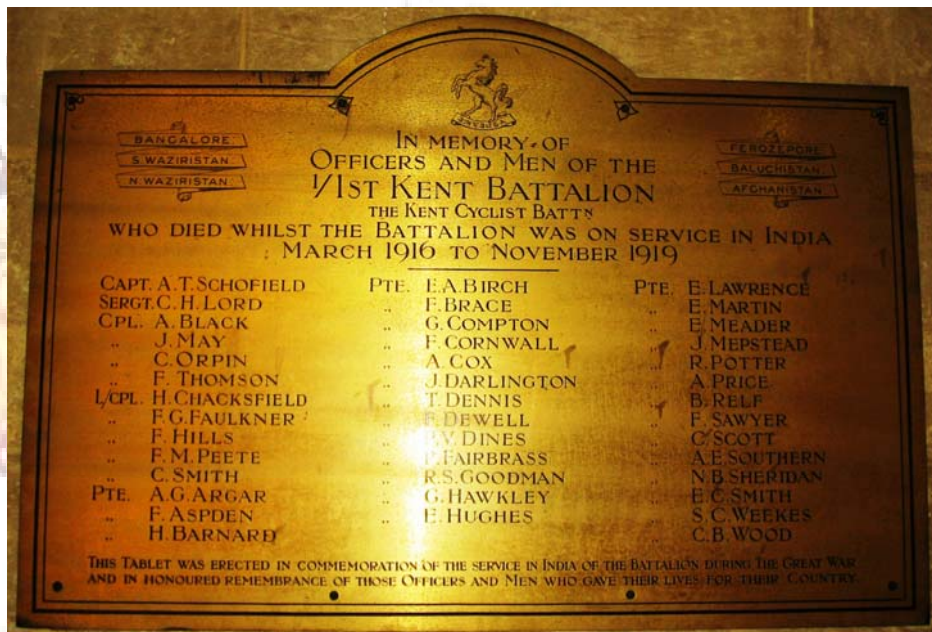




Kent Cyclist Battalion



Canterbury Cathedral



Canterbury Cathedral



1/1st Kent Cyclist Battalion (1st Line Territorial)

The Kent Cyclist Battalion was one of fifteen units administered by The Territorial Army Association headed by the Lord Lieutenant of Kent. Other units included Yeomanry, Artillery, Fortress units of the Royal Engineers (Kent Fortress Royal Engineers), the 4th and 5th battalions of The Buffs, and the 4th and 5th battalions of the Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment). The Kent Cyclist Battalion was formed in 1908 as part of the new Territorial Force, replacing the volunteers to form an effective properly trained and organised part-time army. The battalion was designed to defend the homeland against possible invasion when the regular army was sent overseas. The Kent Cyclist Battalion was one of the ten original territorial cyclist battalions in the country whose main role in wartime was to be in patrolling the UK coastline. This was soon changed when the regular army lost most of its manpower.

The 1/1st Kent Cyclist Battalion comprised 8 companies some of which maintained small Troops in nearby towns and villages.



Kent Cyclist Battalion

1911

Headquarters, Drill Hall, Tonbridge, Kent

Colonel Bt H Streatfield CB, MVO

Lieutenant Colonel C.E Warner VD

Major J Egginton

Captain T.F Parkinson

Captain H.W Shaw

Captain J.N Hampson

Captain W.B Gunn (Musketry)

Captain C.R.H Crawford

Captain C.F Adams (Adjutant)

Lt F.W Butler

Lt H.G.M Gardner

Lt W.G Moore

Lt K.C.H Warner

2Lt M.H Unwin

2Lt M.E Balston

2Lt W.H Robinson

2LT G.F.W Powell

2LT F.G Monkton

Lt J.E Holland (Quatermaster)

Lt W.T Storrs (Royal Army Medical Corps)

Chaplain 4th Class (Captain) F.W Hassard-Short

A Company

Bromley

B Company

Tonbridge

Pembury Troop

C Company

Beckenham

D Company

Maidstone

Chatham Troop

E Company

Tunbridge Wells

F Company

Canterbury

Ashford Troop

Whitstable Troop

G Company

Ramsgate

Margate Troop

Sandwich Troop

H Company

Sandgate

Hythe Troop

Dover Troop

Folkestone Troop

The soldiers of the Kent Cyclist Battalion wore a cap badge similar to the Royal West Kent Regiment (the invicta horse with a scroll beneath saying Kent Cyclist Battalion).

Upon the outbreak of war the 1st Line Territorial Battalion from Tonbridge was attached to the 2nd (West Lancashire) Division. It spent most of its time training and preparing for deployment overseas. On 2 December 1915 the battalion was re-organised as a dis-mounted infantry unit and attached to 57th Division. The battalion spent most of its time guarding key points throughout Kent. Records and photographs exist that show the battalion guarding coastal areas in and around Lydd and Thanet. In February 1916 the Kent Cyclist Battalion was moved to India where it took up garrison duty. It remained in India for the remaining duration of the war.



2/1st Kent Cyclist Battalion

(2nd Line Territorial)

Formed at Tonbridge sometime in late 1914. This Second Line Territorial Battalion remained in the UK for the duration of the war. It was tasked with guarding key points and patrolling the coastline to deter invasion and to catch spys.



3/1st Kent Cyclist Battalion

(3rd Line Territorial)

Formed in 1916 but dis-banded before 1918. Not much is known about this Third Line Territorial Battalion.

The 1/1st and 2/1st Kent Cyclist Battalions were both disbanded in 1920.

Those interested in the history of this battalion are advised to read the battalions official history – **ISBN 0-9512880-0-8**. It is held by some Kent reference libraries.

