

The Danish Brigade in Germany

1947 – 1958

The British 7th Armoured Division, perhaps better known as the Desert Rats, moved into Itzehoe Barracks in Northern Germany on 5 May 1945. Division HQ and The Kings Royal Irish Hussars occupied the barracks until July 1946. In July the 27th Heavy regiment, Royal Artillery and the Control Commission of Germany (CCG) took over. Later on the 334th Forward Observation Battery (FOB) and 3rd Parachute Battalion from 6th Airborne Division also came to Itzehoe.

In autumn 1948 the forces in Northern Germany were reorganized, and a Norwegian brigade (482nd) from Harzen moved to Schleswig-Holstein. One of its infantry battalions was moved to Itzehoe and almost all British units left the barracks.

The Danish Occupation Force was established 7 October 1949 with HQ in the small town of Jever in East Friesland. It was soon decided to move the brigade to Itzehoe.

The Danish Brigade arrived at Itzehoe Barracks on 1st November 1949. First company in was 2nd Company from 19th Battalion commanded by Captain Mathisson. Soon that day the Danish colours at a ceremony by the new Danish commandant, Lieutenant Colonel S. Clausen, replaced the Norwegian colours. After a break for 86 years Danish soldiers again manned Itzehoe Barracks after the withdrawal in December 1863.

The other units soon arrived as well: During November- January 1st Company from 3rd battalion and 6th Company from 2nd Pioneer Battalion as the rest of the forward party. They were soon relieved and from 1950 – to 1952 more units moved to Itzehoe to form the brigade:

Danish Brigade in Germany:

Brigade Staff	100
9 th Infantry Regiment	
HQ	28
6 th Infantry Battalion	619
13 th Infantry Battalion	611
7 th Infantry Battalion	586
Jutland Dragoon Regiment	126
4 th Field Artillery Regiment	
HQ	37
6 th Field Artillery Battalion	200
4 th Field Artillery Battalion	168
Elements of 12 th Field Artillery battalion	141
14 th Field Artillery Battalion	148
2 nd Pioneer battalion	134
The Signal battalion	176
Military Police	126
Repair and Depot facilities, medical Corps personnel	250
Officers and NCO's	500
Observers and liaison	250

Total

4.200

So it is safe to say, that main elements from the Danish Army served in Northern Germany in this period (Read my article on the reorganization of the Danish Army after WW2). There was little to do for the soldiers, just guard duties, parades and exercises.



Warrant Officers from The Guard Hussars, note uniforms model 1944 battledress with shoulder flashes

From 1952 the brigade was reduced to around 1.500 soldiers and renamed The Danish Command.

In 1953, on 11th of April, the Norwegian contingent held their closing parade on Schleswigland Airfield after completing exercise VIKING II with the Danish Brigade.

25 March 1958 the Danish Brigade held their closing parade and the Danish part of the occupation of Germany after WW2 ended.