

24th Indian Anti-Aircraft Brigade (1)

Headquarters, 24th Indian Anti-Aircraft Brigade & Signal Section

1st Coast Regiment, Ceylon Garrison Artillery (2)

63rd (Northumbrian) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery (3)
(H.Q., 177th (Northumbrian), 178th (Northumbrian) & 269th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Batteries, Royal Artillery)

9th (Punjab) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Indian Artillery (4)
(H.Q., 10th, 24th (Punjab) & 26th (Punjab) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Batteries, Indian Artillery)

2nd Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Ceylon Garrison Artillery (5)
(H.Q., 5th, 6th & 8th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Batteries, Ceylon Garrison Artillery)

43rd Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery (6)
(H.Q., 147th, 148th & 264th Light Anti-Aircraft Batteries, Royal Artillery)

74th Light Anti-Aircraft Battery, Royal Artillery (7)

7th Light Ceylon Garrison Artillery

405th Searchlight Battery, Royal Artillery

10th Searchlight Battery, Ceylon Garrison Artillery

24th Anti-Aircraft Brigade Company, Royal Army Service Corps

24th Anti-Aircraft Brigade Workshops, Royal Electrical & Mechanical Engineers

NOTES:

1. This brigade was formed in February 1943 as the second anti-aircraft brigade on the island of Ceylon. The brigade formed the anti-aircraft defences for the naval port and garrison at Trincomalee, on the east coast of Ceylon, where it replaced the 1st Royal Marine Anti-Aircraft Brigade. Brigadier (Temporary) Brigadier Arthur John Rupert Marshall LESLIE, C.B.E., *g.*, commanded the brigade at its formation until 4 March 1943, when he was appointed the Brigadier Anti-Aircraft Artillery for Ceylon Command. Brigadier (Temporary) John Dallas EDGE, M.C., came from Eastern Command on the same date to assume command of the Brigade. Brigadier EDGE left on 18 July 1943, and he reverted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in August 1943. Brigadier (Acting) Gilbert Daly HOLMES, M.B.E., *G.*, assumed command of the Brigade with effect from 18 July 1943. Between 26 November and 22 December 1943, Brigadier HOLMES was promoted to the rank of Acting Major General while undertaking the appointment of Garrison Commander at Trincomalee. On 23 December 1943, he resumed command of the 24th Anti-Aircraft Brigade. Brigadier HOLMES transferred to the command of the 9th Anti-Aircraft Brigade in India on 21 February 1944. Brigadier (Acting) Thomas Houssemayne Du BOULAY (Captain, Reserve of Officers), was promoted to command this Brigade from the 69th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment. He may have assumed command in February 1944, or on 11 April 1944. On 23 June 1944, Brigadier (Temporary) Victor Raymond Wallen CRAWFORD, M.C., *p.s.c.*, assumed command of the Brigade, allowing Brigadier Du BOULAY to return to the United Kingdom. In January 1945, the 24th Anti-Aircraft Brigade transferred to India, and in March 1945, with different units under command, it was deployed to Meiktila in Burma, still under the command of Brigadier CRAWFORD (see next page).
2. This regiment was formed in September 1939, from locally enlisted personnel, to man the coastal defence guns at Trincomalee. The first Commanding Officer was Lieutenant Colonel O. B. FORBES. On 14 August 1942, Lieutenant Colonel C. C. M. MacLEOD-CAREY assumed command. Lieutenant Colonel D. W. L. RICHEY then assumed command on 13 January 1944. It was under command of the 23rd Anti-Aircraft Brigade from 1 March until 15 March 1944, transferring to the 24th Anti-Aircraft Brigade. It served with the 24th A.A. Brigade until 2 January 1945, when that formation left Ceylon. Lieutenant Colonel G. e. G. KOCH was the Commanding Officer with effect from 1 December 1944. It reverted to the 23rd A.A. Brigade for two days, after which it appears to have been disbanded.
3. The 55th Medium Brigade was reformed in 1920. The headquarters was based at the Drill Hall, The Green, Sunderland. The 217th Battery was also based in Sunderland alongside the headquarters. The 218th and 220th Batteries were based at the Drill Hall, Seaham Harbour, and the 219th Battery at the Armoury, West Hartlepool. In 1936, the brigade converted into an anti-aircraft role, being titled as the 63rd (Durham) Anti-Aircraft Brigade. The Headquarters, 176th and 178th Batteries were based in Sunderland at the Drill Hall, The Green, and the 177th Battery at the Drill Hall, Seaham Harbour. It joined the 30th (Northumbrian) Anti-Aircraft Group, and it was still with this group (by now redesignated as a brigade) at the outbreak of war. The regiment later served in Ceylon and India. The regiment arrived in Ceylon on 29 July 1942, with under command the 177th, 178th and 269th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Batteries. By this date, it appears that the title of the regiment had changed from Durham to Northumbrian, but it is not known when this change occurred. Lieutenant Colonel C. H. WRIGHT commanded the regiment during this period.

The regiment came under command of the 1st Royal Marine Anti-Aircraft Brigade, transferring to the command of the 24th Anti-Aircraft Brigade on 21 March 1943 when the Headquarters, 1st (Royal Marine) Anti-Aircraft Brigade departed for India. On 31 January 1944, the regiment was transferred to the 23rd Anti-Aircraft Brigade, until it moved to Jubblepore in India on 24 April 1944, where it was placed in suspended animation. The remaining personnel formed the 63rd Medium Battery, which then combined with the 70th Medium Battery (formed by converting the 70th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment) to form the 87th Medium Regiment. The new regiment continued to serve in India until disbanded in May 1945.

4. This regiment was raised on 1 June 1942 by the conversion of the 14th Bn. 8th Punjab Regiment. On formation, it comprised the 24th, 25th and 26th H.A.A. Batteries, and it was deployed to Ceylon, initially under the 23rd Anti-Aircraft Brigade at Colombo. When the 24th Anti-Aircraft Brigade was formed at Trincomalee, this regiment moved across the island to join this Brigade. By this date, the 10th H.A.A. Battery had transferred from the 4th Indian H.A.A. Regiment to replace the 25th (Punjab) H.A.A. Battery. The regiment was still serving at Trincomalee in October 1944, and it was disbanded on 4 June 1945. Lieutenant Colonel A. GEORGE was in command of this regiment until Lieutenant Colonel E. V. M. HUGHES replaced him with effect from 10 May 1944.
5. The Ceylon Garrison Artillery (C.G.A.) was formed in 1918 by the amalgamation of the Ceylon Artillery Volunteers and the Town Guard Artillery. The post-First World War function of the C.G.A was to man coastal artillery batteries at Colombo and Trincomalee. With the outbreak of the Second World War in the Far East in December 1941, the C.G.A. was mobilised and expanded. The 1st Coast Regiment comprised one field and four coast batteries around Colombo. The 2nd H.A.A. Regiment was formed at Trincomalee, and it was equipped with the 3.7" anti-aircraft guns. A 3rd Searchlight/Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment was also formed, based in and around Colombo, equipped with searchlights and 40 mm Bofors guns.
6. This regiment was formed in November 1939 with a battery from the 16th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment. It was based in the U.K. until it left for the Far East in December 1941. The regiment arrived at Colombo on 4 March 1942, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel W. BALDWIN-FLETCHER, and it joined the 23rd Anti-Aircraft Brigade. In September 1943, it transferred to the 24th Anti-Aircraft Brigade at Trinacomalee. It was under command of this Brigade from 11 September 1943 until 12 November 1944. Lieutenant Colonel F. H. B. JENKIN assumed command of 15 February 1944. The 264th L.A.A. Battery was detached to join the 13th Anti-Aircraft Brigade at Chittagong for a period of time. The regiment disbanded in Ceylon in March 1945.
7. This battery was detached from the 23rd Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, which was under command of the 23rd Anti-Aircraft Brigade.

24th Indian Anti-Aircraft Brigade (1)

Headquarters, 24th Indian Anti-Aircraft Brigade & Signal Section

5th Indian Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Indian Artillery (2)

(H.Q., 12th, 13th & 14th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Batteries, Indian Artillery)

2nd Indian Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery (3)

(H.Q., 7th, 8th & 9th Light Anti-Aircraft Batteries, Indian Artillery)

NOTES:

1. This brigade had been formed in Ceylon, but it moved to India in early 1945. Brigadier (Temporary) Victor Raymond Wallen CRAWFORD, M.C., *p.s.c.*, was in command of the Brigade during its period of deployment in Burma. The Brigade was flown into Meiktila to defend the airfield against Japanese air attacks, and then it followed XXXIII Indian Corps as it advanced from Central Burma to Rangoon. On its arrival in Rangoon, this Brigade became responsible for the air defence of Rangoon. This responsibility was transferred to the 3rd Indian Anti-Aircraft Brigade in June 1945, and this Brigade was redesignated as the 61st Army Group, Royal Artillery, under command of the 12th Army in Burma, but by September 1945, all anti-aircraft tasks in Burma were terminated, which led to the 24th Anti-Aircraft Brigade (61st A.G.R.A.) being disbanded.
2. This regiment was raised on 1 March 1942, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel R. C. ELLIOTT, and it comprised the 12th, 13th, and 14th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Batteries. It was deployed to Assam where it came under the command of the 9th Indian Anti-Aircraft Brigade, and in October 1944, it transferred to the 3rd Indian Anti-Aircraft Brigade, which had now deployed to Assam. On an unknown date, Lieutenant Colonel O. C. D. BERRY assumed command of the regiment. By March 1945, this regiment was under command of the 24th Anti-Aircraft Brigade, and it was deployed to Meiktila with the Brigade. It moved to Rangoon, and it was still based there when the Brigade (now the 61st A.G.R.A.) was disbanded.
3. Raised on 1 October 1941, this regiment was under the command of Lieutenant Colonel E. C. KENSINGTON, and it comprised the 7th, 8th, and 9th L.A.A. Batteries. It was deployed to Bengal, where it joined the 14th (West African) Anti-Aircraft Brigade, but by February 1943, it was stationed in Assam. Towards the end of 1944, it was re-equipped with self-propelled 40 mm Bofors guns, and it joined the 24th Anti-Aircraft Brigade. The regiment was deployed to Meiktila, and it moved down to Rangoon with the Brigade. In June 1945, it came under command of the 61st A.G.R.A. when the 24th A.A. Brigade was redesignated. On an unknown date, Lieutenant Colonel R. G. B. REED has assumed command of the regiment.

SOURCES:

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Websites

1st Royal Marine Anti-Aircraft Brigade

<http://www.rothwell.force9.co.uk/burmaweb/RMIO-1st-RM-AA-Brigade.htm>

[Accessed 24 November 2022]

Please see: <https://www.librarything.com/catalog/RobPALMER>

Additional material kindly provided by Steve ROTHWELL in December 2025.