



Devonshire Regiment

The **Devonshire Regiment** was a line infantry regiment of the British Army which served under various titles and served in many wars and conflicts from 1685 to 1958, such as the Second Boer War, World War I and World War II. In 1958 the regiment was amalgamated with the Dorset Regiment to form the Devonshire and Dorset Regiment which, in 2007, was amalgamated with the Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment, the Royal Green Jackets and The Light Infantry to form The Rifles.

Origin and titles

In June, 1667, Henry Somerset, Marquess of Worcester, was granted a commission to raise a regiment of foot, **The Marquess of Worcester's Regiment of Foot**. The regiment remained in existence for only a few months and was disbanded in the same year. It was re-raised in January 1673 and again disbanded in 1674. In 1682, Henry Somerset was created Duke of Beaufort, and in 1685 he was again commissioned to raise a regiment, **The Duke of Beaufort's Regiment of Foot**, or **Beaufort Musketeers**, to defend Bristol against the rebellion. The regiment served under the name of its various Colonels until it was numbered as the **11th Regiment of Foot** when the numerical system of regimental designation was adopted in 1751. It was given the additional county title of **11th (North Devonshire) Regiment of Foot** in 1782. In 1881, under the Childers Reforms it became the **Devonshire Regiment**, at the same time merging with the militia and rifle volunteer units of the county of Devon

The Great War



Memorial at La Ville-aux-Bois-lès-Pontavert

In the Great War, the regiment expanded to a total of 29 battalions, which fought on the Western Front, in Italy at the battles of the Piave and Vittorio Veneto, Macedonia, Egypt and Palestine, and Mesopotamia. The 9th (Service) Battalion was one of the few British units to reach its initial objectives on the first day of the Battle of the Somme, albeit at the cost of 463 dead or wounded of the 775 men who went 'over the top', with only one officer remaining unwounded. The 8th (Service) Battalion, part of 29th Brigade reserve, was committed within 3 hours of the beginning of the attack and suffered 639 casualties on the first day.

The 1st Battalion, Devonshire Regiment was a Regular Army unit, joined the 8th Brigade, 3rd Division and then transferred to the 14th Brigade, 5th Division.^[10]

The 2nd Battalion, assigned to the 23rd Brigade, 8th Division, was awarded the French Croix de guerre for its gallant defence of Bois des Buttes on 27 May 1918, the first day of the Third Battle of the Aisne.

Post-war and amalgamation

The 2nd Battalion was disbanded at Topsham Barracks in Exeter in 1948. The remaining battalion was in Malaya from 1948 to 1951 at the time of the Malayan Emergency and in Kenya from 1953 to 1955, during the Mau Mau Uprising. In 1958, the regiment was amalgamated with the Dorset Regiment to form the Devonshire and Dorset Regiment.