



HANTS SOCCER IN THE 19TH CENTURY: ALDERSHOT AREA –A TIMELINE

- 1854** A military camp is established at Aldershot, which at the time, was little more than a village. Little is known about the introduction of football in the Army but the first shots at goal in Aldershot were fired by soldiers.
- 1873** It has been recorded that the 93rd Highlanders of North Camp had played in ten games, with a record of won 1; drew 3; lost 6.
- 1875** The 105th Light Infantry enter the FA Cup for the first time (1875/76) and lost a first-round replay 0-3 against the original Crystal Palace side at The Oval (after a 0-0 draw in the first match at Aldershot).
- 1880** A match was played between Alton and Aldershot in November. This was thought to be the first reference to civilian football in the town.
- 1881** A record of a match between the Highland Light Infantry and Guildford which was played behind All Saints' Church on the Army Athletic Ground. The Egyptian War subsequently took away most of the troops and the H.L.I. lost many notable players at Tel-el-Kebir.
- 1885** The Aldershot Institute Club was formed. It was a social club located in High Street and most of their games were with Army clubs. They initially competed for the Surrey Cups and in the Surrey West League.
- 1888** The Army Football Association is formed.
- 1889** The Hampshire Senior Cup is held for the second time and the final is won by the Royal Engineers who convincingly defeated the Portsmouth Football Association club by 5-1 at Southampton.
- 1890** The Hampshire Senior Cup final is an all-Army affair as the Royal Engineers defeat the King's Royal Rifles by 3-2 to retain the cup. (They made it to the final for the third successive season a year later but were unsuccessful).
- 1890** Fleet FC is formed (the present-day Fleet Town FC).
- 1894** The Royal Engineers win the Hampshire Senior Cup for the third and last time, defeating St Mary's in the final by 1-0. The Aldershot Football Association is formed on 5th August 1894 which is the second oldest local Association in the County. It was a largely military affair in its formative years, with nine regiments in membership and two civilian teams, an 'Aldershot FC' and Wellington Works (belonging to a printing company Gale and Polden, who were initially based in Chatham and had constructed a new factory in Aldershot around this period). The proprietor of the 'Aldershot News' presented a challenge cup for competition (the Aldershot Senior Cup).
- 1895** A Junior Cup was established. The Aldershot & District League commenced, but this was a military affair with a civilian club section added.
- 1898** A Charity Cup was founded but most local football was played on open ground and special arrangements had to be made to take a 'gate'.