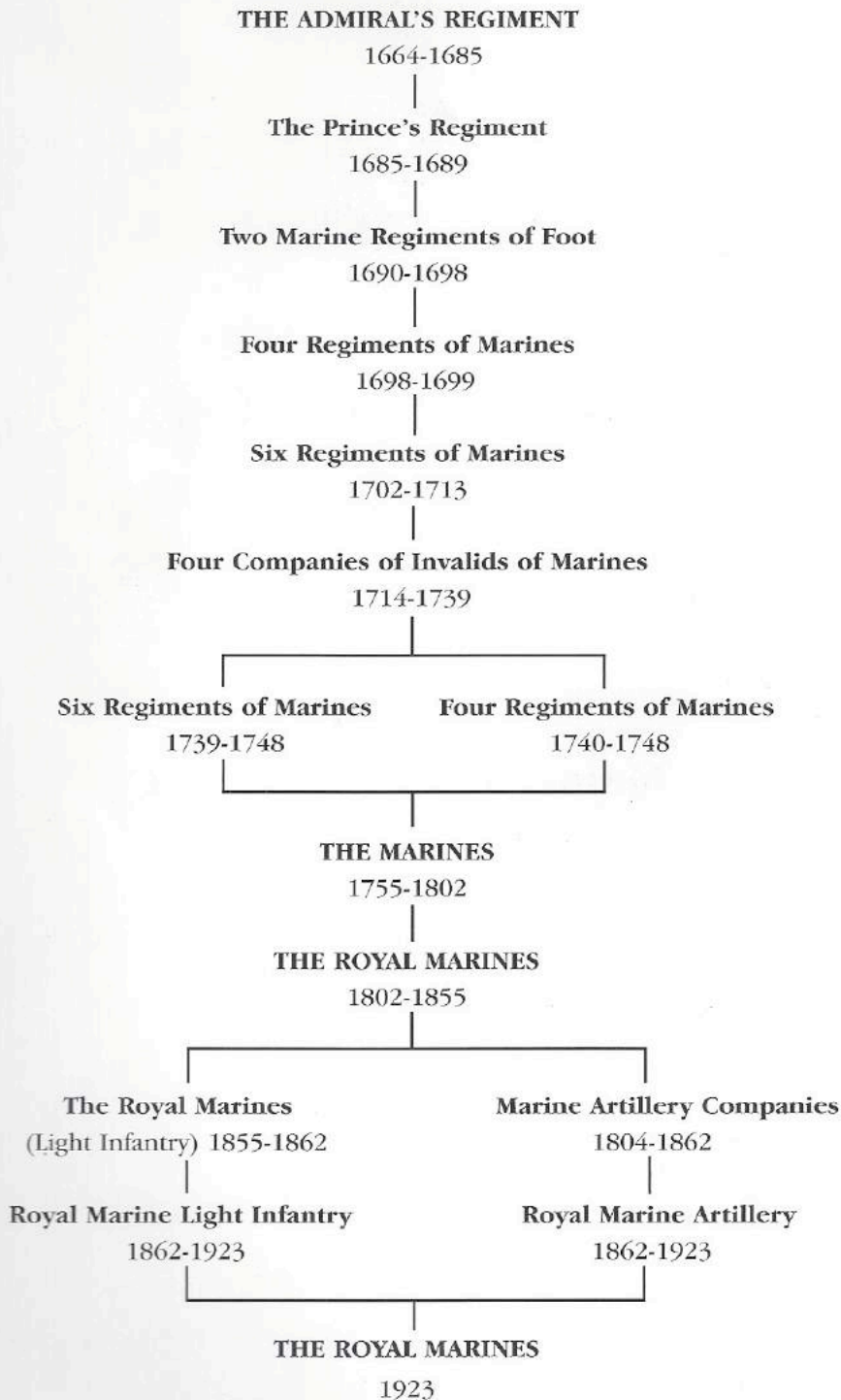


# Genealogical Tree of The Royal Marines



## Colour Sergeants

On 5th July 1813 the War Office approved of one Sergeant per Company being granted the paid rank of Colour Sergeant as an honour. The General Order also stated *"It is His Royal Highness's Pleasure that the duty of attending the Colours in the field shall be at all times performed by these Sergeants."* To a suggestion by the Commandant of Portsmouth Division on the 17 March 1814, that a Sergeant Burns should be so promoted for meritorious conduct, the Admiralty replied that these regulations did not apply to the Royal Marines. However on 22 August the rank was introduced into the Corps with 6d a day extra pay and 18 Sergeants were promoted at Chatham, 14 at Portsmouth, 15 at Plymouth and 12 at Woolwich. In the original Army General Order the distinguishing badge was described as *"the Honourable Badge of a Regimental Colour supported by two crossed swords"*.

A few days later however, a coloured drawing accompanying a letter from the Secretary of State showed the Regimental colour replaced by a Union Flag (the basis of a King's Colour). The first badge of rank for Colour Sergeants in the Royal Marines therefore was based on that of the army; a crown above a Union flag, on the staff below were two crossed swords over an anchor all set above a single gold and silver lace chevron. By 1858 the Union flag had become much larger with a gold wire globe and laurel above a fowl anchor mounted on it, but still with the crossed swords and the single chevron below and a crown above. Colour Sergeants of the RMA wore a similar badge but with the addition of a bursting grenade between the crossed swords and the chevron. It might seem strange that the Royal Marine Artillery had Colour Sergeants when, like the Royal Artillery, they did not have Colours<sup>6</sup>. However the RA also had Colour Sergeants, whilst the Cavalry and the Departmental Corps eventually had Staff Sergeants.

In 1868 the badge changed to the globe mounted over crossed Union 'Colours', with an anchor below and, in the case of the Light Infantry a bugle horn above, all surrounded by a laurel wreath and surmounted by a crown but still with the crossed swords and chevron below. At this change the RMA no longer had the crossed swords or the chevron, and the globe in the centre was replaced by crossed cannons. Until 1881 colour sergeants wore this badge on their right arm and three chevrons on their left. In that year the three chevrons were moved underneath the badge on the right arm.

The Colour Sergeant's special badge of rank was abolished in the army in 1915, although similar insignia was retained for the recruiting service. In the Royal Marines the badge returned after the First World War and, on the amalgamation of the RMA and RMLI in 1923, RM colour sergeants continued to wear a very similar badge; a globe mounted on crossed union flags, a large fowl anchor below, all surrounded by a laurel wreath and with a crown above. This ornate badge was of course only worn in full dress, the normal crown above three chevrons being worn in other orders of dress, so when full dress ceased to be worn at the start of the Second World War it was no longer seen. However in 1956 the badge was reintroduced for wear on No 1 tunics, but rather smaller in size.





1830



1814



1830 (Artillery Coys)



1860 (RMLI)



1925 (RM)



1902 (RMLI)



1860 (RMA)



1956



1902 (RMA)



# REGIMENTAL COLOURS SHOWING THE CYPHERS OF THE SOVEREIGN AT THE TIME OF PRESENTATION



a



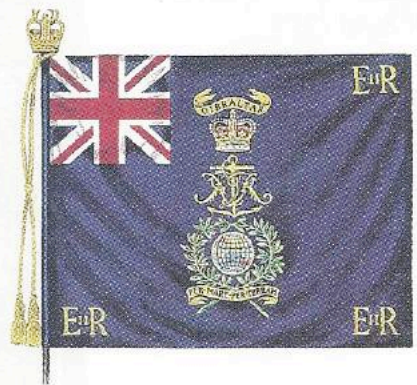
b



c



d



e

a. All Divisions 1894/96 - 'VRI'

b. Portsmouth Division 1931 - 'GRI'

c. RM Barracks Plymouth 1951 - 'GVR'

d. 40 Commando RM 1952 - 'EIR' and crown

e. RM Barracks Eastney 1956 - 'EIR'