

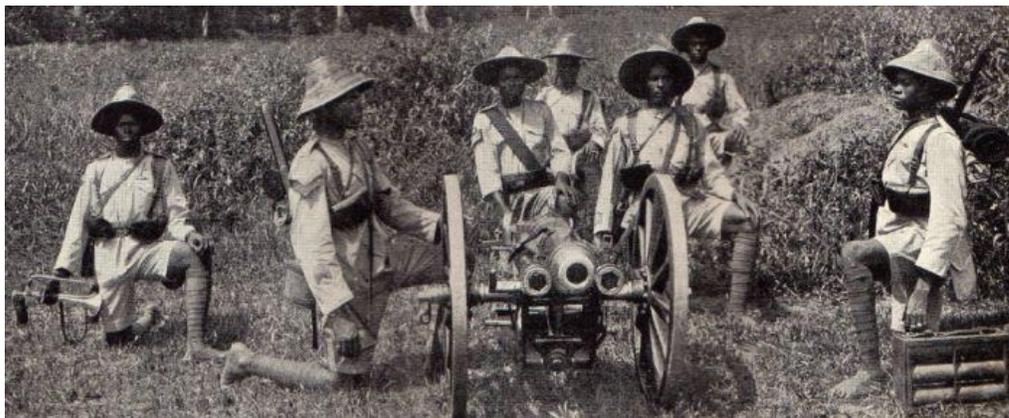
## The Gold Coast Regiment

The Gold Coast Regiment originated in organisations formed in the 1850s in what is now Ghana. The 'Gold Coast Corps' had been recruited in the early 1830s for the defence of settlements in the colony. By the 1850s it consisted of a number of small organisations which were mainly used in a policing role. These were amalgamated in 1879 and renamed the 'Gold Coast Constabulary'. This also had a military role and in 1893-1894 it took part in a campaign against the Ashanti kingdom, who had been threatening tribes in what is now central Ghana.

The Gold Coast Artillery Corps was formed in 1850 and from the late 1850s wore a uniform similar to that of the West India Regiment. It was disbanded in 1863 however, after its soldiers had mutinied. Many of its former members joined local forces which later became part of the Gold Coast Constabulary.



In 1901 the Gold Coast Constabulary was renamed the 'Gold Coast Regiment' as it became part of the newly organised West African Frontier Force under the direction of the Colonial Office. It was organised into one battalion of infantry and one battery of artillery. The artillery possessed only small field guns which could be moved by hand through the thick jungle found in much of the country.



The uniform which was adopted for the whole West Africa Frontier Force was modelled on the one worn by the earlier Gold Coast Artillery Corps and consisted of a khaki sleeved waistcoat, shorts and puttees. Footwear was optional and most chose to go barefoot. For dress and parade order, a red cummerbund and a red sleeveless jacket edged in gold were also worn, along with a red fez with a tassel. The jackets of senior non commissioned officers were further decorated with lines of gold 'frogging'.



For normal duties a brown woollen jumper could be worn over or instead of the sleeved waistcoat and a green woollen 'Kilmarnock' cap with a pom-pom was worn instead of the fez. For campaign dress the Kilmarnock cap was worn with a khaki jacket or the brown jumper instead of the sleeved waistcoat. Photographs show that the red cummerbund was often worn on campaign as well. In the field, wide brimmed hats were also commonly worn, often over the Kilmarnock cap.





On the outbreak of the First World War, the Gold Coast Regiment was the main British force used to capture the neighbouring German colony of Togoland (modern Togo) and destroy its powerful radio masts. This was already happening before the war really got started in Europe and the first bullets fired by a British soldier against the Germans in the war were fired by a Gold Coast Regiment soldier named Alhaji Grunshi (seen in the picture on the left) more than a week before the first engagement in Europe.

The regiment then took part in the invasion of the German colony of Cameroon and spent the end of 1914 and most of 1915 fighting in the campaign to gain control of the colony and destroy its ability to relay radio messages to German warships.

In 1916, the Gold Coast Regiment entered the campaign against the Germans in East Africa (modern Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania), which had been going since August 1914. It fought through most of the East African campaign, engaging German forces in many places in what are now Tanzania and Mozambique. In mid 1918, the regiment returned to barracks in the Gold Coast and took no further part in the remainder of the campaign.

The gold regiment remained part of the West Africa Frontier Force (later renamed the Royal West Africa Frontier Force) until shortly after the Gold Coast gained independence in 1957, when it was withdrawn from the RWAFF and renamed the Ghana Army. Today, the Ghana Army forms the majority of the ground forces of the Ghana Armed Forces.