

British Infantry (Rifle) Battalion

War Establishment reference II/1931/12B/3

Notified 6th April 1938

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Composed of;

Battalion Headquarters	4 Officers, 43 men
Headquarter Company	6 Officers, 215 men
Company Headquarters	(1 Officer, 6 men)
Signal Platoon	(1 Officer, 33 men)
Anti-aircraft Platoon	(16 men)
Mortar Platoon	(17 men) - (two 3-inch mortars)
Carrier Platoon	(1 Officer, 29 men) - (ten Carriers)
Pioneer Platoon	(20 men)
Administrative Platoon	(3 Officers, 94 men)
Four Rifle Companies, each	3 Officers, 97 men
Company Headquarters	(2 Officers, 10 men)
One Rifle Platoon	(1 Officer, 29 men)
Two Platoons, each	(29 men)
Total strength	668 all ranks (22 Officers and 646 men)

Summary Table, British Infantry Battalion, April 1938

Detail	Headquarter Company								Total, HQ Company	Four Rifle Companies, each			Total, Rifle Company	Total, Battalion
	Battalion HQ	Company HQ	Signal Platoon	Anti-aircraft Platoon	3-in Mortar Platoon	Carrier Platoon	Pioneer Platoon	Administrative Platoon		Company HQ	One Rifle Platoon	Two Rifle Platoons (each)		
i). Personnel														
Officers	4	1	1	0	0	1	0	3	6	2	1	0	3	22
Warrant officers	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	5	1	0	1	3	18
Staff-serjeants	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	5
Serjeants	4	0	1	0	2	3	0	5	11	0	1	1	3	27
Corporals	2	0	2	2	2	6	2	4	18	1	3	2	8	52
Privates	36	4	30	13	12	20	17	84	180	7	25	25	82	544
Total, all ranks (including attached)	47	7	34	16	17	30	20	97	221	12	30	29	100	668
ii). Transport														
Bicycles	3	0	8	0	2	0	2	0	12	2	1	1	5	35
Motorcycles	5	0	3	2	2	0	1	1	9	0	0	0	0	14
Cars (4-seater)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Trucks, 8-cwt (6-seater)	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	4	1	0	0	1	9
Trucks, 15-cwt	2	0	1	4	2	1	1	6	15	1	1	1	4	33
Lorries, 30-cwt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	12	0	0	0	0	12
Carriers, Bren gun	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	10
iii). Weapons														
Pistols	10	1	4	2	2	1	1	4	15	2	1	1	5	45
Rifles	37	6	30	14	15	29	19	93	206	10	29	28	95	623
Light machine guns	0	0	0	4	0	10	0	0	14	0	3	3	9	50
Anti-tank rifles, .55-inch	0	0	1	4	1	3	0	1	10	0	1	1	3	22
2-inch mortars	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	12
3-inch mortars	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Signal pistols (issued as required)*	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24

Notes

Attached personnel consist of 1 Officer, 2 Serjeants and 3 rank & file (included in above).

Of the total Corporals (excluding attached) 10 may be Lance-serjeants.

Of the total Privates (excluding attached) 40 may be Lance-corporals.

*The original W.E. does not give a figure for signal pistols in carriers.

Battalion Headquarters (4 Officers, 43 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Battalion commander	Lieutenant-colonel	1	Pistol	
Second-in-command	Major	1	Pistol	
Adjutant	Captain	1	Pistol	
Regimental serjeant-major	Warrant officer, class I	1	Pistol	
Serjeant clerk	Serjeant	1	Rifle	
Clerk	Private	2	Rifle	
Batman	Private	6	Rifle	
Intelligence officer	Subaltern	1	Pistol	
Intelligence serjeant	Serjeant	1	Pistol	
			Motorcycle, solo	1
Intelligence	Private	3	Rifle	
Intelligence	Private	3	Rifle	
			Bicycle	3
Provost-serjeant	Serjeant	1	Pistol	
			Motorcycle, solo	1
Regimental Police	Private	3	Pistol	
			Motorcycle, solo	3
Medical officer's orderly	Lance-corporal	1	Rifle	
Medical serjeant	Serjeant	1	Rifle	
Stretcher bearer	Corporal*	2	Rifle	
Stretcher bearer	Private	18	Rifle	
<i>Driver, I.C. (from Admin Platoon)</i>			Car, 4-seater	1
<i>Driver, I.C. (from Admin Platoon)</i>			Truck, 8-cwt	1
<i>Driver, I.C. (from Admin Platoon)</i>			Truck, 15-cwt, GS	1
			<i>Battalion office</i>	
<i>Driver, I.C. (from Admin Platoon)</i>			Truck, 15-cwt, GS	1
			<i>Medical Officer & equipment</i>	
Total, all ranks		47		

* Two men in Battalion Headquarters were Corporals but their positions are not identified in the W.E. As they were both in the Medical Section they have been assumed as stretcher bearers.

Headquarter Company (6 Officers, 215 men)

Company Headquarters (1 Officer, 6 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Company commander	Major or Captain	1	Pistol	
Company serjeant-major	Warrant officer, class II	1	Rifle	
Company quarter-master-serjeant	Staff-serjeant	1	Rifle	
Batman	Private	1	Rifle	
Clerk	Private	1	Rifle	
Storeman	Private	1	Rifle	
Rangetaker	Private	1	Rifle	
<i>Driver, I.C. (from Admin Platoon)</i>			Truck, 8-cwt	1
Total, all ranks		7		

(No.1) Signal Platoon (1 Officer, 33 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Platoon commander	Subaltern	1	Pistol	
Batman	Private	1	Rifle	
Signal serjeant	Serjeant	1	Pistol Motorcycle, solo	1
Orderly	Private	3	Rifle Bicycle	3
Orderly	Private	2	Pistol Motorcycle, solo	2
Signaller	Corporal	2	Rifle	
Signaller	Private	19	Rifle	
Signaller	Private	5	Rifle Bicycle	5
<i>Driver, I.C. (from Admin Platoon)</i>			Truck, 8-cwt	1
<i>Driver, I.C. (from Admin Platoon)</i>			Truck, 15-cwt, GS <i>signal stores</i>	1
			Anti-tank rifle	1
Total, all ranks		34		

(No.2) Anti-aircraft Platoon (16 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Headquarters				
Platoon commander	Warrant officer, class III	1	Pistol	
			Motorcycle, solo	1
Orderly	Private	1	Pistol	
			Motorcycle, solo	1
Two detachments, each				
LMG number and rifleman	Corporal	1	Rifle	
LMG number and rifleman	Private	3	Rifle	
<i>Driver, I.C. (from Admin Platoon)</i>			Truck, 15-cwt, GS	1
			Light machine gun	1
			Anti-tank rifle	1
Two detachments, each				
LMG number and rifleman	Private	3	Rifle	
<i>Driver, I.C. (from Admin Platoon)</i>			Truck, 15-cwt, GS	1
			Light machine gun	1
			Anti-tank rifle	1
Total, all ranks		16		

(No.3) Mortar Platoon (17 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Headquarters				
Platoon commander	Warrant officer, class III	1	Pistol	
			Motorcycle, solo	1
Orderly	Private	1	Pistol	
			Motorcycle, solo	1
Orderly	Private	2	Rifle	
			Bicycle	2
Rangetaker	Private	1	Rifle	
Two detachments, each				
Detachment commander	Serjeant	1	Rifle	
Mortar detachment	Corporal	1	Rifle	
Mortar detachment	Private	4	Rifle	
<i>Driver, I.C. (from Admin Platoon)</i>			Truck, 15-cwt, GS	1
			3-inch mortar	1
			Anti-tank rifle*	1
Total, all ranks		17		

*in one Detachment only

(No.4) Carrier Platoon (1 Officer, 29 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
<i>Headquarters</i>				
Platoon commander	Subaltern	1	Pistol	
Batman	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver-mechanic	Private	1	Rifle	
			Carrier, Bren gun	1
			Light machine gun	1
<i>Driver, I.C. (from Admin Platoon)</i>			Truck, 15-cwt, GS	1
<i>Three Sections, each</i>				
Section commander	Serjeant	1	Rifle	
LMG number and rifleman	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver-mechanic	Private	1	Rifle	
			Carrier, Bren gun	1
			Light machine gun	1
			Anti-tank rifle	1
LMG number and rifleman	Corporal	1	Rifle	
LMG number and rifleman	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver-mechanic	Private	1	Rifle	
			Carrier, Bren gun	1
			Light machine gun	1
LMG number and rifleman	Corporal	1	Rifle	
LMG number and rifleman	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver-mechanic	Private	1	Rifle	
			Carrier, Bren gun	1
			Light machine gun	1
Total, all ranks		30		

(No.5) Pioneer Platoon (20 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Platoon commander	Warrant officer, class III	1	Pistol Motorcycle, solo	1
Blacksmith	Private	1	Rifle	
Bricklayer	Private	1	Rifle	
Carpenter	Private	6	Rifle	
Mason	Private	1	Rifle	
<i>Driver, I.C. (from Admin Platoon)</i>			Truck, 15-cwt, GS	1
Two Sections, each				
Pioneer	Corporal*	1	Rifle Bicycle	1
Pioneer	Private	4	Rifle	
Total, all ranks		20		

* The W.E. shows two Corporals in the Platoon and the above assumes one per Pioneer Section.

(No.6) Administrative Platoon (3 Officers, 94 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Transport	Subaltern	1	Pistol	
Transport	Serjeant	1	Pistol Motorcycle, solo	1
Quarter-master	<i>not stated</i>	1	Pistol	
Regimental quarter-master-serjeant	Warrant officer, class II	1	Rifle	
Batman	Private	2	Rifle	
Butcher	Private	1	Rifle	
Clerk	Private	2	Rifle	
Equipment repairer	Private	1	Rifle	
Motor mechanic	Private	2	Rifle	
Postman	Lance-corporal	1	Rifle	
Sanitary duties	Private	4	Rifle	
Storeman	Private	1	Rifle	
Technical stores	Serjeant	1	Rifle	
Technical storeman	Private	2	Rifle	
Water duties	Private	2	Rifle	
Serjeant cook	Serjeant	1	Rifle	
Cook	Private	8	Rifle	
Serjeants' mess cook	Private	2	Rifle	
Officer's mess cook	Private	1	Rifle	
Officer's mess servant	Private	1	Rifle	
Continued...				

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Driver, I.C. <i>(with Platoons and Companies)</i>	Private	35	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	2	Rifle Truck, 8-cwt	2
Driver, I.C.	Private	2	Rifle Truck, 15-cwt, water (200-gal)	2
Driver, I.C.	Private	3	Rifle Truck, 15-cwt, GS <i>reserve ammunition</i>	3
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Truck, 15-cwt, GS <i>mortar ammunition</i>	1
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Anti-tank rifle Rifle	1
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Lorry, 30-cwt, GS <i>officers' mess</i>	1
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Lorry, 30-cwt, GS <i>fitters' stores</i>	1
Driver, I.C.	Private	5	Rifle Lorry, 30-cwt, GS <i>cooking sets</i>	5
Driver, I.C.	Private	2	Rifle Lorry, 30-cwt, GS <i>baggage</i>	2
Driver, I.C.	Private	2	Rifle Lorry, 30-cwt, GS <i>anti-gas capes</i>	2
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Lorry, 30-cwt, GS <i>petrol distribution</i>	1
<i>Attached personnel</i>				
Medical officer (RAMC)	<i>not stated</i>	1	Pistol	
Armourer (RAOC)	Serjeant	1	Rifle	
Shoemaker (RAOC)	Private	1	Rifle	
Fitter, MV (RAOC)	Serjeant	1	Rifle	
Fitter, MV (RAOC)	Private	2	Rifle	
Total, all ranks		97		

The W.E. shows four Corporals in the Platoon but gives no indication of the posts that they occupied. Vehicle loadings taken from transport table in the August 1940 re-issue of the table.

Four Rifle Companies (3 Officers, 97 men), each

Company Headquarters (2 Officers, 10 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Company commander	Major or Captain	1	Pistol	
Second-in-command	Captain	1	Pistol	
Company serjeant-major	Warrant officer, class II	1	Rifle	
Company quarter-master-serjeant	Staff-serjeant	1	Rifle	
Batman	Private	2	Rifle	
Clerk	Private	1	Rifle	
Storeman	Private	1	Rifle	
Orderly	Private	2	Rifle	
			Bicycle	2
Orderly	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver-mechanic	Corporal*	1	Rifle	
<i>Driver, I.C. (from Admin Platoon)</i>			Truck, 8-cwt	1
<i>Driver, I.C. (from Admin Platoon)</i>			Truck, 15-cwt, GS	1
Total, all ranks		12		

* The W.E. shows one Corporal in Headquarters and the above assumes his position.

One Rifle Platoon (1 Officer, 29 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Headquarters				
Platoon commander	Subaltern	1	Pistol	
Platoon serjeant	Serjeant	1	Rifle	
Batman	Private	1	Rifle	
Orderly	Private	1	Rifle	
			Bicycle	1
Mortar detachment (2-inch)	Private	2	Rifle	
			2-inch mortar	1
<i>Driver, I.C. (from Admin Platoon)</i>			Truck, 15-cwt, GS	1
			Anti-tank rifle	1
Three Sections, each				
Section commander	Corporal	1	Rifle	
LMG number and rifleman	Private	7	Rifle	
			Light machine gun	1
Total, all ranks		30		

Two Rifle Platoons, each (29 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Headquarters				
Platoon commander	Warrant officer, class III	1	Pistol	
Platoon serjeant	Serjeant	1	Rifle	
Orderly	Private	1	Rifle	
			Bicycle	1
Mortar detachment (2-inch)	Private	2	Rifle	
			2-inch mortar	1
<i>Driver, I.C. (from Admin Platoon)</i>			Truck, 15-cwt, GS	1
			Anti-tank rifle	1
Three Sections, each				
Section commander	Corporal*	1	Rifle	
LMG number and rifleman	Private	7	Rifle	
			Light machine gun	1
Total, all ranks		29		

*One Section in the Platoon is commanded by a Lance-corporal.

Notes

1. The original War Establishment gives a figure for the number of Corporals in Headquarters and Platoons but does not specifically identify the position that they occupied. Some of these I have assumed and noted as such in the above.
2. Only two personnel are positively identified as Lance-corporals. With 40 allowed across the whole Battalion there would be sufficient for one per Rifle Section but this is not explicitly stated.
3. No rank is stated for either the Battalion Quarter-master or the attached Medical Officer (RAMC).
4. A batman was provided for each Officer, the Regimental Serjeant-major and the Medical Officer.
5. Scottish Battalions and Irish Battalions (except the RUR) will be allowed one Serjeant Piper and five Pipers in addition. A Battalion of Foot Guard will be allowed two Drill Serjeants (Warrant Officers, class II) in addition.
6. Vehicle loadings are taken from the rewrite of this table, issued as II/1931/12B/4 notified 14th August 1940. At time of writing I do not have the organization table issued in early 1939 for attachment to II/1931/12B/3.