

13th Hussars 1866 - 1885

Canada 1866-69

The Fenian incursions into Canada from the United States in 1866 caused the British government to send cavalry out to Canada, and the 13th Hussars were selected to go. On 11th Sep 1866 seven Troops (324 other ranks with 26 officers) marched from York and were sent by train to Liverpool. Under Lieut-Col Jenyns they embarked on the Taria and the Europa. There were only 246 troop horses, but 59 horses for the officers. It was a bad crossing with heavy gales blighting the whole voyage, causing the deaths of 16 troop horses and 4 officers' horses. Another boat, the Damascus set sail on 12th Sep with 5 officers and 152 men (and no horses) which arrived at Quebec two days after the other two.

Two Troops were posted to Montreal and the rest of the regiment went to Toronto. They purchased 78 horses there and set themselves up in the Crystal Palace where the buildings were made of glass and wood. After 20 months they were reinforced, on 27th June 1868, by a draft of one officer, a sergeant and 101 men. They were then issued with Snider breech-loading carbines. They were not sent into action.

Their time in Canada had been spent in finishing off the buildings in which they were housed and turning cattle sheds into stables. They also established a cavalry school to instruct Canadian Mounted Volunteers. The New Brunswick Regiment of Yeomanry Cavalry was raised in 1869, basing its uniform on the 13th Hussars. They became the 8th Princess Louise's New Brunswick Hussars and continued to copy the uniform of the 13th.

India 1874-1884

The 13th appear to have learned a hard lesson after the suffering and death of horses on the voyage out to Canada in 1866, so that when they were ordered to sail to India in Dec 1873 they handed over their horses to the 21st Hussars who had just returned from India. They sailed on 8th Jan 1874 and arrived in Bombay on 12th Feb. The regiment was commanded by John Miller and had a strength of 450 all ranks. They went by train to Lucknow and were given the horses that the 21st Hussars had left in India. The regiment were not in action for most of their time in India. They were inspected by the Prince of Wales on 12th Jan 1876, and other inspections by General officers produced highly complimentary reports. On the occasions when a cavalry regiment left India a few men chose to stay on and were drafted into the 13th. The men were issued with new Martini-Henry carbines on 6th July 1878 in place of the Sniders.

Afghanistan 1880

After nearly 7 years in Lucknow the regiment was ordered to go to Kandahar in Nov 1880. They travelled by train to Quetta under the command of Sir Baker Russell, and marched to Kandahar in Afghanistan, a journey that took them eleven days. They were camped at Kokeran until April 1881 when the evacuation of Kandahar was ordered. The 13th formed the rearguard of the column leaving the city. They reached Quetta on 5th May and stayed until 14th Oct when they returned to India. The regiment did not come into action during their time in Afghanistan although 9 men died. The history does not say how they died, only that the average age of the men was 24.

South Africa 1885

They were stationed at Muttra and then marched to Meerut in Dec 1883 and were inspected by the Duke of Connaught on 25th Jan 1884. They returned to Muttra and were ordered to Natal so that on 14th Nov 1884 they sailed from Bombay on the HMS Serapis, the same ship that brought them from England 10 years before. The ship took them to Port Natal on 29th Nov, where they were to serve temporarily. They proceeded to Pinetown to relieve the 6th Dragoons. In May 1885 they went to Pietermaritzburg to take part in manoeuvres. In Sept 1885 Sir Baker left the regiment and Herbert Gifford took over command. On 8th Oct 1885 the regiment sailed home from Durban and arrived on 4th Nov at Portsmouth from where they travelled by train to Norwich and Colchester.

<http://www.britishempire.co.uk/forces/armyunits/britishcavalry/13thhussars1861.htm>