

**Section 141**

**The Labour Battalions**

**The Works Companies**

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When conscription began in March 1916 many men were classified as suitable for labour work rather than for general service. These were given rudimentary training at the barracks and then posted to what were described as Depot Works Companies. There were at least 15 such companies and two at least were somewhat specialised.

The 2nd Depot Company was used to handle men who had been called up but who had specialist administrative skills. They included clerks and managers and also many students. Although nominally part of the regiment almost all were attached to other units within the military establishment such as the Officers Cadet Bn at Trinity Hall Cambridge, APC Hounslow, the RE at Bletchley and the Infantry Records Centre at Warwick.

There was a 3rd Agricultural Company. They were located at Lyndhurst and seem to have been engaged in farming in the New Forest.

The companies recorded are:

<i>type</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>location</i>
<b>Depot</b>		
	1	Reading
	2	various
<b>Infantry Works</b>		
	1	Bulford
	2	
	3	
	4	
	5	
	6	
	7	
	8	
	9	
	10	Cosham
	11	
<b>Agricultural</b>		
	1	
	2	

<b>Labour</b>		
	3	Lyndhurst
	1	
	2	Portsmouth
	3	Cosham
	4	
	5	
	6	Portsmouth
	7	
	8	Cosham
	9	Portsmouth

Postings to the Works Companies ceased after the first postings to the 12th Battalion except for a trickle to the 2nd Depot Company.

The 2nd, 3rd, 6th, 8th and 9th Labour Companies were used to form the 10th Battalion along with 4 Labour Companies from the Wiltshire Regiment.