

DRILL HALLS

A NATIONAL OVERVIEW

Katie Carmichael



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SUMMARY

This report examines the history and development of drill halls as a building type, providing a national context for their assessment. For the purpose of this document, a drill hall is defined as a purpose-built facility for the training of members of the Army's volunteer forces c.1859 onward. Drill halls vary greatly in style and provision of space but always incorporate a large open hall for drilling, administrative rooms and, often, accommodation for a caretaker or drill instructor as well as an indoor rifle range. Most drill halls closed following a reduction in the size of the Territorial Army after the Second World War. Many were demolished while others were sold and converted to new uses. Current proposals to change the structure of the reserve forces mean that many more are likely to become surplus to requirement and are expected to be demolished or substantially altered. Of those drill halls still in use by the reserve forces, many have suffered a loss of character through alterations – particularly to fenestration and access. The report aims to provide a national overview of the building type to assist in the assessment the significance of individual drill halls in order to inform planning and designation decision-making by English Heritage and local authorities, but will also be of general historical interest. The project has been logged as RaSMIS number 6331 and responds to several priorities embedded within the National Heritage Protection Plan, specifically 4A4.2: Enhanced Protection of Priority Heritage Asset Classes.

CONTRIBUTORS

Fieldwork, research and report writing were undertaken by Katie Carmichael. Kathryn Morrison and Wayne Cocroft provided guidance on the scope and content of the report and edited the text. Graphics were produced by Phil Sinton. Photography was undertaken by James Davies, Pat Payne and Derek Kendall. Rushden Research, The King's Own Royal Regiment Museum of Lancaster, Pete Herring, Martin Jeffs, Alan Johnson, John Minnis and Adam Sharpe kindly provided additional photographs for use in this report.

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CONTACT DETAILS

English Heritage, Brooklands, 24 Brooklands Avenue, Cambridge, CB2 8BU
Katie Carmichael (nee Graham) : 01223 582782 : Katie.Carmichael@english-heritage.org.uk

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INTRODUCTION

Drill halls originated as a building type following the formation of Rifle Volunteer Corps in 1859. Also known as 'drill sheds', and commonly identified on modern Ordnance Survey maps as 'TA Centres', they can be defined as dedicated training facilities for the army's volunteer units. They are a common sight in almost every English town and city.

Drill halls receive some consideration in English Heritage's listing selection guide, 'Sports and Recreation Buildings', which emphasises their potential for structurally innovative wide-span roof types.¹ Of those which are currently listed, only 15 were purpose-built as drill halls for the Army's volunteer forces. Additional listings include sites that have lost their drill hall, those which occupy converted buildings, and some which were erected for the regular forces. The 15 listed purpose-built drill halls are all designated at Grade II and range in date from 1864 to 1907.

A survey carried out by Mike Osborne in 2006 revealed a total of 1,863 documented English drill halls,² around 300 of which were still used by the Territorial Army (TA) at that time. Most drill halls had closed following a reduction in the size of the TA after the Second World War. Subsequently, many were demolished while others were sold and converted to new uses. With current proposals to change the structure of the TA, many may become surplus to requirement. They will need to find new occupants if they are to be economically sustainable. Their uncertain future has prompted English Heritage to examine the history, development and significance of drill halls as a building type.

The history of drill halls dates back to the mid-19th century, when the authorities made a concerted effort to create a reserve of men with military training, arranged along the lines of the regular army. The Militia and Yeomanry had existed long before the formation of the Volunteer Rifles, and their barracks and stores are of considerable interest in their own right (Fig 1). However, the requirements and social status of the Militia and Yeomanry were very different to those of the first volunteer units and any sites built specifically for them, without later additions for the volunteers, have been excluded from this report. When voluntary service, as opposed to enlisting into a paid semi-professional militia, was opened up to the general population in 1859, it proved very popular. By the end of 1860 more than 120,000 men had signed up.

This vast new force needed accommodation and existing local barracks and depots were unable to take the strain. The majority of volunteer units were set up in towns and cities where existing public buildings generally lacked spare capacity. Most units were, at first, private organisations with no access to central funds. Although many of the early volunteer groups adapted existing buildings such as village halls, a purpose-built drill hall was considered the most desirable option. Since volunteers were responsible for paying for their own accommodation, the building of purpose-built facilities was limited to those units best placed to raise the money.

Drill halls for the volunteer forces slowly began to emerge as a distinct building type and, although no two drill halls are identical, they do all share three essential elements. These combined to form a characteristic layout whereby the offices, armoury and stores were

accommodated in an administrative block fronting the street, with a large hall positioned at right-angles behind (often with an indoor target range to one side and viewing balconies at either end). The third element, accommodation for the caretaker or drill instructor, could be included within the administrative block or placed separately to the rear of the hall, as desired. Whilst there are countless variations upon the basic layout, the most common is the side-by-side arrangement with the hall running along the street beside the administrative block. In addition to their standard functions, drill halls acted as focal points for events within the wider community. Many were designed with this in mind and boasted of their suitability to host concerts, dances and meals. The units were a source of local civic pride and the architecture of their drill halls often reflected that – friendly rivalry between neighbouring units often resulting in a series of improvements or extensions.



Fig 1 Oakham's Yeomanry stables and riding school of c.1790 on Catmos Street, built for the Rutland Yeomanry Cavalry. © Martin Jeffs

Many drill halls are significant not only architecturally but also for their associations with local communities. During the two world wars of the 20th century, drill halls were where the Territorials met to be kitted out and mobilised. Some volunteers served in Britain, but most relieved regular garrisons in overseas territories or were deployed on active duty. Whilst the wars effectively put a stop to major building work, drill halls also served as recruiting offices, training facilities, hospitals and mustering points, with a number of old buildings requisitioned to meet demand. Inevitably, many existing drill halls received adaptations. These may be significant, if not architecturally, for their wartime associations.

Whilst many drill halls are simple, undistinguished, utilitarian structures with little or no embellishment, their architectural treatment can be divided broadly into four periods: 1859-1880, 1880-1914, 1914-1945 and 1945 to the present. The very earliest drill halls, those of 1859-1880, were often private concerns. A lack of central regulation tended to result in small buildings which were somewhat eclectic in design and style. Many of these

were substantially altered or demolished as they became increasingly unfit for purpose. As such, relatively few survive.

The period 1880-1914 saw the increasing influence of the War Office and a move towards regulation and uniformity. In the late 19th century buildings became larger, showing a clear preference for designs inspired by medieval castles or forts although the domestic Tudor revival style also became popular around 1900. Drill halls became more uniform in size and in provision of facilities – if not in design and style – following the creation of the Territorial Force in 1907. This marked the commencement of a programme of building which continued until the outbreak of war in 1914. Buildings of this period are characterised by simple two-storey office blocks in front of the hall. The very last drill halls to be built before the outbreak of war display a wide variety of styles including the continued use of both medieval and Tudor designs, as well as the more fashionable Neo-Georgian, modified Wrenaissance, Queen Anne and Neo-Baroque styles.

More than 200 new drill halls were built in the period 1914-1945, mainly in the suburbs of England's major towns and cities. These buildings were designed with vehicles and improved technology in mind – resulting in larger buildings for use by fewer, smaller, but more specialised units. Most inter-war drill halls date to the 1930s, a decade marked by a rise in international military activity. Whilst medieval and Tudor influences lingered, the dominant architectural style of this period was Neo-Georgian.

The final period, from 1945 to the present, has largely been a time of contraction within the volunteer forces, whilst continued improvements in technology and increasing concern regarding security have had an impact on the design of drill halls. Mid-20th century drill halls were stylistically almost indistinguishable from many pre-war examples but often incorporated small technical improvements to enhance security. The most recent drill halls of the late 20th and early 21st centuries have mirrored wider architectural trends, resulting in structures of the 'shed' or 'warehouse' form so often seen on industrial estates and retail parks.

Drill halls are of interest to people for diverse reasons. Whilst many are obviously of evidential or aesthetic value, drill halls are especially important for their historical, social and communal – illustrative, associative, commemorative and symbolic – values. Furthermore, many drill halls contain physical reminders of past lives and events, in the form of battle honours and war memorials. Adaptations and extensions to drill halls largely reflect the shifting demands made on the military and the volunteer forces over time. Wartime advances in technology and warfare had a significant impact not only on the organisation of the forces but also upon the architecture of their bases, with an increased focus on improved mobility and efficiency. Yeomanry units were rapidly converted into artillery units, vast numbers of riflemen were replaced by fewer, smaller, more highly skilled units with access to lorries which needed garaging, and anti-aircraft batteries and searchlight units which demanded large spaces with wide doors for ready access. Whilst unaltered examples of drill halls are clearly of interest, adaptations are also important in telling the story of how society, technology and warfare evolved over time.

Whilst this report is concerned with the infrastructure of the Army's reserve forces it is important to note that each branch of the Services had its own volunteer reserve force: known most recently as the Royal Navy Reserve, the Royal Marines Reserve, and the Royal Auxiliary Air Force.³ Each of these forces relied upon volunteers and had its own infrastructure to facilitate their training – many with drill halls of their own, often built along similar lines as those belonging to the Army Reserve but with necessarily different requirements depending upon the particular specialisms and equipment of each force.

The History of the Army Reserve

The complex history of Britain's Army volunteer force, today known as the Reserve Forces but often still referred to as the Territorial Army (TA), had a direct impact on the size, location and design of drill halls. The timeline below sets out some of the key dates and events.

1859 – Formation of Rifle Volunteer Corps. Many coastal units elected to become gunners rather than infantry units.

1863 – The Volunteer Act set the standard for drills. The Cadet Battalions were formed and attached to Rifle Volunteer units.

1871 – The Regulation of the Forces Act.

1881 – Rifle Volunteers became Volunteer Battalions within Line Regiments.

1908 – Following the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act of 1907, the Territorial Force (TF) was formed through the consolidation of the Rifle Volunteers and the Yeomanry, leading to the formation of more specialised units including artillery, engineering and medical units. The TF had 14 infantry divisions and 14 mounted yeomanry brigades, with an overall strength of around 269,000 men administered by County Associations. The Militia was renamed the Special Reserve.

1914 – The TF was mobilised alongside the regular army by Royal Prerogative.

1918 – Many TF units disbanded.

1920 – TF units were reconstituted as the TA. Out of 55 yeomanry units just 14 kept their horses. The other units either converted to artillery or were disbanded.

1921 – 40 pairs of infantry battalions were amalgamated.

1922 – Further reductions to the TA saw six artillery gun batteries reduced to four, whilst infantry battalions were reduced in size along with ancillary units.

1923 – TA given responsibility for anti-aircraft defence in London.

1926 – TA given responsibility for coastal defence.

1930s – Further Yeomanry units were converted to either artillery or armoured units and many infantry units became anti-aircraft units.

1936 – Formation of the Auxiliary Territorial Service, allowing women to volunteer.

1938 – 77,000 new TA recruits.

1939 – The TA doubled in size, with 340,000 individuals organised into 26 divisions and another 100,000 individuals forming the anti-aircraft section. The TA was mobilised and its units absorbed into the regular army by Royal Prerogative.

1944 – Women were serving in mixed anti-aircraft batteries.

1946 – The regular army was demobilised and the TA temporarily suspended.

1947 – The TA was reconstituted along its pre-1939 structure and expanded.

1953 – More than two-thirds of the TA were on National Service.

1955 – The TA's Anti-Aircraft Command was disbanded.

1956 – Coast Artillery disbanded.

1960 – The end of National Service and a reorganisation of the TA saw 266 fighting units reduced to 195.

1967 – An attempt to reinvigorate the reserves led to the virtual abolition of the regimental system and the adoption of the title Territorial and Army Volunteer Reserve (TAVR).

1971 – New battalions were created in an attempt to increase the size of the reserves.

1979 – The TAVR title was abandoned and the TA title restored.

1980s – The TA increasingly reinstated the old regimental system, although Brigades were used instead of Divisions due to the relatively compact size of the force.

1996 – The Reserve Forces Act allowed TA personnel to be deployed alongside regulars and the TA assumed a more high-profile role, supporting the regular army in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Balkans.

1998 – The Strategic Defence Review saw 87 TA companies in 33 battalions reduced to 67 companies in 15 battalions. Despite a reduced authorised strength of 42,000 the TA generally had around 35,000 volunteers.

2004 – A radical restructuring of the regular army led to a realignment of the TA as reserves of the regular regiments in 14 infantry battalions.

2006 – County TA Associations fell into 13 regional Reserve Forces and Cadets Associations.

2011 – 'Future Reserves 2020 – The Independent Commission to Review the United Kingdom's Reserves' outlined a plan to restructure both the TA and the regular army by 2020 to create a force of 12,000 soldiers comprising 84,000 regulars and 36,000 reservists. The TA to be renamed the Army Reserve.

THE HISTORY OF DRILL HALLS

1859-1880

Authorisation was given to create the Volunteer Rifle Corps and Artillery Corps (in coastal towns) on 12 May 1859 by Jonathan Peel, Secretary of State for War, due to the perceived potential threat to England following rising tensions in Europe.⁴ By October 1860, 119,146 men had enrolled,⁵ but the formation of units was unstructured and it soon became clear that tighter regulation was required. As the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe stated in a debate in 1908:

When the Volunteers first came into being they enrolled themselves spontaneously, a company here, and a company there, and were afterwards formed into battalions and then into brigades. No one could have said then how many men would be provided by any particular county.⁶

Membership of the Rifle Volunteers was a self-consciously middle-class affair to begin with, the middle classes having been largely excluded from (or having paid to avoid) roles in the regular army, Militia and Yeomanry. Membership incurred costs – not least through men providing their own equipment – and was awarded through the proposing and seconding of new members,⁷ very much like a private club. However, by 1862 more than half of the Rifle Volunteers came from the upper-working class, including a number of purely artisanal corps.⁸

By 1861 most of the numerous units had been consolidated into battalion-sized units. A new version of the Volunteer Regulations was published the same year. Following Viscount Eversley's examination of the volunteer forces in 1862, which at that time consisted of 162,681 men, a number of recommendations were made which led to the passage of the Volunteer Act of 1863. The Act granted volunteer units the right to acquire their own premises, set efficiency standards for drills and introduced the requirement for annual inspection. Units were also entitled to apply for a grant which could be used towards the cost of new premises, equipment or uniforms.⁹ However, land could only be acquired for use as a rifle range, it could be no larger than four acres, and it could be transferred to the volunteer corps for a period of only 21 years – it was not until the Regulation of the Forces Act was passed in 1871 that these powers were extended to include the acquisition of land for drill halls.¹⁰ The Act of 1871 also saw jurisdiction of the volunteers transferred from county Lord-Lieutenants to the Secretary of State for War, with units increasingly being administered along the lines of the regular army. As a result of all this, drill halls of the 1860s were generally built on donated (rather than purchased) land. The acquisition of land specifically for the construction of drill halls in the 1870s, and the availability of grants, enabled far more units to construct purpose-built facilities.

Around 350 purpose-built drill halls are known to have been constructed prior to 1900 and – whilst it is difficult to know how many early drill halls have been lost in their entirety, or so substantially altered as to be unrecognisable – perhaps 150 survive.¹¹ Of those 150, most date from the 1880s or 1890s, the period following the Cardwell and

Childers reforms and increased regulation of the volunteer forces. As such, any purpose-built drill hall from the period 1859-1880 is of potential interest.

Drill halls of this period are characterised by the use of the popular Gothic Revival style. The majority were fairly modest, almost domestic in appearance, but often included decorative touches such as polychromatic brickwork or lancet windows. The builders of larger drill halls were inspired by medieval castles to create structures which dominated their surroundings.

Listed Examples, 1859-1880

Seven drill halls built prior to 1880 are included on the National Heritage List for England, all at Grade II – they are located in Selby, Great Yarmouth, Chester, Halifax, York, Falmouth and Sheffield. Between them they represent the basic story of stylistic development seen in drill halls during this period.

The drill hall on Armoury Road, Selby, North Yorkshire (Fig 2), built in 1864-5, is the oldest listed drill hall in the country and has an average-sized hall of 80 feet long by 40 feet wide. The main elevation is symmetrical, with polychromatic brickwork and a number of Gothic Revival touches such as the lancet windows in the gable above the entrance. When built, the drill hall was rectangular in plan, the hall lying parallel to the street and entered through the centre of one of the long walls with two-storey cross wings at either end housing the ancillary rooms and staff accommodation (Fig 3).



Fig 2 The drill hall on Armoury Road, Selby, built 1864-5 is the oldest listed drill hall in the country. © Alan Murray-Rust. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence



Fig 3
 A detail of an aerial photo of Selby's drill hall taken in 1932 showing the rear of the building and the cross wings at either end. © English Heritage EPW040266

Similarly in the Gothic Revival style is the York Road drill hall in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk (Fig 4), built in 1867. Although the front block is dominated by the use of knapped flint, the polychromatic brick detailing and the use of two-centred relieving arches above the first-floor windows is not dissimilar to elements seen at Selby. Whereas Selby's drill hall lies parallel to the road, Great Yarmouth's drill hall displays the more common lateral arrangement. The hall lies behind a front block (in this case the staff accommodation), at a right angle to the road and entered through one of the short end walls, with a second block to its rear (administrative rooms and stores). Great Yarmouth's drill hall is notable for its unusual elliptical roof trusses (Fig 5) which are identical to those used in the 1862 International Exhibition building in South Kensington which was designed by Capt. Francis Fowke of the Royal Engineers.



Fig 4 The York Road drill hall in Great Yarmouth was built in 1867 and shows the contrast between the Gothic Revival style front block and the plain hall behind. © Katie Carmichael



*Fig 5 The interior of Great Yarmouth's drill hall with its unusual elliptical roof trusses and a blocked doorway which led to the former balcony, the supports for which are still visible.
© Katie Carmichael*

The entrance block of Chester's Albion Mews drill hall survives (Fig 6), though the hall itself was demolished in 1983. It dates from 1868. The façade is an example of the castellated design that became very popular for drill halls, marking a move away from polychromatic brickwork in favour of medieval castle-inspired features, normally with stone detailing which conveying a sense of power and solidity. The hall (which was 100 feet long by 60 feet wide) was entered through a three-storey tower which contained staff accommodation above the archway and a small magazine and armoury in the basement. The rest of the two-storey block, to the side of the tower, housed offices and leisure spaces including a reading room. Typical castellated features include the crenellated parapet, machicolated corner turrets, false arrow-loops, buttresses, quatrefoils and mullion and transom windows with lancet or shoulder-arched heads.



*Fig 6
The front block of the Albion Mews drill hall in Chester, built 1868 – the hall behind has been lost. © John S Turner. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence*

The drill hall on Prescott Street, Halifax (Fig 7), was designed in 1868 and opened in 1870. Once again designed in a Gothic Revival style, this stone building – with transoms, buttresses, machicolations, hood moulds, cusping, lancets, trefoils, quatrefoils and an octofoil – has clear medieval influences, although expressed in a form more reminiscent of a church than a castle. The hall itself, at approximately 140 feet long and 60 feet wide, is substantial, and is entered directly through its southern gable wall. Behind the hall, to the north, is a two-storey administrative block whilst staff accommodation is provided in the form of a two-storey house to the side of the main entrance. A number of projecting wings and extensions along the west side of the hall probably housed further stores, changing rooms or classrooms.



Fig 7 A fine example of a Gothic Revival style drill hall in Halifax, opened in 1870 and reminiscent of a church. © Tim Green aka atoach. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

York's St Andrewgate drill hall (Fig 8) opened in 1872 and marks a return to the polychromatic brickwork deployed at Selby and, to a lesser extent, Great Yarmouth. Built from red brick, the building is enlivened by white brick bands and stone dressings including the heads of the lancet windows which are connected by a continuous hood mould and enhanced by slender stone shafts with foliate capitals. More unusual is the use of glazed tiles, used to particular effect in the tympanum above the main entrance which is located in the middle of the long west wall of the hall. At roughly 95 feet by 65 feet the hall was fairly substantial but appears to have been built without any administrative or domestic blocks. It was expanded c.1900. The 1881 census returns mark the 'volunteer drill sheds' as being uninhabited, but by the time of the 1911 census it was home to the Rayner family, with Fred Rayner giving his occupation as 'Soldier, Color Sergeant 5th West Yorks. Regiment'.¹²



Fig 8
The drill hall on St Andrewgate, York was built in 1872 with fine polychromatic brickwork and foliate capitals. © Tim Green aka atoach. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence



Fig 9
the 1874 drill hall in Falmouth is, like Halifax, an example of a Gothic Revival design reminiscent of a church. © Tim Green aka atoach. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

The drill hall on the corner of Berkeley Vale and Brook Street in Falmouth, Cornwall (Figs 9 & 10), is dated 1874 and is again in the Gothic Revival style. The building is faced in stone and whilst the use of hood moulds and shafts with foliate capitals is reminiscent of York, the round-arched windows and dominant rose window result in a building which, like the drill hall in Halifax, could easily be mistaken for a chapel. As in York, the location of administrative or domestic spaces is not clearly articulated externally. A single-storey range was added along Brook Street around 1900 but a narrow bay on the north side of the hall, set back slightly from the street, appears to be original. The 1881 census includes a return for the drill hall which at the time was home to George Fenning, Sergeant Instructor of Volunteers, and his family, so it seems likely that the accommodation was located on the northern side of the hall.¹³ Depending on the internal arrangement of the building, the hall had a maximum possible size of around 75 feet long and 50 feet wide.



Fig 10 A detail from an aerial photo showing Falmouth's drill hall in 1928. © English Heritage EPW021726

Sheffield's Edmund Road drill hall (also known as Norfolk Barracks) opened in 1879 and marks a stylistic turning point away from the Gothic Revival and towards the Tudor Revival (Fig 11). Although the crenellated and machicolated four-storey entrance tower with lancet-shaped relieving arch is reminiscent of that in Chester, the articulation of the design – in exposed red brick with corner turrets, hood moulds, shaped chimney stacks and four-centred arches – is distinctly Tudor in influence. Such combinations of loosely medieval and Tudor features are not unusual in drill hall design and were often used to great effect. At approximately 160 feet long and 90 feet wide, the hall is one of the largest in the country and has a single-span roof by Andrew Handyside, with shallow arched cast-iron latticed trusses borne on internal brick buttresses (Fig 12). The range to the west of the hall, but under the same roof, may have been an indoor rifle range. The staff accommodation was likely to have been located within the two-storey front block, home to Ninian Anderson, Sergeant Major Royal Artillery, and his family in 1881,¹⁴ whilst a two-storey block to the rear of the hall provided further training and store rooms.



Fig 11 The Edmund Road drill hall of 1879 in Sheffield marked a move towards the Tudor Revival style of the late 19th century. © Warofdreams. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unreported Licence



Fig 12 The interior of Sheffield's Edmund Road drill hall showing the cast-iron latticed trusses by Andrew Handyside. © Sheffield City Council, Libraries Archives and Information: Sheffield Local Studies Library Picture Sheffield: s07477

Unlisted Examples, 1859-1880

Yorkshire retains a number of early drill halls, including the modest drill hall at Castlebergh Lane, Settle (Fig 13), which was built in 1864 by Walter Morrison of Malham.¹⁵ Built from local stone in a traditional style, the building is not immediately identifiable as being a drill hall and could easily be mistaken for an adapted agricultural building rather than a purpose-built facility – the lack of regulation at the time of construction, combined with the astylar nature of the building, does suggest that it could have been designed with a more general community purpose in mind and that it may not have been used exclusively by the volunteer forces. The hall, which is approximately 60 feet long and 30 feet wide, is highly unusual in being on the first floor and accessed by an external staircase. This is presumably partly due to topography of the site, but may



Fig 13 An early example of a modest drill hall built in a traditional style can be found in Settle, built 1864.

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also have allowed for a secure ground-floor armoury, the lower half of the street elevation being blind except for one door. A small iron donation box is incorporated into the wall near the top of the exterior steps leading to the upper level of the building. The gable wall of the hall along the lower flight of steps is partly plastered, suggesting that this section of the stairway was once covered. Whilst there does not appear to be a residential element to the building, the 1911 census states that it was home to one Thomas Sheridan, 'Army Sergeant Territorials', and his wife.¹⁶

Also built in Yorkshire in 1864 is Hull's Londesborough Barracks (Fig 14) which, although still quite plain, does display just a hint of Gothic Revival styling. The two-storey front block in white brick with red brick detailing (now largely painted) was originally symmetrical; a building break where a bay was added to the east is clearly visible. The central doorway has a shallow two-centred arched head, but the windows (including the three gabled dormer windows) are round headed with multi-paned sashes. Between the central and eastern dormer is a casement window with a straight head which appears to be an original feature. A simple decorative eaves band and the white rose crest of the east Yorkshire regiment over the entrance are the only other architectural embellishments. The hall lies behind the front block, at right angles to the road, and is entered through a gable wall. Behind the hall is a two-storey administrative/stores block. The bay window on the west gable wall of the front block is a 20th-century addition overlooking what was formerly an open parade ground. A number of buildings have been constructed within the grounds, including two detached blocks added to rear of the hall by 1911 and a miniature rifle range by 1925. The 1881 census describes the drill hall as a

Rifle Barracks and home to Charles Maybank 'Volunteer Sergeant Major R Vol Chelsea Pensioner', and his family.¹⁷ The hall was said to be 120 feet long and 60 feet wide with attached sergeants' quarters, armoury, officers' rooms and stables, whilst the original rifle range was to the west of the town centre.¹⁸ The building was added to Hull's local list as a building of interest in 2007.¹⁹



Fig 14 Londesborough Barracks in Hull, built 1864, is another early and comparatively simple building, but one which displays hints of the Gothic Revival style. © Bernard Sharp. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence



Fig 15 Keighley's drill hall, built in or before 1867 is another example of a typically modest early drill hall, built using local materials. © Betty Longbottom. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

Remaining in Yorkshire, Keighley's drill hall on the corner of Drill Street and Lawkholme Lane (Fig 15) was built sometime before November 1867.²⁰ Another example of a modest design, the original stone front to Drill Street blends in with the two-storey terraced housing beyond. The discreet façade is simply embellished with ashlar dressings but shows little outward sign of the function of the building. The blind, stepped gabled to the east end displays a roundel containing a blank ashlar shield, the only hint at a military association. Behind

the front block is the main hall, adjoining at a right angle. To the east of the main hall is a smaller hall and a two-storey block which were both added as part of a series of extensions in the 1880s by Messrs Judson and Moore, again with stepped gables.²¹ The main hall is approximately 85 feet long and 65 feet wide, the roof supported by cast-iron trusses. On the north wall is a Boer War memorial, whilst regimental insignia and the mottos 'Defence not Defiance' and 'Virtutis Fortuna Comes' adorn the southern wall, flanked by a split staircase providing access to the first floor of the front block. The complex once housed a gymnasium, billiard room, band room, storage rooms, kitchens and bathrooms.



Fig 16 The Grade II listed façade of the Castle Street drill hall, Bury, of 1868 and 1907. The unlisted hall behind is probably the largest in the country at c.155 x 125ft. © John Minnis



Fig 17 A detail of the crest above the entrance of the 1907 extension to Bury drill hall. © John Minnis

Moving to Greater Manchester, the earliest part of Bury's Castle Street drill hall (Fig 16) designed by Henry Styan and James Farrier dates from 1868, and although the front block of the building is listed at Grade II, the hall itself (built in 1907) was specifically excluded from the listing. At approximately 155 feet long and 125 feet wide, the hall is one of the largest (if not the largest in terms of area) to have survived. An extension in 1907 saw the front block of the armoury extended to its present length (Fig 17), and the hall added to the rear, the new facility being opened by HRH the

Duke of Connaught, brother of King Edward VII. A fire in 1943 destroyed most of the building, including the officer's mess, and repairs were not completed until 1952.²² The front block is one of the most impressive in the country, built from rock-faced rubble in a Gothic Revival/medieval style complete with crenellated parapet, machicolations, arrow slits, arcaded windows, grotesques, gargoyles, towers and turrets.

The drill hall on the Quay in Sandwich, Kent (Fig 18) was built in 1869 for the 2nd Cinque Ports Royal Garrison Artillery (Volunteers)



Fig 18 The drill hall in Sandwich, built in 1869, is a simple building with subtle Gothic Revival touches. © Rose and Trev Clough. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

Gabled to the quay, the hall is a single-storey building of yellow brick, with grey brick dressings, including the plinth. The central double doorway and flanking windows have round heads set within decorative lancet-shaped arches – a subtle Gothic Revival touch. Built immediately adjacent to the grade I listed Fisher Gate, the overall composition and use of materials compliments the earlier structure. The building has an overall dimension of around 100 feet long and 40 feet wide and contained a 75 foot long firing range for .22 calibre guns along one side, and offices, store, toilets and a mess to the rear of the hall,²³ suggesting that the hall itself was around 75 feet long and 30 feet wide.

Another Gothic Revival drill hall of the period is that on Greenway Road, Runcorn, Cheshire (Fig 19), built in 1869. The two-storey, four-bay front block has striking polychromatic brickwork window heads and a hexagonal, castellated, tower at one end. The tall, pointed gable over the entrance contains a stone plaque displaying the Cheshire Rifle Volunteers badge and the date 1869, whilst a narrow stone band is inscribed with the common regimental motto 'Defence Not Defiance'. The hall lies at right angles to the street behind the front block and is approximately 90 feet long and 60 feet wide.

The drill hall on the corner of Victoria Road and Lightburn Road in Ulverston, Cumbria, was built shortly before the 'Ulverston & District Industrial and Fine Art Exhibition' was held in the building in 1873. Built from stone with red sandstone dressings, the two-storey front block is only marginally taller than the attached house which lies to the south side. The front block has two arcaded round-headed windows to either side of the central arched entrance, with flat-headed windows to the first floor, but is otherwise quite plain (Fig 20). The hall lies behind the front block, at a right angle to the street, and is approximately 74 feet long by 40 feet wide, lit by rooflights. A small single-storey block is attached to the south side of the hall towards the western end and has a blocked entrance to Lightburn Road. The hall roof is supported by elliptical cast-iron roof trusses with projecting arrow-shaped finials which are reminiscent of the elliptical roof trusses seen at Great Yarmouth.



Fig 19 Runcorn's drill hall of 1869 with striking polychromatic brickwork and Gothic Revival features. © John M. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence



Fig 20 An undated photograph of the c.1873 drill hall in Ulverston, showing the attached staff house, rear hall and a (since removed) entrance canopy with flagpole. Reproduced courtesy of King's Own Royal Regiment Museum, Lancaster

The Isle of Wight's Newport drill hall is a relatively large but simple building of c.1870-1880. The hall lies parallel to the single-storey front block and is most distinctive for the raised ridge lantern to the hall, and for the polychromatic window-heads of the front block (Fig 21). The hall itself is approximately 100 feet long by 55 feet wide, with a post-

1910 extension to the south. The front block has pointed window heads in contrasting yellow and red brick, a gabled entrance with a wide arched doorway and buttresses which hint at the influence of the Gothic Revival.



Fig 21 The drill hall in Newport, Isle of Wight, with buttresses and polychromatic brick heads to the front block and a simple hall with raised ridge lantern beyond. © English Heritage DPI66101



Fig 22 The 1973 drill hall in St-Leonards-on-Sea has an unusual plan with the hall lying beside the front block, which itself varies in height due to topography. © English Heritage DPI66098

In St-Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex, a new drill hall was built on the corner of Southwater Road and Hatherly Road in 1873 to a design by Thomas Elworthy (Fig 22).²⁴ Unusual in form, the drill hall makes the most of the available plot by positioning the administrative block to the south of the hall. Built from red brick with white brick banding, arch-headed windows and buttressing, the hall itself is approximately 80 feet long by 40 feet wide, gabled to Southwater Road with wide double doors and a single storey block to the north. The administrative block to the south is largely a two-storey building, reducing in height to the west as it follows the rise of Hatherly Road. Again built from red brick, it contains shallow-arched windows and has a shaped pediment containing a blank plaque on the southern elevation. The bays are clearly articulated by projecting piers at first-floor level, some containing hidden chimney flues.

The drill hall on Easton Lane, Grove, on the Isle of Portland (Figs 23 and 24), is a fine example of the Gothic Revival/medieval style. Built in 1874 for the Portland Artillery Volunteers, the site originally consisted of a hall with a two-storey front block containing the armoury and stores. In 1901 the castellated tower entrance was added, along with a two-storey, three-bedroom cottage with crow-stepped gables for the instructor/ caretaker. The 1901 improvements also saw the installation a billiard room and a lavatory block.²⁵ Constructed from Portland stone, with its use of rock-faced rubble, arrow slits, corner turret, machicolations, crenellated parapet and round-headed windows, the building is most similar in style to Bury's drill hall – albeit on a very different scale.



Fig 23 The drill hall on Easton Road, Grove, on the Isle of Portland is a wonderful example of a Gothic Revival/medieval style drill hall. Built in 1874 and extended in 1901 with the addition of the tower and the staff accommodation block. © English Heritage DPI66096



*Fig 24
The interior of
Grove's Easton Road
drill hall. © English
Heritage DPI66092*

Summary, 1859-1880

The formation of the Rifle Volunteer Corps in 1859 and the subsequent fervour it inspired led to the creation of drill halls which were closely tied to the needs of the local community and the image they wished to project. Some early drill halls are very small and modest, such as those in Settle (built 1864) and Keighley (built by 1867) which were built using local materials and blend into the surrounding streetscape. Others, such as Sheffield's Edmund Road drill hall (built 1879) were vast – capable of holding an entire battalion – and designed to draw the eye through the use of materials and styles quite distinct from the local building tradition. Some, although modest in scale, display an investment in design and materials that reflected the pride which local communities had in these buildings – for example Grove's drill hall (built 1874). The size of the hall was often directly related to the size of the supporting community and the number of men that could have volunteered, as well as the wealth of potential funders. Accordingly, the largest of the early drill halls tended to be built in urban environments.

The arrangement of the internal space is of particular interest. Billiard rooms and reading rooms are often referred to and viewing galleries would once have been a common sight but, as at Great Yarmouth and Chester, many such facilities have been lost. Firing ranges were a basic requirement too, but it is seldom clear whether these were purpose-built indoor ranges (made possible by modifying rifles using a Morris Tube to allow for smaller ammunition over a shorter range) or full-size outdoor ranges in the surrounding area. A government study of rifle ranges in 1896/7 found that there were 1,200 ranges in the country, 1,130 of which were used solely by the Volunteer Force.²⁶ Despite this, it might be assumed that urban drill halls are more likely to have been designed with indoor ranges from the start, indeed following the study of 1896/7 the then Secretary of State for War, Henry Petty-Fitzmaurice, noted that: 'in the neighbourhood of the metropolis the difficulty of obtaining suitable rifle ranges has become almost insurmountable'.²⁷ The manner in which the roof is supported is also of potential interest: drilling required large, uninterrupted spaces sheltered beneath a clear-span roof and the ways in which this was achieved in the late 19th century could be quite ingenious.

1880-1914

In 1881 new Volunteer Regulations were introduced which brought the Volunteer Battalions further in line with the regular infantry and set out stricter specifications, including those governing the storage of arms. Armouries (often within drill halls) now had to be well-aired, unaffected by woodworm, white-washed and kept clean at all times.²⁸ Clearly these requirements were not too restrictive as, during a debate into the funding of the Volunteer Force at the House of Commons in 1890, the Financial Secretary for War, St John Broderick, stated that:

Up to 1886 the Volunteer Force might have been said to be something like a haphazard collection of units [and] the administration of some Volunteer corps has not been so economical as that of others. In some cases it has even been exceedingly extravagant . . . there are corps who have spent as much as £10,000 on buildings, to which are attached baths, reading rooms, tennis courts, and almost every kind of luxury. Are the Government to undertake those debts, and are they to do nothing for those corps which have exercised due economy and prudence?²⁹

Given the increased alignment of the volunteer forces with the regular army it is likely that drill halls for volunteers would increasingly resemble those for the regular Army, Navy or Air Force, such as the drill hall at the Royal Naval Barracks Pembroke, Chatham (now the library for the University of Medway), built in 1902.³⁰ A handbook issued to the Army in 1905 outlines the specifications expected of drill halls at that time. For example: the floor of the hall should be of special deal, 1.5 inches thick and supported on joists 18 inches apart; the ceiling should be matchboarded and painted or stained; the walls should be flat-jointed and limewashed with a dado of brown glazed bricks 4 feet 6 inches high; the entrance doors should be no less than 6 feet 3 inches wide and 8 feet tall; windows should have steel sashes and there should be one in each bay of the side walls; in the side walls the tops of the window sills should be 12 feet above the floor, while in end walls they should be 8 feet above the floor of the hall and 4 feet above the floor of the gallery; finally, the roof should be supported by steel trusses carried on brick piers which were visible only on the outside of the building.³¹ Such regulations applied only to the basic materials and components of a building and there was still considerable scope to express individuality in the style and composition of a drill hall.

Despite the increased professionalism of the volunteers, the Boer War of 1899-1902 was the first time that rifle volunteers played an official active military role, with Volunteer Active Service Companies (formed from Volunteer Battalions) joining the regular battalions of their county regiments.³² The 'South Africa 1900-02' Battle Honour was awarded to those units who served and would have been displayed with pride in their drill hall (Fig 25).

The Territorial Force was formed in 1908 through an amalgamation of some 183,000 members of the Volunteer Force and the Yeomanry. Presented as a domestic force which was under no obligation to serve overseas, less than 10% chose to do so when asked in 1910.³³ After the outbreak of war in 1914, however, 23 infantry battalions volunteered to serve in France, with other units deployed to Egypt and garrisons

throughout the British Empire, allowing the regular units stationed there to serve on the front line.³⁴



*Fig 25
The South Africa
Battle Honour of
the Honourable
Artillery Company
inside Armoury
House (adjoining
the drill hall)
in Islington,
London. ©
English Heritage
aa002317*

Listed Examples, 1880-1914

The drill hall at 16 Chenies Street, Camden (Fig 26), London, was built in 1882-83 for the Bloomsbury Rifles (later the 12th Bn. London Regiment) who were founded in 1859 by the author Thomas Hughes. The Grade II listed red brick and sandstone building was built by B. E. Nightingale to a design by Samuel Knight, a captain in the regiment, and funded by Lt-Col. Richards, the commanding officer. Currently part of RADA, the drill hall has had a long association with the arts, notably when it housed the Ballet Russes during their rehearsals with Nijinsky in the early 1900s. Notable for its Gothic chimneypieces and label stops in the form of carved military heads, the drill hall was designed loosely in the Tudor revival/Gothic style. It features a four-storey battlemented tower with a first-floor mullion and transom oriel window above the four-centred entrance arch. The second-floor window has an over-panel depicting a horn, the symbol of the Rifle Brigade, above which are three shields portraying, from left to right, the arms of the Duke of Bedford (the ground landlord), the royal arms and those of the county of Middlesex. Designed with both military and social requirements in mind, the hall (which, at approximately 85 feet long and 60 feet wide, is not particularly large) lies to the rear of the front block and feature a stage, a metal trussed roof and a glazed ridge lantern (Fig 27). The former ground-floor mess room has a Gothic chimneypiece with sunken



quatrefoils. The Officers' Mess on the first floor has a more elaborate Gothic chimneypiece in Caen stone, enriched with a castellated canopy and the arms of commanding officers, whilst the ceiling and walls are panelled with diagonally set deal planks – also used to ceil the roof at second-floor level. The adjoining room in the tower, lit by the oriel window, also has a Gothic fireplace and panelling and was the Colonel's room. The drill hall was unusual in featuring a double-height billiard room on the second floor, above the officer's mess, with a chimneypiece matching that in the ground-floor mess.

Fig 26
The Chenies Street drill hall in Camden was built for the Bloomsbury Rifles in 1882-3 and has had a long association with the arts. © John M. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

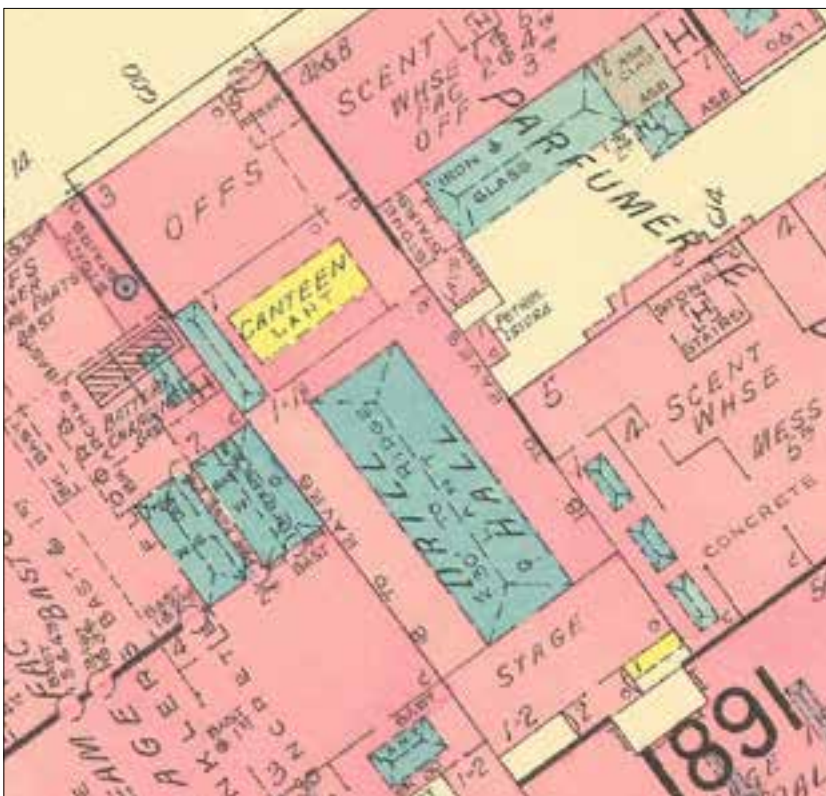


Fig 27
A Goad fire insurance plan of Camden in 1940 shows the layout of the Chenies Street drill hall at that time, with offices, canteen, hall and stage. © Landmark Information Group Ltd. Licence No. GD0003

The drill hall at Ardwick Green North, Manchester (Fig 28), built in 1886 to a design by Laurence Booth, is a fine example of the continuing use of the medieval castellated style in stone. Influenced by the earlier drill hall in Bury, the Grade II listed, roughly rectangular, building was built from coursed sandstone rubble for the 1st Battalion Lancashire Volunteers, C Company, and is three storeys high. The main block is formed of three asymmetrical bays, the bay to the right being wider than that to the left, with a four-storey tower to the far left. The segmental-headed arched entrance is located in the central bay of the main front block, above which is a three-light mullion and transom window, the upper lights having cusped heads, set within a richly carved segmental relieving arch. Corbelled tourelles rise from this level to project above the eaves as chimneys, flanking five narrow windows on the second floor and a panel containing the words 'ALWAYS READY' in relief within the parapet. The hall to the rear appears to be approximately 95 feet long and 90 feet wide, with broad ridge lights (Fig 29).



Fig 28 The Ardwick Green north drill hall of 1886 in Manchester was influenced by the earlier design at Bury. © Tricia Neale. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

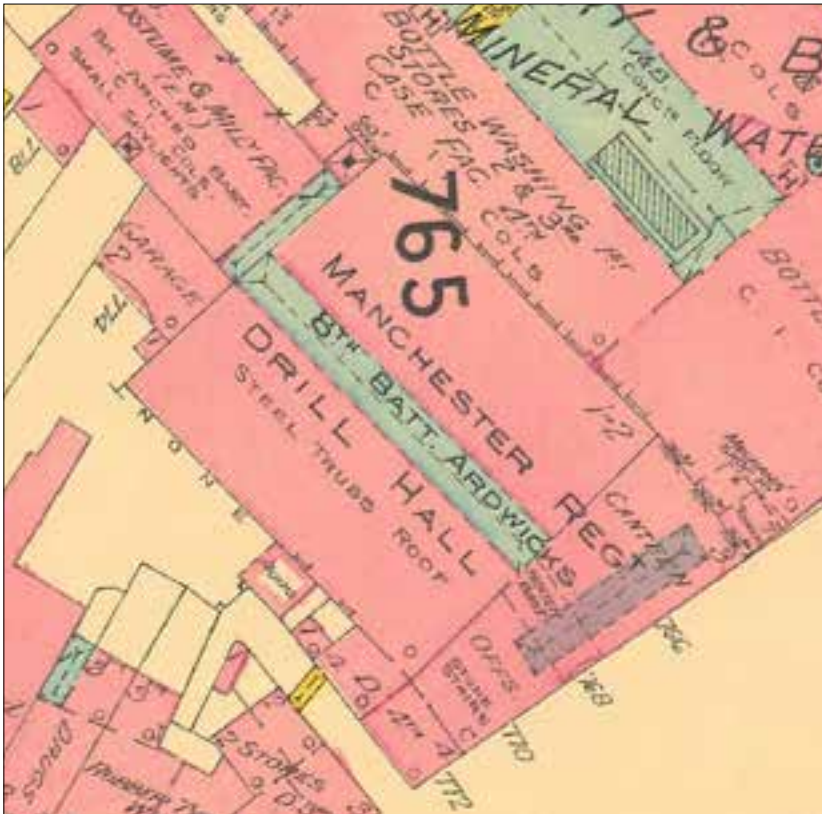


Fig 29
A Goad fire insurance plan of 1928 shows the layout of the Ardwick Green drill hall at that time. © Landmark Information Group Ltd. Licence No. GD0003

Edmund Scott's drill hall on Church Street, Brighton (Fig 30), was built for the Royal Sussex Regiment in 1889-90 and is Grade II listed. It has an unusual stuccoed, Neo-Baroque façade, eleven bays long and two storeys high, with a basement. The central door surround is particularly elaborate (Fig 31), the eaves are heavily bracketed with simple paterae in the frieze beneath, and the mansard roof contains five original dormers with six late 20th-century dormers inserted between them. A blocked flat-headed gateway to the far right of the block would have allowed vehicular access to the yard behind. Above the gateway is a stone panel containing the regimental arms flanked by



Fig 30
The Church Street drill hall in Brighton, designed by Edmund Scott in 1889-90 in an unusual Neo-Baroque style. © Mike Quinn. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

lions' heads. The hall itself, approximately 160 feet long and 75 feet wide, runs parallel to Spring Gardens and is built in brown brick laid in English bond, with a ridge lantern to the slated roof. The 1898 Goad map of Brighton (Fig 32) shows the drill hall as having 'Dressing, Billiard and Concert Rooms' on the first floor of the front block.



Fig 31 The elaborate door surround of Brighton's Neo-Baroque drill hall. © Mike Quinn. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

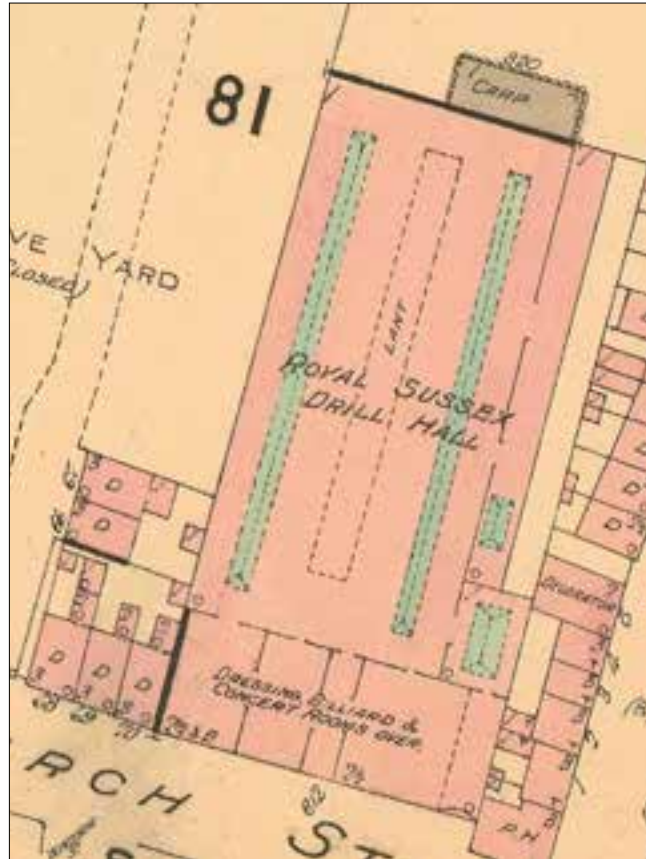


Fig 32 The Goad fire insurance plan of Brighton for 1898 indicates that the drill hall benefited from the provision of a billiard room and concert rooms for entertainment. © Landmark Information Group Ltd. Licence No. GD0003

Lincoln's Grade II listed Broadgate drill hall (Fig 33), built in 1890, was paid for by Joseph Ruston and possibly designed by William Watkins. It is another example of the Tudor revival/crenellated Gothic style, executed in red brick and stone. The two-storey front block is symmetrical, three bays wide with a three-storey projecting central tower, complete with tourelles, machicolations, a crenellated parapet and square corner turrets to the outer bays. The central entrance contains a four-centred arched doorway with a hood mould, above which is a canted mullion and transom oriel window displaying the Royal arms and two regimental badges in stone panels. The outer bays have a battered plinth and all of the windows contain fixed cast-iron glazing bars framing octagonal quarries. The ground-floor lights have shouldered heads set within pointed stone lintels whilst the first-floor lights have simpler pointed heads. The interior of the hall,

approximately 120 feet long and 50 feet wide, has piers with chevron capitals, an arch-braced rolled steel roof with traceried spandrels containing the City arms. The relieving arch at the west end contains a wreathed and corniced war memorial tablet erected around 1920.



*Fig 33
Broadgate drill hall in Lincoln was built in 1890 and is a fine example of the Tudor revival/ crenellated Gothic style. © Dave Hitchborne. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence*

No. 17 Amwell End, Ware (Fig 34), Hertfordshire, is a Grade II listed drill hall built of brick in 1899 by J. Simpson & Son of Paddington to a design by Vivian Young of Westminster. The two-storey, asymmetrical front block has a splayed entrance above which projects a canted oriel window flanked by sashes. Above this, the parapet rises into a gable. The front block comprised a sergeants' mess, billiards room, drum store, orderly room and male toilets, with residential accommodation above. The hall, which lies behind, is approximately 95 feet long, 50 feet wide and 27 feet tall with elliptical cross-braced iron girders, supporting a boarded, slated roof with rooflights and dormer windows, similar in shape to a mansard roof. The hall also has a first-floor viewing gallery. To the rear of the hall were a store, lecture room and armoury.



*Fig 34
Ware's drill hall is clearly seen in this detail from an aerial photo taken in 1949, seen from the rear the shape of the hall roof is immediately obvious. © English Heritage EAW022366*

The Artists' Rifles drill hall on Dukes Road, Camden (Fig 35), London, was built in 1889-90 by Charles Kynoch & Co. of Clapham to a design by Sir Robert William Edis and was officially opened by the Prince of Wales. The symmetrical façade, built from yellow brick with terracotta dressings, is in the Queen Anne revival style. It comprises two storeys, plus attic and basement, and has a slightly projecting central bay containing the entrance. The building has a number of fine features, such as the Dutch gable, the moulded terracotta eaves which form rainwater heads between the dormer windows, the terracotta architraves and a terracotta doorcase with banded pilasters which support an entablature inscribed '20th Middlesex Artists R.V.', above which is a broken pediment with a cartouche medallion depicting the profile heads of Mars and Minerva by Thomas Brock. The building was very much a social club as well as a military establishment, and the group boasted of its messes and canteen, fortnightly informal smoking concerts, a swimming club, as well as various other riverside clubs and camps.³⁵ The hall itself is approximately 100 feet long and 50 feet wide, with a ridge lantern and a public viewing gallery (Fig 36).



Fig 35 The 1889-90 drill hall for the Artists' Rifles on Dukes Road, Camden, designed in the Queen Anne revival style. © Ceridwen. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence



Fig 36 A Goad fire insurance plan of 1897 showing the position of the gallery overlooking the hall of the Duke's Road drill hall in Camden. © Landmark Information Group Ltd. Licence No. GD0003

Moving into the 20th century, Sheffield's Grade II listed Somme Barracks on Glossop Road (Fig 37) consist of a barracks and a drill hall built in 1907 to replace an earlier drill hall on the same site. The drill hall, with a shallow hipped roof behind a plain parapet, lies to the west of the barracks and is a plain building of red brick with restrained ashlar dressings. The south wall is divided into four bays by shallow pilasters, each bay containing a single upper window and three ground-floor windows (some infilled) with fixed lights, all with plain stone heads and sills. The hall has roof lights and is approximately 90 feet long and 70 feet wide.



Fig 37 The Somme Barracks on Glossop Road, Sheffield, built in 1907. © Terry Robinson. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

In Portsmouth, the Grade II Connaught drill hall on Stanhope Road (Fig 38) was built in 1901 but badly damaged in 1941 and partially rebuilt after the war. It was designed by A. Bone in the Tudor revival style with stock brick, bands of red brick and some Portland stone dressings. The rebuilt front is in red brick with concrete dressings, and the roof is of sheet steel. The original plan form was of a large rectangular hall with offices to the south and west, with a tower at the south-west corner. The tower and the south offices were destroyed during the war and rebuilt c.1950 without the tower, but still following the stepped form of the original south front, following the curve of Stanhope Road. The seven-bay hall, approximately 175 feet long and 95 feet wide, has an arched braced-girder steel roof, the spandrels of the trusses filled with circles, with braced-girder purlins and truss posts inscribed 'H. Handyside & Co. Ltd., Derby & London'. There are observation galleries on the south and west sides of hall, supported by iron brackets and with iron balustrades.



Fig 38
 Portsmouth's Connaught drill hall was built in 1901 and partly rebuilt following extensive damage during the Second World War. © Colin Babb. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

Unlisted Examples, 1880-1914

Only the entrance the drill hall in Wokingham, Berkshire, survives (Fig 39). This was built in 1881 in the domestic Tudor style. Two pairs of cottages flank a passage which led into the courtyard in front of the drill hall. This symmetrical building, now demolished, was built in red brick with yellow brick dressings, and stood one storey high with a dormered roof. The outer cottages are accessed from Denmark Street and the inner ones from doors within the passageway, beside shallow bow windows. The cottages are divided by fire walls which incorporate shared chimney stacks. Above the entrance to the passageway is a gable containing a shallow oriel window. The arrangement of a detached hall and a front block which appears to have been purely residential is highly unusual. OS



Fig 39 The surviving residential block which one stood in front of Wokingham's demolished drill hall. © Reading Tom. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

maps suggest that a small building was attached to the side of the drill hall and this may have housed some of the ancillary rooms normally housed in the front block.

In Tameside, Ashton-under-Lyne's Old Street drill hall (Fig 40), known locally as the Armoury, was built in 1887 and is a large building with a complex red brick façade. Designed in a combination of the Tudor revival and Gothic styles, the two-storey front block has a three-storey tower and a number of interesting features including a gabled oriel window, lancet-shaped relieving arch, a small balcony, stepped gables and decorative tympana. The hall to the rear is approximately 180 feet long and 70 feet wide with attached garaging and outbuildings. The roof is supported by cast-iron curved truss braces without ties and lit by a raised ridge lantern.



Fig 40 The varied and lively façade of the Old Street drill hall, Ashton-under-Lyne, built in 1887. © Gerald England. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

The drill hall on Holdenhurst Road in Bournemouth (Fig 41) was built c.1895. Whilst the hall to the rear has been lost, the two-storey plus attic, three-bay, symmetrical front block remains. It is built from red brick with stone details in the Tudor revival style. The outer bays have two-storey canted bay windows with stone mullions and transoms and gables above. The parapets of the bay windows contain stone plaques with the words '5/7th Battalion' and 'Hampshire Regiment' in relief. The centre bay contains a wide four-centred archway with a partially infilled doorway, above which is a stone oriel window set within a small gable containing a stone plaque with the words 'Head Quarters' in relief.



Fig 41 The Holdenhurst Road drill hall in Bournemouth – the gable wall of the hall (since demolished) can just be seen to the rear of the front block. © Mike Searle. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

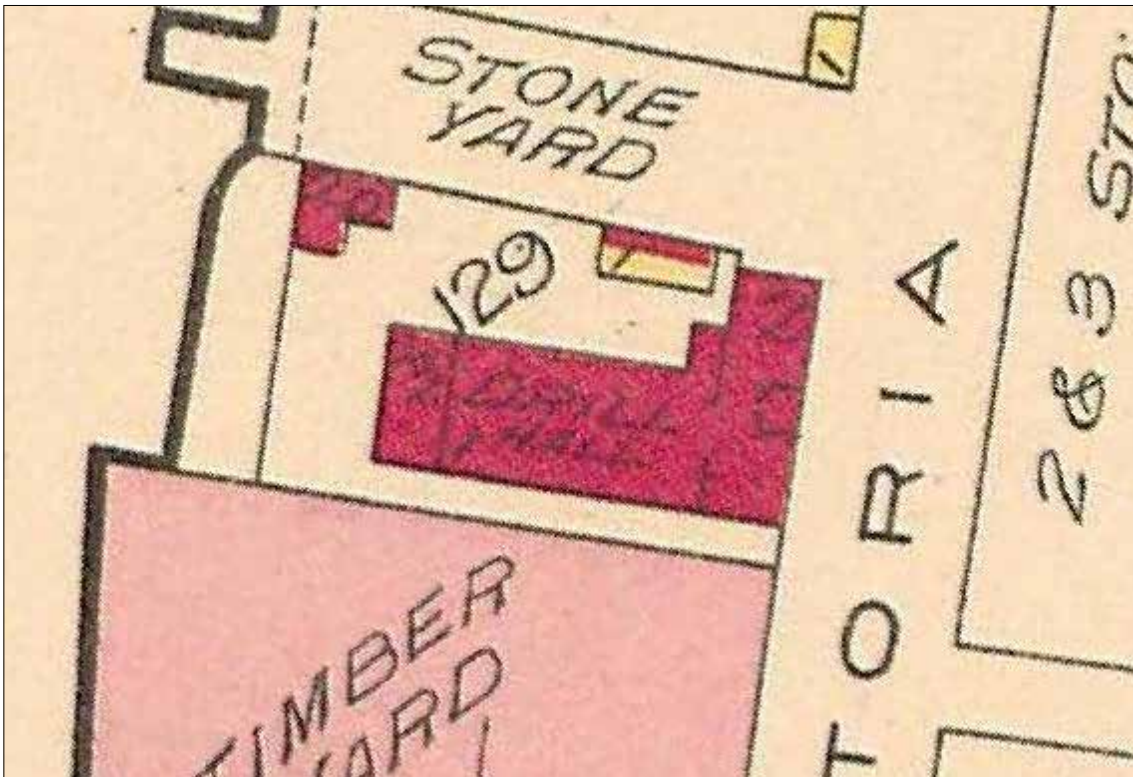


Fig 42 The Victoria Street North drill hall, Grimsby, as shown on the Goad fire insurance plan of 1896. © Landmark Information Group Ltd. Licence No. GD0003

Built between 1890 and 1896 (Fig 42), the drill hall on Victoria Street North, Grimsby, is another example of the widespread popularity of the Tudor revival style. The broad, symmetrical two-storey front block is constructed from red brick with stone dressings and combines the characteristic features one would expect, with a pointed arched head to the former entrance (now blocked), an oriel window with mullion and transom windows, a central tower with corner tourelle, and battlemented pediments (Fig 43). The hall, c.100 feet long and 60 feet wide, lies at a right-angle to the street and is off-centre with later infill blocks to the north of the hall.



Fig 43 The front block of Grimsby's drill hall was designed in the Tudor revival style in the 1890s. © English Heritage DPI72155

Barnsley's Eastgate drill hall (Figs 44 & 45), south Yorkshire, was built in 1896 and officially opened on 29 October 1897. The cost of construction was reported in the Leeds Mercury the following day as being more than £4,000, of which over £1,937 was raised by public subscription.³⁶ The hall, which lies parallel to the street, was reported as being 85 feet long and 45 feet wide. In the basement was a drill shed of similar proportions, whilst an armoury, smoking room, officers' rooms, changing rooms and accommodation for the caretaker were also provided. The two-storey front block is symmetrical, built of stone, and is designed with an unusual combination of historicist features. The central section projects forward slightly and contains a central double doorway with a shallow four-centre arched head and rusticated keystones forming part of a continuous hood mould which extends over one small window and one larger mullioned window to either side. Above the doorway is a tall, arched window with a rusticated surround flanked by shorter square-headed windows in a composition resembling a wide Venetian window. To either side is another square-headed window, all beneath a continuous hood mould.

A castellated parapet rises up into a central gable with a segmental pediment containing the datestone, 1896, with a shaped apron below, and terminates in small tourelles or finials at the outer corners. The overall impression is of a Neo-Baroque or Scots Baronial style with Classical, Gothick and Tudor touches.



Fig 44 The unusual façade of the Eastgate drill hall, Barnsley, with its combination of Neo-Baroque, Scots Baronial, Classical, Gothick and Tudor revival touches. © Alan Murray-Rust. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence



Fig 45 The façade of Barnsley's drill hall is seen here in a detail of an aerial photo taken in 1937. © English Heritage EPW055898

Berwick-upon-Tweed's Ravensdowne Drill Hall (Fig 46) was built in 1891-92 for the 1st Berwick-upon-Tweed Volunteer Artillery Militia, to designs by James W. Thompson in a restrained castellated style. It comprises a front residential and administrative range with an adjoining rear hall, and has low stone walls and railings to the street front. The asymmetrical front elevation, to Ravensdowne, is of coursed squared sandstone, dominated by a three-storeyed, battlemented tower over the round-arched main entrance which is reached by a set of stone steps. The tower is flanked on the left by a two-storeyed, two-bay block with a basement and on the right by a single-storeyed block, also with a basement. The windows are mostly later replacements with timber mullions and transoms; a canted bay has been added to the south elevation. The single-storeyed drill hall to the rear, approximately 80 feet long and 55 feet wide, extends for eight bays, with windows alternating with stepped stone buttresses. An original entrance at the west end of the north elevation of the hall has been blocked. The building was assessed for listing in 2010 but failed to meet the necessary criteria.



Fig 46 The Ravensdowne drill hall in Berwick-upon-Tweed was built in a restrained castellated style in 1891-2. © John Minnis

The drill hall on St Mary's Road, Southampton (Fig 47) is a red brick building with stone dressings in the Tudor revival/crenellated Gothic style. Completed in 1889, the two-storey entrance block has a three-storey castellated tower marking the main entrance – a four-centred arch with the date 1889 in relief within the spandrels. A round turret on the south-east corner of the tower rises from the level of the corbelled eaves and projects beyond the crenellated parapet. The first-floor windows are narrow with pointed heads and are closely spaced. The section to the far right was added in 1905, but

largely in the same style, with corbelled eaves, stone heads and sills, and a central first-floor window with a pointed head, above which is a stone date plaque. The hall behind is approximately 150 feet long and 80 feet wide and contains a public gallery. The hall was officially opened in 1890 by the Secretary of State for War, Edward Stanhope, a fact inscribed on a stone by the entrance.



Fig 47 The drill hall on St Mary's Road, Southampton, was built in 1889 and contains a public viewing gallery. © Mike Faherty. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

The drill hall on Broad Street, Seaford (Fig 48), Sussex, formerly known as 'The Queen's Hall', was built in 1898 and consists of a two-storey red brick front block with a hall at right angles behind. The façade of the front block is symmetrical with a central arched double doorway, a shallow, hipped, tiled roof hidden behind a parapet and a small central triangular pediment. A continuous projecting hood mould connects the arched heads of the ground-floor windows and blocked doors. Within the spandrels of the central door the words 'Drill Hall' have been painted (possibly incised). Below the central first-floor window is a row of six decorative brick half balusters. The hall is approximately 90 feet long and 40 feet wide and the building was erected to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. There had been a public collection to build the hall but the money raised was not quite sufficient, resulting in a mortgage of £100 to bridge the gap.³⁷ The hall was used not only by the reserve forces, but also as a meeting place for groups including the local choral society.

Construction on Huddersfield's St Paul's Street drill hall (Fig 49) began in 1899 for the 2nd Volunteer Battalion, Duke of Wellington's West Riding Regiment, and the building was officially opened in 1901. Built to designs by Capt. W. Cooper, one of the officers,



Fig 48 Broad Street drill hall, Seaford, is a handsome building of 1898 built to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee the previous year. © Oast House Archive. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence



Fig 49 Built in 1899 the St Pauls Street drill hall, Huddersfield, was designed in the still-popular castellated stone style. © Betty Longbottom. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

the total construction cost was between £8,000 and £9,000.³⁸ The two-storey front block was originally symmetrical with five bays and built in stone. The outer bays are in the form of square towers with castellated parapets, corner tourelles and mullion and transom windows. The inner two bays are gabled, with false arrow loops and mullion and transom windows; the ground-floor window beneath a segmental relieving arch. The central bay is also gabled and projects slightly forward as well as rising higher than the flanking bays and has tourelles which start at first-

floor level. The central bay has a castellated parapet above a stone plaque depicting the regimental coat of arms, below which is a three-light mullion and transom window within a shallow segmental relieving arch above a segmental archway with wide double doors providing access through to the hall beyond. The hall itself measures approximately 125 feet long as 75 feet wide, beyond which is a two-storey cross-wing.

In Worcestershire, the hall at Stourport's Lion Hill drill hall has been demolished but previously lay perpendicular to the road on the north side of the surviving block. Built in 1911 the two-storey symmetrical front block was designed in a restrained Tudor revival style (Fig 50), with mullion and transom windows and slight hood moulds. The building is coated in rough-cast render and the central entrance bay projects slightly; whilst a shallow pediment rises up to form gables above the outer bays. A reset date stone of 1911 is all that survives of the former hall, which was 80 feet long and 40 feet wide.



Fig 50 The surviving front block (right) of Stourport's Lion Hill drill hall of 1911. © English Heritage DP005253

The drill hall on Recreation Road, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, was built in 1914 to a design by A. Vernon Rowe.³⁹ An unusual combination of styles, the symmetrical façade to Recreation Road (Fig 51) consists of a Medieval inspired central archway in brick and stone with crenellations, flanked by Neo-Georgian pavilions with tiled hipped roofs and bracketed eaves. Here we see an example of a design which was simultaneously keen to adopt the fashionable Neo-Georgian style of the era but also to retain the familiarity of the old Medieval/Tudor revival styles. The building was turned down for listing in 2009 as being too much altered but is included on the local list and the hall measures approximately 76 feet long by 32 feet wide.

The drill hall on Mount Pleasant in Bilston (Fig 52) in the West Midlands, is an unusual example of the Neo-Baroque style of drill hall. It was built c.1902 on the site of an earlier drill hall. Constructed from red brick, the three-bay symmetrical front block, whilst small,



Fig 51 The drill hall on Recreation Road, Bromsgrove was built in 1914 and is an unusual combination of the Neo-Georgian and Tudor revival styles. © Alan Johnson



Fig 52 An unusual Neo-Baroque drill hall of 1902 in Bilston. © Alan Murray-Rust. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

is enlivened by stucco decoration. The single-storey outer bays contain arched windows with stuccoed architraves and prominent triple keystones. The central two-storey bay is gabled with a stuccoed broken triangular pediment flanked by volutes and contains an elaborate crest within a cartouche decorated with swags (Fig 53) set immediately above a small window with leaded casements. The round-arched entrance also has a prominent triple keystone and contains a set of wide double doors. The plain drill hall to the rear measures approximately 85 feet long and 40 feet wide.



Fig 53 The cartouche and crest of Bilston's drill hall, unusually elaborate details for such a modest sized building. © John M. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

Another example of Neo-Baroque design can be seen in the drill hall on Phoenix Street, Lancaster (Fig 54), which was built prior to 1913. This single-storey stone building is quite unusual in design. The asymmetrical façade running along Phoenix Street has a low pediment and four small, shaped, gables with volutes and small finials which alternate with blank panels of wall. The three eastern gables are set over mullion and transom windows, the upper lights having prominent keystones in-line with a scroll motif within the gable above. The fourth gable, to the west, contains a blank shield and scroll design set above a small sash window with a segmental head and prominent keystone, below which is a panel with the words 'Rifle Volunteer Drill Hall' flanked by volutes. Immediately below

this panel is the straight-headed entranceway with double doors and rusticated banding to the surround. The hall appears to be approximately 100 feet long and 50 feet wide and there is no discernable office or accomodation block.



*Fig 54
The Phoenix Street drill hall of c.1913 in Lancaster is another example of the more unusual Neo-Baroque style of drill hall. © Karl and Ali. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence*

Occasionally drill halls at this date still tended to look like chapels or churches (for earlier examples see e.g. Falmouth, 1874), as at 28 Westgate Street in Launceston (Fig 55), Cornwall, which was built in 1907. Gabled to the street, the stone hall lacks a front block and is accessed directly by means of a pair of double doors set within a segmental arched entrance with stone pilasters surmounted by narrow triangular pediments. The doorway is flanked by narrow buttresses and above it, within a segmental relieving arch, is a small stone shield depicting the crest of Cornwall. Set into the apex of the gable is a triple-arched window. The windows visible along the eastern side of the hall are positioned high in the wall and are divided into three sets of three arched windows with arched heads within a flat-headed surround. The hall measures 73 feet long by 36 feet wide.



*Fig 55
Launceston's drill hall of 1907 is one of a number which strongly resemble churches or chapels. © John M. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence*

The drill hall on the corner of Park Road on Lancaster Road in Rugby, Warwickshire, was built c.1910 in a style reminiscent of an Arts and Crafts church hall or a Sunday School. Built from red brick with dark red brick detailing, the one-and-a-half-storey hall is entered through the gable end on Park Road via a wide round-headed arch with rusticated quoins as well as concentric bands of brickwork, including chevron detailing, reminiscent of a Norman arch (Fig 56). Above the arch is a squat Venetian window with a thin tiled hood mould. The single-storey façade to Lancaster Road has projecting end bays with canted bay windows, rusticated brick quoins and decorative tile lozenges in the gables. The hall lies parallel to Lancaster Road and measures approximately 75 feet long by 30 feet wide.



Fig 56 The impressive entrance to the Park Road drill hall in Rugby, c.1910. © Martin Jeffs



Fig 57
The restrained design of the Corporation Street drill hall of 1911, Tamworth, is typical of many urban Edwardian designs. © Humphrey Bolton. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

Whilst the Neo-Baroque style enjoyed limited popularity for drill halls designed in the Edwardian period, most drill halls built in the early 20th century were more restrained and often shared a number of characteristics. In Staffordshire, Tamworth's Corporation Street drill hall (Fig 57) is one such example. Although the hall itself has been rebuilt, the front block, dated 1911, survives. The symmetrical five-bay façade has a restrained elegance, lacking many of the ostentatious flourishes of the Neo-Baroque, Tudor revival or castellated styles and is, perhaps, more typical of an urban drill hall of this date. The red brick building is enlivened with simple yellow brick and stone details, with hints of the earlier Tudor style with wide stone upright separating paired windows, but more overtly classical motifs emerge, such as the wreaths on the pilasters either side of the doorway with its segmental pediment and simple lettering, the roundel with prominent keystones, and the use of ball finials.

One very simple and domestic-feeling example of a drill hall can be found off Zig-Zag Road in Ventnor on the Isle of Wight (Fig 58). Built c.1902 the front block of the hall appears to be entirely domestic. The modest two-storey, three bay, symmetrical building is built from stone with attractive red-brick dressings with a slate hipped roof. To the rear, running parallel with the front block, is the hall – approximately 90 feet long and 35 feet wide with two, wide, shallow-arched windows to the west of the entrance on the north elevation. Osborne claims that there are 'stables on end of hall, still with remnants of stalls'⁴⁰ but it is unclear where these are – the small additional block to the west of the hall not being built until after 1909.



Fig 58 The drill hall off Zig-Zag Road in Ventnor on the Isle of Wight was built c.1902 in an unusually domestic style. The rear of the hall itself is seen here. © English Heritage DPI66102

Stratford-upon-Avon's New Broad Street drill hall (Fig 59), built between 1906 and 1914, consists of a symmetrical two-storey front block built in red brick with wide salient bays flanking the central entrance, each bay with four tall, narrow, ground-floor windows and three first-floor windows projecting up into the gable, all with pointed brick heads. Above the rebuilt entrance are three narrow windows with straight heads. Flanking the gabled bays are small, single-storey blocks with hipped roofs which are set back from the main façade. The block on the left (east) retains two narrow windows with straight heads rising to the eaves, whilst the block on the right (east) has had the windows filled in. The hall (approximately 70 feet long and 30 feet wide) lies behind the front block (Fig 60). To the east is an attached single-storey block and a number of large detached garages and outbuildings were added c.1960. The simple, symmetrical façade is characteristic of the period c.1910-1914, the only hint of a historicist style being the pointed heads to the main windows.



Fig 59 The New Broad Street drill hall, Stratford-upon-Avon, was built in the early 20th century with a characteristically simple, symmetrical façade. © Jaggery. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence



*Fig 60
The simple plan form of
Stratford-upon-Avon's
drill hall, seen from the
rear. © English Heritage
EPW026840*

The drill hall on Commercial Road, Hayle, Cornwall (Fig 61), was built in 1911 and is an example of a type seen in several locations throughout Cornwall, including Carn Bosavern, St Just (also 1911, Fig 62) and Chapel Street, Redruth (1912). At each location the single-storey stone hall, approximately 60 feet long and 30 feet deep, lacks an administrative front block and is positioned laterally to the street with a central gabled entrance flanked by two wide windows to either side. To the rear of the halls in Hayle and St Just are three gabled bays with a fourth bay projecting to the left, as seen from the street. This style of drill hall was clearly designed for use within a small community and could easily be mistaken for a village hall or a school room were it not for the inclusion of detached rifle ranges approximately 90 feet long and 12 feet wide. Those at Hayle and St Just are extant. The fact that these ranges were detached, however, suggests that the halls themselves could easily have been used for other purposes by the community.



Fig 61 A modest drill hall of 1911 in Hayle – one of several drill halls of almost identical design in Cornwall. © Pete Herring



Fig 62 Almost identical to the drill halls in Hayle and Redruth is the example in St Just, also built in 1911. © Adam Sharpe

Ripon's Somerset Row drill hall was built in 1912 from dark red brick and has a two-storey staff house attached to the east side of the two-storey symmetrical front block. Designed on a domestic scale with low first-floor casement windows and tripartite ground-floor sashes, the most impressive element is the door surround. This has red-brick pillasters supporting a rusticated brick pediment, from which rises a flag pole. The hall lies behind the front block and is approximately 50 feet long and 30 feet wide.

The hall element of the drill hall on St Peter's Street in Stamford (Fig 63), Lincolnshire, has been demolished, but the front block, built in 1913, survives. The two-storey building is built from coursed stone blocks – with stone window surrounds, keystones, plat band and cornice – and has the words 'Territorial Infantry Headquarters' carved in relief above the wide arched entrance passage which once led through to the hall behind, the keystone of the arch beneath being decorated with a carved sphinx. This elegant façade sits well within its environs. Surrounded as it is by historic domestic buildings, a brick-built or overly militarised design would have been inappropriate.



Fig 63 St Peter's Street, Stamford – the hall itself has been demolished but the front block, built in 1913, remains. © Martin Jeffs

Three drill halls in Boston, Spalding and Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire, were all built in the Neo-Georgian style in 1913 to the same basic design. All three are built from red brick and have a hipped slate roof, four bays with a projecting broken triangular pediment above the entrance bay, bracketed eaves, rusticated brick quoins, segmental-headed windows, stone band and keystones – the entrance bay containing a segmental-arched stone entrance on the ground floor, leading to double doors. The drill halls on Cole Street, Scunthorpe (Fig 64), and Haverfield Road, Spalding (Fig 65), both have one bay to the left of the entrance bay containing a single window at both ground and first-floor level, set high – the ground-floor window in Scunthorpe with the addition of a shaped brick apron beneath (the sill of the first-floor window has been lowered). To the right of



Fig 64
Cole Street drill hall, Scunthorpe.
Built in to a Neo-Georgian design
also seen in Spalding and Boston.
© English Heritage DPI52490



Fig 65
Spalding's drill hall of 1913 is
almost identical to Scunthorpe's
drill hall of the same date. © John
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Fig 66
The second drill hall on Main
Ridge West, Boston, was built in
1914 and is one of a number of
drill halls designed by Scorer &
Gamble. © John Minnis

the entrance bay on both buildings is a narrow bay containing a single-width window to both floors, and beyond that a bay with a wide window on each floor. Attached to the right of the main building is a single-storey structure with mono-pitch roof. The plan of Boston's Main Ridge West drill hall (Fig 66) is simply reversed, with two bays to the left of the entrance bay and one to the right – with shaped aprons beneath the windows on this side. Boston and Spalding drill halls were designed by Scorer & Gamble⁴¹ and it seems highly likely that they are also the architects for Scunthorpe's Cole Street drill hall.

A number of drill halls were built immediately prior to the outbreak of the First World War. Those in Hampton, Greater London; Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire; Oakham, Rutland; Shepshed, Leicestershire; Wantage, Berkshire; Lostwithiel, Cornwall and Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex were all built in 1914. The drill hall on High Street, Hampton, has a two-storey red-brick front block designed in a modified Wrenaissance style with sash windows, rusticated brick quoins, stone keystones and a stone door surround with rusticated pilasters and a broken triangular pediment containing a crest carved in relief. Above this is a stone window surround with a date stone in the apron. The hipped roof has deep bracketed eaves and two dormer windows. The hall behind has been rebuilt.

Melton Mowbray's Asfordby Road drill hall (Fig 67), once again built from red brick with salient outer bays, a hipped roof, sash windows with window heads formed by creasing tiles and rusticated brick quoins is another example of the influence of the 'Wrenaissance' style which favoured symmetry and restrained elegance. It retains its hall which lies behind the front block and is around 110 feet long and 40 feet wide.



Fig 67 Melton Mowbray's drill hall of 1914 is a typical example of the popular modified Wrenaissance style of the period. © John M. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

The drill hall on Penn Street, Oakham (Fig 68) is yet another example of this popular new style, with creasing tiled window heads containing sash windows, rusticated brick quoins and an open triangular pediment to the central bay. The hall, at around 110 feet long and 40 feet wide, is again similar to the drill hall in Melton Mowbray which lies around 12 miles north-west of Oakham and was probably designed by the same architect in a complimentary style.



Fig 68 The drill hall on Penn Street, Oakham, was built in 1914 and displays typical features of the modified Wrenaissance style, such as rusticated brick quoins, hipped roof and sash windows. © Martin Jeffs



Fig 69
Another example of a modified Wrenaissance drill hall from 1914 can be found in Shepshed. © John M. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

Lying around 19 miles west of Melton Mowbray is Shepshed, whose King's Road drill hall (Fig 69) is again similar to those at both Melton Mowbray and Oakham. The Shepshed example has a hipped roof, rusticated brick quoins and creasing tiled window heads with a rusticated brick and stone door surround with a datestone rising from the keystone. The windows have been replaced but were of similar dimensions to those seen in Melton Mowbray and Oakham. To the west is a later block in a complimentary style whilst the hall to the rear, unusually proportioned at around 95 feet long and 100 feet wide, is a later replacement of the earlier hall which originally ran parallel to King Street.

In contrast, the drill hall on Springfield Road, Wantage (Fig 70), also built in 1914, is in a completely different style. Arranged as a complex of buildings, the hall (approximately 60 feet long and 30 feet wide) is off-set from the two-storey front block, which is T-shaped, rendered and almost domestic in appearance with small-paned casement windows and a hipped roof. To the north of the main building and hall is a detached rifle range (approximately 100 feet long and 25 feet wide), whilst behind the hall lies a detached Nissen hut (approximately 50 feet long and 22 feet wide), garages and a later cadet hut.



Fig 70 The drill hall in Wantage, also built in 1914, is an unusually domestic example of the 'Wrenaissance' style. © Roger Templeman. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

The drill hall on The Parade in Lostwithiel (Fig 71), Cornwall, is a rare example of a corrugated iron drill hall built around 1914. Roughly L-shaped, the building has been heavily restored in recent years and is an example of a form of building more commonly associated with churches, hospitals and cottages. The choice of building material may have been influenced by the start of the First World War. The internal arrangement of

the building is not evident externally. The longest dimensions of the building, however, give it overall dimensions of approximately 75 feet in length and 45 feet wide, so the hall element itself cannot have been overly large.



Fig 71 The 1914 drill hall in Lostwithiel is an unusual corrugated iron design, a building form more commonly associated with hospitals and churches. © John M. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

Summary, 1880-1914

The stylistic development of drill halls up to 1900 was dominated by the influence of Tudor revival and castellated Gothic designs, often used in combination (for example: Manchester, 1868; Lincoln, 1891; Ashton-under Lyne, 1887; Southampton, 1889), although a more domestic Tudor Revival style was used increasingly (as at Wokingham, 1881, and Bournemouth, 1895). Brighton's Neo-Baroque drill hall of 1889-90 is unusual (as the Pevsner city guide for Brighton suggests, the overall effect is reminiscent of a 17th-century building in Salzburg),⁴² and this style didn't receive widespread popularity until the Edwardian period when it was used for drill halls throughout the country (e.g. Bilston, c.1902; Lancaster, pre-1913).

Drill halls became increasingly uniform in size and provision of facilities following the creation of the Territorial Force, with the commencement of a programme of building in 1907 which continued until the outbreak of war in 1914. Buildings of this period typically have a simple two-storey office block in front of the hall, often in the modified

Wrenaissance style which came to dominate the design of drill halls built in the years immediately prior to the outbreak of war (e.g. Hampton, Melton Mowbray, Oakham and, Shepshed, all built in 1914).

Of course, not all drill halls can be ascribed to a particular style; some are generally historicist in treatment, with many different influences (e.g. Barnsley, 1896), and many were simple, utilitarian structures with little or no architectural embellishment (e.g. Hayle, 1911; St Just, 1911; Redruth, 1912), whilst the front blocks of some drill halls are almost domestic in scale or appearance (e.g. Ripon, 1912; Wantage, 1914). Nonetheless, the overall impression throughout the period 1880-1914 is of a move towards simplification and symmetry, with three- or four-storey castellated towers giving way to two-storey, symmetrical buildings with clean lines.

The spanning of roofs still allowed for structural innovation, notably the use of elliptical cross-braced iron girders at Ware in 1899. This roof is highly unusual. Most hall roofs of the period 1870-1910 were framed using semi-circular trussed ribs, but Ware is an early example of a steel parabolic arch roof, a construction technique more commonly associated with 20th-century concrete. In addition to the structural innovation seen at Ware, it is unusual for a drill hall to be so forward looking: most adopted designs that, stylistically, looked backwards, not forwards. The advanced design, of Ware, however, could easily be mistaken for a building of c.1910.

Drill halls, although given increasingly clear military functions, still played an important social role and a number continued to be built with enhanced facilities such as billiard rooms (e.g. Chenies Street, 1882-83, Brighton c.1890, and Ware, 1899) and public viewing galleries (e.g. Ware, 1899, and Portsmouth, 1901), whilst others were well known for hosting plays and concerts (e.g. Brighton c.1890, Seaford, 1898, and Dukes Road, Camden, 1889-90).

Although more drill halls were built, the size and scale of their facilities does not seem to have changed much. Drill halls of this period range in size from 180 by 96 feet (Portsmouth, 1901) to 50 by 30 feet (Ripon, 1912), but the majority measured around 100 feet or more in length, and perhaps 50 or 60 feet wide. Many would have had integral or, increasingly popular, detached rifle ranges usually measured around 90 feet long and 20 feet wide. It would be interested to compare the dimensions and specification of a number of volunteer drill halls of this period to the regulations set out for regular army drill halls in 1905 and see if and how the increasing influence of the War Office affected the construction of new drill halls in the building campaign of 1907-1914.

1914-1945

No new drill halls were built during the course of the First World War and low numbers of recruits in the immediate years following the cessation of war resulted in a series of improvements to existing drill halls in a bid to make membership of the Territorial Army more appealing. Re-armament in the 1930s led to the creation of over 200 new drill halls, largely in suburban settings, designed with a focus on new technological developments and the increased use of vehicles in modern warfare. The number of units was reduced, but they became more highly specialised and generally demanded larger buildings, designed or modified to suit the specific needs of the unit. As one Member of Parliament, Mr De la Bère argued, put it in a debate with the Financial Secretary to the War Office, Sir Victor Warrender, in 1938:

Is the hon. Member not aware that, broadly speaking, the drill halls in this country are very unsatisfactory, and is he not aware that what is wanted are bigger and brighter drill halls?⁴³

Many 1920s drill halls continued to be designed in the 'Wrennassiance' style which was popular before the onset of war. However, most of the drill halls built in the 1930s were neo-Georgian in style, although some still displayed Gothic and Tudor influences. There are very few examples of the international *moderne* style which was so popular for other building types of the time.

Listed Examples, 1914-1945

There are no listed drill halls of this date.

Unlisted Examples, 1914-1945

Horsham's Denne Road drill hall (Figs 72 & 73) of 1922 has a wide, symmetrical two-storey front block with a hipped roof and a rusticated raised basement. The central entrance is reached by a flight of steps and is set within a porch with Doric columns, flanked by salient bays. Above the porch is a plaque displaying the arms of the Royal



*Fig 72
Horsham drill hall, 1922 –
one of the first new drill halls
to be constructed following
the First World War. © Andy
Potter. This work is licensed
under the Creative Commons
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Generic Licence*



Fig 73 Horsham drill hall, with its distinctive salient end bays, is seen in a detail of a photograph taken in 1951. © English Heritage EAW037049

Sussex Regiment. The ground floor is rendered whilst the first floor is built from exposed brown brick in stretcher bond. The windows all have straight heads and replacement UPVC glazing. The hall, approximately 95 feet long and 45 feet wide, has wide ridge lights and the rear wall of the drill hall contains a blocked opening which would have allowed vehicles or equipment to be moved. Beside it is a pedestrian doorway with small Diocletian window above. To the north-east of the hall is a detached rifle range, approximately 95 feet long and 22 feet wide, with attached offices or stores.

The drill hall on Brunel Road, Hinckley, Leicestershire, was built in 1923 of red brick with a hipped roof. Some details of the two-storey asymmetrical front block, one half of which is slightly recessed, are similar to the earlier modified Wrenaisance style (e.g. creasing tiled door surrounds and window heads, sash windows and a prominent keystone to the main entrance), but the simplified design means that the overall effect is more similar to the emerging neo-Georgian style. The hall itself measures approximately 75 feet in length and 40 feet in width.

Two drill halls in the towns of Rushden (c.1928, Fig 74) and Wellingborough (c.1924, Fig 75) located close to one another in Northamptonshire, are strikingly similar with distinct similarities to the earlier drill halls in Boston, Spalding and Scunthorpe in neighbouring Lincolnshire. Each is neo-Georgian in style and has a symmetrical, two-storey front block built from red brick. In each case a projecting, pedimented central bay contains a segmental-arched stone entrance on the ground floor, leading to double doors, above which is a plaque displaying the words 'Drill Hall'. This is incised at Rushden and in raised relief in Wellingborough. The ground-floor windows have segmental-arched heads whilst the first-floor windows have straight heads rising to meet the eaves. Wellingborough's drill hall is built on a largely residential street, Great Park Street, and is set back slightly in line with the abutting terraced houses. The façade of the drill hall is modest in scale with two windows to each bay, and the hall itself measures c.75 feet long and 35 feet wide, with very limited outdoor space to the rear. Rushden's Victoria Road drill hall was built on the edge of a residential area and has a larger plot which allowed for three windows to the outer bays as well as access down the side of the drill hall to the yard behind. The hall itself is attached to the front block by a single-storey building and is c.70 feet long by 30 feet wide, with what appears to be an attached rifle range, c.100 feet by 13 feet, to the north-east.

Peterborough's Lincoln Road drill hall of 1927 (Fig 76), though similar in overall style to the drill halls at Rushden, Wellingborough, Boston, Spalding and Scunthorpe, is clearly far larger and with more elaborate detailing. The wide, two-storey, symmetrical front



Fig 74 The drill hall on Victoria Road, Rushden, was built c.1928 in an elegant neo-Georgian design. Reproduced courtesy of 'Rushden Research', www.rushdenheritage.co.uk



Fig 75 The neo-Georgian drill hall of c.1924 in Wellingborough is strikingly similar to that seen in Rushden, built c.1928. © Martin Jeffs

block has a projecting central bay with a triangular pediment. The entrance surround, a more elaborate version of segmental arch seen at both Rushden and Wellingborough, is flanked by sash windows. The hall is approximately 80 feet long and 60 feet wide, and behind it is a two-storey ancillary block.



Fig 76 The 1927 drill hall on Lincoln Road, Peterborough, is an expanded version of the form already seen at Wellingborough and elsewhere. © Martin Jeffs



Fig 77 A handsome drill hall of c.1930 with attached staff house in Oundle. © English Heritage DPI56073

An elaboration of the now-familiar segmental-arched entrance surround can be found in Oundle, Northamptonshire, at the Benefield Road drill hall of c.1930. The complex consists of a two-storey, seven bay, front block (Fig 77) with off-centre entrance



Fig 78 The door surround of Oundle's drill hall.
© English Heritage DPI56076

approached by a short flight of steps, the arched surround formed from banded stone (Fig 78) with the words 'Drill Hall' incised above. To the west side of the main block, slightly set back from the road and with a lower roof height, is a two-storey, five bay, house for the drill sergeant or caretaker with a central doorway approached by a short flight of steps, with a stone surround with an arched head and prominent keystone. Both buildings have gabled roofs a stone plinth and shaped stone sills, all emphasised by rough-cast render and stone quoins to the main administrative building. To the rear lies the brick-built hall – approximately 45 feet long by 30 feet wide – and attached to the rear of the hall there is what appears to be the former rifle range which is approximately 100 feet long and 16 feet wide. In the grounds to the east of the hall (now a car park) are two detached brick-built explosive or inflammables stores which appear to date from the First World War.

Similar in form is the drill hall on Nelson Street, Dalton-in-Furness, Cumbria, built in 1928. The overall arrangement of the front block, with projecting central bay with triangular pediment above an entrance with a stone segmental-arched surround is familiar, but the details and the use of materials is quite different. The stone arch itself is both simpler and more dominant, with articulated voussoirs and a projecting keystone containing the date '1928', whilst stones on either side contain the inscriptions '4th B' The King's Own Royal Regt' and 'Company Quarters'. Several windows are grouped, divided by simple stone mullions. The ground floor is constructed from dark red brick in stretcher bond, whilst the upper floor is pebble-dashed. The arrangement of chimneys and the location of a doorway to the left of the main entrance suggest that the far left (south) of the front block was residential accommodation. The buildings behind occupy the entire plot and the dimensions of the hall itself are hard to discern, but it appears to be no larger than c.65 feet long by 35 feet wide.

Not far away, a much grander expression of a now-familiar form can be seen on Holker Street, Barrow-in-Furness, built just one year earlier than the hall in Dalton-in-Furness, in 1927. The asymmetrical two-storey front block is dominated by the three bays containing, and immediately flanking, the entrance. Built from red brick with rusticated banding, a

vermiculated stone plinth, stone segmental-arched entrance with prominent keystone (containing the date, 1927), stone mullions and stone detailing to the triangular pediment which incorporates an oculus to the apex, the overall impression is far more dominant than other examples of the 1920s. As with Dalton-in-Furness, only three miles to the north, inscriptions to either side of the entrance reveal that it was built as the 'Company Headquarters' for '4th Battalion The King's Own Rt'. The hall lies parallel to the street and measures approximately 100 feet long by 50 feet wide. Attached is a long single-storey building which at c.100 feet long and 25 feet long is probably a rifle range.

A number of 1920s drill halls were built in a neo-Tudor style, including one on Townfield Gardens, Newburn-upon-Tyne (Fig 79), Tyne and Wear, built in 1924. The two-storey front block is built from red brick with stone dressings and has Tudor revival features including mullions, a continuous hood mould, an oriel window, and a four-centred archway leading to the double entrance doors. Beside the entrance is a bay which projects beyond the parapet, a modest version of the towers seen in earlier Tudor revival designs. The hall behind, which tapers, is approximately 90 feet long and 45 feet wide.



Fig 79 The drill hall in Newburn-upon-Tyne was built in 1924 in a neo-Tudor style. © Andrew Curtis. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

Tiled mansard roofs became briefly popular for drill halls in the 1920s and 30s, often on buildings designed on a more domestic scale than the examples discussed above. An example is the drill hall on Wilton Road, Salisbury, built in the late 1920s with a symmetrical single-storey front block. A number of its features are influenced by the modified Wrenaissance and neo-Georgian styles, including a pedimented gable and the use of small-paned sash windows. The hall behind measures c.60 feet long by 30 feet wide. Attached to its side is a block measuring c.90 feet by long by 13 feet wide, possibly a former rifle range. Witney's Langdale Hall (Fig 80) in Oxfordshire, built in 1927, is a larger and simpler example of a drill hall built with a mansard roof, again with small-paned sash windows. In this case the hall measures approximately 80 feet long by 45 feet wide.



Fig 80
Langdale Hall in Witney, built 1927, is a large but plain building distinguished by its mansard roof. © Copyright Betty Longbottom. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

Tynemouth's drill hall on Station Terrace (Fig 81) is an unusual design which opened in 1928. The wide two-storey symmetrical entrance façade is pebble-dashed with a low stone plinth, and is dominated by a giant-order stone arch surmounted by a triangular pediment which marks the entrance. Set back within the arch are a set of double doors, above which is a carved stone relief plaque depicting two angels, 'Fas' and 'Gloria' ('Right' and 'Glory'), words commonly associated with the Royal Artillery and their motto, 'Quo Fas Et Gloria Ducunt' (Where Right and Glory Lead). Below the angels are the words: 'Tyne Electrical Engineers 1928'. The hall lies parallel to the street, behind the entrance block, with a simple two-storey ancillary office block to Tynemouth Road.

Many drill halls of the 1930s continued to be designed in the neo-Georgian style which had become popular in the 1920s, including that on Woburn Street in Ampthill (Fig



Fig 81 Tynemouth's drill hall is seen under construction in an aerial photograph taken in October 1927. © English Heritage EPW019755

82) in Bedfordshire. It was built in 1937 to a design by Ivan Daughtry,⁴⁴ with the rifle range and detached house being added in the 1950s or 60s. The hall itself is c.55 feet long and 30 feet wide. Built from dark red brick with stone dressings, the front block is designed to look like a Georgian house, with a fanlight over the central doorway, small-paned sash windows, and a hipped roof behind a parapet. Above the doorway is a coat of arms. Neo-Georgian drill halls of this period were similar in style to Army and also RAF buildings of the Expansion Period designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, and the style was clearly deemed eminently suitable for a respected military organisation. A larger version of design similar to Ampthill can be seen on Hucknall Lane in Bulwell, Nottinghamshire, from c.1938. Although much wider, with projecting end bays, the front block has a central doorway with a fanlight and a stone surround, stone plat bands, small-paned sash windows, and a hipped roof behind a parapet.



Fig 82 A fine Neo-Georgian drill hall of 1937 in Ampthill, showing the front block with hall to the rear and, beyond that, a detached staff house. © Martin Jeffs

Examples of drill halls in the moderne or Modern styles are unusual, but a number may be found across the country. Many halls display only restrained and subtle hints of modern styling, as at Liverpool's Townsend Avenue drill hall. The acutely angled site, at the junction of Townsend Avenue and Parthenon Drive, resulted in an irregular V-shaped building (Fig 83). This is two storeys high and built from dark red brick in English bond, with a hipped roof behind a simple parapet, with grooved stone or concrete used to form a continuous band above the ground-floor windows. The main entrance is at the tip of the 'V', with a central doorway set within a projecting bay which rises above the parapet. Above the doorway is a crest and the date '1936' beneath a large window with concentric recessed brick bands forming the surround. The hall itself measure approximately 75 feet in length and 30 feet in width and is located parallel to Parthenon Drive.



Fig 83 Townsend Avenue drill hall, Liverpool, situated on an acutely angled site and built in 1936 with hints of the fashionable moderne style © English Heritage DPI66593

In North London, Tottenham's High Road drill hall of 1938 is a typical example of a large 1930s drill hall (Fig 84). Although simple and quite sober in design, the long two-storey front block displays a number of features which were popular at this date. Built from simple brown brick with rendered details and a hipped roof behind a low parapet and with steel-framed windows, the central section of the block is set slightly forwards and contains brick banding between ground and first-floor windows, alternating with rendered window surrounds and aprons. The central doorway has a rendered, stepped doorcase rising to form a window-surround above. To the south, the front-block wraps around the hall and attaches to a symmetrical two-storey house for the drill instructor or caretaker (Fig 85). The hall itself lies parallel to the street and measures approximately 90 feet in length and 50 feet in width, lit by ridge-lights and supported by slender 'Belgian' style roof trusses (Fig 86).



Fig 84 Tottenham High Road drill hall, 1938. A typical large 1930s design with long two-storey front block. © English Heritage DPI72149



Fig 85 Attached staff house, on the left, behind the front block of Tottenham's drill hall.
© English Heritage DPI72152



Fig 86 The interior of the hall at Tottenham drill hall with the typically slender Belgian form roof trusses of the period. © English Heritage DPI72153

Construction on Crewe's Myrtle Street drill hall (Fig 87) in Cheshire began in 1937. This building is more clearly and directly influenced by the moderne style. The main façade fronting Derrington Avenue consists of a two-storey symmetrical red brick front block in English bond with a hipped roof and steel-framed windows connected by continuous grooved stone or concrete heads and sills, curved at the ends in the streamline moderne manner. The centre of the façade is marked by a projecting bay which rises to the first-floor sill level and contains a foundation stone which reads 'THIS STONE WAS LAID BY HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR OF CREWE ALDERMAN .F. BOTT J.P MBE ON THE TWENTY THIRD DAY OF JULY IN THE YEAR OF GRACE 1937'. The brickwork is enlivened by the use of shiner course horizontal brick banding between the windows, and soldier course bands beneath the first-floor sill level and to the top of the low plinth. The hall itself is entered from two doorways on Myrtle Street, each approached by a short flight of concrete steps. The wall between the doors is enlivened by the two brick plat bands whereas the doors themselves (Fig 88) have quite extraordinary surrounds consisting of a series of nested projecting rectangular moulded-brick bands, through which a vertical brick element projects. To the east of the hall is a detached purpose-built brick garage. The hall itself is approximately 50 feet long and 45 feet wide and the original interior of the main hall survives largely intact (Fig 89) with wooden parquet flooring, an exposed metal steel roof frame with wide-span angle-iron trusses of the 'Belgian' form (lightweight symmetrical trusses divided into a series of isosceles triangles) and a cambered tie supporting a match-lined timber roof.



Fig 87 The Myrtle Street drill hall in Crewe was built in 1937 and is an unusual example of a drill hall built to a design which is clearly influenced by the moderne style. The steel-framed windows are connected by heads and sills which curve in a streamline manner whilst horizontal brick banding at first-floor level emphasises the horizontal elements of the façade. © English Heritage DPI66577



Fig 88
The highly distinctive and lively door-surrounds of Crewe's drill hall. © English Heritage DPI66576



Fig 89 The interior of the hall on Myrtle Street, Crewe, with enclosed balcony. The curving iron trusses are of the Belgian form and the floor appears to be original parquet. © English Heritage DPI66583

Liverpool's Mather Avenue drill hall was built c.1938. The two-storey front block is built from dark red brick with stone or rendered details and a hipped roof. It is notable for the two-storey bowed entrance bays (Fig 90) which contain double doors within rendered door surrounds on the ground floor, with a curved projecting cornice and a curved window above. In the centre of the façade, between the two entrance bays, a balcony incorporates a crest and pierced crosses supported on scrolled brackets. The hall, which is approximately 90 feet long and 55 feet wide, lies parallel to the street and has a large Diocletian window at the southern end whilst there is extensive integral and detached garaging to its south. Internally a number of fine features survive, including the Officers' Mess (Fig 91) which boasts a barrel-vaulted ceiling as well as its original

panelling and parquet flooring, and the coloured tiles and shaped baluster-railings in the stairways (Fig 92). Externally, to the rear of the hall, is a symmetrical single-storey terrace of three cottages for staff accommodation (Fig 93).



Fig 90
The drill hall on Mather Avenue, Liverpool, was built c.1938 to an unusually moderne design with projecting entrance bays. © English Heritage DPI66570



Fig 91 The Officers' Mess at Mather Avenue drill hall boasts a panelled interior with a barrel-vaulted ceiling. © English Heritage DPI66565



Fig 92
Some fine interior details survive at the Mather Avenue drill hall, including tiles and baluster-railings in the stair hallway. © English Heritage DPI66560



Fig 93 A terrace of three cottages to the rear of the hall, built as staff accomodation in a complimentary style to the main building. © English Heritage DPI66559

Southampton's Blighmont drill hall (Fig 94) is highly unusual in consisting of two detached halls side by side with almost identical symmetrical front blocks. The two-storey front blocks, built from dark red brick with hipped roofs, are largely uninspiring except for the entrances which are notable for their moderne curved balconies, placed above the doorways, from which a number of brick fins rise to project above the parapet. Set back from Millbrook Road West behind a former parade ground (now car parking), the site was built c.1939 for anti-aircraft and searchlight divisions. Both halls have wide-span angle-iron trusses of the 'Belgian' form, roof lights and wooden floors. The smaller hall, to the west, measures approximately 90 feet long and 40 feet wide whilst the larger, to the east, measures approximately 110 feet long and 50 feet wide. The larger hall is likely to have been used by the searchlight unit and the smaller by the anti-aircraft unit. Behind the halls are a number of ancillary buildings and extensive garaging.



*Fig 94
Blighmont drill hall in
Southampton is actually a pair
of drill halls built c.1939 for
anti-aircraft and searchlight
divisions, each with its own hall
and facilities. © Mike Faherty.
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Cornwall has a number of good examples of drill halls of different styles dating from the 1930s. Liskeard's drill hall of c.1930 on Barras Cross is one of many which resemble RAF buildings of the same date. It has a simple, rendered, three-bay facade with a projecting central bay which rises through the eaves. The doorway is set back within the central bay with a simple projecting canopy above, whilst a continuous string course runs around the outer bays. Truro's Moresk Road drill hall (Fig 95) is highly unusual in looking not unlike an Odeon cinema design of the period. Built c.1930 the hall rises above the single-storey front block and contains three pairs of tall, narrow windows in the stepped gable wall. The front block is wider than the hall, emphasising the contrast in height between the two elements, with a central entrance flanked by pilasters which curve at the top, hinting at fins, while the windows are connected by a continuous stone head which is curved at the ends. To the left (north) of the main hall is a later single-storey block.

Equally unusual, although for different reasons, is the drill hall on Carn Bosavern, St Just (Fig 96). Built in 1938 beside an earlier drill hall and rifle range, this large Nissen-like building has unusually shaped pebble-dashed gables and a shallow projecting moderne window which seems to be filled with 'Lenscrete' glass blocks. It would appear that this building served as an Anti-Aircraft/Searchlight battery and housed large items of equipment. Drills could have continued in the old drill hall next door. Geodetic barrel roofs such as this can also be found in Redruth (c.1938) and Southwold, Suffolk (c.1930, Figs 97 and 98), and were based on the geodetic barrel designs of the German firm Junkers. They are similar in form to hangars designed by Barnes Wallis for airships and



Fig 95 An unusual drill hall of c.1930 which bears similarities to Odeon cinemas of the period can be found in Truro. © Pete Herring

bombers. The Junkers design was licensed in 1929 to the Horsley Bridge & Engineering Co. of Birmingham and marketed in England under the Lamella Construction label. The RAF adopted the designs from 1936 onwards,⁴⁵ and it appears that the TA was not far behind.



Fig 96 Another unusual Cornish drill hall of the 1930s, St Just's 1938 drill hall was probably used more for machinery and equipment than for drilling. © Adam Sharpe



Fig 97 The c.1930 drill hall in Southwold is one of a few based on geodesic barrel designs.
© Wayne Cocroft

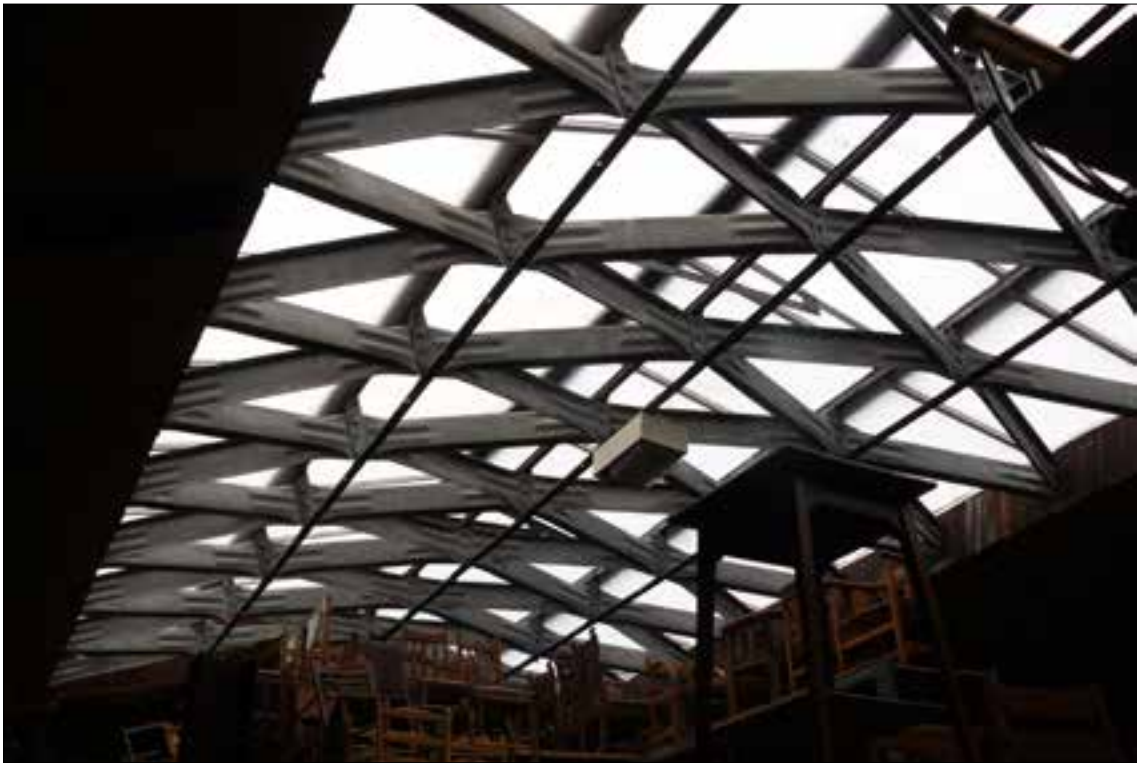


Fig 98 The distinctive roof structure of Southwold's drill hall. © Wayne Cocroft

Summary, 1914-1945

The first drill halls built following the end of the First World War tended to use established designs, generally still historicist in nature, with the influence of the 'Wrenaissance' and neo-Georgian dominant. By the 1930s the neo-Georgian style was entrenched as the favoured style – it was sober, simple and easily adaptable, ensuring no two drill halls were quite identical, whilst being easily recognisable thanks to its adoption by other branches of the armed forces. The influence of the moderne or International style was limited and where seen is generally quite restrained.

The biggest change in the design and layout of drill halls was a result of the changing nature of warfare at the time and the increased adoption of mechanised units. In 1935 the TA was given responsibility for anti-aircraft defence. Anti-aircraft batteries needed a drill hall of 3,000 square feet, and nearly the same again in general training spaces and facilities, whilst the new guns required high roofs and doors. Searchlight units required even more space, with a minimum height in the hall of 15 feet, and outdoor space for several lights – new drill halls were designed to accommodate these requirements and also included specialist training rooms.⁴⁶

Derby's Kingsway Road drill hall perfectly demonstrates the provision and size of facilities deemed desirable on the eve of war. Built in 1939, the main drill hall was 5,143 square feet, offices comprised 1,200, store/armoury 3,369, AA training 840, apparatus room 700, battery room 150, lecture room 600, social/changing 4,492, garages/gun-parks 6,977, store 100, engine room 139 and ancillary tracks 180 square feet, making the complex almost 24,000 square feet in total.⁴⁷ Training facilities often went far beyond simple classrooms. Ewell's 1938 drill hall for a Searchlight Battalion had, in addition to a dark room and the main hall, dedicated rooms for Spotters, Listeners, Searchlights and Driving & Maintenance crews, whilst the drill hall in Kingston-upon-Thames had an additional training room for Sound Locators. In Lincoln the Newport drill hall, also of 1939, had a dark room with a painted mural of the night sky allowing the searchlight operators to undertake simulations.⁴⁸ Plans for Peterborough's London Road drill hall, drawn up in 1938 by the office of 'Sir John Brown and A.E. Henson architects of Northampton', clearly show rooms marked as 'dark room', 'sound locator', 'spotters', 'listeners' and 'searchlight operations' (Figs 99) alongside the usual array of lecture rooms, lounges, bars, stores, offices hall and rifle range.

As a result of these new requirements the drill hall itself may not have drastically altered in size but they tend to be taller, and the front block tends to be longer or to wrap around the hall to accommodate all of the facilities required – messes, changing facilities and offices as well as training rooms – whilst the provision of outdoor space and garaging became increasingly critical. Volunteer units were becoming ever more closely aligned with the regular army, resulting in tighter regulations. The provision of social spaces for the benefit of the community seems to have almost completely disappeared and the spaces became far more clearly militarised. Resources were limited following the First World War so although visible elements such as parquet floors in the hall or panelling and fireplaces in the officers' mess (e.g. Mather Avenue, Liverpool) were still well made and expensive, the more hidden elements, often in the roof or in the outbuildings, tended to be more utilitarian.



Fig 99 The plan of Peterborough's London Road drill hall as designed in 1938, showing the array of specialist rooms and facilities which were now common. © English Heritage

1945- present

As in the 1914-18 war, no new drill halls were built during the Second World War or for some time thereafter, as the country struggled to recover from the destruction and economic hardships of the war. Even after the reconstitution of the TA in 1947 construction of new facilities remained a very low priority, a fact emphasised by Mr Michael Stewart, then MP for Fulham East, in a House of Commons debate in March 1948:

If the hon. Member is referring to permanent construction, no such work is being undertaken. The present policy is to provide any necessary additional accommodation either by purchase of suitable buildings or by the erection of temporary hutting, or both.⁴⁹

The lack of new buildings deemed suitable for modern warfare was clearly a source of frustration to many in both the government and the military and an appeal was made by Brigadier Anthony Head (later Secretary of State for War) in July 1947:

This is probably a futile suggestion, but could we not get hold of the odd bits of Bailey bridges, some asbestos sheeting and corrugated iron bits and rig up something? Do not let us be hidebound by the specification which I have no doubt is within the files of the War Office: "Hall, drill, 1, 27 feet by 87 feet" or some such figure. Could it not be approached in an entirely unconventional way, somewhat after the method by which such problems were approached during the war?⁵⁰

His pragmatic solution was derided, but the spirit of his argument gained support with Mr Oliver Stanley, a former Secretary of State for War, replying:

I cannot agree with the interesting suggestion . . . that, in view of the shortage, it is a good thing to make drill halls out of two sardine tins and an empty beer bottle. Even if we could do it, I believe that kind of improvisation, useful as it is for the purpose of training, is a great deterrent to recruiting . . . In other words, if they want drill halls they must have them, and not tin sheds, and if we can only give them drill halls even by giving them priority over housing schemes, then it has to be given.⁵¹

Drill hall construction resumed in the 1950s as resources became available for new buildings which were better suited to modern usage. These buildings are often very similar to pre-war halls, but reflect increased concerns regarding security. Lessons learnt during the recent war led to small technical improvements. In 1955 the TA's anti-aircraft command was disbanded and in 1960 the end of National Service resulted in a huge drop in recruits. Combined with changing technology and a continued focus on economy, this meant that the start of a number of contractions, reductions and reorganisations within the TA was imminent.

Some of the earliest proposals were brutal. In December 1965, Mr Edward Heath, then leader of the opposition, declared:

As I understand it, all the Territorial Army divisions and brigades and

127 units will disappear. Ninety per cent of the Territorial units, 95 per cent of the armoured, 91 per cent of the gunners and 81 per cent of the infantry are to be disbanded . . . A thousand drill halls out of 1,300 are to be closed down . . . Seventy-three thousand men, or 67 per cent of the present strength, will not be required.⁵²

In actuality the cuts were not quite so extensive as had been feared, but they were not far off. In November 1968 Mr Gerald Reynolds, the Minister of Defence for Administration, announced that 'since 1st April, 1967 I have been in process of disposing of about 850 drill halls in various parts of the country. The disposal of those drill halls will continue'.⁵³

Despite the on-going upheaval in the TA a small number of new drill halls continued to be built right up to the present day, at the same time as drill halls continued to close across the country. Suitability for the modern demands of warfare, as well as location, remain key issues in determining the future and nature of these buildings.

Listed Examples, 1945-present

There are no listed drill halls of this date.

Unlisted Examples, 1945-present

Many post-war drill halls are difficult to distinguish from earlier designs. It remains unclear to what extent pre-war designs had been put on hold and were implemented in the 1950s, and to what degree an established and familiar aesthetic was deemed desirable.

One of the earliest post-war examples is Portsmouth's Peronne Road drill hall, originally designed in 1940 but built to a modified design in 1949. The modifications were a result of lessons learnt during the war: the windows were reduced in size, a rooftop walkway was added, and the eaves and tiling were altered to reduce the risk of fire damage.⁵⁴ Many pre-war buildings had been destroyed by fire during the war because of poor access to the roof and the flammability of their basic materials. Set well-back from the road, the main entrance at Peronne Road appears to be from the south, with access to the hall flanked by two single-storey blocks with flat roofs. The hall itself measures c.90 feet by 35 feet and beyond it is a long, red brick, two-storey block with a hipped roof.

Perhaps more similar to many of the 1930s drill halls is Farnham's Guildford Road drill hall in Surrey, also built in 1953 for an anti-aircraft unit. The two-storey red brick front block with projecting end bays wraps around the hall and has a projecting entrance bay. The stone door surround with canopy and a tall window above, steel-framed windows and continuous ground-floor window head are all features one might expect to see on an earlier drill hall. Flat roofs – used here for the front block – are commonly associated with *moderne* or art deco buildings of the late 1920s and 30s, but do not seem to have been used for drill halls until the 1950s. The rifle range was located on the first floor, running to one side of the hall, which measures approximately 70 feet by 50 feet, and there is extensive garaging to the rear of the hall. Osborne says that there is a dome-trainer incorporated within the structure,⁵⁵ presumably built in the 1970s or 1980s for training

on how to use the Rapier missile defence system.

From the late 1950s onwards the design of drill halls became simpler, still using many of the basic shapes and materials popular in the 1930s but simplifying the design, becoming ever more utilitarian. It is around this time that the relationship between the hall and the ancillary rooms shifted. Previously the ancillary rooms in the front and side blocks were almost secondary to the spatial requirements of the main hall. In drill halls of the late 1950s, however, the hall often appears to be dwarfed by the supposedly ancillary facilities. One such example is on Hallcroft Road, Retford, Nottinghamshire (Fig 100). Built in 1956, the two-storey front block is very plain with the exception of the projecting entrance bay which rises above parapet level, its verticality emphasised by the use of an architrave which surrounds both the door and the window above in a continuous flow. The front block is approximately 125 feet long and up to 32 feet deep, the detached garaging and stores measure up to 120 feet long and 60 feet deep at their widest part, and the hall is just 45 feet long and 40 feet wide.



Fig 100 An example of the increasing move towards utilitarian buildings in the mid-to-late 20th century can be seen in Retford, built 1956. © Andrew Hill. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic Licence

The move towards simplification resulted in a number of utilitarian drill halls that Mike Osborne describes as resembling contemporary factory buildings.⁵⁶ In Bedfordshire, Luton's Old Bedford Road drill hall of 1955 (Fig 101), set back from the road, is one such example. The stark two-storey front block is almost completely devoid of any ornamentation or detailing. Although the ground-floor windows have a continuous stone or concrete window sill and head, they are very slight and do little to break up the expanse of red brick wall, laid in stretcher bond with a plain parapet. The stone or concrete surrounds to the first-floor windows are equally slight, and the stone door surround to the central entrance only serves to emphasise the rigid bay rhythm. The hall, c.60 feet by 30 feet, lies parallel to the street and is totally surrounded by two-

storey ancillary blocks. It was originally built with two sets of semi-detached houses to the rear, but only one set survives. A large detached shed to the north-west of the hall, approximately 110 feet long by 45 feet wide, appears to be original, as are some detached garaging and stores.



Fig 101 The 1955 drill hall on Old Bedford Road, Luton, is reminiscent of contemporary factory designs. © English Heritage DPI61580

Also built c.1957 was the Kilnmead drill hall in Crawley, Sussex. Another simple design, the long front block is built from brick in stretcher bond with a plain parapet and the window openings are small with plain straight heads and sills. The recessed entrance is accessed via a short flight of steps, beyond which is the hall (c.70 feet by 35 feet) which forms part of a continuous rear wing extending a total length of c.215 feet, presumably containing further stores and facilities.

A number of 1960s drill halls resemble churches of the same date, for example the drill hall on Elizabeth Street, Corby, Northamptonshire (Fig 102), which was built in 1962 and extended to its present form by 1967. The original design was an L-shaped building with a cross wing projecting from the centre of the main façade to Elizabeth Street. The second phase saw the addition of a second L-shaped range, added to the courtyard of the first, with garaging and stores beyond. The drill hall is built from brown brick in stretcher bond with a pitched copper roof. The main entrance is within the projecting cross wing, emphasised by wooden panelling and a balcony above the doorway with thin metal railings with a W shaped pattern. In the apex of the gable is a stone plaque depicting the castle insignia of the Northamptonshire Regiment: the best clue that the building is, in fact, a drill hall.

Many new drill halls of the 1970s onwards are simple, utilitarian, buildings lacking much



Fig 102 The drill hall on Elizabeth Street, Corby, was built in 1967 and is reminiscent of contemporary church design. © Martin Jeffs

architectural finesse. The drill hall on Cowpen Road, Blyth, Northumberland, was built c.1978 from brown brick with yellow brick panels, large windows, a single-storey porch, a rendered band and a parapet. The original location of the hall element remains unclear as the main building does not appear to house a hall and the other buildings on the site were garages and stores.

Derby's Sinfin Lane drill hall of c.1981 shows little architectural progression from the factory-style examples of the 1950s. The two-storey front block is constructed from brown brick in stretcher bond with a flat roof hidden behind a simple parapet. The only detailing involves white panels between the recessed windows at the eastern end of the building. The hall is almost totally enclosed by the ancillary rooms with only a small gap left for access in the north-eastern corner of the building, facing the garaging and stores. The hall itself is approximately 55 feet long by 30 feet wide.

The 1990s saw the arrival of slightly more adventurous drill halls, such as Chavesse House on Sarum Road, Liverpool (Fig 103), built c.1990. This three-storey yellow brick building with red brick detailing and a tiled, hipped roof with deep eaves is notable for the use of a full-height canted entrance bay and second-floor oriel windows, those at the eastern and southern corner wrapping around the building. The windows are divided into square panels by thick green glazing bars. However, the building is one of several examples of drill halls which could easily be mistaken for a large office block on an industrial estate. Another form of building popular in the late 1990s was the out-of-town warehouse or motorway service station style with exposed metal and glass and a curving roof, as seen on Uxbridge Road in Southall, west London, c.1999.



Fig 103 Chavasse House, Liverpool – the late 21st century once again saw greater variation in the design of drill halls but they can often still be mistaken for office buildings of the period.
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Summary, 1945-present

Drill halls built in the late 20th century were designed with tighter security concerns in mind. Drill halls were no longer open to the public as social spaces but were, instead, increasingly considered to be likely targets for attacks. For this reason they were often built back from the street with high walls or fences restricting access.

The provision of space became increasingly important as the role of the volunteer forces, technology and equipment evolved over time. Garaging and hard-standing were now considered essential elements and were integral to new designs. As such, most new drill halls were built in the suburbs of large towns and cities where space was at less of a premium.

As the number of drill halls increased, and as anti-aircraft guns and searchlights were operated outdoors, the dimensions of the hall itself were generally smaller than in earlier drill halls – 60 feet in length and 30 feet in width was about standard. Drill halls were still provided with social spaces in the form of messes, but these were very much now closed environments. No late 20th-century drill halls are known to have incorporated public viewing galleries.

The materials used to build drill halls during this period were generally economical. Brick dominates – often laid in stretcher bond – with limited stone, concrete or rendered detailing. The popularity of flat roofs in the 1950s seems to have resulted from lessons learnt from fire damage to earlier buildings during the war. It appears that as new drill halls became ever more tightly regulated, the opportunity for individualism using local materials or designs was long gone.

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