

Organization and Constitution of the Corps.

ITS FIRST FORMATION.

1. *The Corps of Royal Marines.*—The Corps of Royal Marines is a military body specially organised and trained for service in the Fleet as well as on shore; it is raised and supported by Naval Funds, and constitutes an important part of the naval forces of the country.

2. *First raised in 1664.*—A regiment of Marines was first raised by the Admiralty, its maintenance becoming a charge on Naval Funds in 1664; previous to this, troops had been embarked for temporary duty on board ship; since then the Corps has passed through many phases consequent on changes of policy and the frequent transitions from peace to war.

In 1755 the Corps was constituted on its present basis, and the three Divisions at Chatham, Portsmouth and Plymouth were established. A fourth Division was established at Woolwich in 1805, and disbanded in 1869. By Order-in-Council of 18th August, 1804, the Royal Marine Artillery was first authorised, Artillery Companies being formed and attached to each Division, the Officers being taken from the general list of the Corps. The present Royal Marine Artillery Division was established at Eastney in 1866, and a R.N. School of Music, for training Royal Marine Bands for service afloat, in 1903. Since its inception the Corps has taken a prominent part in all the naval, and in most of the military, warlike operations in which the country has been engaged.

3. *“Designation.*—On the 29th April, 1802, as a reward for its services, the Corps was, by Royal Command, created ‘the Royal Marines,’ the facings being changed from white to blue. In February, 1855, in consequence of services in the Crimea, the title of ‘Light Infantry’ was added.”

4. *Officers.*—When the Royal Marine Artillery was first established the officers were taken from the general list of the Corps. Order-in-Council of 21st March, 1862, and of 10th November, 1866, established the present organisation and divided the Corps into two distinct branches under the designation of the Royal Marine Artillery and the Royal Marine Light Infantry, with the Officers on separate and distinct lists for promotion.

In 1912 Officers were entered direct on one list and posted as required to the Royal Marine Artillery and Royal Marine Light Infantry, but in 1920 the two separate lists were re-instituted.

In Order-in-Council of 3rd December, 1920, a new establishment of General Officers was fixed, common to the R.M. Artillery and R.M. Light Infantry.

STRENGTH AND COMPOSITION.

7. *Its Strength.*—Its strength varies from time to time, according to the requirements of the Fleet, and is distributed as follows, viz. :—

One Division, Royal Marine Artillery, Head-quarters at Eastney.

Three Divisions, Royal Marine Light Infantry, Headquarters at Chatham, Gosport and Plymouth.

One Recruit Dépôt at Deal.

One Royal Naval School of Music; Headquarters at Eastney.

8. During the Great War of 1914–1918 the following Royal Marine Units were raised :—

	Raised.	Disbanded.
Royal Marine Submarine Miners	1915	1919
Royal Marine Labour Corps (France)	1917	1919

Royal Naval Division :—

Divisional Engineers—1 H.Q., 3 Field Cosys.	1914	*1917
* Transferred to Royal Engineers in 1917.		
Divisional Train	1914	1919
Medical Unit—3 Field Ambulances	1914	1919
Ordnance Unit—One Company	1914	1917
Cyclist Company—One Company	1914	1917
Home Service Labour Corps	1917	1919
Royal Marine Engineers	1918	1919

9. The following Units were provided by the R.M.A. and R.M.L.I. :—

R.M. Artillery :—

	Raised.	Disbanded.
Howitzer Brigade	1915	1919
Siege Batteries	1915	1919
Anti-Aircraft Brigade	1915	1919

R.M. Light Infantry :—

Four R.M.L.I. Battalions (Chatham, Portsmouth, Plymouth and Deal) were raised in 1914, which were amalgamated into the 1st and 2nd Battalions in 1915 and into the 1st R.M. Battalion in 1918.

R.M.A. and R.M.L.I. (composite) :—

	Raised.	Disbanded.
Special Service Battalion for service in Ireland	1916	1916
3rd R.M. Battalion for service in Eastern Mediterranean	1916	1921
4th R.M. Battalion for service at Zeebrugge	1918	1918
5th R.M. Battalion for special service in connection with Mines	1918	1919
6th R.M. Battalion for service in North Russia	1919	1919

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	Raised.	Disbanded.
8th R.M. Battalion for service in Ireland	1920	1922
11th R.M. Battalion for service in Eastern Mediterranean	1922	—
Heavy batteries of 4-in. and 12-pdr. Guns for service in East Africa	1916	1918
Siege Batteries, R.G.A.	1918	1919
525th Battery, R.M.L.I., Chatham.		
526th Battery, R.M.L.I., Portsmouth.		
527th/528th Batteries, R.M.A., Eastney.		

Each of these batteries contained a proportion of ranks of R.M.L.I., Plymouth Division.

10. An "Unattached List, Royal Marines" was instituted in May, 1918, in order to meet cases such as those of civilian officials serving under the Admiralty whose duties necessitated the wearing of uniform. The Officers entered were granted Temporary Honorary Commissions.

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