

The History of 30 Signal Regiment

1951 - 5th Corps Signal Regiment

1956 - 90th Signal Regiment (Trials)

1959 - 30th Signal Regiment (Trials)

1967 - 30th Signal Regiment

30th Signal Regiment claims descent from 1st Middlesex Engineer Volunteers which became 2nd London Division Telegraph Company in 1908-later 47th Division (see 47 Signal Squadron). In 1935 that unit became London Corps Signals TA and which evolved into V Corps Signals by 1942, only to be disbanded in 1946 and succeeded in the TA by 23 (Southern) Corps Signal Regiment in 1947. There was no regular regiment until 1951, when the combination of the war in Korea, and the enlargement of NATO forces in Germany, brought about an expansion in the number of formation headquarters in the British Army. To help support them, 5th Corps Signal Regiment was formed in 1951. The regiment moved to Cherry Tree Camp, Colchester, and was renumbered 90th Signal Regiment on 1 April 1956. It then moved to Middle Wallop in November 1958. In the number changes Of 1959 it was renumbered 30th Signal Regiment-its previous number was given to A unit of the Army Emergency Reserve (see 90 Signal Squadron).



30th Signal Regiment march through Blandford forum 1960

The regiment moved to Blandford on 21 March 1960 and absorbed 14th Signal Regiment on 1 November 1976. It remained at Blandford until the move to its present location at Gamecock Barracks, Bramcote, in November 1993.

As 90th Signal Regiment, and then 30th Signal Regiment (Trials), the unit's principal task was the testing of new equipment and procedures. Gradually, that task was supplemented by responsibility for 'out of area' operations, which eventually became the regiment's principal role.

When formed in 1956, the regiment brought together elements of 5th Corps Signals, a special wireless troop, a medium wireless troop, the War Office Monitoring Team, 1 and 2 Maintenance Teams, the Army Wireless Chain Installation Team, the User Trials Squadron,

the Experimental Radio Relay Squadron, the Royal Signals Recruiting Team Quicksilver, and the Radio Interference Group. Re-organised, as well as renumbered, in 1959, the regiment consisted of HQ Squadron, 1 Squadron (Engineering), 2 Squadron (Survey and Installation), 3 Squadron (Special Wireless), War Office Monitoring Team and the Demonstration Team. 4 (BRUIN) Squadron was formed in 1966, and moved to BAOR to implement that system in October 1967. In that same year, 1 Squadron passed under command of the School of Signals. The trials role of the regiment reached its peak between 1963 and 1967 after which out-of-area' operations gradually took precedence. On 16 October 1967, 1 (Trials) Squadron left the Regiment to come under command of the School of Signals. The trials activities of the Regiment ceased on that date.



30th Signal Regiment 10th Anniversary Parade

Blandford Forum 9th September 1970

The process of de-colonisation within the former British Empire during the 1960's created a new role for the regiment. As locally-based signal units disbanded, a need arose to provide communications for ad hoc operations in situations which might arise outside the NATO area. This task fell to 30th Signal Regiment. In 1961, 640 Signal Troop formed to provide signal detachments able to deploy a short notice. The troop sent detachments to British Guiana, Swaziland, Zambia, Kenya, Sarawak, Cyprus, Borneo, Aden, Bahrain, Aldabara Island, Benghazi, Sharjah and Anguilla during the 1960s. In 1967, the troop was enlarged and designated 1 Squadron. In addition the regiment provided troops for amphibious operations with 661 Signal Troop on board HMS Intrepid and 621 Signal Troop on board HMS Fearless. By 1969, the regiment assumed responsibility for 644 Troop which was with the UN force in Cyprus. In addition, it parented signal support for the newly-formed Allied Command Europe Mobile Force (see 249 Signal Squadron). In addition, 3 Squadron handled EW work outside the NATO area. By 1969, the Regiment's sole task was to provide individuals and formed troops for contingency operations, and to hold a general reserve of men and equipment. Throughout the 1960s and the 1970s, the regiment had a demonstration and recruiting role for the Corps. Its work for the Odiing Committee in 1964 helped influence the retention within the Corps of technicians who would otherwise have been transferred to REME.

Since the Falklands War, the regiment has been involved in operations in:

Operation Hyperion Beirut 1983-1984

Operation Prosperous Namibia 1989-1990

Operation Granby Gulf 1990-1991

Operation Pinseeker Kuwait 1991

Operation Haven/Warden Iraq/Turkey 1991
Operation Hanwood/Cheshire Croatia 1992-1993
Operation Jural Saudi Arabia 1992
Operadon Grapple/Lodestar Croatia/Bosnia 1992-1995
Operation Gabriel Rwanda 1994
Operation Chantress Angol 1995
Operation Purposeful Uganda 1996
Operation Determinant Zaire 1997
Operation Bolton Kuwait 1998

At the end of 1993, No. 1 and 2 Squadrons were allocated the numbers 256 and 258, which brought them into the same numbering sequence as 250 Queen's Gurkha Signal Squadron, which had become part of the Regiment in 1990.

The Regiment is comprised of 4 Squadrons:

250 Gurkha Signal Squadron,

256 Signal Squadron,

258 Signal Squadron

Support Squadron.

The regiment's current role is to provide strategic communications for the Joint Force Headquarters. (see UNTAG Signal Squadron)

This stone situated outside of Regimental Headquarters is from the island of Alderney.



It commemorates the tenth anniversary of the association of Alderney with the

- 30 Signal Regiment 1971 - 1981

Birmingham University OTC

East Midlands Universities OTC

Heraldry & Ceremonial

The regimental emblem, a white swan on a black background, is taken from the emblem of the Dyers Company, which is one of only two livery companies granted the right by the Crown to keep swans on the Thames.

THE ORIGINS OF THE REGIMENTAL CREST



In April 1960, 30th Signal Regiment was honoured to receive and accept an invitation from the Worshipful Company of Dyers that it be formally adopted by the Company. So it was that the Regiment was the first regular unit privileged to be adopted by a City livery Company.

Some of the early history of the 'Wardens and Commonalty of the history of Dyers of the City of London' is given here so that members of the Regiment may be aware of the great honour that has been accorded to them.

The Dyers were first mentioned as a Guild in 1188. The Dyers' Company in the past was the twelfth of the great livery companies following in all proceedings and standings next after the Vintners, then, as now, the eleventh company.

Geoffrey Chances mentioned the Dyers in his 'Canterbury Tales' of about 1390. Chaucer himself was a member of the Vintners' Company, with which the Dyers have old associations in the keeping of Swans on the Thames. The privilege of the Dyers of having a Royalty of a game of swans on the Thames is said to go back to before 1483. The cygnets are taken up each July for identification and to witness this the Wardens attend for a day the annual Swan Upping Voyage. Identification is now one mark on the beak for the Dyers, and two for the Vintners; those of Her Majesty the Queen, the Seigneur of the Swans, are unmarked.

In Elizabethan times, it was customary for the livery companies to be linked with the City's auxiliary braces and it is a happy renewal of interest in the reign of the second Elizabeth that has got the company to develop a close relationship and to adopt 30th Signal Regiment. Thus it is that the Regiment has chosen the emblem of a White Swan on a black background for the Regimental Crest.

256 Signal Squadron

The original 256 Squadron was formed by 47 Guided Weapons (GW) Regimental Royal Artillery Signal Troop on 1 November 1960. 256 Signal Squadron provided communications for 47 Regiment Royal Artillery who were based at Napier Barracks, Dortmund. The Regiment was equipped with the American CORPORAL Surface to Surface Guided (SSGW) system. 256 Signal Squadron provided a dedicated radio relay circuit to Corps Headquarters

for the sole purpose of nuclear warhead control. 256 Signal Squadron filled this role until 1966 when 47 Regiment reverted to a non-nuclear role. It was decided by Commander 1 Artillery Brigade that: 'Brigade communications would be rationalised with one large squadron responsible for all communications within the brigade'.

256 Signal Squadron merged with 257 Signal Squadron who had provided similar communications to 27 Regiment Royal Artillery. The new squadron retained the title 257 Signal Squadron and later became part of the 3rd Armoured Division Headquarters and Signal Regiment.

History of Bramcote Station

Bramcote is one of the few stations still in operation which has been occupied by all three services during its lifetime, first by the RAF, then the Royal Navy (Fleet Air Arm) and then the Army (Junior Leaders Regiment Royal Artillery and 30th Signal Regiment).

Royal Air Force: 1939 - 1946

Bramcote was planned as a training airfield for the Midlands in the latter part of the 1930s. It was also part of a general plan to be used as a dispersal airfield in the event of the airfields in East Anglia becoming easy targets for enemy bombers.

Construction work began in early 1939 with the airfield eventually completed and operationally effective on 4 June 1940.

Bramcote immediately became responsible for training all bomber aircrew for the Polish element of the RAF. It saw the formation of the four Polish manned bomber squadrons. The first to be formed was No. 300 (Masovian) on 1 July 1940. No. 301 (Pomeranian) was formed on 22 July 1940 and in August Nos. 304 (Silesian) and 305 (Ziemia Wielkopolska) were formed. After training they moved to RAF Swinderby.

The main training unit at Bramcote was No. 18 OTU (Operational Training Unit) which arrived at Bramcote on 15 November 1940. It had been formed at RAF Hucknall on 1 May 1940. After the initial formation and training of the four Polish manned squadrons, 18 OTU trained all aircrew who were then posted to join the operational squadrons. The establishment of aircraft of 18 OTU on arrival was 54 Wellington bombers and 9 Ansons. The four Polish squadrons were all eventually equipped with Wellington bombers and the first Polish pilots to fly these bombers did so on 1 January 1941.

Although Bramcote was primarily a bomber base, some elements of fighter squadrons spent a little time here. Coventry received its fateful heavy air raid on 14 November 1940 and following that, 151 Fighter Squadron (Defiants) was based here for a short while.

In May and June 1942, 18 OTU (despite being a training unit) provided aircraft and crews to take part in the thousand bomber raids over Germany, including Cologne, Essen and Bremen. The lack of reserves for training had, by March 1943, brought about the reduction of 18 (Polish) OTU to just one flight and it was then moved to the training unit at RAF Finningley. Bramcote then took on the training of aircrew for transportation and the longer flights such a role would require. This became the task of 105 OTU, with Bramcote passing from Bomber to Transport command. In August 1945, 105 OTU ceased its operations and its duties were taken over by 1381 (Transport) Conversion Unit. By now Wellingtons were no longer used and the unit was completely equipped with Dakotas.

Since 1941, Bramcote had also been the home of 1513 BAT flight, equipped with Oxford

aircraft. BAT stands for Beam Approach Training - a form of blind flying. On 16 July 1946 it was replaced by 1510 Flight. They stayed until November of that year. This ended the chapter of the RAF period, as on 3 December 1946 the station was handed over to the Royal Navy.

Royal Navy: 1946 - 1959

The Royal Navy took over Bramcote Station on 3 December 1946. It became known as Royal Navy Air Station, Bramcote 'HMS Gamecock'. The ship's badge was 'a gamecock proper' on white background with the motto 'spurred for the skies'

At the commissioning ceremony, captain G N Brewer DSO, Officer Commanding, remarked to the assembled gathering 'you have seen the white ensign hoisted for the first time about as far from the sea as it is possible in England. You are serving in the most inland 'stone frigate' in the country'.



This was the original anchor of H.M.S. Gamecock, which is situated just opposite the guardroom.

The main function of RNAS Bramcote was to be the technical training for Naval Airmen Aircraft Mechanics. About one thousand men were under training at any one time. After completing new entry and airmanship courses, the trainee then joined an aircraft carrier for one month's sea experience.

HMS Gamecock was also a centre for the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (Air branch) and was used by 1833 (RNVR) Squadron. This squadron started its flying at Bramcote with Seafires (the naval version of the Spitfire). The early 1950s saw an expansion of the RNVR and in 1954, 1833 squadron got its eagerly awaited Sea Furies. There were also a small number of Firefly aircraft and on 15 February 1954, this element was formed into 1844 squadron, which concentrated on anti-submarine training. Both Squadrons were distinguished by having their spinners (propellers) painted red - this being the unofficial station colour. All aircraft based at Bramcote, were identified by the letters BR painted on the tail fin.

On 23 October 1955, 1833 squadron were moved to RAF Honiley - near Coventry - as they were to be equipped with jet aircraft as Bramcote had grass runways.

In March 1956, 1844 squadron re-equipped with Grumman Avengers. They no longer had red spinners but the cowlings now bore a red diamond with a squadron crest on a white inner.

HMS Gamecock, as the name implies, suggests an association with the game bird and it is believed that a cock-fighting pit did exist within the station perimeter - not far from the Officers Mess. It is not surprising to find therefore that the Navy had a mascot - yes - a

gamecock. The first one was 'Wallis' - to be followed by many more and he was paraded in his spherical cage at ceremonial parades.

The latest Gamecock Bird 30th Signal Regiment Mascot LCpl Jimmy



With the run down of the RNVR (Air Branch) Bramcote eventually became surplus to requirements for the Navy and the training was transferred to Arbroath. During the long run down the local press headlined the question 'what is to happen to HMS Gamecock? Their fears were alleviated by the announcement that the camp was to receive new tenants.

Army - 1959 onwards

In 1959 the barracks was taken over by the Junior Leaders Regiment Royal Artillery. The Regiment was tasked with producing the future NCOs and warrant officers for the Artillery. The training included skill-at-arms, drill, fieldcraft, first aid, NBC, leadership, character training, map reading, education, physical training, gunnery and signals.

The regiment was divided into four batteries - 2, 33, 39 and 40. Each battery consisted of four troops. Each battery and troop carried the name of a famous gunner of the past. Camaraderie was built up through the system of troops and batteries and there was a great deal of healthy competition in all areas, especially sport.

The decision to restructure the training base of the British army in the early 1990s for a while saw Bramcote as the home of one of the two Army Junior Leader Regiments. Under the new scheme of things the Regiment accommodated a battery of Junior Gunners, a Junior Guards Company, a Junior Queens Company and a Junior Prince of Wales Company. However this new scheme did not last long as a decision to scrap junior intakes was made with the final intake passing off in June 1993.

After some months of uncertainty it was decided that Gamecock Barracks would become the new home of 30th Signal Regiment. The Regiment took over the camp in September 1993, completing it's move from Blandford by November.