

Cinque Ports Volunteers

In 1794, owing to the fear of invasion from France, the government encouraged the raising of extra troops for the defence of the Realm, including a large body of Cavalry and Infantry recruited by voluntary enlistment.

Local companies of part-time volunteers were formed in the Cinque Ports and remained in service until the signing of the Peace of Amiens in 1802. A year later, amidst renewed fears of invasion, William Pitt the Younger, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, helped to re-form the local companies of 1794-1802 into a new Regiment of Cinque Ports Volunteers. This regiment remained in service until 1810 when changes in the militia system came into force.

The demands of the Peninsular War necessitated the drafting of militia men into the regular army and the establishment of a new local militia, primarily for home defence. The Local Militia Act of 1808 created a new reserve force intended to replace the volunteers and in 1810 the Earl of Liverpool, who had succeeded Pitt as Lord Warden, established the Cinque Ports Regiment of Local Militia.

With the end of the Peninsular War in 1814 and the eventual defeat of Napoleon in 1815 the need for a reserve force ceased. The volunteers were disbanded in 1814 and the local militia were disembodied in 1816.

Extract from <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/374d689e-e3f1-458b-af43-4c4f2639e35f>

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