

Tigers



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Great Britain's Regular Army was large enough to contain the initial German Advance of 1914, but heavy casualties and the prospect of a long World War forced the British to tap new manpower sources. Lord Kitchener, the British supreme commander, called for the creation of a "New Army" from civilian volunteers. This new army required Britain's existing regiments to raise wartime "Service" battalions with a strong regional identity. This volume covers in great detail the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th "Service" battalions raised by the Leicestershire Regiment, a unit best known for its bayonet charge against Washington's troops at Princeton in 1777. The new volunteers, often coming from such quaint localities as Coalville, Market Harborough and Wigston, underwent military training with enthusiasm and arrived on the Western Front in late 1915. Steel helmets had not yet been issued and the four battalions were readily identified by the "Tiger" badge of the Leicesters worn on their cloth caps. Leicestershire maintained its four battalions through the fruitless campaigns of 1916 and 1917, but the original batch of volunteers, identifiable by their black collar patches, became fewer and fewer as the months rolled by. This vivid account is backed up by 200 photographs, most never before published, maps, and rolls of the names of participants. It is a unique exercise in both local and military history.

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