



HISTORY OF SIGNALLING IN 100 OBJECTS THE ROYAL ENGINEERS SIGNALS SERVICE BADGE



The Royal Engineers in 1912 formed a separate and integral branch dedicated to providing communications. This was called the RE Signals Service. The badge of this Signal Service is shown above. Henceforward there would be increasingly specialised signallers in the British Army.

This reflected the lessons that had been learnt during the colonial wars in Southern Africa and acknowledged that communications required specialist operators capable of handling telegraph, line and later wireless signals.

The picture on the right shows a RE cable section in 1910 at Rowlands Castle. 2 years later these soldiers were to be incorporated into the RE Signal Service. When the WW1 commenced in August 1914, the RE Signal Service had fewer than 6,000 men. The War changed this and by the end of



the war the Service was 70,000 strong. Prior to the war the RE Signal Service was primarily a telegraph communications provider, but by 1918 the telephone was the major means of communication on the Western Front. Wireless had only just begun to play a much more significant role in military communications, not so much on the Western Front, but more in other theatres of operations. It was the size and complexity of this RE Signal Service in 1918, which led to the decision to form the Royal Corps of Signals in 1920.