Forging the rapier among scythes: Lieutenant-General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien and the Aldershot Command 1907-1912

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Abstract
When the Boer War ended in 1902, Great Britain began to analyze her extremely poor performance in that conflict. For decades, her army had accomplished its assigned missions on numerous colonial campaigns and expeditions. But the Boer War clearly demonstrated that her old military practices and attitudes were terribly outdated. In August 1914, when the First World War engulfed Europe, Britain fielded the best trained, equipped, and led army in the world. In the twelve years between the end of the Boer War and the start of the Great War, England had completely refurbished her army. Most of the credit for preparing the British Expeditionary Force belongs to Lieutenant-General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Aldershot Command, 1907-1912. He improved the living conditions of the soldiers; injected realism into marksmanship, training, and maneuvers; taught the cavalry to fight dismounted with rifles; developed the initiative and self-respect of the individual soldier; and most importantly, streamlined Britain's haphazard mobilization procedures. Although he played a key role in the early months of combat, his major contribution toward winning the war to end all wars was his farsighted and sound training programs and reforms during the four years that he was in command at Aldershot.

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History

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General Sir Horace Lockwood Smith-Dorrien was a senior British Army officer. One of the few British survivors of the Battle of Isandlwana as a young officer, he also distinguished himself in the Second Boer War. Smith-Dorrien attended the Staff College and in 1889 began a decade of service in India; ten years
later he was with Sir H. H. Kitchener at Omdurman and followed the sirdar to Fashoda. For the next two years, Smith-Dorrien fought in the Boer War, being promoted major general. He came home in 1907 to the Command at Aldershot, and five years later was appointed to the Southern Command at Salisbury. Given command of the II Army Corps on August 17, 1914, Smith-Dorrien led this unit as part of the British Expeditionary Force under Sir John French. General Sir Horace Lockwood Smith-Dorrien, GCB, GCMG, DSO, ADC was a senior British Army officer. One of the few British survivors of the Battle of Isandlwana as a young officer, he also distinguished himself in the Second Boer War. For faster navigation, this Iframe is preloading the Wikiwand page for Horace Smith-Dorrien. Home. News. Horace Smith-Dorrien was born at Haresfoot, a house near Berkhamsted, to Colonel Robert Algernon Smith-Dorrien and Mary Ann Drever. He was the twelfth child of sixteen; his eldest brother was Thomas Algernon Smith-Dorrien-Smith, the Lord Proprietor of the Isles of Scilly from –. Twitter Posts: Jacky Schmeler (udyxybegun). Title: Forging the rapier among scythes: Lieutenant-General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien and the Aldershot Command Author: Seim, Richard Ray. Horace Smith-Dorrien. www.1879zuluwar.com. Horace Smith-Dorrien was born at Haresfoot, Berkhamsted, the 11th child of 15. He was educated at Harrow, and on 26 February entered the Royal Military Aca. Horace Lockwood Smith Dorrien 1858. members.cox.net.