

## **Helmets WP (Wolseley Pattern)**

Current pattern replaced the 1905 helmet in 1912 (GORM 78/1912 & BSS Vol II p 307) 'No issues until present stocks exhausted', consequently it was hardly ever seen until well after the War – in fact really until the amalgamation, giving rise to the thought that it wasn't introduced until then. (GORM 10/1913 informed officers that the old helmet could be worn until January 1915) The best illustration is a cartoon in the Museum, "The Pride of Eastney" showing a short RMA officer wearing the new pattern helmet marching past on the right of a line of very tall RMA ORs wearing the old pattern helmet.

Points to remember:

Helmet Plates - The small present date universal helmet plate was introduced with the old 1905 helmet.

Chin Chains - Although Officers started to wear a gilt chin chain in Review Order in 1926, it was not introduced for ORs until 1939. The Band and Buglers for the Royal Tour of Canada were issued with them in 1938 (Notes by FVD). and The street lining company for the Royal drive to London Guildhall after the tour were issued with them, and they were retained afterwards (RM Circ 7 Jun 1939). Later in 1939 insufficient stocks only allowed an issue to ranks serving in ships and issues to ranks ashore were being deferred (RM Circ 17 May 1939). All chin chains were returned to store in 1940 (RM Circ 5 Feb 1940).

Helmets were not to be worn in Home Ships and Establishments for the duration of the War (RM Circ 25 Sep 1939), they were no longer a personal issue in 1942 and returned to store (RM Circ 4 Feb 1943). Bands reverted to wearing them in 1945 (RMRO 1452/45 – although there are photographs of Bands wearing them during the war), they were issued to ranks posted to HMS *Royal Prince* and *Royal Albert* in Germany in 1954 (RMRO 206/54) and on personal loan to ranks in HM Ships in 1964 (RMRO 21/64). They were of course issued to all ranks on parade for the Presentation of Colours to the three Commandos in Malta in 1952.

(AJD – 11 May 2005)