



North Staffordshire Regiment

The **North Staffordshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's)** was a line infantry regiment of the British Army, which was in existence between 1881 and 1959. The 64th (2nd Staffordshire) Regiment of Foot was created on 21 April 1758 from the 2nd Battalion of the 11th Regiment of Foot.^[2] In 1881, under the Childers Reforms, the 64th Regiment of Foot was merged with the 98th (Prince of Wales's) Regiment of Foot (originally raised in 1824) to form the **Prince of Wales's (North Staffordshire Regiment)**. In 1921 the regimental title was altered to the **North Staffordshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's)**.

First World War (1914–1918)

The North Staffordshire Regiment was heavily committed to the fighting during the First World War, and over the course of the conflict, was expanded to 18 battalions, some by duplication of the Territorial Force battalions and others, labelled "service" battalions raised as part of Field Marshal Kitchener's New Army.

The battalions that served in France took part in many of the major actions of the war including the 1915 Battle of Neuve Chapelle, the 1915 Battle of Loos, the Battle of the Somme in 1916, the Third Battle of Ypres in 1917 and the Battle of Amiens in 1918.

Awards and decorations

Altogether, the regiment was awarded 52 battle honours, but it was ruled that only ten could be carried on the colours.

Victoria Crosses

Four Victoria Crosses were awarded to men of the North Staffordshire Regiment during World War I:

Reputation for profanity

Even by the standards of the British Army, the Regiment (and the 1st Battalion in particular) seems to have gained a reputation during the First World War for profane language. When the 1st Battalion was relieved in the front line

following its defence of Delville Wood in September 1916, one of the advanced posts was missed out by mistake. The Lance-Corporal in command, suspecting something was amiss, sent a man back to the front-line trench to investigate. The soldier realised he was at some risk of being shot by his own side, and so "when he had crawled within shouting distance he enquired politely but firmly what —— bastards were holding that —— trench. The 9th East Surreys, who were the troops thus addressed, recognised the North Stafford idiom and let him in unhurt". Bernard Martin, who served as a 2nd Lieutenant with the 1st Battalion, records another incident which probably took place in 1917, when (very unusually) the battalion was addressed at a church parade by a general, who railed against "the disgusting word many of you utter every time you speak. ... I tell you again this indecent word is not to be used any longer. It is so common amongst you that it has become the shameful nickname by which your battalion is known throughout my Division". As the parade ended, one soldier was heard to ask, "What was that bugger gassing about?"; to which another replied, "Buggered if I know, I was having a kip. Where's the old bugger gone now?"