



ROYAL MARINES MUSEUM

Marines Uniforms

The complexities of Marines uniforms from 1664 cannot be comprehensively covered in a brief guide-sheet such as this. The following selected books contain depictions, aspects and details of Marines uniforms at various periods.

- *Uniforms of the Royal Marines 1664 to the present day* by Charles C. Stadden and G & C Newark 1997
- *Britain's Sea Soldiers (Volumes I & II 1664-1913)* by Colonel Cyril Field RMLI Lyceum Press: Liverpool 1924
- *The Royal Marines 1914-19* by General Sir H.E. Blumberg KCB RM Swiss: Devonport 1927
- *The Royal Marine Artillery (Volumes I & II 1804-1923)* by Fraser & Carr-Laughton RUSI: London 1930
- *Shoulder-Belt Plates and Buttons* by Major H G Parkyn Gale & Polden: Aldershot 1956
- *Head-Dress Badges of the British Army (Volumes I & II)* by Arthur Kipling & Hugh King Muller: London 1979
- *Uniforms of the Seven Years War 1756-63* by John Mollo & Malcolm McGregor Blandford Press: Dorset 1977
- *The British Army in the American Revolution (1775-1783)* by Alan Kemp Almark: 1973
- *Dress & Insignia of the British Army in Australia & New Zealand 1770-1870* by Ronald Montague Library of Australian History: NSW 1981
- *Marine Badges & Insignia of the World* by Bert Cambell & Ron Reynolds Blandford Press: Dorset 1983
- *The Thin Red Line – Uniforms of the British Army between 1751 & 1914* by D S V & B K Fosten Windrow & Greene: London 1989

UNIFORMS AND ACCOUTREMENTS 1919 - 1997

Dress Regulations

Before 1966 these were published as *Royal Navy and Royal Marines Uniform Regulations*. These included, for officers, nine orders of dress, from No.1 Full Dress to No. 13 Lovat Shirt Sleeve Order, each order of dress being assigned a number for combinations of different items of dress. There were also nine orders for wear in hot climates including No.8W Tropical Dress. For other ranks there were 15 orders of dress, including No.12 Tropical combat Dress,¹ plus the snow warfare and various orders of dress for operations in other theatres.

RMA and RMLI

Details of these uniforms are given in earlier histories, although during World War I dress regulations had not been enforced, and both branches of the Corps did not revert to pre-1914 uniforms until the winter of 1918-19. the pre-1914 full dress, however, was only worn by the divisional Bands and by one, or possibly more, detachments in ships on a Royal Tour.² The RMA in 1921 adopted a cap badge with a small grenade above the globe and laurel for sergeants and lower ranks. This grenade snapped off easily, making the badge fragile, and in 1922 the RMA reverted to a simple grenade badge with small crossed guns set separately above a silver globe and 'gold' laurel leaves. RMA staff sergeants wore the same badge as junior ranks but from 1921 the grenade was worn separately in the way WO2s wore the Crown and Lion in the 1970s.

Headdress

The Wolseley pattern white helmet (see Fig 14) was reintroduced after World War I. Although not generally worn between 1939 and 1950 (from late 1940s for bands), it again became the ceremonial headdress and was worn in the 1990s.

The blue Broderick cap (introduced in 1903) continued to be worn in 1919 by ranks below Staff Sergeant, although the RMA corporals' and gunners red piping in front of the pre-1918 Broderick was no longer used. In 1927 a similar cap to the Broderick was introduced, but had no peak. The semicircle of red serge behind the cap badge was retained, as was the additional blue cloth trim in the front of caps. This trim had gold piping around its upper edge for senior NCOs. Officers and staff sergeants continued to wear a cap with a scarlet band and scarlet piping around the crown. Other ranks were issued from 1933 with a new pattern cap with a scarlet band (but no piping). White cap covers were worn on these various



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caps during the summer (May to September) in the UK and home Waters and in hot climates, except for some 18 months (30 April 1921 to 22 October 1922). During 1938 a cap with a white duck top (blancoed) was introduced for wear in hot climates, and this was considerably lighter than the normal cap. White cap covers continued to be worn in the UK and in UK-based ships until World War II. They were reintroduced after the war until replaced in 1956 by a white plastic-topped cap in one pattern for officers and one for other ranks.

The blue field service cap of 1897 — the ‘fore-and-aft’, often incorrectly called a forage cap — was worn by officers in mess dress, and particularly before World War II it was sometimes worn on board ship. In 1942 blue FS caps were issued for wear aboard ship, and withdrawn on disembarkation. A similar pattern of khaki cap was worn by all ranks after the introduction of battledress into the Corps in 1939; it was also worn by some recruits and others wearing khaki service dress, and was an optional item from 1948. Officer cadets in World War II wore a white cloth insert in the front of this cap and white ½-in bands on the shoulder straps of their battledress blouses, probationary cadets wore similar inserts and bands but in blue cloth. Blue field service caps could be worn when not on parade during World War II, but were an optional item a man might buy at his own expense.

The peaked khaki forage cap was worn with khaki service dress, the other ranks’ pattern of this cap being similar to that worn by Foot Guards, and had a small, soft ribbed peak. Officers continued to wear their pattern of this cap throughout world War II, although it was not worn on parade after the issue of blue berets. Other ranks in Provost Companies also wore forage caps with red covers on the crown in the same manner as the Army’s Military Police. But the khaki forage cap was not generally worn by other ranks after 1940.

The blue beret began to replace the khaki field service (fore-and-aft) cap late in 1943, and had been worn by all ranks of Royal Marines in Combined Operations from that summer. Although it was generally issued, it was not worn throughout the Corps until 1948. In 1995 it is only worn by young officers and recruits (including juniors) under training, for the green commando beret has been worn by all ranks passing their commando course since 1960. This green beret had previously been worn by all ranks in Army and RM commando units since its introduction late in 1942.³

The Wolseley helmet was worn between the World Wars in hot climates, as part of a man’s non-ceremonial dress, when the brass ball was replaced by a zinc top. In the Mediterranean it was worn with a khaki cover during field training. In World War II many Royal Marines in hot climates were issued with the khaki tropical helmet with a ribbon of Corps colours on the puggaree (left side), and khaki bush hats were also issued when appropriate.

Cap badges

Since 1923 the globe and laurel surmounted by the crown and lion (irreverently, the dog and basket) have been the Corps’ cap badge. This was of polished brass for Marines and corporals, but sergeants and above was gilt, needing no polishing. Quartermaster sergeants also had a gilt badge but the crown and lion were a separate part of it. Before World War II a bronze badge was worn by other ranks in khaki service dress, and in World War II a Bakelite cap badge was issued for economy. Officers’ cap badges are ‘split’ but have a silver globe, and although anodised were always polished, before the general introduction of anodised badges for all ranks. Since 1958 all cap badges have been anodised and in the field all ranks have worn a bronze cap badge since 1964.

A red patch — or flash — behind the badge on khaki caps had been worn from late 1941 by all ranks after completing their initial disciplinary training, and the patch was incorporated into the design of the blue beret. But since the training of all Marines as commandos, recruits are issued with the blue beret and flash on joining. The only other cap badges worn since 1923 were officers’ full dress collar badges, worn in World War II on green berets of officers of 41 RM Commando, and the bands’ badges described below.



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Blue Tunics

After the Amalgamation a new ceremonial dress was introduced (see Fig. 14), in 1925, but like all new uniforms this took time to become generally available; three years were allowed for its complete distribution, although it was not worn generally after 1939. The tunic featured several items with origins in the RMA and RMLI dress as shown in Fig. 14.

The pattern of both the officers' and other ranks' blue suit ('blues') has been unchanged since the Amalgamation; but between 1941 and 1947 other ranks were issued with utility style 'blues' of lower quality and with no lower pockets, pocket pleats and other features. These were the first blue tunics made by outside contractors in modern times, for the Divisional tailors had previously made all blue suits. The first deliveries were returned, however, because they were black not blue. The buttons on all 'blues' were brass with the 'foul anchor' embossed and polished, but the much prized sets of RMLI buttons of a brighter and softer brass were used by those who could acquire them. Anodised buttons were introduced (to save cleaning) from 1958, and as from 1974 a finer blue tweed cloth was introduced, though the pattern of tunic did not change and after World War II became the Marines' ceremonial tunic.

Before World War II officers wore a ceremonial blue tunic, but since then officers have worn for ceremonial the blue tunic which was their everyday parade dress of the 1930s. This is of the same pattern as the pre-World War II khaki service dress (KSD). During the war a utility KSD was worn which did not have 'pointed cuffs' or the fullness of material in pockets and pleats. Many 'HO' officers did not receive a kit allowance for 'blues' and were not required to wear them, but for those in ships' detachments the blue suit of prewar pattern continued to be worn during World War II.

Badges of Rank

These have followed army styles with chevrons, crowns, etc., but with some exceptions that include:

(a) Colonels Commandant before World War II wore, and senior officers — colonels and above — in 1990s wear, army style dress. however, since 1964 these senior officers have worn RM buttons, blue lanyards, and a unique Corps-pattern of mess dress.

(b) Royal Marine officers below the rank of colonel wear the letters RM below the stars and/or crowns on their shoulder straps except when in combat dress or mess kit. The letters 'RM' are replaced by the appropriate cipher for RM equerries to members of the Royal family.

(c) Special Duties (SD) Officers was a change of title, as before 1948 there were Warrant Officers and Commissioned Warrant Officers (see below). SD Officers wore similar badges of rank to general service officer.

(d) Sergeants on the staff (as opposed to staff sergeants, later QM Sgts) wore three inverted chevrons on the right cuff. The hospital sergeant who ran the infirmary wore a red cross on a white circle edged in red above his chevrons; the armourer sergeant similarly wore crossed hammer-and-pincers. Provost sergeants continue to wear inverted chevrons and leather sword belts.

(e) Colour Sergeants wore above their three gold chevrons in ceremonial dress of 1925–39 a large, gold-wire embroidered badge (globe over crossed union flags with crown above, foul anchor below, the whole surrounded by laurel leaves). A smaller version of this badge was reintroduced in 1956 for ceremonial 'blues'.

(f) Band masters from time to time also wore badges unique to RM bands.

(g) Quartermaster Sergeant Instructors of physical training, gunnery and infantry, the principal specialist qualifications before World War I, each had their SQ badges incorporated in the gold wire badge on their blue tunic from the late 1920s until the mid-1950s. (See also 'Cloth Insignia' below.)

(h) Warrant Officers wore 'WO' in a small laurel wreath on the shoulders from 1940 until the late 1940s, when this rank was replaced by Commissioned and Senior Commissioned Warrant Officers. The Commissioned WO wore a small star and the Senior Commissioned WO wore a 2nd lieutenant's single



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star (incorrectly called a 'pip'). On promotion to Lieutenant (Quartermaster) and more senior ranks they wore the same badges of rank as general service officers (two stars for lieutenants, three for captains and so on). About 1948 these WO's and CWO's as Commissioned Sergeants Major and Senior Commissioned Sergeants Major were known as Branch Officers. In 1957, when these commissioned WOs came on the SD officers' promotion list, the term Branch Officer was abolished. The classes of Warrant Officer in 1997, as WO I and WO II were distinguished by a crown in a laurel wreath worn on the bottom of the right sleeve by WO I's in combat dress and the Royal Coat of Arms in a laurel wreath worn by a WO I.

Cloth insignia

Examples of the shoulder flashes of RM units are given in Fig. 15; other formation signs were worn from time to time, although after May 1942 Royal Marines were not allowed to wear 'Army Area badges etc, and other Army distinctive badges (Signals, Artillery etc) ...' 'Y' Bty (MNBDO I) had worn the Polar Bear insignia of 49 Division while in Iceland with this division in 1941–2. 27 RM Signals Coy had worn the 2-in coloured strip the army used to distinguish different branches, changing from blue/white for signals to red/blue of artillery, as it came under different commands. When with Twenty-first Army Group, the Coy is reported to have worn — contrary to orders? — the Group's formation insignia. RM Armoured Support Group's personnel also wore artillery distinguishing marks (or shoulder 'bars'), as the formations which became the Group were formed from RM Division artillery units, which appear to have followed the 1942 permission for 31 RM Light Battery to wear a red and blue shoulder patch. Landing craft personnel wore the Combined Operations' insignia.

Specialist qualifications (SQ) badges are also shown in Fig. 15, but have been, and are, those currently worn by army and navy specialists, with a few exceptions, as explained in the caption. Since 1945 a great number of specialist qualifications have been introduced, and a system of stars and crowns incorporated into the SQ badges denote the wearer's degree of efficiency. These badges were worn on blues, battledress, khaki service dress and tropical rig before 1964, but since then have only been worn by RMs in Lovats. The position of these SQ badges has varied from time to time, and varied to distinguish specialists from specialist-instructors, in the position of the badge on the tunic sleeve.

Army-pattern badges for good conduct, World War II length of service and wound stripes were also worn by Marines. In the 1990s good conduct badges are awarded to RM other ranks at 4, 8 and 12 years' service with good conduct.

Lanyards

Officers of the RMA in khaki dress wore a blue silk shoulder lanyard for a whistle in the top left pocket, and RMLI one of Light Infantry green; after amalgamation the blue lanyard continued to be worn on the left shoulder in blues, KSD, battledress and in Lovats. When the rank of RSM was introduced in 1939, the RSMs also wore the blue lanyard, as they do in 1990.

Other ranks wore a plain cord knife-lanyard on the right shoulder when in marching order with khaki or blue suits until the late 1940s. This, unlike the blue lanyard with slip 'Turks head' slip knot, was similar to a naval lanyard and doubled to form the shoulder loop. Other ranks in Plymouth Barracks are known to have worn a white lanyard on the left shoulder, but no regulation has been traced which authorised these, and the practice had ceased by 1939. Since the 1930s by custom the King's Squad has worn a white naval-type lanyard on the left shoulder and two chin-straps, with one around the cap.

In World War II the 1st RM Battalion wore a white lanyard, and artillery men in the RM Division in 1940–3 wore a plaited knife lanyard (on the right shoulder), as worn by the Royal Artillery.

Unit lanyards are worn by all ranks in Commandos in Lovat Dress, and earlier when in KSD and khaki battle dress. These lanyards, originally naval lanyards dyed, are worn on the right shoulder, and since the mid-1950s have been single cotton braid lanyards with a 'Turks head' slip knot.



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The Commando lanyards were — and are for those not disbanded: dark blue for those in HQ Commando Forces and the Logistic Rgt; dark green for HQ 3 Cdo Bde; light blue 40 Cdo; old gold 41 Cdo; white 42 Cdo; scarlet 43 Cdo; scarlet 45 Cdo; old gold/scarlet Comacchio Coy/Grp; old gold/rifle green 539 Assault Sqn; and dark blue/light blue 847 naval Air Sqn.

Blue Suit Trousers

All officers below the rank of colonel before World War II wore 'overalls' — the tight fitting trousers with a scarlet welt down each side — when not on parade with troops, in what was undress order, and when a frock coat was worn. Since World War II field officers, adjutants and ADCs in ceremonial dress have worn 'overalls' and spurs. ('Overalls' have bands fitted under the leather Wellington boots with which they are worn.) Plain bottom trousers ('slacks'), are worn on parade by all officers. The scarlet 'stripes' are $\frac{1}{4}$ in wide but colonels and more senior officers have a wider stripe on their trousers.

Other ranks' blue trousers have been the same cloth as tunics, and have a $\frac{5}{16}$ th inch stripe down each side seam (in the utility suit this only ran to the lower edge of pockets). Blue serge trousers without a stripe were worn until 1964 with a blue tunic for parade drills, orderlies' duties and similar work, but retained only for PTIs from 1964.

Belts

Before 1939 a working belt was worn. This was in the Corps colours: four parts navy blue, one part old gold, one part Light Infantry green, one part Drummer red, and another four parts navy blue. It was replaced during World War II by a blue belt worn when in 'shirt sleeve order'. In mid-1950s a Corps pattern belt — a stable belt — in corps colours was an optional item of kit, which later became standard issue for wear in working dress and with appropriate dress in hot climates.

For ceremonial parade Marines wore a white web belt (in the current style of webbing equipment), and a blanched khaki web belt was worn with battledress on drill parades. At other times belts have been blanched white for drill parades, but after 1948 they were boot-polished black as 3 Commando Brigade had followed this practice, blacking being more suitable than blanco in hot climates. White belts, however, were retained for minor ceremonials in battledress, and in the 1990s commandos wear white plastic belts for parades. RSMs wear Sam Browne belts with an infantry sword, while QM Sergeants, Staff band Masters, Drum Majors, Bugle Majors and Provost Sergeants wear white buff or leather sword belts with appropriate dress.

Khaki and Lovat suits

All ranks wore army pattern khaki suits as issued from time to time, and as a general rule until 1964 Marines had two blue and one khaki suit; although this was varied from time to time and RMs joining the Brigade in the 1950s were issued with an additional battledress. In World War II many 'HO' Marines had only two khaki battle dresses — no blues — and Marines in some units equipped to army scales (as laid down in the appropriate G1098) had only one battledress and no blues.

On the 1 April 1964 Lovat suits were introduced, with the distinctive dark green infill in their khaki weave, and in the 1990s Marines have two suits of Lovats (with bronze RM buttons and badges, both in the pattern of 1923) and one of 'blues'. Lovat suits are unique to the Corps. They are worn as an alternative to 'blues' for certain ceremonial parades, by sentries and other duty men, and for walking out when 'ashore' on duty. Since 1969 a heavy woolen jersey has been worn as normal working dress, with badges of rank and a Royal Marines Commando shoulder flash.

Top Coats

Officers may wear a blue boat cape with crimson lining and reaching 2in above the knee; it is normally worn with mess dress. This cape has lion head fastenings with a chain. Army officers' pattern greatcoats



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are worn but officers may wear British warms of a light khaki colour with leather buttons, on occasions when wearing Lovats. Before Lovats were introduced, officers wore a military-style riding mackintosh with metal badges of rank and the letters 'RM' on detachable shoulder straps but since 1964 they have worn the general issue mackintosh (see below).

Since the Amalgamation the Marine's greatcoat has been double-breasted, with two rows each of four buttons and a large collar. NCOs' badges of rank are worn on the lower arm. In World War II army-pattern greatcoats were the general issue, and since 1968 RM greatcoats for all ranks have been held in central stores and only issued when required for ceremonial parades.

A blue mackintosh for RM other ranks was an optional item of clothing not worn on parades. It was often worn on shore leave after its introduction in 1921, but the practice of wearing these gradually died out after World War II when civilian dress could be worn for 'going ashore'. Two patterns of Lovat Macintosh have been issued since 1964, and are worn with anodised metal badges of rank for officers, or white embroidered NCOs' badges, on slides over shoulder straps.

Navy Blue Battledress

This was introduced in June 1942 and was of the same pattern as khaki battledresses, which had covered pocket buttons etc. Officers wore it with a blue lanyard, white shirt and collar and black tie; the shoulder title letters 'RM' were at first worn but from November 1943 these were not worn on this dress but woven arm badges 'ROYAL MARINES' (in scarlet on blue) were worn. NCOs' badges of rank were in red and their blue battledress was fastened at the neck, as were those of Marines. This was the dress of landing craft crews and of ships' detachments when not doing dirty jobs. It ceased to be manufactured in 1950 but for many years afterwards was worn for office work, often with trousers from 'blues'. Medal ribbons were not worn on this dress until after World War II.

Combat Dress 1980s and 1990s

The No. 11A Arctic combat dress had: a DPM cold weather cap had velcro fastenings on its crown to which the quilted cotton ear and neck flaps could be folded back, these flaps incorporated nylon fur and the cap had any badge of rank on its front; a DPM windproof jacket; lightweight green or DPM windproof trousers; combat shirt [khaki]; woollen heavy jersey; ski march boots; snow gaiters; ski march toe covers; inner woollen mittens; windproof/waterproof outer mittens. Also available were: a loose fitting two-piece snow suit in white nylon and worn over combat clothing; Du-liner Arctic overalls for technicians; and thermal overboots for sentries and others on static duties. Snow goggles were also available for ski patrols. (See BR81 Dress Regulations for Royal Marines.)

In 1991 a new Desert Lightweight Combat dress in DPM material of various shades of stone and brown was first worn for operation 'Haven'. But to avoid the need to issue special clothing when men were to operate in different theatres in 1995, a new uniform was introduced as Combat Soldier 1995 (CS95). The basic uniform consisted of a lightweight shirt (worn outside the trousers) and trousers, both of cotton/polyester DPM material, under which a cotton T-shirt could be worn or thermal underwear including 'Long Johns' in cold weather climates. A shirt with a zip fastener at the front, in the Norwegian army style with a roll-collar might be worn under the combat shirt. A wind-proof thigh length gaberdine smock in DPM cotton was worn in moderately cold weather, and a fleece lined jacket was available for cold weather. This jacket had a zip fastening, a woollen collar and elastic cuffs, normally worn under the smock. This clothing could be covered by waterproof over-garments of a smock and trousers. These were in a material which allowed perspiration to evaporate to its outside, but prevented water passing through this material from the outside. This Moisture Vapour Permeable material (MVP) was used for other linings. The principle of which this clothing was designed relates to the layers of dress which retain air as an insulator between layers.



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The combat boots worn with CS95 dress had shock absorbing soles and a speed-loop lacing system with an eyelet. There was also a Pro-boot which was Goretex-lined (an MVP material) for wear in severe weather. Gaiters in heavy duty nylon or MVP material were worn for added protection against water seeping into boots. The gaiters covered the whole of the upper boot with a strap under the instep and reached to just below the knee.

Gloves issued with CS95 had a pair of nylon inner gloves with rubber grips on the palms, and leather outer gloves with MVP linings. The Mark 6 GS Combat helmet could be worn with a white or a DPM cover, and was made of a bullet-resistant plastic. NBC suits were worn at times when chemical warfare attacks seemed likely. These protective smocks and trousers had patches that could detect chemical vapours, they were worn with black rubber overboots and rubber gloves as well as a respirator.

Mess Dress

RMA officers wore a dark blue mess dress which after World War I replaced the high-necked, ornate dark blue dress. But after Amalgamation the RMLI scarlet mess jacket, blue waistcoat and blue trousers with red welts were adopted as the mess dress for officers of the Corps. This is the dress worn in the 1990s, usually with a soft white shirt and black tie, although stiff shirts with winged collars were always worn until the late 1960s and are still worn in ball dress and on occasions of particular formality in the 1990s.

Senior NCOs have worn a mess dress as an optional item of clothing since the 1950s, when it was the same pattern as the officers' white tropical mess dress. But in the 1960s the officers' pattern with a scarlet mess jacket was adopted, with a scarlet cummerbund in place of the waistcoat and miniature gold wire badges of rank on the right sleeve only.

Other Clothing

A blue canvas working dress was worn from about 1925 until World War II, when the army denim suit (of a battledress pattern) became the dress for fatigues and was on occasion worn in action. 'No.8s' of dark blue trousers and a light blue shirt were worn by detachments as 'action working dress' in the 1980s and 1990s but in World War II boiler suits were worn under anti-flash gear at sea. On landing craft in those years 'sea rig' consisted of any comfortable combination of polo-necked jerseys, slacks and fleece jackets under oilskins or a duffle coat (sea boots or puttees were not worn, as a man's boots or trousers filled with water, making him heavy to pull from the sea if he fell overboard). Lightweight nylon trousers (latterly with stay-pressed creases and zip fly) replaced denims in the mid-1960s and were worn with woollen pullovers on occasions. But due to the fire risks with nylon, these trousers were not worn where there was any danger of petrol bombs or similar fire hazards.

Tropical dress has followed army patterns, but there were differences in material, and in style for RM other ranks. Since the late 1960s the ceremonial drill tunic has been replaced by an open-necked tunic, not unlike a bush shirt, and worn with a white helmet on ceremonial occasions in hot climates. Several patterns of olive green walking-out dress with a bush shirt, shorts or trousers, have been worn in the Far East since the 1950s.

The Combat Dress (see above) in the 1990s could be supplemented by various items privately purchased, giving rise to the Army's allusion to 'Millett's Marines'. Milletts were a chain of shops selling camping equipment and clothing in the second half of the 20th century.

Webbing and Similar Equipment

This has followed army patterns for field service, but Marines were also issued with hammocks and other items of naval kit — oilskin, duffle coats, etc. in World War II — when required. As a result even a small Marine detachment of 14 men travelling by rail could be mistaken for the baggage party of an army platoon, for the Marines had seagoing kit bags, army kitbags (with their tropical suits, etc.) and hammocks, taking up considerable space in a luggage van.



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By 1995 Marines used the 1990 Pattern of Personal Load Carrying Equipment (90 PLCE) of heavy duty nylon, with black plastic quick-release buckles. A nylon mesh yoke fastened to the back of the waist belt, had wide padded straps which stretched over the shoulders and were attached to two narrower adjustable straps which came up from the two ammunition pouches, one each side of the wearer's chest and attached to the belt. Two further ammunition pouches could be fastened to the belt, as could a bayonet frog, an entrenching tool, a water bottle and a respirator. Two adjustable side straps could be worn for added stability. This PLCE could be worn in three configurations: Assault Order when the weight was kept to a minimum consistent with the projected battle; Patrol Order which allowed for rations to be carried and other necessities for prolonged time in the field; and Marching Order when a Bergen might be carried. This Bergen rucksack usually carried spare clothing, a tent, climbing equipment, rations, a stove, possibly ammunition reserves, and an appropriate shovel. (White camouflage could be added using a cover with elasticated sides.)

Kit Upkeep Allowance (KUA) and its replacement

After World War I a Marine's kit was replaced according to expected 'life' of each item; but if a man did not need a new suit of blues, for example, he could draw a cash sum approximately equal to its cost. Many men, however, preferred to draw the 'replacement' item even though they did not need it, as in this way they built up a wardrobe, so to speak, of clothing and spare kit. During World War II there was a system of survey, when after fair wear and tear an item would be replaced on the basis of new for old without charge. This system was changed, although some items continued to be issued for replacement on survey until the early 1950s, but from 1948 a Kit Upkeep Allowance was paid at set rates per annum for all other ranks, and men had to buy new suits out of this, shirts, vests and so on as required. In addition to basic kit, Marines from time to time have received items — such as combat clothing — on loan, and this issue is known as 'loan clothing'. From the Spring of 1992 KUA was replaced by a form of survey not unlike that available in World War II.

Band Uniforms

These are a study in complexity and minor variations beyond the scope of a general history, but the salient features were the following:

Ceremonial Dress. The RMA Band wore a navy blue hussar-type tunic with horizontal gold-braided bars, and gold-braided collars, cuffs and back panel seams. Their cap badge was different to that worn by RMLI bands. After the Amalgamation, bands continued to wear their original uniforms until 1925, when new ceremonial dress was introduced for Divisional Bands. After World War II they wore the general service ceremonial dress of 1925. (See phot XX, the ceremonial dress of musicians in the 1990s.)

Broad red trouser strips from 1925 were the traditional mark of Divisional bandsmen, until the formation of the new Band Service in 1950. Since 1951 all RM musicians have worn trousers with the broad stripe in 'blues' and ceremonial dress. Buglers, however, continue to wear the thin stripe.

Band Service pre-1950 wore 'blues' (with thin red trouser stripes) of general service Marines.

Cap badges and helmet plates have incorporated different features for divisional bands from time to time. But in 1980 the cap badge of other ranks in C-in-C Naval Home Command's band (Portsmouth) was a gilt grenade on which was mounted the cipher GRV and a crown, both in silver, surrounded by a gilt laurel wreath. The silver cipher EIR/PP with a crown was worn separately above this cap badge. The helmet plate was of standard RM design with the ciphers GRV below the globe and EIR/PP above it, and incorporated into the full design of the helmet plate. The Commando Forces Band (Plymouth) other ranks wear a cap badge with a silver Prince of Wales plume between the globe and the lion and crown



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This plume was worn in a similar position on their helmet plates. The directors of both these bands wear helmet plates in the special style of their musicians. These unique badge features were granted to these bands' predecessors at different times for services to the royal family. However, the white rose, which was a feature of Chatham Division Band's badge, had not been incorporated into any badge of a band in 1980.

Distinctive badges included the lyre cap badge and collar badge. The latter were worn from 1906 until 1951 by Band Service musicians, who also wore the lyre cap badge until 1946. Both badges were replaced by general service globe and laurel style badges on the respective dates, although juniors continue to wear lyre collar badges. The bandsman's 'RMB' on his shoulder straps was replaced in 1946 with the general service 'RM'. Other ranks of the Portsmouth Band wore on the right shoulder a blue flash with 'Royal Yacht' surmounted by a crown, both in gold. *Badges of rank.* There have been a number of changes in the style of these, and until 1968 band masters of Portsmouth, Plymouth and Deal bands wore three inverted chevrons surmounted by an academy-style lyre, on the right cuff of all uniforms; the drum and bugle majors wore four similar chevrons surmounted by a drum and bugle. These chevrons were in gold on ceremonial and best blue uniforms, and in red on working dress. Staff band masters from 1963 to 1972 wore the gold embroidered badge of a lyre enclosed in a laurel leaf, surmounted by a crown, on the right cuff. In 1972 the rank of WO2 (Band Master) replaced staff band masters, who since that date have worn the Corps' WO2 badges of rank. A WO1 (Band Master) has worn the badge of the Royal arms on the right cuff. Band C/Sgts, sergeants and corporals have worn normal badges of rank since 1968.

Miscellaneous. In 1921 'garter blue' ceremonial uniforms with light blue collar and trouser stripes was briefly issued to one or two bands. After world War II the band service was reissued with white helmets and buff equipment. Since 1965 musicians have worn a ceremonial order of dress in hot climates. This consists of a white drill tunic, blue trousers with broad red stripe, and a white helmet. However, the Royal Yacht Band continued to wear an all white tropical dress; its bandsmen also wore the pre-1939 Divisional Band's ceremonial tunic on other occasions when embarked.

In 1966 the senior NCOs began to wear scarlet mess jackets when performing as leaders of an orchestra or conducting small dance bands. Band orders of dress also included Lovats; and the mess 'kit' with a stiff shirt for officers conducting orchestras, when musicians wear No.1 blue uniforms (1925-style) with a cloth belt and no cap.

Green beret. This was worn by the band of 3 Commando Brigade when in battledress, but band ranks of the 1990s wear their white-topped caps in all but ceremonial orders of dress, including dress with woollen pullovers.