



*Salute
to the
Regiment*

May, 1944

SALUTE TO THE HERTFORDSHIRE REGIMENT

*COMPILED FOR THE HERTFORD BOROUGH AND RURAL DISTRICT
NATIONAL SAVINGS COMMITTEE IN CONNECTION WITH
THE "SALUTE THE SOLDIER" CAMPAIGN AND
IN APPRECIATION OF THE MEN OF
THE HERTFORDSHIRE REGIMENT*



The proceeds from the sale of this booklet will be devoted to the Benevolent
Fund of The Hertfordshire Regiment



HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
Honorary Colonel 1st Battalion The Hertfordshire Regiment

THE COUNTY HALL,
HERTFORD,
HERTS.

8th May, 1944.

*At the Queen's command I convey
Her Majesty's best wishes for the success
of "The Story of the Hertfordshire
Regiment" which is being published in
connection with the Hertford "Salute the
Soldier Week."*

HAMPDEN,
*Honorary Colonel,
Hertfordshire Regiment*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The compilation of this Booklet could not have been achieved without the assistance of many who have served with the Hertfordshire Regiment, and we are particularly grateful for the kind co-operation of VISCOUNT HAMPDEN, G.C.V.O., K.C.B., C.M.G., *Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire ;* LORD CROFT, C.M.G., T.D., *Under-Secretary of State for War ;* BRIGADIER LONGMORE, M.B.E. ; COLONEL E. C. M. PHILLIPS, C.B., D.S.O., A.D.C. ; *and the Hertfordshire Mercury and County Press.*

The Booklet, no doubt, has many shortcomings, but much detail has had to be omitted owing to present conditions, which the reader will no doubt appreciate.

C. F. D.

May, 1944.



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FOR many years Hertfordshire has enjoyed a reputation of setting an example to other counties, notably in civil affairs, and not, perhaps, the least in the spirit of voluntary service, which has permeated the inhabitants of the county for many centuries. To one of the most important aspects of this national trait this booklet is devoted—the Territorial Army and, especially, to the Hertfordshire Regiment.

The Hertfordshire Regiment owes its origin to the “ Hertford Volunteer Corps ”, which was formed by Earl Cowper on 25th October, 1859, and in 1877 assumed the title of “ The Herts Rifle Volunteers ” with an establishment of 800 all ranks in eight companies. Later, fresh units were formed in the western district of the county, and two battalions formed.

In 1900 there came a change in the Army administration, and the two battalions became 1st (Herts) and 2nd (Herts) Volunteer Battalions of the Bedfordshire Regiment. It was from these battalions that Volunteer Companies were formed to serve with Regular Battalions abroad in the South African War. The companies were attached to the 2nd Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment and acquitted themselves with considerable distinction.

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The fighting was finished, and we find that on 8th December, 1918, the ceremony of the removal of the Regimental Colours from All Saints' Church, Hertford, where they had been deposited since the outbreak of war, took place. The ceremony was watched by thousands of people, for a Colour Party of two officers and three non-commissioned officers came to take the Colours to the place in Belgium where the Hertfordshire Regiment was to be stationed until the peace had been completed. This was believed to be Charleroi, not far from Namur. The Regiment gradually returned home, and the inhabitants of the various towns gave their men the welcome they truly deserved. The Colours were the last to arrive—in April, 1919.

Further evidence of the great part played by the Hertfordshire Regiment at the early stages of the war is available in the speeches made at various gatherings after the war. In January, 1919, a function was held at St. Albans, when the Earl of Cavan was honoured with the Freedom of the City, having returned home to Wheathampstead after having served the country as Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces with the Italian Army.

In the course of a speech Lord Cavan said he was proud to be a Hertfordshire man and particularly so at the first Battle of Ypres, when he was in command of the 4th Guards' Brigade. He had lost 600 men of the Irish Guards in one day and two or three hundred Grenadiers on the same day. It was at the most critical moment of the battle that Lord French sent to his aid the Hertfordshire Regiment. He went to see Lord Hampden, then in charge of the Hertfordshires, in the most dirty field one could imagine—they had just arrived, but as happy and bright as ever.

Lord Cavan related how he told Lord Hampden how serious the situation was and that he must send half his battalion up into the line that night and further that that line must be held at all costs. "Lord Hampden," he said, "sent his guides down, the half battalion went into the line, and there they stood, these men of Hertfordshire, ranged alongside the hillside

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The following gracious reply was received:—

COLONEL LONGMORE, Commanding 1st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment, Drill Hall, Hertford.

It has given me much pleasure to receive your telegram of loyalty and devotion on the occasion of my becoming the Honorary Colonel of your Regiment. Please convey to all ranks my sincere thanks for their message. I am glad indeed to be associated with the county in which I have spent so many happy years of my life.

ELIZABETH R.

Early in 1939 the distant rumbling of the threat of war was heard again, and, as a preliminary, the order went forth in April that the Territorial Army was to double its strength. The call went out in all the towns and villages in Hertfordshire for a second battalion of the County Regiment. The call was answered with great alacrity and in four weeks the Regiment had the men for a second battalion, and, incidentally, was the first County Regiment to double its strength in the Territorial Army. They went to camp at Shorncliffe as one battalion, some 40 officers and 1,200 men attending.

Such a response was due to the magnificent foundation laid by those who succeeded Lord Croft as commanding officers—Lieut.-Col. E. C. M. Phillips, D.S.O., T.D., Lieut.-Col. Hanbury Pawle, O.B.E., and Lieut.-Col. J. A. Longmore, M.B.E., T.D.

The Regiment was embodied in September, 1939, on the outbreak of the present war with the 6th Battalion Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment, which formed the 162nd Infantry Brigade as part of the 54th Division.

The part the Regiment is playing in the present war will have to be recorded in the future, but no doubt when its history comes to be written it will be as equally brilliant as that of its past.

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