

## 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Infantry Division <sup>(1)</sup>

Headquarters, 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Infantry Division & Employment Platoon

### 152<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Brigade <sup>(2)</sup>

Headquarters, 152<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Brigade & Signal Section

2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. The Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Buffs, The Duke of Albany's)

4<sup>th</sup> (Ross-shire) Bn. The Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Buffs, The Duke of Albany's)

4<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders

152<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Brigade Anti-Tank Company

### 153<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade <sup>(3)</sup>

Headquarters, 153<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade & Signal Section

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

1<sup>st</sup> Bn. The Gordon Highlanders

5<sup>th</sup> (Buchan and Formartin) Bn. The Gordon Highlanders

153<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade Anti-Tank Company

### 154<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade <sup>(5)</sup>

Headquarters, 154<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade & Signal Section

1<sup>st</sup> Bn. The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) <sup>(4)</sup>

7<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (Princess Louise's)

8<sup>th</sup> (Argyllshire) Bn. The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (Princess Louise's)

154<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Anti-Tank Company

### Divisional Troops

Headquarters, 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Infantry Divisional Royal Artillery <sup>(7)</sup>

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

23<sup>rd</sup> Field Regiment, Royal Artillery

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

51<sup>st</sup> (West Highland) Anti-Tank Regiment, Royal Artillery <sup>(6 – one battery only)</sup>

Headquarters, 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Infantry Divisional Royal Engineers

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

236<sup>th</sup> (City of Aberdeen) Field Company, Royal Engineers (6)

237<sup>th</sup> (City of Dundee) Field Company, Royal Engineers (6)

239<sup>th</sup> (City of Aberdeen) Field Park Company, Royal Engineers (6)

51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Infantry Divisional Signals, Royal Corps of Signals

Headquarters, 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Infantry Divisional Royal Army Service Corps (8)

51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Infantry Divisional Ammunition Company, Royal Army Service Corps

51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Infantry Divisional Petrol Company, Royal Army Service Corps

51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Infantry Divisional Supply Column, Royal Army Service Corps

Headquarters, 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Infantry Divisional Royal Army Service Corps

152<sup>nd</sup> (Highland) Field Ambulance, Royal Army Medical Corps

153<sup>rd</sup> (Highland) Field Ambulance, Royal Army Medical Corps

154<sup>th</sup> (Highland) Field Ambulance, Royal Army Medical Corps (6)

13<sup>th</sup> Field Hygiene Section, Royal Army Medical Corps

8<sup>th</sup> Mobile Bath Unit, Royal Army Ordnance Corps

51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Infantry Divisional Field Cash Office, Royal Army Pay Corps

51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Infantry Divisional Field Post Office, Royal Engineers

51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Divisional Provost Company, Corps of Military Police

Attached Troops

1<sup>st</sup> Bn. The Princess Louise's Kensington Regiment (9)

7<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers (10)

6<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Royal Scots Fusiliers (11)

7<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Royal Norfolk Regiment (12)

'A' Infantry Brigade (12)

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

2<sup>nd</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding) (14)

1<sup>st</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Sherwood Foresters (Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire Regiment)

51<sup>st</sup> (Midland) Medium Regiment, Royal Artillery (15)

1<sup>st</sup> Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery (16)

213<sup>th</sup> (North Midland) Field Company, Royal Engineers (17)

## NOTES:

1. The 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Division was a Territorial Army formation that was reconstituted in 1920 after service in the Great War, and was based in Scottish Command. As the outbreak of another war became increasingly likely, the division began mobilization on 24 August 1939. Major General Victor Morven FORTUNE, C.B., D.S.O., *p.s.c.* had assumed command of the division on 3 January 1938, and remained in command until he made the difficult decision to surrender the elements of the formation trapped at St. Valery. Like most of his troops, he became a prisoner-of-war for the rest of the Second World War. The division arrived in France on 24 January 1940, and four days later, it came under command of II Corps. On 9 April, the division transferred to III Corps, and then on 22 April, it was sent to the French sector on the Saar Front to come under command of the Third French Army. It was under French Command when the Germans attacked on 10 May 1940. It was forced back with the retreating French Army, until it was captured on 12 June 1940. The 154<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade was detached to form ArkForce, and therefore escaped capture. In the United Kingdom, the 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (which was the second line duplicate of the 51<sup>st</sup> Division) was used to reconstitute the 51<sup>st</sup> Division. The former regular battalions, namely the 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. Black Watch, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. Gordon Highlanders, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Seaforth Highlanders were reconstituted. The 5<sup>th</sup> Gordons were reconstituted from the 7<sup>th</sup> Bn. to form the 5<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Bn.. The 4<sup>th</sup> Cameron Highlanders were reconstituted, but were redesignated the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. when the original 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. was captured in Tobruk. The 4<sup>th</sup> Bn. Seaforth Highlanders ceased to exist after France. Of the surviving battalions, the 4<sup>th</sup> Bn. Black Watch was sent to Gibraltar, the 7<sup>th</sup> Bn. Argylls amalgamated with the 10<sup>th</sup> Bn. to form the 7<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> Bn. in the new 154<sup>th</sup> Brigade. The 7<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> Bn. was later redesignated simply as the 7<sup>th</sup> Bn.. The 8<sup>th</sup> Argylls were sent to Plymouth to join the 1<sup>st</sup> Royal Marine Brigade and later joined 38<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, 78<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division to fight in Tunisia and Italy. The 17<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment escaped with 154<sup>th</sup> Brigade, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Field Regiment was captured and later reformed. The 75<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment escaped in sufficient numbers to remain a viable unit, but the 51<sup>st</sup> Anti-Tank Regiment was captured and not reformed. The three Field Companies survived. The 26<sup>th</sup> Field Company later joined the 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade (Guards) serving in North Africa and Italy. 236<sup>th</sup> Field Company joined 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, going on to serve in Madagascar, India and Burma. 237<sup>th</sup> Field Company went on to serve with 78<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in North Africa, Sicily and Italy. 239<sup>th</sup> Field Park Company was the only engineer unit that continued to serve with the Division.
2. This was a Territorial Army brigade. Colonel Herbert William Vansittart STEWART, D.S.O., assumed command of the brigade on 27 February 1936. He was promoted to the rank of Temporary Brigadier on 24 November 1937, when the status of commanders of Territorial Army brigades was raised. Brigadier STEWART was wounded and evacuated from St. Valery-en-Caux on 5 June 1940, seven days before the eventual surrender. He was awarded the C.B.E. on 18 October 1940, and later promoted to the rank of Major General.
3. This brigade was another Territorial Army formation. Brigadier (Temporary) George Talbot BURNEY, M.C., transferred to command this brigade from the 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade on 3 January 1940. He was fifty years' of age, and replaced fifty-five-year-old Temporary Brigadier G. B. ROWAN-HAMILTON, D.S.O., M.C.. Brigadier BURNEY was captured on 12 June 1940, and died in captivity on 7 November 1940. He was buried in the Durnbach War Cemetery.
4. These two battalions exchanged brigades on 5 June 1940.

5. The third Territorial Army brigade was also commanded by a Regular Army officer, namely Temporary Brigadier Arthur Christopher Lancelot STANLEY-CLARKE, D.S.O.\*. He had assumed command of the brigade on 17 November 1937 in the rank of Colonel, and was promoted to the rank of Temporary Brigadier on 24 November 1937 when the status of the commanders of Territorial Army brigades was raised. This brigade was detached from the division on 9 June 1940 to form 'Ark Force'. This formation was tasked with defending the port of Le Havre and the lines of communication for the division. As such, it was evacuated successfully back to the U.K.. Brigadier STANLEY-CLARKE remained in command of the brigade as the division was reconstituted in the U.K., and was awarded the C.B.E. on 18 October 1940. He later commanded the Edinburgh Area in Scottish Command.
6. These units were detached from the division to Ark Force therefore, they were successfully evacuated from Le Havre.
7. The Commander Royal Artillery for the division was a Territorial Army officer, namely, Temporary Brigadier James Ogilvy SHEPHERD, C.B.E., M.C., T.D.. He was appointed on 20 May 1938, and was awarded the C.B.E. on 8 June 1939. On 12 March 1940, a Regular Army officer, Brigadier (Acting) Henry Charles Hamilton EDEN, M.C.\*, *p.s.c.* replaced Brigadier SHEPHERD. Brigadier EDEN became a prisoner-of-war on 12 June 1940, and spent the rest of the war in captivity. He retired soon after his release.
8. On the outbreak of the Second World War, when the division mobilized, the three companies of the Royal Army Service Corps allocated to the division formed an Ammunition Company, Petrol Company and Supply Company. In this division, the 525<sup>th</sup> Company, R.A.S.C. formed the Ammunition Company, the 526<sup>th</sup> Company, R.A.S.C. formed the Petrol Company and the 527<sup>th</sup> Company formed the Supply Column. The fourth R.A.S.C. company was not added to the divisional establishment until June 1942, when the organisation was changed to three infantry brigade companies, and one divisional troops company.
9. This first line Territorial Army battalion was based at 190, Hammersmith Road, London and started the war under the command of the 2<sup>nd</sup> London Infantry Division. It spent the winter of 1939 training at Ilminster in Somerset. The battalion left the 2<sup>nd</sup> London Infantry Division in April 1940 to move to France, where on arrival, it came under command of this division on the Saar Front. The battalion withdrew with the division, fighting on the River Somme on 2 June. Then it moved to the line of the River Bresle. With the German advance, 'A' and 'D' Companies found themselves within the perimeter at St. Valery-en-Caux, where they surrendered with the division with 274 men going into captivity. Battalion Headquarters, 'B' and 'C' Companies made their way back to Le Havre from which they were evacuated. The survivors of the battalion landed at Southampton on 13 June 1940.
10. A first-line Territorial Army battalion, this unit had its headquarters at Alnwick in Northumberland, with companies based across the north of the county. In March 1940, the battalion moved to France as III Corps Troops, being attached to the 51<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division. It was deployed with the division to the Saar Front in April. The battalion began its withdrawal on 20 May. It arrived at Preuseville near Abbeville on 29 May, where the division formed a defensive line. On 7 June, the battalion was deployed along the River Bresle in support of the division. It was forced back into the perimeter formed around St. Valery-en-Caux, surrendering with the division on 12 June. The battalion was reformed in the United Kingdom, later serving in North West Europe with the 59<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.

11. This battalion was a second line Territorial Army battalion, which had been formed in 1939 as a duplicate of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion. This battalion was based at Ayr alongside its parent unit. It was sent to France as a Pioneer Unit in April 1940, being attached to the division for operations on the Saar Front. The battalion performed some strenuous work constructing defences on the Maginot Line. It moved back when the division had to retire, with 30 May finding the battalion deployed on the line of the River Bresle. Attached to 'Ark Force', the battalion moved back to Le Havre from where it was evacuated.
12. This battalion was also a second line Territorial Army battalion, formed in 1939 as a duplicate of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion. This battalion was based at King's Lynn. It had started the war under command of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade, 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. It left that Division on 1 November 1939 to transfer to France, where it came under command of the B.E.F. for pioneer duties as it was not fully equipped or trained. The battalion was deployed to the Saar Front, where it came under command of the 51<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division. Withdrawing with that formation, the battalion deployed along the River Bresle. After the Germans broke through to the south, the battalion found itself within the perimeter at St. Valery-en-Caux, surrendering with the rest of the division on 12 June.
13. This brigade was the original 'Beau Force'. On 4 May 1940, the headquarters of the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade came under command of the 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in France. At this time, the three existing units in the brigade came under command of H.Q., Lines of Communication, B.E.F.. These three battalions comprised 'Beau Force'. It was retitled Number 2 Lines of Communication Brigade, then 'X' Brigade, and then 'A' Brigade. The three constituent battalions were formerly under command of the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, having been deployed to France specifically for Lines of Communication duties. Brigadier (Acting) Michael Arthur GREEN, O.B.E., M.C. commanded 'A' Brigade with effect from 27 May 1940. The brigade formed a medium machine gun company with men from the No. 5 Infantry Base Depot. In addition, there was a carrier platoon under brigade command. On 9 June, the brigade was sent north to reinforce the 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Infantry Division. It was sent back to guard the lines of communication to Le Havre (with the exception of the 2/7<sup>th</sup> Duke of Wellington's Regiment (see below)), from where it was evacuated. The brigade was formally disbanded on 18 July 1940 back in the U.K.
14. On 18 May 1940, the 4<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Border Regiment was detached from this brigade to Rouen where it joined No. 5 Reserve Motor Transport Company, R.A.S.C., and became a motorised battalion. On 23 May, it was ordered to join the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armoured Brigade near Amiens. The battalion took part in the abortive attack on Abbeville and was then used to protect the right flank of the 51<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division. 'D' Company was deployed to guard the bridge over the River Bresle at Incheville, which it successfully held for six days until overwhelmed. The rest of the battalion fell back to Le Havre, from where it was evacuated to Cherbourg. On 16 June, it was ordered forward again, but was then diverted to Brest. It sailed from Brest on 17 June to return to Southampton. The 4<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Border Regiment was replaced in 'A' Brigade by the:  
**2<sup>nd</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding)**  
This battalion had been part of the 137<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade of the 46<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. It was cut off from the main division when enemy forces cut through northern France. When the rest of the brigade moved back towards Le Havre, this battalion did not do so and ended up in the perimeter around St. Valery-en-Caux. As it was at the eastern end, near Veules-les-Roses, some 500 men were evacuated successfully from the beaches back to the U.K.

15. The 51<sup>st</sup> (Midland) Medium Regiment was formed This brigade (regiment) was formed in October 1932 by amalgamation of the 51<sup>st</sup> and 54<sup>th</sup> Medium Brigade. The Headquarters Battery, 215<sup>th</sup> and 216<sup>th</sup> Batteries were all based in Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire. The third battery of the brigade was the 204<sup>th</sup> (Warwickshire) Medium Battery, based in Saltley, Birmingham. The regiment mobilised at the outbreak of war, with now the 215<sup>th</sup> and 240<sup>th</sup> (Shropshire Horse Artillery) Batteries now under command. It moved to France in October 1939. In April 1940, it was deployed to the Saar Front under command of the 51<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division. The regiment withdrew with the division and came under 'Ark Force' so made for Le Havre. It was evacuated successfully from that port in June. The regiment remained in the U.K. until September 1942, when it sailed for Egypt. It served in Italy until February 1945 when it moved to North West Europe.
16. A Regular Army regiment, this unit was originally part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Support Group in the 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured Brigade. It was detached and sent to the Saar Front, where it came under command of the 51<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division. One battery was detached, to be replaced by the 385<sup>th</sup> Field Battery from the 97<sup>th</sup> (Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment. This composite unit fought with the division during the retreat and came within the perimeter at St. Valery-en-Caux. Most of the men of the 385<sup>th</sup> Battery were evacuated successfully from the beach at Veules, but the rest of the regiment surrendered with the division. Successfully evacuated from Dunkirk, the other battery from this regiment was used to reconstitute the regiment back in the U.K.
17. This Territorial Army field company was evacuated from Le Havre.

**SOURCES:**

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