

## 55<sup>th</sup> (West Lancashire) Infantry Division <sup>(1)</sup>

Headquarters, 55<sup>th</sup> (West Lancashire) Infantry Division

### 164<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade <sup>(2)</sup>

Headquarters, 164<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade & Signal Section

1<sup>st</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Bn. The South Lancashire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Volunteers)

9<sup>th</sup> Bn. The South Lancashire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Volunteers)

9<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment)

### 165<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade <sup>(3)</sup>

Headquarters, 165<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade & Signal Section

1<sup>st</sup> Bn. The Liverpool Scottish

10<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding)

9<sup>th</sup> Bn. The King's Regiment (Liverpool)

### 199<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade <sup>(4)</sup>

Headquarters, 199<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade & Signal Section

2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Lancashire Fusiliers

2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. The Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire)

9<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment

### Divisional Troops

161<sup>st</sup> Reconnaissance Regiment, Royal Armoured Corps <sup>(5)</sup>

109<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment, Royal Artillery <sup>(6)</sup>

259<sup>th</sup> Field Company, Royal Engineers

283<sup>rd</sup> Field Company, Royal Engineers

55<sup>th</sup> (West Lancashire) Divisional Signals, Royal Corps of Signals

## NOTES:

1. This formation was a first line Territorial Army division, which was organised in 1939 as a motor division under Western Command. In November 1939, it moved to Northern Command and then on 19 April 1940 to Eastern Command. It reorganised to a standard infantry division establishment in June 1940, when the 66<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division disbanded and the 199<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade joined this division. It came under command of XI Corps until 6 November 1940 when it transferred to IV Corps. It left an operational formation in October 1941 moving to Southern Command, and then in December 1941, Northern Command. In January 1942, the division was placed on the lower establishment. It spent a short time in VIII Corps District and then South West District, joining South Eastern Command on 31 May 1943. The division was not designated as one of the training divisions of the British Army, being sent to Northern Ireland on 21 December 1943 to come under command of British Troops Northern Ireland. In May 1944, the division was raised to the higher establishment, and returned to the mainland on 26 July 1944. This is the order of battle for the period of deployment in Northern Ireland.
2. One of the original two brigades in the division, the 1<sup>st</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Bn. South Lancashire Regiment was the only remaining battalion in the brigade. A first line Territorial Army unit, it was joined on 13 August 1943 by the war raised 9<sup>th</sup> Bn. South Lancashire Regiment and on 29 September 1943 by the war raised 9<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Buffs. When the Division returned from Northern Ireland the three battalions left this Brigade. The 1<sup>st</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> South Lancashire Regiment transferred to the 166<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, which was also part of this Division. It is believed that both the 9<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Buffs and the 9<sup>th</sup> Bn. South Lancashire Regiment were disbanded at this time.
3. This was the second original brigade in the Division. Only the 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. The Liverpool Scottish was remaining from the three battalions which comprised the Brigade in September 1939. This was a Territorial Army unit, whose parent regiment was the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, which was based in Liverpool. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. of the regiment which had been in the brigade left in September 1942 to be converted to a light anti-aircraft regiment and the 5<sup>th</sup> Bn. The King's Regiment had left in April 1943 to become part of a Beach Group for the invasion of Normandy. The war raised 10<sup>th</sup> Bn. D.W.R. joined the brigade on 13 September 1942, and the 9<sup>th</sup> Bn. The King's Regiment joined on 12 April 1943. In July 1944, the 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. Liverpool Scottish transferred to the 166<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, but the 10<sup>th</sup> Bn. D.W.R. and 9<sup>th</sup> Bn. King's were disbanded at or about this time.
4. In 1939, the 66<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division was formed as a duplicate of the 42<sup>nd</sup> (East Lancashire) Infantry Division. The 199<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade was part of this division. Following the withdrawal of the British Army from Dunkirk, the 66<sup>th</sup> Division was disbanded and the 199<sup>th</sup> Brigade transferred to this division. Only the 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Lancashire Fusiliers was an original unit, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. Loyal Regiment (formed on 28 May 1942 by the redesignation of the war raised 10<sup>th</sup> Bn.) joined on 16 September 1942 and the war raised 9<sup>th</sup> Bn. Beds & Herts joined on 16 October 1943. On 15 August 1944, this brigade was redesignated as the 166<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. Loyals moved to Italy in October 1944 and it appears the 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Lancashire Fusiliers and 9<sup>th</sup> Bn. Beds & Herts disbanded at this time.

5. This regiment joined this division on 23 December 1943 as 161<sup>st</sup> Regiment, Reconnaissance Corps. It had been formed in August 1941 by the conversion of the 12<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Green Howards as the armoured reconnaissance regiment of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Armoured Division. It became part of the Reconnaissance Corps with the disbandment of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Armoured Division at the end of 1943. It left this division on 24 July 1944, when it transferred to the 45<sup>th</sup> (Holding) Division.
6. Formed in 1939 as the duplicate of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Field Regiment, this regiment initially was under the command of the 66th Infantry Division. It transferred to this division on 1 July 1940 when the 66<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division disbanded.

## 55<sup>th</sup> (West Lancashire) Infantry Division <sup>(1)</sup>

Headquarters, 55<sup>th</sup> (West Lancashire) Infantry Division

### 164<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade <sup>(2)</sup>

Headquarters, 164<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade & Signal Section

4<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Devonshire Regiment (1<sup>st</sup> Rifle Volunteers)

5<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Somerset Light Infantry (Prince Albert's)

1<sup>st</sup> Bn. The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry

### 165<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade <sup>(3)</sup>

Headquarters, 165<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade & Signal Section

4<sup>th</sup> (City of Dundee) Bn. The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment)

2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. The Royal Irish Fusiliers (Princess Victoria's)

5<sup>th</sup> Bn. The West Yorkshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Own)

### 166<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade <sup>(4)</sup>

Headquarters, 166<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade & Signal Section

1<sup>st</sup> Bn. The Liverpool Scottish

1<sup>st</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Bn. The South Lancashire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Volunteers)

8<sup>th</sup> (Ardwick) Bn. The Manchester Regiment <sup>(5)</sup>

### Divisional Troops

1<sup>st</sup> Royal Gloucestershire Hussars <sup>(6)</sup>

5<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Manchester Regiment <sup>(7)</sup>

Headquarters, 55<sup>th</sup> (West Lancashire) Divisional Royal Artillery

5<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment, Royal Artillery <sup>(8)</sup>

109<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment, Royal Artillery <sup>(9)</sup>

141<sup>st</sup> (Queen's Own Dorset Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery <sup>(10)</sup>

89<sup>th</sup> Anti-Tank Regiment, Royal Artillery <sup>(11)</sup>

150<sup>th</sup> (The Loyal) Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery <sup>(12)</sup>

Headquarters, 55<sup>th</sup> (West Lancashire) Divisional Royal Engineers

205<sup>th</sup> (Wessex) Field Company, Royal Engineers

259<sup>th</sup> Field Company, Royal Engineers

283<sup>rd</sup> Field Company, Royal Engineers

108<sup>th</sup> Field Park Company, Royal Engineers

9<sup>th</sup> Bridging Platoon, Royal Engineers

55<sup>th</sup> (West Lancashire) Divisional Signals, Royal Corps of Signals

## NOTES:

1. The division returned from Northern Ireland on 26 July 1944, being re-equipped to the higher establishment. It came under the command of G.H.Q. Home Forces between 26 July 1944 and 12 April 1945. On that date it transferred to Western Command. It is believed the division disbanded in 1946, and it was not reformed in the reconstituted Territorial Army of 1947.
2. On its return from Northern Ireland, there was a complete change in units in this brigade. Two transferred in from the 45<sup>th</sup> (Wessex) Infantry Division, the 4<sup>th</sup> Bn. Devons from 134<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade and the 5<sup>th</sup> Bn. S.L.I from 135<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade. The 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. D.C.L.I. had been reformed in December 1942 by the re-designation of the 6<sup>th</sup> Bn. D.C.L.I., and came under command of the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, 47<sup>th</sup> (London) Infantry Division. It transferred to this Brigade when the 47<sup>th</sup> Division was disbanded in August 1944. The 164<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade was disbanded on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1945, after the cessation of hostilities in North West Europe. All three battalions in the brigade were transferred to the 183<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade, 61<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division in preparation for deployment to the Far East.
3. This was one of the two original brigades in the division. The 4<sup>th</sup> Bn. Black Watch was sent to Gibraltar in July 1940, leaving in April 1943. On its return, it joined the 141<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade, 47<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division transferring to this brigade on 26 July 1944. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. Royal Irish Fusiliers had started as the war raised 6<sup>th</sup> Bn., but following the capture of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. on the Aegean Islands, in May 1944, it was redesignated as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. It joined this brigade on 26 July 1944 from the 141<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade. The 5<sup>th</sup> Bn. West Yorks transferred in from 220<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, 76<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division on 28 August 1944. This brigade remained with the division until it was disbanded in 1946.
4. On 15 August 1944, the 199<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade was redesignated as the 166<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade. The three battalions which comprised the brigade prior to July 1944, only the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. The Loyal Regiment stayed, but this battalion also left in October 1944 to travel to Italy (see below). The 1<sup>st</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Bn. South Lancashire Regiment transferred from the 164<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade and the 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. The Liverpool Scottish transferred in from the 165<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade. When the division returned to the mainland in July 1944, this brigade remained in Northern Ireland under operational command of the Northern Ireland District. On 28 June 1945, this brigade returned to the mainland and rejoined the division.
5. This battalion was a pre-war Territorial Army unit, which had left the U.K. in May 1940 to serve in Malta. It left Malta in August 1943 and returned to the U.K. It joined this brigade on 28 November 1944 replacing the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. The Loyal Regiment, which had left this brigade on 16 October 1944 to travel to Italy.
6. This regiment joined as the divisional reconnaissance regiment on 2 August 1944 from the 9<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division. It left the division on 15 June 1945 to transfer to the 35<sup>th</sup> Armoured Brigade.
7. This battalion joined the division as the machine gun battalion on 22 October 1944. It remained with the division until it was disbanded.
8. The 5<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment was a Regular Army regiment, which in 1939 was based in India. The regiment had served in Malaya, being captured there in February 1942. The regiment was reformed in the U.K. in June 1943. It came under command of the 47<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. It transferred to this division on 1 August 1944. It was reorganised and redesignated as the 5<sup>th</sup> Light Regiment on 27 June 1945.

9. The 109<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment had been formed in 1939 as a duplicate of the 51<sup>st</sup> Field Regiment. It came under command of the 66<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division until that division disbanded in June 1940, when it transferred to this division.
10. This regiment had been formed in 1939 as a duplicate of the 94<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment. It was part of the 43<sup>rd</sup> (Wessex) Infantry Division and remained with that formation until June 1942. It then transferred to the 9<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division. When that division was disbanded in July 1944, the regiment transferred to this division. It left on 11 June 1945 to transfer to the 61<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division.
11. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. The Liverpool Scottish had been formed in April 1939 as a duplicate of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, and it came under command of this division. In November 1942, the battalion was converted into an anti-tank regiment. It spent a period under command of Home Forces and the 47<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division before joining this division on 21 October 1944. It left this division on 29 August 1945.
12. This regiment was formed in April 1943 by the conversion of the 62<sup>nd</sup> Searchlight Regiment, which itself had been formed by the conversion of the 4<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire) in 1938. It served with Home Forces and the 9<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division until joining this division on 1 August 1944.
13. This field park company joined the division on 30 August 1944.

SOURCES:

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