

Section 116

Training in England

The 6th Battalion September 1914 to July 1915

Shorncliffe

The Battalion was raised by Lt Col Foley at Shorncliffe in September 1914. Drafts came in from Berkshire, Birmingham and South Wales. [LW]

The Battalion was raised in September 1914 by Col Hanby [RM 19/9/14]

Lt Col AJW Dowell was appointed to take command of the Battalion.

As with the other Service Battalions there was great difficulty at first in obtaining clothing and equipment. The difficulty was partially solved by allowing battalions to purchase immediate necessities privately and locally. This enabled men to be fitted out, but it was a long time before regulation clothing and equipment was supplied to all.

Colchester

In October 1914 the Battalion moved from Shorncliffe to Colchester where it joined the 53rd Brigade of 18th Division, together with the 8th Norfolks, the 8th Suffolks and the 10th Essex.

Codford St Mary

Training continued at Colchester until May 1915 when the Division moved to Codford St Mary on the western border of Salisbury Plain. In July the Battalion was inspected by HM the King, informed they were going abroad and were given 4 days embarkation leave.

Private Gosling (16070) recalled his experiences.

After 3 days I was fitted out with my first suit. Blue coat and trousers, blue cap and overcoat. On the 4th January 1915 I was drafted to Colchester to join the 6th Battalion, Royal Berks, "C" Company, Section 12, 18th Division. One month of squad drill then full training.