



## **Manchester Regiment**

The **Manchester Regiment** was a line infantry regiment of the British Army in existence from 1881 until 1958. The regiment was first created during the Childers Reforms 1881 by the amalgamation of the 63rd (West Suffolk) Regiment of Foot and the 96th Regiment of Foot

After distinguished service in both World War I and World War II, the Manchester Regiment was amalgamated with the King's Regiment (Liverpool) in 1958, to form the King's Regiment (Manchester and Liverpool) which was, in 2006, amalgamated with the King's Own Royal Border Regiment and the Queen's Lancashire Regiment to form the present Duke of Lancaster's Regiment (King's, Lancashire and Border).

### **Home Front**

During a raid by German Zeppelin L 21 on the night of 31 March - 1 April 1916, 31 soldiers of the 3rd Manchesters were killed when a bomb hit their billet at Cleethorpes.

### **Western Front**

The 2nd Manchesters embarked for France with the 5th Division in August 1914 and contributed to the rearguard actions that supported the British Expeditionary Force's (BEF) retreat following the Battle of Mons.<sup>1</sup> Engaged in the battles of the Marne, the Aisne and "First Ypres"

Severe casualties were sustained by the 1st Manchesters and its brigade during the Battle of Neuve Chapelle. A succession of intensely fought battles followed, culminating in the Second Battle of Ypres and Battle of Loos.

On 1 July 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme, the regiment had nine battalions committed, including the Manchester Pals, the 16th (1st City), 17th (2nd City), 18th (3rd City) and 19th (4th City), all serving in the 90th Brigade

of the 30th Division. The day proved to be the deadliest in the British Army's history, with more than 57,000 killed, wounded or missing.

The regiment continued its involvement in the Somme Offensive. In late July, the 16th, 17th and 18th Manchesters attacked an area in the vicinity of the small village of Guillemont. During the action, Company Sergeant-Major George Evans, of the 18th, volunteered to deliver an important message, having witnessed five previous, fatal attempts to do so. He delivered his message, running more than half a mile despite being wounded. He was awarded the Victoria Cross.

The later-prominent war poet, Wilfred Owen served with the 2nd Battalion, Manchesters in the later stages of the war. On 1 October 1918 Owen led units of it to storm a number of enemy strong points near the village of Joncourt. For his courage and leadership in the Joncourt action, he was awarded the Military Cross, an award he had always sought in order to justify himself. On 4 November 1918 Wilfred Owen was killed in action during the crossing of the Sambre–Oise Canal, exactly one week (almost to the hour) before the signing of the Armistice of 11 November 1918 and was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant the day after his death.