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'IS THE TERRITORIAL FORCE A SHAM?' WERE THE TERRITORIALS A MILITARILY CAPABLE ORGANISATION PRIOR TO THE GREAT WAR, 1908-1914?: ARE THERE LESSONS TO BE LEARNT?

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The Territorial Force (TF - forerunner of the Territorial Army) before the Great War had a reputation for being a poorly trained, poorly led and inefficient organisation.¹ Colonel Sir Mark Sykes, Commanding Officer (CO) of the 5th Battalion The Green Howards (TF) claimed that the 'Territorial Army with its incomplete battalions, poor physique, lack of training, lack of material and lack of equipment, cannot be at present dignified with the name of an Army.'² This criticism was made in 1908, shortly after the TF had formed replacing the expensive and poorly functioning Militia, Yeomanry (cavalry) and Volunteers. However, criticism of its poor training and poor equipment continued up until the outbreak of war and was disseminated through the journals and newspapers of the time especially by the National Service League (NSL - a pro-conscriptionist organisation) who saw the TF as a block to their progress.³ There was a real groundswell of anti-TF rhetoric during this period which criticized the organisations training methods as well as their purpose. Added to this was a strong bias towards citizen-soldiers from the public and professional soldiers alike, present ever since there have been professional and amateur soldiers working side by side, which presented itself, in the Territorials case, as either outright hostility or as satire subtle or otherwise.⁴ It could be said that the campaign by the NSL against the TF has clouded the way reservist soldiers are perceived right-up to the present day.

This article will ask whether the poor training and poor equipment was in fact, as Sykes had suggested, the fault of the TF. There was a framework which the Territorials used for its training and other commitments; this was shaped by the

¹ Ian F. W. Beckett, *Territorials: A Century of Service* (Plymouth: DRA Publishing, 2008), pp. 21-4. There was a part of the TF called the 'Class Battalions' that attracted middle class recruits and had more cache and more money than the rest of the TF. Most of the Class Battalions were based in London with regiments such as the London Scottish, The Artist's Rifles and the oldest army unit in Britain The Honourable Artillery Company. An example of a class battalion outside of the capital was the Liverpool Scottish.

² Hull History Centre (hereafter HHC), UDDSY2/8/4/3, Colonel Sir Mark Sykes, pamphlet entitled 'Things Political' (No. 4), 'England's Dangers', transcribed speech delivered at the Norton Conservative Association Annual Meeting, 3 December, 1908, p. 9. Mark Sykes was also the Unionist Member of Parliament for Hull West (1912-1919) and a pro-conscriptionist National Service League member.

³ Anon, 'Territorial Force', *The Manchester Guardian*, 21 Feb., 1912. Just one example of many states that 'Viscount Middleton said that not only was the TF 60,000 short, but its training was defective, so that it would be useless as a defensive force in the event of the expeditionary force going out of the country.'

⁴ Ian F. W. Beckett, *Britain's Part-time Soldiers: The Amateur Military Tradition 1558-1945* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2011), pp. xi-ii.

amount of time serving members of the organisation could afford to give the Territorials who were volunteer civilians with jobs and families after all. Therefore, this article will also highlight the influence of the Territorials' employers and families and the effect they had upon attendance at training.

Furthermore, a spotlight will be shone on Territorial failings and whether there was any substance to the constant stream of disparaging remarks. Moreover, it will ascertain whether these attacks were politically motivated and whether they had a basis in truth. Finally, by 1914 and the start of the Great War were the TF ready to deploy and support the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in Flanders and France? To do this the article will look at the training of the TF which included musketry (shooting) and artillery gunnery, drill nights, annual camps and military courses. This article will argue firstly that at the start of the Great War the majority of the TF were not militarily ready to fight in the opening stages of the conflict without a period of full-time pre-deployment training. However, the blame for the organisation's unready state cannot be blamed on the men of the TF. This article will show the reason for the TF's lack of preparedness can be attributed to the Treasury, the Army Council and the War Office who were supposed to adequately, fund, train and kit out an effective second line reserve.

This research will show that Britain's current Coalition government is fighting against history as they try to make the new Army Reserve (AR) a more integrated, and larger part of the British Army. The article will also add new primary material regarding Territorial training before the Great War, and compliments research carried out by historians such as Ian F. W. Beckett in his work on Britain's amateur military tradition, Peter Dennis and K. W. Mitchinson's research on the work of the Regional Territorial Association's struggles to ensure the Territorial organisation survived.

Criticism

When Lord Richard Burdon Haldane (Secretary of State for War, 1905-12) passed the Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill (1907), which brought the 'Citizen's Army' of the TF into existence, he compromised on the Territorials' intended purpose of being an augmenting fighting force ready to support the BEF when engaged in a Continental conflict after around six months training to being a force that was primarily there to 'defend our shores'.⁵ Ostensibly he compromised because he was afraid the Bill would not succeed due to a heavy presence in Parliament of MPs who were militia and Imperial Yeomanry colonels and their supporters.⁶ There was a vague understanding amongst the Army Council that the TF could be, in the event of continental war, trained for six months at home protected by the Royal Navy (the

⁵ House of Commons Debate, 'Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill', *Hansard*, Vol. 170, cc.508, 514, 4 March 1907. Under this Bill the Volunteers and the Yeomanry became part of the Territorial Force second line, and the Militia became reserves *sans phrase*, for the regular first line, at least those who would not transfer to the new TF.

⁶ Ian F. W. Beckett, *Territorials: A Century of Service* (Plymouth: DRA Publishing, 2008), p. 31. The TF eventually came to life 1 April 1908.

'Blue Water' theory); something Haldane knew was likely to happen.⁷ However, Haldane repeatedly quoted the premise that the TF were a home defence force until their strategic purpose was obfuscated to such a degree that the majority of the TF were deceived and believed home defence was their *raison d'être*, as did almost everyone else.⁸ This 'fudge' by Haldane over the purpose of the TF made it too easy for the Treasury and the Army Council to spend the bare minimum upon the TF in terms of kit and equipment thus concentrating the lion's share of the army's budget on the regulars. Parsimony towards the TF and their subsequent poor reputation later manifested itself into anger and embarrassment when Lord Kitchener at the start of the Great War chose not to use the TF framework, and the Territorial Associations to expand the army choosing instead to build new volunteer armies.⁹

Unfortunately the TF would have many enemies who produced much anti-TF rhetoric ranging from disgruntled ex-militia men, opposition politicians and perhaps its biggest enemy the NSL the pro-conscriptionist movement led by Field-Marshal Lord Roberts of Kandahar, hero of the British Empire and voluble critic of TF training who had the covert support of the army.¹⁰ Roberts and the NSL particularly attacked the TF's inadequate systems and framework which permitted this under-strength force to be the last word in Britain's home defence.¹¹ In fact the NSL were so active in disparaging everything the TF did it is claimed that the organisation had a major effect upon the recruiting of men for the TF. Field Marshall Sir John French, whilst Inspector General of the Army, described in a 1911 report upon the state of the TF, that many commanding officers had complained to him that their endeavours to obtain recruits were much hampered by NSL agents who were said to have gone about certain districts advising men not to join the service.¹² However, before labelling the NSL as conscriptionist military extremists one has to bear in mind the rising power of Germany and the threats it posed to peace and the British Empire. For example Germany during this time period had a regular army of 840,000 which could be bolstered on mobilisation with 3,000,000 reservists.¹³ Furthermore,

⁷ Peter Dennis, *The Territorial Army 1907-1940* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press – Royal Historical Society, 1987), p. 19.

⁸ Hugh Cunningham, *The Volunteer Force: A Social and Political History 1859-1908* (London: Croom Helm, 1975), p. 148.

⁹ Cunningham, *The Volunteer Force*, p. 143. The Army Council received a memorandum from Haldane detailing the six-months training commitment for TF units in the event of war, therefore, one would imagine that many members of the TF's arch-nemesis the NSL (many serving regular officers) would have been known of the Territorials purpose during war – even when the majority of the TF did not.

¹⁰ R.J.Q. Adams and Philip P. Poirier, *The Conscription Controversy in Great Britain, 1901-18* (London: Macmillan Press, 1987), pp. 14-15.

¹¹ Adams and Poirier, *The Conscription Controversy*, pp. 31-3.

¹² Anon, 'The Territorial Force: Report by Sir John French', *The Manchester Guardian*, 14 Dec., 1911. Lord Derby however, disagreed maintaining that TF recruitment was best where NSL membership was strongest, while in another article: Anon, 'Peers and Territorial Force', *The Manchester Guardian*, 3 June, 1913, Lord Lucas attacked the NSL campaign as 'giving an excuse for shirking service to the slack and the selfish.'

¹³ David Stone, *Fighting for the Fatherland: The Story of the German Soldier from 1648 to the Present Day* (London: Conway, 2006), pp. 252 and p. 243-4, Germany at this time had six levels

Germany's Naval Laws and Dreadnought building programme was seen as a huge threat to Britain too.¹⁴

The TF framework as it was prior to the Great War would not have inspired confidence regarding defence, a fact reinforced when two regular army divisions were kept back by Lord Kitchener as home defence (alongside home service TF divisions), when the BEF were deployed to Belgium and France.¹⁵ However, the NSL's campaign of denigration proceeded in a much organised direction and one particular letter to the *Review of Reviews* highlights perfectly the NSL's campaign of disparaging the TF:

Is the Territorial Force a Sham?

Is the Territorial Force, as at present untrained, indeed a sham? Let us examine the elements of this truly weighty question. John Brown enlists in the Regular Army, and on the same day his brother James enlists in the Territorial Force. At the end of, say, five years John Brown is a veteran Soldier whose military education has been continuously advancing during 1,826 consecutive days; whereas James has been intermittently under arms, attending drills or in camp, on perhaps 100 days, probably less. If James is equal to John as a fighting man, it is clear that much public money has been wasted upon making the latter a professional soldier; but if, upon the contrary, the military values of the two brothers are approximately proportionate to the time they have respectively devoted to soldiering, then the efficacy of the Territorial Force for defensive or other purposes must appear to leave something to be desired. – ELIJAH.¹

The TF and their state of training and readiness were constantly being compared against the conscript armies of Europe and how they could never take these forces on in a stand-up fight, or even stop a 'bolt from the blue' limited invasion of Britain from an enemy force (principally Germany) consisting of around 150,000 troops.¹⁶ Of course those with any knowledge of the TF would have realised that the

of military service for its conscripts starting at the age of 18 finishing at 45 years of age. The 18 year old recruit join the *Landsturm* for 2 years, regular army – 2/3 years, first reserve – 2/3 years, *Landwehr* – 5 years, *Landwehr* (2nd level) – 9 years, *Landsturm* (senior) – 6 years; equalling 28 years service.

¹⁴ Robert K. Massie, *Dreadnought: Britain, Germany and the Coming of the Great War* (London: Pimlico, 2004), pp. 172-8.

¹⁵ K. W. Mitchinson, *Defending Albion: Britain's Home Army, 1908-1919* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 1.

¹⁶ Lord Roberts, 'Bolt from the Blue', *The National Review*, Dec. (1907), 579. This theory of an overwhelming, principally German, successful assault was dismissed after a sub-committee of Imperial Defence investigation and report. The National Archives (hereafter TNA) CAB 16/3A, *Report and Proceedings of a Sub-Committee of Imperial Defence, Appointed by the Prime-Minister to Reconsider the Question of Oversea Attack*. Also Lord Hankey, *The Supreme Command: 1914-1918, Vol. 1*. (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1961), pp. 67-8.

Territorials would not have been mobilised immediately without some form of full-time training, after embodiment, with the regular army doing the fighting until these men were ready.¹⁷ And this point regarding pre-mobilisation training was fully laid out in Territorial Force regulations which openly admitted that with the limited time available for training the TF would not be able to train up to the standard of regular troops.¹⁸ The aim of training for the TF was to be directed towards laying a foundation upon which pre-mobilisation training could be based.¹⁹

The TF did not get much protection from the criticism it received from the NSL, politicians, regular soldiers and the press. This vitriol aimed specifically at the TF and their Associations certainly provided a smokescreen from which the government and War Office hid its woeful budgetary and kit and equipment parsimonies before war caught them unprepared. Nevertheless, the question that must now be asked is what training did the TF, consisting of the Infantry, Artillery, Yeomanry, and their engineer, transport and medical support receive? Was it as poor as it has been historically acknowledged?

Training

Training for the Territorials throughout their history has always proved challenging and often compromises have had to be made due to the part-time nature of the organisation and its civilian volunteers other lives of work and family. In comparison the regular British army has always trained repetitively for long periods upon the essential basics of the soldiering craft, which resulted in the British Expeditionary Force becoming a small but very well-trained force; the German army themselves labelling the BEF as 'a perfect thing apart.'²⁰

It may then seem surprising therefore, that the TF should gain such a bad reputation and struggle in its annual tests when the training, incorporating the efficiency and budget of the TF was overseen by regular army General officers responsible to the Army Council. According to TF Regulations 'the command and training of the Territorial Force will be entrusted to divisional, mounted brigade and coast defence commanders.' These commanders were to 'draw annually a programme of training for the Territorial Force under their command which had to be submitted not later than 1st January for approval of the General Officer Commanding [in Chief]' (GOCinC).²¹ The GOCinC then forwarded the annual training plan to the War Office for approval by this government department.²²

¹⁷ O.T.C., 'National Defence', *Westminster Review*, Vol. 179, No. 5 (1913), pp. 509-10. The article states that 'No one who is not a candidate for a lunatic asylum would dream of comparing the Territorial Army with the first line troops of a Continental power. No one who knows the Territorials, and also knows the second and third line troops of, say Germany, and is capable of unbiased judgment, will deny that the Territorials are amply equal in point of training.'

¹⁸ War Office, *Regulations for the Territorial Force and for County Associations, 1908* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1908), p. 43.

¹⁹ War Office, *Regulations for the Territorial Force*, p. 43.

²⁰ Lord Charles Moran, *The Anatomy of Courage* (London: Constable & Robinson, 2007), p. 36.

²¹ War Office, *Regulations for the Territorial Force*, p. 42.

²² War Office, *Regulations for the Territorial Force*, p. 42.

Therefore the training, planning and funding of the TF was a regular army responsibility. The regulars also provided regular permanent staffs at a local level which usually included a regular adjutant (usually a Captain) and Senior Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs: Sergeants, Colour Sergeants, Staff Sergeants).²³ So why did the TF gain such a reputation for inefficiency?

The Territorial volunteer was first and foremost a civilian; being a Territorial, other than in war, is but a small part of that individual's life. The TF soldiers of the period in the article would have predominantly have been young working-class men some of whom had wives and families.²⁴ Many joined as a hobby, and many joined to enjoy the annual camp (summer camp – or just camp) which was usually located by a seaside resort, and was usually the only time away from work they would get.²⁵ One enthusiastic member of the Civil Service Rifles (London Regiment) thought that 'camp' was the high point of the year:

Camp! What splendid memories are revived by the mere mention of the word camp. The life in the open air, the spirit of comradeship which prevails, the feeling of fitness, to say nothing of the glorious thirst generally associated with life under canvas, appeals strongly to the average man.²⁶

To strike the right balance the part-time soldier had to live by the Territorial's Trinity of obligations which were: family, work, and Territorial volunteering. These obligations were not indivisible; the first obligation that would have to go, if pressure was applied, would be soldiering. Generally people need jobs for income and desire a happy family. Therefore the Territorial's time was precious and limited when it came to learning the trade of soldiering; a problem the Territorials have always had and continue to struggle with under their new incarnation as today's Army Reserve.

The part-time nature of the TF and the difficulties of learning the full-time craft of soldiering were often highlighted in official annual reports. For example, contained in the School of Gunnery's Report for 1909 the report's writer sums up perfectly the problems faced by the Territorials, especially when they were trying to learn the more technical skills of Artillery gunnery. The author stated that:

It is noticeable that officers are eager to learn new things and work hard, but they do not fully appreciate the fact that to do anything well the constant drudgery of repetition is necessary. From want of constant practice they are

²³ War Office, *Regulations for the Territorial Force*, p. 42.

²⁴ K. W. Mitchinson, *England's Last Hope: The Territorial Force, 1908-14* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 53-5.

²⁵ Mitchinson, *England's Last Hope*, p. 69.

²⁶ Jill Knight, *The Civil Service Rifles in the Great War: 'All Bloody Gentlemen'* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2004), p. 23.

extremely slow when it comes to their turn to carry out the duties of a Battery Commander.²⁷

The problem of training Territorials was reiterated by the Director General of the TF, Lieutenant General Sir Edward Bethune. In 1912, he said 'The whole system of training the Territorial Force is one of compromise, and we have to evolve the system which will best meet all requirements.'²⁸ The TF could never achieve the efficiency its critics demanded and it was a problem that contemporaries were well aware of. 'The more we strive for efficiency the heavier and more irksome must we make the burden on the individual, until at last it becomes too heavy for all who cannot afford the loss of time or the pecuniary loss.'²⁹ Of course this would have an effect on recruitment and retention (which ran at 12.5 per cent annual wastage) which were problems the TF and its future incarnations always struggled with, and still do.³⁰

Nevertheless, training needed to be carried out and the basis for the training was the drill night (two to three hours of instruction at the local barracks once a week), occasional weekends (hence the nickname of 'Saturday Night Soldiers'), and annual camp, a continuous fifteen or eight (shortened) days under canvas battalion/brigade training opportunity.³¹ Annual camps for the increasingly technical combat supporting arms of the Royal Engineers (who were well regarded by the regular army) and the Royal Artillery (who were not) would often be instruction courses at Chatham or Woolwich, or on the ranges at Lydd, Shoeburyness or Larkhill.³² The training of the infantry between 1908-1914 consisted of the same annual programme of skills and drills as the regular army which consisted of foot drill, rifle drill, weapon handling (including machine gun), signalling, fire control orders and field exercises (duties of a sentry, sham fights etcetera), only the Territorials did it piecemeal and part-time.³³

Drill nights held at the local drill hall varied in their quality and quantity of training between units. Attendance was set at the minimum of 40 drill periods per annum for recruits during their first year. A further commitment of at least eight days of a 15 days annual camp was also required. After a year with a TF unit the

²⁷ Research Departmental Library Woolwich, Royal Artillery (hereafter RDLWRA), Colonel S. C. Smith, Chief Instructor and Commandant, Lydd, Annual Report of the School of Gunnery for Horse, Field and Heavy Artillery, September 1909, p. 18.

²⁸ Beckett, *Territorials*, p. 192.

²⁹ Colonel G. P. Rankin, 'The Future of the Territorial Force - III', *The Academy and Literature*, Vol. 2066 (1911), p. 722.

³⁰ Beckett, *Britain's Part-Time Soldiers*, p. 219.

³¹ War Office, *Regulations for the Territorial Force*, p. 45.

³² RDLWRA, War Office Library, Annual Reports of the School of Gunnery, 1905-1913 (London: Harrison and Sons, 1913), Shelford Bidwell, *Gunners at War: A Tactical Study of the Royal Artillery in the Twentieth Century* (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1970), pp.19-20, and Richard Holmes, *Soldier: Army Lives and Loyalties from Redcoats to Dusty Warriors* (London: Harper Press, 2012), p. 157.

³³ Anon, 'The Battle of Eston', Territorials engaged in a sham fight today', *North Eastern Gazette*, 8 Aug., 1913

Territorial soldier was required to attend a minimum of 20 drill periods per annum.³⁴ When the Territorial soldier from the ranks completed his commitment during his four year engagement to his unit, as an incentive to sign-on again, he received camp pay, a boot allowance and discretionary payments of up to a shilling a day.³⁵ Nevertheless, how did the Territorial fare on his core soldiering skills?

Core skill of soldiering - Musketry

For any soldier (especially infantrymen), alongside being able to march (and keep-up) with full kit and equipment, and show proficiency in handling a rifle to produce quick accurate shots that could engage and stop an enemy should be a primary skill.³⁶ However, the Standard Musketry Test was a test that many TF soldiers seemed to struggle with (the TF were issued with the 'long' Lee-Enfield .303 an obsolete rifle). The standard test itself did not seem too daunting consisting of firing off 23 rounds at an indicated target, of which eight rounds were fired as rapid fire to qualify as efficient.³⁷ Under the musketry regulations the tests that applied to the TF were designed to 'speedily ensure a satisfactory standard of proficiency in those branches of training which cannot in ordinary circumstances receive further attention after the outbreak of war.'³⁸

If the standard test was failed or the Territorial soldier could not take the test for any reason, then he could take an alternative test on a 30-yards range or miniature range with a converted .22 RF (Rim Fire- Morris Tube) rifle.³⁹ The shortage

³⁴ War Office, *Regulations for the Territorial Force*, p. 44-6, and Edgar Wallace, *Kitchener's Army and the Territorial Forces: The Full Story of a Great Achievement* (London: G. Newes, 1915), p. 166.

³⁵ War Office, *Regulations for the Territorial Force*, pp. 62-3; whilst on annual camp and assigned quarters Field Officers received 2d a day for quarters, other officers received 1d a day. If the officer is under canvas he was entitled to 4/- per day in aid of mess expenses. NCOs at annual camp or attending an authorised course of instruction were issued separation allowance for all those who were married.

³⁶ HHC UDDSY2/5/92, Mark Sykes draft letter to the editor of *The Times*, typed on Parliamentary House of Commons headed paper, 5 July 1912, Sykes complains that the poor march discipline he has witnessed amongst Territorials is down to 'the absence of regular senior NCOs.' Mitchinson, *England's Last Hope*, p. 167, p. 144, on march discipline writes that 'with the exception of a few units the bulk of the TF were considered 'miserable specimens. A large proportion of men from West Lancashire, East Anglia and the Home Counties and many townsmen were not capable of carrying their own kit. Most Territorials had poor march discipline and dropped out all too readily. However, those working class units that contained miners and countrymen proved good marchers as did the 'Class' Battalions of the London Brigade, usually Civil Servants. Helen B. McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers: The Liverpool Territorials in the First World War* (Cambridge: CUP, 2005), p. 144. McCartney highlights an ingenious way of improving the march discipline within the Liverpool Scottish, when a marcher fell out of a march he was issued with a ticket which simply stated 'Was unable to keep up', it proved effective.

³⁷ House of Commons Debate, 'Territorial Force', *Hansard*, Vol. 15 cc913-5W, 21 March 1910.

³⁸ War Office, *Musketry Regulations. Part I. 1909 - Reprinted, with Amendments 1914* (London: HMSO Harrison and Sons, 1914), paragraph 348, p. 139.

³⁹ House of Commons Debate, 'Territorial Force Musketry', *Hansard*, Vol. 7 cc530-5, 20 March 1911. War Office, *Musketry Regulations*, paragraph 296, p. 116, the regulations state that 'range practices and more advanced training may be regarded as a waste of ammunition and time unless recruits have been thoroughly grounded, and trained men are kept efficient, in

of suitable outdoor ranges for the TF to train and fire on, let alone conduct musketry tests, meant that the 30-yards range was the only alternative for many Territorials to take their standard test.⁴⁰ However, on many occasions' 30-yards ranges were often unavailable due to intensive use by local units. Even attempting to build one often proved problematic, with Fernand Braudel's *la longue durée* being the best way to measure the time from planning to building and using. For example Flintshire TFA put forward plans to build a 30-yards range at their HQ in 1908. Despite many meetings on the project there is no evidence, up until 1942, of it ever being built.⁴¹

Lord Haldane perhaps had brought ridicule upon TF musketry standards in 1911 by admitting that the TF standard test pass marks had been 'slightly lowered' to improve results from satisfactory, whilst insisting that the TF's marksmanship was still higher than the average European conscript.⁴² The Musketry standard test and the Territorial's proficiency in the test was a persistent question within Parliament, newspapers and journals until the start of the Great War, many delighting in the struggles of the Territorials. During one debate over Territorial musketry tests, Colonel Seely MP informed the House that the TF soldier received a certificate of competence whether he passed the standard test or the alternative test, to which a Mr Hunt MP sardonically responded 'Is the Territorial compelled to let off his rifle at all?'⁴³

The crux of the Territorials problems with musketry was the numbers of men who failed the standard musketry test; many of them trained TF soldiers. During 1908-9, 106,651 men qualified in musketry, 96,768 did not.⁴⁴ In 1909, sixteen Territorial battalions failed to become efficient in musketry; of these battalions seven failed to put any men through the standard test, with the remaining nine battalions failing to put 50 per cent of their numbers through the test.⁴⁵ Three of the battalions fired no ammunition, and of the rest the average number of rounds per man varied from five to 52.⁴⁶ During the qualifying period of 1909-10, there were 126,912 who qualified as efficient in musketry with 68,673 failures. Additionally 18,453 "trained"

elementary training . These tests are divided into oral, inspection and standard tests. A record will be kept for each man of the results of the various tests, which will be inspected periodically by the commanding officer. Extracts from these records will furnish useful guides as to efficiency when men are transferred to other companies or battalions.'

⁴⁰ House of Commons, 'Territorial Force Musketry'.

⁴¹ Flintshire County Archives (hereafter FCA), Hawarden, Deeside, Clwyd, TA/D/4, Denbighshire Territorial Force Association Minutes.

⁴² House of Commons Debate, 'TF Musketry', 20 March 1911.

⁴³ House of Commons Debate, 'Territorial Force', *Hansard*, Vol. 35. cc185-6, 5 March 1912. By contrast the regular army took the Hythe Musketry Test and needed to attain 15 aimed shots per minute which was used as a minimum qualifying standard for regular recruits during this time period.

⁴⁴House of Commons Debate, 'Territorial Force Musketry Returns - 1908-9 and 1909-10', *Hansard*, Vol. 122 cc189-90, 28 Feb., 1911, and Colonel G.P. Rankin, 'The Future of the Territorial Force - I', *The Academy and Literature*, Vol. 2062 (1911), p. 597.

⁴⁵ Rankin, 'The Future of the Territorial Force', p. 597.

⁴⁶ Rankin, 'The Future of the Territorial Force', pp. 596-7.

men and 24,640 recruits qualified in the alternative test, mainly with the converted rifle on the miniature rifle range.⁴⁷

The figures for 1911 stand at 195,000 TF soldiers tested; of this figure 180,724 men were tested on an open rifle range, of these 126,912 qualified, leaving 53,812 failures in the standard test.⁴⁸ From those who failed the standard test 24,460 qualified under alternative methods – the 30-yards range and the miniature range; around 15,000 others were not re-tested.⁴⁹ The musketry failures shrank in 1912 to 34,505 however, they then rose the following year to 58,446.⁵⁰ A representative from the War Office could not shed any light upon the reasons for the increased failures due to a 'lack of statistics.'⁵¹

The amount of failures equates to a range of problems from the ever-present lack of time and poor funding to other factors such as lack of local ranges, problems with landowners and even encroachment upon ranges by civilian golf clubs.⁵²

Lord Lucas, Under-Secretary of State for War (1908-11), offered answers appertaining to the TF musketry test results suggesting that 'the standard test constituted a useful guide to how the TF were progressing with their marksmanship but that nobody should attach too much importance to its results.'⁵³ A comment that may seem decidedly complacent, however, this was the correct approach to take with Territorials, as those who volunteered for overseas service during the Great War, who were to receive at least six months, sometimes longer, pre-deployment training, and further training overseas before being sent to fight.⁵⁴

⁴⁷ House of Commons Debate, 'Territorial Musketry Returns', 28 Feb., 1911 and Rankin, 'The Future of the Territorial Force', pp. 596-7

⁴⁸ House of Commons, 'TF Musketry', 20 March 1911.

⁴⁹ House of Commons, 'TF Musketry' 20 March 1911, presumably the remaining 29,352 either could not commit to the re-test on an alternative date or failed through poor marksmanship.

⁵⁰ House of Commons Debate, 'Territorial Force', *Hansard*, Vol. 51 cc566-7, 3 April 1913.

⁵¹ House of Commons, 'Territorial Force', April 1913.

⁵² FCA TA/D/5, Flintshire TFA Minute Book 1911-1913, 'Llangollen Rifle Range', 11 May 1911. An example of the type of difficulties which were faced by the Territorials at a local level trying to carry out training. 'O. C. complaint relating to difficulties which were being raised by the tenant of the range as to the right of way for vehicles to and from range was submitted. Reported that tenant Mr John Williams will not allow carts etc. to pass through and will not had over the keys of gate as promised', Mitchinson, *England's last Hope*, p. 98, 111, 114, rifle ranges were forced to close on occasion due to their encroachment by golf clubs, furthermore, renewal of leases for TFAs were often rejected by landowners in favour of the more financially beneficial leases paid by golf and shooting clubs. There was also very keen competition for ranges from the National Reserve, Cadets, Police, Coastguard, civilian rifle clubs and Boy Scouts.

⁵³ House of Commons, 'TF Musketry Debate', 20 March 1911.

⁵⁴ Some units only had around two to three months training before combat an example being the London Scottish battalion of the London Regiment who fought on Messines Ridge (Flanders), 31 October 1914, Mark Lloyd, *The London Scottish in the Great War* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 2001), pp. 33-55. The extra training the TF would have to do in the event of war was contained within their regulation book stating that 'The training should be directed towards laying a foundation on which more extended training can be based. War Office, *Regulations for the Territorial Force and for County Associations, 1908* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1908), p. 43.

Lucas also cited a severe lack of ranges available for TF musketry practice and testing, which often resulted in men waiting around on the often crowded ranges waiting to shoot.⁵⁵ Certainly overcrowding on ranges could have had a bearing on the numbers of men put through the standard musketry test as each test and unit firing the test had a set window on a certain day in which the test could be taken. If the weather was foul on test days the standard test would still progress due to the tightness of the range bookings.⁵⁶ Lucas blamed bureaucracy for the poor results stating that 'If a man for any reason, is prevented from going to the range to be tested on that day, he has to be returned as inefficient, though he may have gone through the whole of his preliminary musketry and be able to pass the standard test easily.'⁵⁷ It seems that flexibility from the army had no place within its systems during the formative days of the TF. As for the problematic issue of ranges Lucas also said that despite great efforts in acquiring additional ranges, particularly 30-yards ranges, progress was slow due to difficulties in finding suitable sites and a slow process of acquisition.⁵⁸ Another impediment to a successful shoot was the problem of shooting on a Sunday. The Earl of Dartmouth during the same debate raised this spectre when he spoke of weekend camps; he stated 'It is that when men go down on a Friday and shoot on the Saturday and, where conditions are favourable, on the Sunday, a good deal of objection has been taken to Sunday firing.'⁵⁹ However, the shooting of rifles was not the only problem the TF faced. They would also encounter problems when it came to firing their guns too.

Royal Artillery Territorial Gunners

The very idea of TF field batteries being trained in the art of gunnery was an idea that was ridiculed from the TF's very formation until the Great War. The argument against the part-time gunners was the same as the argument against TF infantry, that they would not be able to face a first-class Continental enemy in the field. Lord Roberts and Arthur Lee MP launched a furious attack against the idea of TF Artillery in the Commons (1908).⁶⁰ Haldane and his ally Lord Esher countered with support from allied artillery officers and the King.⁶¹

However, as with the TF infantry the TF artillery always struggled in terms of numbers, training commitment, equipment and weaponry in what could be a very technical arm. The TF artillery also struggled with underrepresentation of Junior NCO and Senior NCO regular instructors, a problem that started in 1908 and continued until 1914. This problem started with the transfer of Militia and Volunteers

⁵⁵ House of Commons, 'TF Musketry Debate', 20 March 1911.

⁵⁶ House of Commons, 'TF Musketry Debate', 20 March 1911.

⁵⁷ House of Commons, 'TF Musketry Debate', 20 March 1911.

⁵⁸ House of Commons, 'TF Musketry Debate', 20 March 1911.

⁵⁹ House of Commons, 'TF Musketry Debate', 20 March 1911.

⁶⁰ Edward M. Spiers, *Haldane: an Army Reformer* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1980), p. 166. Arthur Lee MP was an ex-Royal Artillery Captain, 'Arthur Lee commission RA', *The London Gazette*, No. 26139, 27 Feb., 1891, p. 1120. Also Lee served in the Militia with the Motor Vehicle Corps.

⁶¹ Spiers, *Haldane*, p. 167.

to the Special Reserve and TF, which in turn led to a reduction in the number of appointments and course placements open to regular NCOs on the Gunnery Staff course.⁶²

In the *Annual Report of the School of Gunnery* its assessment on courses for Territorial Heavy Artillery highlighted the Territorials perennial problems of gaining sufficient time off work to attend training. It goes on to state that 'the non-commissioned-officers of the TF were generally rather below the average standard, and it would appear very doubtful whether the best men, who are probably earning good wages, will be able to get away for a month to attend the course.'⁶³ The report opines that 'The result may be that those who are out of work will take the opportunity to earn a month's pay. It might be as well to impress on COs that only those who are likely to make good sergeants and who have been well grounded beforehand be sent on courses.'⁶⁴

The report's author analysed why he thought the TF officers and NCOs struggled when they took gunnery commanders' courses repeating the theme that to become a truly efficient (the author was using regular army standards) soldier one has to train repetitiously.⁶⁵ He praised the TF officers for the eagerness they showed but added that 'they are extremely slow when it comes to their turn to carry out the duties of a Battery Commander.'⁶⁶ Of the TF NCOs the report's author again commends them for their effort however; his criticism is that 'there is still a tendency to learn everything by heart, without fully appreciating the reasons for what is laid down.'⁶⁷

⁶² RDLWRA, War Office Library, *Annual Report of the School of Gunnery, 1908: Part 1 – Coast Artillery*, Report of the Chief Instructor Garrison and Siege, Shoeburyness I – General Remarks (London: Harrison and Sons, 1908), p. 9. The report on the shortages also mentions that the reduction of appointments especially affected those NCOs who did not do sufficiently well to qualify for the School of Gunnery (non-technical NCOs). The report goes on to say that the potential regular TF instructor were divided into two classes '(a) Those who hope to do well enough for appointment (b) those who for other reasons wish to have a year at home, but who do not look forward to gaining any definite advantage from the course.'

⁶³ RDLWRA, War Office Library, *Annual Report of the School of Gunnery for Horse, Field and Heavy Artillery, 1909*, Report on courses for the Territorial Heavy Artillery, Col. S. B. von Donop RA, Chief Instructor and Commandant, Lydd (London: Harrison and Sons, 1909), p. 18.

⁶⁴ RDLWRA, *Annual Report of the School of Gunnery for Horse, Field and Heavy Artillery, 1909*, p. 18, an example of the wrong sort of TF NCO and TF officer to be sent on the Heavy Artillery course is detailed in the following passage: 'One officer in the 1st course, and one Corporal of the TF Artillery in the 2nd course failed. Both worked hard the officer however had little capacity for picking up subjects of the course and knew very little when he joined. The Corporal had no knowledge of Heavy Artillery, previous service was with Coastal Artillery, even this service was as a cook; he was extremely dull, and not the class of man to make a good Drill Sergeant.'

⁶⁵ RDLWRA, *Annual Report of the School of Gunnery for Horse, Field and Heavy Artillery, 1909*, p. 18.

⁶⁶ RDLWRA, *Annual Report of the School of Gunnery for Horse, Field and Heavy Artillery, 1909*, p. 18

⁶⁷ RDLWRA, *Annual Report of the School of Gunnery for Horse, Field and Heavy Artillery, 1909*, p. 18.

Lack of time for preparation and training was frequently highlighted within official reports, especially regarding officers. Time and preparation were needed to master a very technical arm nevertheless, time was a precious commodity especially if that man had a job and a family, and this among other factors had an impact on recruitment and retainment. For example the recruitment of TF Artillery officers and TF officers in general proved problematic from their establishment right up until the start of the Great War. The TF started out 3,049 officers below establishment in 1908.⁶⁸ By 1913 the TF officer corps had struggled up to 1,843 (19.6 per cent) below establishment.⁶⁹ On a more local level the Warwickshire Yeomanry 1st/1st Battery Royal Horse Artillery (TF) could only fill three of seven officer posts until 1914.⁷⁰ The Royal Artillery of course recognised how the shortages hindered good training and the School of Gunnery Report from 1913 signed off by suggesting that 'There are far too many TF Artillery Battalions; reduce by one third and the batteries would have a better pick of officers, men and horses.'⁷¹

Nevertheless, despite the struggles with training commitments and obsolete equipment (see below) by 1913 the TF Artillery arm had made some progress. The Chief Instructor RA indicated that the TF Artillery had 'undoubtedly made progress, and some batteries are very well-drilled and trained.'⁷² However, this good news was tempered by the caveat that they were somewhat let down by their officers' efficiency and knowledge on occasion stating that 'they have to be nursed and helped through their tasks.'⁷³ He added 'a large proportion of the units are only in an elementary stage and their instruction should be run on those lines. Any attempt to take them to more advanced work has not been a success.'⁷⁴

Annual Camp

Perhaps the greatest problem the TF had to overcome with regards to training was that they only concentrated their battalions for fifteen continuous days a year under canvas for their annual training.⁷⁵ Regulations for the TF stipulated that:

Every officer and soldier of the Territorial Force will be required to carry out "annual training in camp" for a period of not less than eight, or more than 15

⁶⁸ House of Lords Debate, 'The Territorial Force', *Hansard*, 16 July 1908, Vol. 192 cc1008-48.

⁶⁹ War Office, *General Annual Report on the British Army for the Year Ending 30th September, 1925, With Which is Incorporated the Annual Report on Recruiting* (London: HMSO, 1925), 'Table 4. - Establishment, Strength, and Camp Attendance (exclusive of Permanent Staff) for the Territorial Army for 1913, 1920 and subsequent years.' p. 114.

⁷⁰ Philip Spinks, paper, 'Corporal Harry Fox and the 1st/1st Warwickshire Battery RHA (TF)', The Royal Artillery Historical Society, Larkhill, Wednesday 22 October 2008.

⁷¹ RDLWRA, *Annual Report of the School of Gunnery for Horse, Field and Heavy Artillery, 1913*, p. 5.

⁷² RDLWRA, *Annual Report of the School of Gunnery for Horse, Field and Heavy Artillery, 1913*, p. 5.

⁷³ RDLWRA, *Annual Report of the School of Gunnery for Horse, Field and Heavy Artillery, 1913*, p. 5.

⁷⁴ RDLWRA, *Annual Report of the School of Gunnery for Horse, Field and Heavy Artillery, 1913*, p. 5

⁷⁵ A shorter 8 day camp could also be taken depending on the Territorial's circumstances.

days (in the case of yeomanry not more than 18 days), and may be called out once or oftener for this purpose. Attendance at a hospital or other selected institution (for Royal Army Medical Corps), in defence works or at manoeuvres may count as annual training in camp.⁷⁶

The regulations also stipulated that the camps were to be held between '1st May and 30th September' except in the case of the Royal Garrison Artillery or other units that carried out their training in works of defence, hospitals etcetera, and not in the field, and may carry their training at any convenient season of the year.⁷⁷ A fortnight was a short time in which to gain any meaningful results being more about instruction rather than testing. However, even a fortnight to eight days was far too long for some employers to contemplate granting their employees leave.⁷⁸

The TF Artillery, Engineers, Yeomanry and Infantry all had their own separate brigade camps (four battalions), and were usually supported by Medical and Army Service Corps detachments, with camps often pitched near the coast or on an open common.⁷⁹ Local businesses and farmers on the whole were keen to host the Territorial's annual camp due to the business of supplying the camp with victuals, and happy to help Territorials spend their money when they had permission to visit the local town.⁸⁰

Using the York and Durham Brigade's (later part of the 50th Northumberland Division) annual camp from 26 July to 9 August 1913 as an example, the 3,000 strong contingents fifteen day camp was scheduled as six days company training, three or four days regimental training with the camp ending with a sham fight between the Reds and the Blues.⁸¹ The days remaining were spent playing team sports and on leave.⁸² However, much of the training on the TF camps was spent in training

⁷⁶ Army Council, *Regulations for the Territorial Force*, p. 46.

⁷⁷ Army Council, *Regulations for the Territorial Force*, p. 46.

⁷⁸ Anon., 'The Territorial Army, Kings and Lancashires: Employers and Recruiting', *The Manchester Guardian*, 14 April, 1908. This particular report found that many mill owners in the Lancashire area were resistant to their employees either joining the TF, or if they were members going to camp. Cunningham, *The Volunteer Force*, p. 77, Director-General E.C. Bethune interviewed hundreds of Cos about unit attendance at annual camp. The COs said that 'if we overcome the business difficulties which are raised by employers and foremen we should get more men to stay for the full fifteen days. There was also much resistance to men joining and getting to attend camp from the left wing with organisations such as the Labour Party, Trade Unions and Socialists in general who refused to support the TF due to their potential to be used as a government force to break strikes. Peter Dennis, 'The Territorial Army in Aid of the Civil Power in Britain, 1919-1926', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (1981), pp. 705-6.

⁷⁹ Anon., 'Territorial Force Annual Camp - Redcar 1913', *North Eastern Daily Gazette*, 26 July 1913.

⁸⁰ Anon., 'Territorial Camp - Redcar 1913', *North Eastern Daily Gazette*, 28 July 1913.

⁸¹ Anon., 'Territorial Camp - Redcar 1913', *North Eastern Daily Gazette*, 28 July 1913.

⁸² Anon., 'Territorials at Redcar continue to spend enjoyable time in camp', *North Eastern Daily Gazette*, 5 Aug., 1913.

recruits the basics, and due to the lack of NCOs to the detriment of the trained TF troops who needed more advanced training opportunities.⁸³

The training of the TF throughout their annual cycles was erratic in quality and quantity. Having the correct up to date kit and equipment might have facilitated better training, however, much like the unevenness of the training afforded the volunteers, their kit and equipment situation did not help in the preparation of turning the TF into an effective fighting force.

Kit and Equipment

The Territorial Force from 1908 to 1914 was not adequately equipped to take the field as a serious fighting force. In mitigation kitting up and equipping a constantly changing number of men on extremely tight budgets was a constant battle for the County Territorial Associations with regular army hand-me-downs always the cheaper option.⁸⁴

The under-equipping of the TF not unlike its training difficulties was regularly attacked by both its detractors and supporters due to much kit and equipment being threadbare and obsolete. For example TF infantry had to train and fight well into the Great War with rifles and webbing that were cast-offs from the regular army last used during the South African War (1899-1902).⁸⁵ One Territorial infantry unit had to stop mobilisation in 1914 when it was found that the men were insufficiently booted to be mobilised.⁸⁶ The Yeomanry suffered from a lack of horses and a struggle to procure the necessary horses for training and camp, this also affected the horse powered reliant TF Artillery who had few horses with which to pull its obsolete fifteen-pounder guns.⁸⁷ Everything the TF were issued was very much second best even the TF Artillery's cap badge had a blank scroll on their badge unlike the regulars who had the battle-honour UBIQUE (everywhere) on their scroll presumably the TF Artillery scroll indicated NOWHERE.⁸⁸

Infantry: Rifles and Webbing

The largest combat arm in the pre and Great War British army was the infantry. Richard Holmes rightly described the infantry's structure as the 'scaffolding around which the army was built.'⁸⁹ Therefore, it would seem essential even for a reserve

⁸³ Peter Dennis, *The Territorial Army, 1907-1940* (Exeter: Royal Historical Society, 1987), p. 149.

⁸⁴ Ian F. W. Beckett, *Britain's Part-Time Soldiers: The Amateur Military Tradition 1558-1945* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 2011), p. 219.

⁸⁵ A. V. Sellwood, *The Saturday Night Soldiers* (London: White Lion, 1974), pp. 67-8.

⁸⁶ TNA WO95/4320, War Dairy, 1/5th Royal Scottish Fusiliers, August 1914. The 1/5th RSF could not mobilise fully due to an insufficient boot supply. The TF pre-war were issued a boot allowance which was not always used on purchasing the best marching boots available.

⁸⁷ Charles Carrington, *Soldier From the Wars Returning* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 2006), pp. 24-5. The regular RA had 18 pounder guns.

⁸⁸ This slight has since been rectified.

⁸⁹ Richard Holmes, *Tommy: The British Soldier on the Western Front 1914-1918* (London: HarperCollins, 2004), p. 174.

force to ensure it had the basics of up-to-date rifles and webbing. Until TF units deployed during the Great War the TF paraded with the old 'long' Lee-Enfield rifle (the regulars had the Short Magazine Lee-Enfield - SMLE .303), and still wore the 1888 pattern leather webbing supplemented with a 60 rounds leather bandolier.⁹⁰ The County Territorial Association's responsible for kit issue were slowly getting around to ordering the new Mills Burrows web-woven waterproof equipment adopted by the regular army in 1908, however for reasons of economy this was taking a long time.⁹¹

This lack of up-to-date rifles and obsolete webbing no doubt affected training to a certain degree but basic infantry training could be carried out with this equipment nonetheless. Many TF infantry units were only issued the SMLE when they deployed or had been in theatre for two to three years. Bill Kennedy of the 42nd (East Lancashire) Division recalled 'Just before we left [Egypt - 1914], rifles were handed to us, "This is the way to hold a rifle, mate," and we were off.'⁹² The 62nd (West Riding) Division finally received their SMLE rifles in May 1916, just in time for some hasty training before the Battle of the Somme.⁹³ Perhaps the biggest disadvantage to using the regulars' leftovers would have appeared when the TF units were eventually issued with the SMLE and had to zero it and get used to how it fired.⁹⁴ However, compared to the problems suffered by the Yeomanry and TF Artillery the infantry's problems were small.

Horses and Guns

Prior to and during the Great War the British army relied very heavily on equine power for mounting cavalry, pulling guns and supplies, and for mounting infantry and staff officers. Due to the TF being part-timers they did not have the luxury of keeping their own horses in their own stables as this was impractical. Because of this the Yeomanry and TF Artillery would only train with horses (some members provided their own horses) during their annual camp. To ensure the mounted TF units had horses for their annual training their Commanding Officers received an allowance from which they hired their horses from civilian contractors.⁹⁵ However, unfamiliar horses and partially trained drivers and riders made for a nervous and

⁹⁰ An Active Officer, 'New kit equipment for Territorials, will make comfort for the troops', *The Courier*, 23 Aug., 1910.

⁹¹ Active Officer, 'New kit equipment for Territorials, *The Courier*, 23 Aug., 1910.

⁹² Bill Kennedy MM, (ed., Sue Richardson), *Egypt, Gallipoli, France and Flanders with the 42nd (East Lancashire) Division in the Great War, 1914-1919* (Manchester: Neil Richardson, 1990), p. 5.

⁹³ John Hussey, "'Without an Army, and without any preparation to equip one": The Financial and Industrial Background to 1914', *British Army Review*, No. 109 (1995), pp. 76-7.

⁹⁴ No two weapons are alike and no two rifle firer's are alike therefore, adjustments need to be made to ensure the rifle is firing true. To zero a rifle requires the soldier to shoot grouping shots of around five rounds upon a target at 100 metres. Depending on where the 'group' is on the target incremental adjustments should be made to the weapon's sights until the soldier's grouping is usually 5 centimetres above the dead middle of the target.

⁹⁵ Philip Ventham and David Fletcher, *Moving the Guns: The Mechanisation of the Royal Artillery 1854-1939* (London: HMSO, 1990), p. 104.

dangerous start to camp and this, coupled with a lack of officers for recruits, many without an elementary knowledge of horses, did not always make for fulfilling training.⁹⁶ An article penned after the Great War by a Lieutenant-Colonel Heindryk R.A. (TF) explains a particularly bad episode from a camp in which eleven men from one battery (198 heads in a battery at full establishment) were hospitalised due to kicks, galls and nervous horses.⁹⁷

The shortage of horses was acutely felt by the mounted TF contingent. For example the War Office in 1912 owned only 14 horses out of a total of 20,817 horses in camp that year predominantly with the Yeomanry.⁹⁸ The TF Artillery had a shortage of horses (1912) which equated to 102 horse and field batteries having their required full complement and twenty-nine batteries short of their complements.⁹⁹ Those batteries that were short on horses had to shoot modified (shortened) annual artillery courses such as the 1st London Division Artillery who fired the modified course at Shoeburyness during the summer on Saturday afternoons.¹⁰⁰ The cost of hiring horses during the 1912 annual training was estimated at £3,200,000 (1912 currency values) charged to the TF Associations.¹⁰¹ And if it was not for officers and men bringing their own horses to training and camp then the cost would have been much higher.¹⁰²

The result of the shortages which beset the TF provided perfect fodder for the pro-National Service League, pro-conscriptionist newspapers, magazines and journals, ensuring that the reputation of the TF remained poor up until the Great War. Nevertheless, due to the constant cheese-paring and shortages, especially in horses, the TF Artillery was forced to improvise. In July 1914, unhappy with never having enough horses to tow their guns, the TF artillery became the first to tow their guns behind motor vehicles.¹⁰³ Another example of TF improvisation saw the machine-gun section of the 25th London (Cyclists) Battalion becoming probably the first mobile gun platform machine-gunners, buying private vehicles (from their own funds) equipping them and mounting machine guns to the rear.¹⁰⁴

Conclusions

By the start of the Great War the TF had fallen a long way short of Haldane's idea of a popular militarily capable 'Citizen's Army'. Moreover, optimistic manpower targets for the organisation had failed and were irrefutably linked to political expediency at the birth of the TF. The causal knot of Haldane's 'fudge' and obfuscation regarding the TF's intended role translated into inadequate funding, kit and equipment and most fundamentally poorly resourced training. Consequently,

⁹⁶ Anon, 'Report by Sir John French', *Manchester Guardian*.

⁹⁷ Ventham and Fletcher, *Moving the Guns*, p. 105.

⁹⁸ House of Lords Debate, 'Territorial Force', 25 Nov., 1912, *Hansard*, Vol. 12, cc987-98.

⁹⁹ House of Lords Debate, 'Territorial Force', 25 Nov., 1912.

¹⁰⁰ House of Lords Debate, 'Territorial Force', 25 Nov., 1912.

¹⁰¹ House of Lords Debate, 'Territorial Force', 25 Nov., 1912.

¹⁰² Spinks, 'Corporal Harry Fox, Warwickshire Battery.

¹⁰³ Ventham and Fletcher, *Moving the Guns*, p. 104.

¹⁰⁴ Beckett, *Territorials*, p. 33.

the TF appeared inefficient and unreliable through no fault of their own, not helped by the constant traducing by its many opponents and those who were meant to train and prepare its soldiers – the British military establishment. The TF, on paper, did offer a solid organisational framework encompassing supporting services, the new Army Reserve (AR) use the same framework today. However, the organisation's perceived weaknesses pre-1914 had undermined the TF's legitimacy as a means of expanding the army when war broke out: although after most units took full-time pre-deployment training, in Britain and abroad, the TF did perform as well as any unit within the British Army. Moreover, the TF kept Britain in the War during 1915 when they 'filled the gap' as Kitchener's 'New Armies were being trained.¹⁰⁵ All of which perhaps indicates that the TF not only suffered from their failures becoming exaggerated, but many of their failings were exaggerated for effect by their enemies in the NSL in order to promote conscription. Nevertheless, their evident struggles to achieve efficiency in musketry and gunnery offered its contemporary observers proof that this civilian volunteer force was a faltering institution which of course was not always the fault of the Territorials as this article has proved. But more fundamentally the study of the Territorials of the past illustrates the fact that voluntary reserve forces can never be expected to deploy upon mobilization. They will always need a period of pre-deployment training. Therefore, they only really need to be trained to a very basic level. The Territorial Force of the past, as the AR of today, could never have become as trained or efficient as the regular army – there simply was not the time.

The TF and the way they trained can be used as a lesson for today's FR2020 proposals of greater AR integration with the regular army and more training may not be as straightforward or necessary as the government imagine. Nevertheless, Territorials have always struggled to give over a certain amount of spare time for training due to family and employment, nothing has changed. The lessons of the past do consider serious consideration, and the past struggles of an organisation and a framework used by the AR for their training has to be seriously questioned if FR2020 is to succeed.

¹⁰⁵ Peter Simkins, *Kitchener's Army: The Raising of the New Armies 1914-1916* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2007), p. 24, and Beckett, *Territorials*, p. 55.