of the field ambulance, which conveyed the patient to an "Advanced Dressing Station" formed by a Tent Sub division. Thence he was conveyed after treatment, and perhaps a day's rest, by the ambulance wagons (bearer subdivision) to meet a party from the "clearing hospital," a large field hospital at some convenient point near railhead. It was the business of this hospital, as its name shows, to evacuate the wounded from the field ambulances, which it did by any available means of transport – country carts, canal boats, railway trains, motor-lorries of the supply columns, or ammunition parks. Once on the line of communications, the patient could be dealt with by stationary hospitals, the general hospital at the base, or convalescent camps as required, or sent back to Great Britain by hospital train and hospital ship.

The organisation of a cavalry division consisted of four brigades, four batteries of horse artillery, and auxiliary services, as shown in the following table:-



In some cases cavalry brigades were formed without being allotted to a cavalry division. Such brigades were given a battery of horse artillery, and enough of other services to render them self-supporting and self-contained bodies.

The food and ammunition systems differed from those of the infantry divisions, in that the motor-lorries delivered food direct to the "cookers" of the regiments and ammunition direct to the brigade ammunition columns, there being no "train" or divisional ammunition column. The ambulances, too, were differently organized, to provide for the special needs of cavalry, had to fight over wide areas and at great distances in front of the main body.\*

*It should be noted that all baggage and supply vehicles of cavalry were drawn by four horses of the "vanner" or ordinary military two heavy cart horses each.*

The war strength of a cavalry division was 9,269 men and 9,815 horses, 24 guns, and 24 machine guns.

The whole Expeditionary Force as organized in 1914 consisted of six divisions, one cavalry division, and one (or two) unallotted cavalry division, and one (or two) unallotted cavalry brigades, with addition troops styled "army troops" at the disposal of the higher commanders, besides the line of communication troops both for administration and for the defence of the line. The army troops included

The squadrons of the Royal Flying Corps, each squadron being subdivided into three "Flights" each of four aeroplanes with their attendant motors and stores.

Taken all in all, the organization and equipment of this force was on a more elaborate scale than that of Continental units of corresponding strength. This, and the professional character of the Army, in no small degree compensated for its small numbers, and the German critic who in 1913 remarked that the British Expeditionary Force was "not an enemy to be despised" (kleine zu verachtende Gegner) was nearer the truth than perhaps he realized.

