

Aldershot Command & South Eastern Command

In 1854, Aldershot became established as the main centre for the British Army in the United Kingdom. In 1920, Aldershot Command was reorganised as the base for the 1st Division and 2nd Division. These formed the embryonic British Expeditionary Force for deployment in times of war.

With the outbreak of war, the Command formed I Corps and the 1st Infantry Division and 2nd Infantry Division were deployed to France. The command continued to perform the role of main reinforcement centre for the B.E.F. until it was evacuated from Dunkirk. With the threat of invasion present, Aldershot Command had only a subsidiary role until it was upgraded with the establishment of South Eastern Command as an operational formation.

On the 15th February 1941, Lieutenant General B. C. T. PAGET, was appointed the first General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of South Eastern Command. The new Command assumed responsibility for the Chatham Area, Aldershot Area, Sussex & Surrey Area and Kent Area. At around the date of formation, the South Eastern Command assumed command of two operational formations, namely IV Corps (which was located in Sussex) and XII Corps (which was located in Kent).

The 29th Independent Infantry Brigade came under direct command of the South-Eastern Command on the 1st April 1941. However, it left on the 6th May 1941 to pass to War Office control for deployment to Madagascar as part of Force 121.

On the 30th November 1944, South Eastern Command was disbanded, and Aldershot District was formed under Southern Command, which now included Hampshire. Kent, Surrey & Sussex became part of the reformed Home Counties

District in Eastern Command. In 1948, Aldershot District gained parts of Surrey from the Home Counties District.

General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Aldershot Command

12th October 1933 – 11th October 1937

General The Honourable Sir J. Francis GATHORNE-HARDY, G.C.B., G.C.V.O., C.M.G., D.S.O.

12th October 1937 – 3rd September 1939

Lieutenant General John Greer DILL, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.

3rd September 1939 – 7th March 1940

Lieutenant General Charles Noel Frank BROAD, C.B., D.S.O.

7th March 1940 – 15th February 1941 (1)

Lieutenant General Michael George Henry BARKER, C.B., D.S.O.

21st May 1940 – 25th June 1940

Major General Geoffrey Taunton RAIKES, C.B., D.S.O.

25th June 1940 – 13th March 1941

Major General Dudley Graham JOHNSON, V.C., C.B., D.S.O.*, M.C.

1. On the 22nd April 1940, Lieutenant General BARKER was transferred to command I Corps in the B.E.F. in France. On 31 May 1940, he handed over command of I Corps to Major General ALEXANDER and returned to the U.K., where he resumed command of Aldershot Command on 7 August 1940.
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General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, South Eastern Command

15th February 1941 – 25th December 1941

Lieutenant General Bernard Charles Tolver PAGET, D.S.O., M.C.

25th December 1941 – 9th August 1942

Lieutenant General Bernard Law MONTGOMERY, C.B., D.S.O.

9th August 1942 – 7th September 1942

7th September 1942 – 19th March 1944

Lieutenant General Sir John George Des Reaux SWAYNE,

19th March 1944 – 24th September 1944

Lieutenant General Sir Edmund Charles Anton SCHREIBER, K.C.B., D.S.O.

25th September 1944 – December 1944

Major General Eric MILES,

General Officer Commanding Aldershot District

1944 – 1945

Major General Charles Wake NORMAN,

1946 – 1948

Major General Joseph Aloysuis BAILLON, C.B.E., M.C.

Brigadier General Staff – (B.G.S.)

Brigadier

General Staff Officer (Grade I) – (G.S.O. I)

Lieutenant Colonel

Major General in charge of Administration

Major General

Blackdown & Deepcut Sub-Area

Farnborough Sub-Area

Aborfield Garrison

Ascot Garrison

Bordon & Longmoor Sub-Area