

BADGES OF THE ROYAL MARINES



W.O.s' and Q.M.S.s' Badges



Mess Dress Collar Badge



Officers' Cap Badge



Officers' Collar Badge



Mess Dress Collar Badge



Sergeants' Badges



R.M. Bands Chatham



R.M. Bands Portsmouth Cap Badge



R.M. Bands Plymouth



Officers', W.O.s' and Q.M.S.s' S.D. Badges



R.M. Bandmaster Cap and Collar Badges



R.M. Bandsman Cap and Collar Badges



Other Ranks' S.D. Badges



Shoulder Title



Other Ranks' Badges



R.M. Band Shoulder Title



O.R.s' pre-1939 Dress Collar Badge



W.O. Dress



W.O. Service Dress



O.R.s' pre-1939 Bandsman Collar Badge



King's Badge



Q.M.S. Instructor of Gunnery



Q.M.S. Instructor of Musketry



Q.M.S. Instructor of P.T.



Plastic Cap and Collar Badges

# BADGES OF THE ROYAL MARINES



R.M. Division  
116th R.M. Bde



34th Amphibian  
Support Regt



117th R.M. Bde



R.M. Engineers



104th R.M. Trng Bde  
R.M. Trng Group

**ROYAL MARINES**

R.M. Shoulder Title



Bush Hat Flash  
Far East 1944-45

**R.N.COMMANDO**

R.M. Beach Commando

**44  
COMMANDO  
ROYAL MARINES**

44 R.M. Commando - embroidered

**ROYAL NAVY  
COMMANDO**

R.N. Personnel Attached  
to R.M. Commandos



R.M. Siege Regiment

**45**

**46**

**41**

**42**

**43**

**44**

**47**

**48**



7th R.M. Bn  
Shoulder Title  
1943

**40  
ROYAL MARINES  
COMMANDO**

40-48 R.M. Commando - woven

**30**

30th Assault Unit

## The Royal Marines

The Royal Marines trace their origins to the Duke of York and Albany's Maritime Regiment of Foot, otherwise known as the Admiral's Regiment, formed in 1664, and recruited largely from the Trained Bands of London. They were organised into a permanent corps in 1775, with 'Divisions' at Chatham, Portsmouth and Plymouth, under the control of the Board of Admiralty.

The Royal Marines provided detachments of small-arms men for duty on the upper decks of His Majesty's ships and landing parties, and in these roles they helped to protect and consolidate the empire for centuries.

During the French Wars they were present at every naval battle; nearly three thousand officers and men were at Trafalgar, whilst they also gained much experience and distinction in innumerable raiding and other amphibious operations. They were rewarded by the granting of the title 'Royal' in 1802.

Artillery companies were added to the Corps in 1804 to man a portion of the armament of the ship and, as their role in defence of ships subsided, they were redeployed in land operations; thus, after the Crimean War, they were divided into Blue Marines (Royal Marine Artillery) and Red Marines (Royal Marine Light Infantry).

These two branches were amalgamated in 1923 under the old title the Royal Marines.

During World War 2 they were called upon to perform a whole range of new tasks: formations for the defence of naval bases overseas, providing crews for landing crafts, beach control parties and armoured units for close support on the beaches, not to mention the well-known R.M. Commandos. All this in addition to their normal activities, such as the defence of ships, the forming of battalions, siege regiments and anti-aircraft units.

### Plate 10. Badges of the Royal Marines

The badge of the Royal Marines is composed of the Royal Crest, which was initially displayed on the officers' shoulder belt plates in 1797, by the laurel wreath, which it is claimed was awarded to them after the battle of Belle-Île in 1761, and by the globe. The latter was granted by King George IV in 1827, when the Royal Marines claimed one hundred and six battle honours in campaigns all over the world for their new colours and received the globe instead.

Only one battle honour was selected for display; it commemorates the capture and defence of Gibraltar, the marines' proudest achievement. The motto *Per Mare Per Terram*, believed to have been used for the first time in 1775, means 'By Sea By Land' and truly describes their deployment. The anchor is often portrayed in the Royal Marines' Insignia to denote that the Corps is part of the Naval Service. It was first used by the marines in 1747.

The cap badges displayed the Royal Crest, the globe and the wreath; the collar badges the globe and wreath only; all were in two variants, for blue dress and khaki service dress uniforms.

The officers' dress cap badge had a silver globe with the continents above it painted in gold, the Royal Crest and wreath were made of gilt and the former was detached from the rest. The Warrant Officer and Quartermaster Sergeant also wore cap badges in two separate pieces but entirely finished in gilt. The Sergeants had gilt cap badges but in one piece, with the crest attached to the ends of the wreath and on the top of the globe; the other ranks had the same badge but made of brass.

The dress collar badges followed the pattern of the cap badge, therefore the officers' had the silver globe, those of the Warrant Officers, Quartermaster Sergeant and Sergeants were identical, i.e. made of gilt, and the collar badges



of the other ranks were made of brass. Collar badges had shorter fittings at the back than cap badges.

The officers wore smaller collar badges on the lapels of the mess dress. The first badge illustrated, with the wreath joining on top, was used from 1897 to 1921; another badge, with a small bugle in between the ends of the wreath, was worn from 1921 to 1923 by officers of the Royal Marine Light Infantry and matched their cap badges, which carried the bugle instead of the Royal Crest. The other badge illustrated, with the wreath's ends parted, was used from 1923 to 1953, later followed by an anodised version.

Before the war, until 1939, a silver globe and embroidered wreath was worn by officers on the collar of the frock coat, while other ranks had collar badges embroidered in yellow thread on a red background for the collar of the blue tunic.

Bronze cap badges were worn on khaki caps and, again, there were two versions: with detached crest for officers, the Warrant Officer and Quartermaster Sergeant, and in a single piece for all other ranks. Black bakelite cap and collar badges were issued to the other ranks during World War 2.

The lyre was adopted in 1906 as a distinguishing badge for the personnel of the Naval School of Music. It was worn on cap badges in place of the Royal Crest and a vast array could be found: some badges were gilded, others made of brass with the lyre detached or attached either to the ends of the wreath or to the globe as well. The lyre was worn above the globe and laurels from 1921 to 1946 and was then replaced by the normal R.M. cap badge.

The officers wore the lyre on the collar with an additional scroll which carried the motto from 1921 to 1930, the other ranks had the plain lyre in brass or embroidered in yellow on red backing; the latter badge was abolished in 1939 when the wearing of blue dress was discontinued but the brass badge continued to be used until 1951 and by Boys Junior Musicians until 1970, later in an anodised version.

The 'RMB' titles, which come in small and large variations were also adopted in 1921; one type was made without the top bar across and has a full stop after the initials. The normal shoulder titles of the Royal Marines, with initials 'RM', were made in bronze and in brass, in small and large sizes.

The three divisional bands, at Chatham, Portsmouth and Plymouth, were granted special cap devices: the former received the silver Rose of York in 1902 as a reward for accompanying the Duke of Cornwall and York, the future King George V, on his tour of the colonies.

The band of the Portsmouth Division was granted the Prince of Wales's Plume in 1876 to commemorate the prince's visit to India and was worn until the amalgamation of the R.M.A. and R.M.L.I. in 1923. Later the badge was still worn by bandsmen at Deal until that band was dispersed in 1930. However, the band of the Royal Marine Artillery went with King George V to India for the Delhi Durbar and thus was awarded the King's Cypher on the

ball of the grenade of the cap badge, a distinction which was retained by the band of the Portsmouth Division.

The Prince of Wales's Plume was also granted to the R.M.L.I. band of Plymouth in 1921 for going with the prince, later King Edward VIII, on his visit to Canada and Australia.

The band serving on the Royal Yacht, since 1925, wear a special shoulder flash which, in fact, reads 'Royal Yacht', and it is still worn today underneath an embroidered crown.

The officers wore rank insignia of army pattern, in gold or bronze according to type of uniforms, and shoulder titles.

The rank of Warrant Officer was instituted in 1943 and was identified by the initials 'WO' surrounded by a laurel wreath, as illustrated, on the shoulder straps. In April 1949 it was abolished and the warrant officers still in charge were upgraded to commissioned officers.

Other rank badges typical of the marines were those for quartermaster sergeant instructors: the Royal Crown within a laurel wreath above crossed guns for gunnery, above crossed rifles for musketry and above crossed clubs for the physical training instructors.

The Royal Marines, although a naval organisation, were basically a separate body, primarily where uniforms and insignia were concerned. The officers' rank distinction followed the army's pattern, but had a special rank of Captain-General, later taken by King George VI and at present by the Duke of Edinburgh. The non-commissioned officers used a mixture of army and navy badges, including some non-substantive badges, which worked out perfectly for their own purpose, and some extra badges of their own.

The King's Badge was adopted in March 1918, following King George V's inspection to R.M. Depot at Deal. It was granted to the best all-round marine in each King's Squad and he kept it throughout his service. At the same time the title of 'King's Squad' was given to each recruits' squad as it became in turn the senior squad in the Corps. The badge was worn on the right upper sleeve of all uniforms and therefore many variations are in existence: the Royal Cypher and surrounding laurel wreath in gold on dark blue, or red on dark blue, gold on red, gold on dark green, white on khaki or brown on summer drill background, according to uniform.

## **Plate II. Badges of the Royal Marines**

Formation signs were adopted during World War 2 for wearing on the upper sleeves of the battledress.

The Royal Marines Division was in existence from 1941 to 1943 and later the trident was used by the 116th R.M. Brigade, which was formed by the 27th, 28th and 30th R.M. battalions. The 117th R.M. Brigade (31st, 32nd and 33rd R.M. Bns) wore the fowl anchor within an 8-pointed star in 1945.

The anchor, with a gold grenade superimposed, was used by the R.M. Engineers from 1940 to 1945 and by the personnel of the 34th Amphibian Support Regiment in 1945-46. A seahorse was the emblem of the 104th Training Brigade, which, in 1943, was redesignated R.M. Training Group.

The R.M. Siege Regiment used a grenade with protruding ball embroidered in red thread and 'T', 'U' and 'W' 4 in (102 mm) batteries of the R.M. Coast Artillery were distinguished by a small maroon triangle from 1941 to 1944.

Red figures cut out from felt and sewn on khaki background were worn on the shoulder straps during the war; an Arabic '7' was used by the 7th R.M. Battalion in 1941-42 and a Roman 'VII' in 1943-44 until March, when the battalion was converted to become the 48 R.M. Commando. The 9th R.M. Battalion used the Roman figure from 1941 until August 1943 when it became the 46 R.M. Commando. Other badges existed as well but only those of the 7th and 9th battalions are displayed at the Royal Marines Museum.

The 30th Assault Unit used the number '30', embroidered in light blue thread on a dark blue background, the 31st R.M. Battalion had a red '31' on khaki and the 33rd had a red '33' on a dark blue background. These badges were worn in the later months of the War.

The shoulder title of the Royal Marines was straight, with red lettering on a blue background, and was worn on battledress by all except commandos from 1943 to 1966. The woven pattern was issued and commandos wore it with the number above and 'COMMANDO' designation below, in three pieces attached together.

Unofficial badges were worn as well: some 'ROYAL MARINES' titles were red on ultramarine blue instead of dark blue, or with dark blue lettering on a red background. There were embroidered commandos' titles, often with the wording displaced, as for the example illustrated of a shoulder title of the 44 R.M. Commando. New curved titles were adopted by the commandos in 1946.

Royal Navy titles were curved, embroidered in white thread on a dark blue background. There were three; besides those illustrated, there was one which displayed only the designation 'COMMANDO'.

The triangular formation sign with the red dagger was used by the personnel of the Special Service Group in 1944-46 and, after the disbandment of the army commandos, it was worn by the 3rd R.M. Commando Brigade from 1946 to 1976 and later re-adopted by army personnel.