



The first contingent of the Canterbury Battalion was formed on the outbreak of the First World War, consisting of four existing Territorial Regiments from the province.

The main body of the Battalion left New Zealand shores on 16th October 1914, arriving in Egypt on 3rd December 1914. They were sent to the Suez Canal to join the defence against invading Turks and from there were assigned to Gallipoli, landing on 25th April 1915.

Canterbury's first wounded soldiers returned home from Gallipoli on 17th July 1915. The first from the Regiment to be awarded the Victoria Cross was Sergeant Henry James Nicholas, a pupil who previously attended Christchurch Normal School in Cranmer Square and Christchurch East School.

The badge of the Canterbury Regiment depicts a white crane flanked by fern fronds and surmounted by a crown. The crane was taken from the personal arms of Major T Wollaston-White who was the second commanding officer of the then Canterbury Rifle Volunteers. It was first used on the colours of the Volunteer Corps on 27th December 1863.

