

TYPES OF MILITARY SERVICE

Types of service up until 1914 - The British Army had offered 4 forms of recruitment since 1908. A man could join the army as a professional soldier of *the regular army* or as a part-time member of the *Territorial Force* or as a soldier of the *Special Reserve*. Finally there was the opportunity to join the *National Reserve*. There was a long-running battle, with politicians and military men taking both sides, about whether Britain should have a system of national conscripted service. By 1914 this had not come about and Britain's army was entirely voluntary.

Short service - In addition to being able to enlist in the regular army on standard terms (usually 12 years) throughout the war years, Lord Kitchener introduced in August 1914 a new form of "Short Service", under which a man could serve for 3 years or for the duration of the war, whichever was the longer. Men joining on this basis were nevertheless technically "of the regular army".

Joining Regiments Wartime volunteers continued to have, at least in theory, a choice over the regiment they joined. They had to meet the same physical criteria as the peace time regulars, but men who had previously served in the army could be accepted up to the age of 45. There are many recorded instances however, of both under age and over age men being accepted into the service. It was not necessary to produce evidence of age or even of one's name in order to enlist.