



The Army at Wilton

Wilton was first associated with the Army in 1914, just after the outbreak of the First World War, when large numbers of troops were drafted into the surrounding area. At Wilton, a camp was built on a site adjacent to the Sheep Fair field at the bottom of the Avenue between the almshouses and the railway.

This association with the Army was short lived and the Army moved out at the end of the Great War. During the Second World War Wilton's links with the Army were renewed. Wilton House was requisitioned as the new HQ of Southern Command; Nissen huts were set up in the grounds and used as extra offices and accommodation. The Pembroke Arms Hotel became the Officer's Mess and what is now the Estate Office was a canteen run by Lady Pembroke and a team of helpers.

Much of the planning for D-Day was done at Wilton House; Southern Command stretched from Sussex to Land's End. Communications were vital and 750 miles of telephone wire was laid in and around Wilton House, linking the centre of operations with all units in the area.

After the war, Southern Command stayed at Wilton House until 1949 when the Army purchased Fugglestone House (part of the Wilton Estate). The American Army had used Fugglestone as their Southern Command Field Base during the war. Erskine Barracks utilised the existing buildings and built extensive new office accommodation in the early 1960s.

Southern Command was merged into Headquarters United Kingdom Land Forces (HQ UKLF) in 1972, then renamed Land Command in 1995. In early 2008 Land Command amalgamated with HQ Adjutant General under Project Hyperion and became Land Forces.

Land Forces moved from Erskine Barracks to the former RAF Andover site, which is now known as Marlborough Lines. Erskine Barracks was sold to a developer (for housing) in March 2013.