

*1643.—Royal Marines—Reorganisation.

(N. 2106.—22.6.1923.)

Further economies in the Royal Marines being essential The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty have decided that one Division is to be abolished.

2. *Amalgamation.*—After carefully considering the requirements of the Fleet, the duties and training of Royal Marines, and the arrangements for drafting and mobilisation, Their Lordships have decided to amalgamate the Royal Marine Artillery and the Royal Marine Light Infantry, and there will in future be common entry and training.

3. *Distribution.*—The Corps will be called “The Royal Marines,” and be composed of :—

Stationed at :—

(a) First Division	...	...	...	Chatham.
(b) Second Division	...	...	...	Portsmouth—Eastney Barracks.
(c) Third Division	...	...	...	Plymouth.
(d) Depôt, Royal Marines	...	...	...	Deal.
(e) R.N. School of Music	...	...	...	Portsmouth—Eastney Barracks.
(f) School of Land Artillery...	...	...	...	Do., do.
(g) Small Arms School	...	...	...	Portsmouth—Browndown.
(h) School of Signalling	...	...	...	Chatham.
(i) School of P.R. Training	...	...	...	Deal.

(e), (f), and (g) will be under the command of the Colonel Commandant, Portsmouth Division.

(h) will be under the command of the Colonel Commandant, Chatham Division.

(i) will be under the command of the Colonel Commandant, Depôt, R.M.

4. *Training.*—All ranks will be trained as Infantry in accordance with the Army Training Manuals and in Naval Gunnery as at present, thus providing the non-substantive ratings now open to the Royal Marines.

A percentage of Officers and men will be trained in Land Gunnery, including management of Searchlights—forming a nucleus for Coast Defence, Anti-Aircraft and Medium Batteries. Specialists will also be trained in Machine Gun, Signalling, and other special ratings required by H.M. Fleet.

5. *Abolition of a Division.*—The R.M. Artillery at Eastney, and the R.M.L.I. at Forton will be combined into the Portsmouth Division, R.M. (they were originally divided in 1862); the three Divisions will be of equal strength, and the numbers required to bring Chatham and Plymouth up to new establishment will be drafted in equal proportions from Eastney and Forton. Each Division will then draft to Ships of its own Port.

6. *Combined List of Officers, etc.*—Officers and Warrant Officers will be combined on one list in accordance with the following principles:—

(i) *Officers.*

(a) According to rank by date of seniority; when two or more Officers are of the same date of promotion they will be placed in order of date of entry into the Service. If still of the same seniority they will be placed in each batch in promotion of 1 R.M.A. to 3 R.M.L.I., the senior of the batch being determined by age.

(b) Officers, of Captain's rank, entered prior to 1907, who joined Greenwich together and underwent the same examinations, will be placed in order of passing out of Greenwich, added to marks obtained in "Excellent"; otherwise as in (a) above.

(c) Officers entered subsequent to 1st January, 1912, in original order before lists were divided in 1919, the seven senior Subalterns, R.M.A., being promoted to Captains (Supernumerary) and replaced in their positions on the list without adjustment of arrears of pay or allowances.

(ii) *Warrant Officers.*—By dates of seniority.

Lists of Officers amalgamated on above principles will be promulgated separately. To adjust their positions the seniority of three Captains, R.M.A., is ante-dated, and seven Lieutenants, R.M.A., promoted to Captain with seniority of the R.M.L.I. Captains next below them on the list.

(iii) *Other Ranks.*—Will be combined on Divisional lists by date of promotion. Corporals, R.M.A., promoted prior to 1918 will count their time from date of promotion to Bombardier.

In cases in which date of seniority in present rank is the same, seniority is to be determined by reference to the rank next below, *vide* General Standing Orders, R.M., paragraph 275, or date of candidature for promotion in the case of Corporals of the same seniority.

(iv) *Candidates for Promotion.*—Transferred as a result of amalgamation will carry with them the date of their seniority as candidates, *vide* Instructions for R.M. Divisions, Article 20, but sub-paragraph 2 of this Article as to candidates transferred to another Division not being considered for promotion until one year after transfer will be in abeyance for candidates transferred under the scheme for amalgamation. In cases where the dates of candidature is the same, the oldest soldier is to be considered the senior, under age time being eliminated.

7. *Nomenclature.*—The titles "Gunner" and "Private" will be dropped and the title "Marine" (abbreviation "Mne.") adopted. Arrangements are being made to amend existing Regulations in which "Marine" includes N.C. Officers.

8. *Transfer and Posting.*—Voluntary transfer from Eastney and Forton to Chatham and Plymouth Divisions will be open for three months from the date of this Order. Names and particulars of volunteers (in the form shown in Appendix "A") should be submitted by Commanding Officers of Ships and establishments to the Adjutant-General, R.M., who will regulate the numbers to be transferred.

If at the expiration of three months from the date of this Order insufficient candidates for transfer are forthcoming, N.C. Officers and men of R.M.A. and Forton will be posted to Chatham and Plymouth Divisions to complete numbers. As far as possible these transfers will be unmarried men.

Sanction has been given to the payment of reasonable removal expenses of Officers and other ranks and their families transferred from Eastney and Forton to other Divisions as a direct result of reorganisation.

9. *Surplus Ranks.*—Ranks rendered surplus as a result of amalgamation will be allowed to retire and to take their discharge on the special terms outlined in A.F.O.s 1358/22 and 1359/22.

Details (including terms for ranks not dealt with in these Fleet Orders) will be issued separately.

10. *Colours.*—All three Divisions will carry the King's and Regimental Colours; those presented to Portsmouth Division by H.M. Queen Victoria in 1894 will continue to be borne by that Division.

11. *Uniform.*—Consequent on amalgamation, the following alterations to Uniform have been approved by His Majesty The King:—

Cloth Tunic.—To be of Blue Cloth with Scarlet Facings, the details to be considered when full Ceremonial Dress is reintroduced.

The Detachment of the Royal Yacht to remain for the present in Scarlet Tunics, and the Divisional Headquarters Bands, i.e., the Chatham, Plymouth, and Deal Bands to be in Scarlet, and the Portsmouth Division (late R.M.A.) in Blue.

Cap Badges.—The Grenade and Bugle in the Cap Badges and elsewhere where worn, will be replaced by the "Lion and Crown."

The Cap and Helmet Badges of the Portsmouth Band will be those granted by His Majesty in 1911 to the R.M.A. Band, and the Prince of Wales' Feathers worn by the Band of the Portsmouth Division, R.M.L.I., in memory of the visit of His late Majesty to India in 1877, will be transferred to the Depot Band at Deal.

Trousers and Overalls.—The Scarlet Welt, as worn by Infantry, will be worn by the Corps generally (except Divisional Bands, who will continue to wear the present R.M.A. Pattern).

Collar Badges.—"Globe and Laurel" of present pattern to be worn by all ranks. Grenade abolished.

Buttons.—To be inscribed "Royal Marines." Present patterns abolished.

Shoulder Letters.—Letters "R.M." to be worn by all ranks. Present patterns abolished.

Shoulder Sashes.—Will be worn by all Sergeants.

Whistle Cords.—To be Blue.

Bugle Strings.—R.M.A. Pattern to be worn by all Buglers.

Mess Dress.—To be Scarlet Cloth of the pre-1920 Infantry Pattern, but Officers now posted to R.M.A. will have the option of wearing their present pattern R.M.A. Mess Jackets until they require replacement. Scarlet is retained for the Mess Jackets as it is the traditional colour of the Royal Marines.

Officers' Swords.—Infantry Pattern, except that Officers now in possession of Artillery Pattern will continue to wear them.

12. Badges, Scarlet Stripes on Trousers, Shoulder Letters and Whistle Cords are to be replaced by new pattern by 1st April, 1924. Red braid on the front of the Caps, now worn by Corporals and below, R.M.A., is to be removed.

13. The uniform of R.M. Band Service and R.M. Schoolmasters is not affected by these alterations.