



Everywhere. That right and glory leads

There have been gunners ever since the invention of guns in the 13th century and the first official gunners were appointed in 1485, as part of what became the Board of Ordnance. Throughout the next 400 years the forts around Britain had master gunners permanently appointed by the Board of Ordnance. Trains of artillery were formed for campaigning both at home and abroad, with guns and the men to serve them.

1716 to 1800

In 1716, under a Royal Warrant, two companies of artillery, each of 100 men, were formed at the Woolwich Warren (later the Royal Arsenal) to ensure that a regular force of gunners was available when needed. Woolwich has been the spiritual home of the 'Gunners' ever since that time, although the Regiment had moved to its famous barracks on Woolwich Common by 1805.

The Regiment expanded rapidly in the 18th century and saw service in every campaign and every garrison world-wide. In 1793, the Royal Horse Artillery was formed to provide greater mobility in the field, and soon became associated with the role of supporting cavalry. The RHA performed so well that it became a corps d'elite within the Regiment.

The 19th century

The 19th century saw the Regiment heavily engaged in the Crimean War and the South African War. Throughout the century, it was campaigning in India alongside the separate artilleries of the East India Company. This led to their amalgamation with the British Army after the Indian Mutiny, bringing some famous batteries into the Regiment.

The 20th century

The science of artillery grew rapidly under the pressure of the Industrial Revolution and by the end of the 19th century, the need for indirect fire brought major changes. Guns became ever more powerful, firing more efficient munitions to longer ranges with increased accuracy and greater speed. The Great War of 1914-18 was to prove an artillery war, and the number of gunners increased dramatically, serving 6,655 guns by the end of the war, with anti-aircraft (AA) guns joining in against the new threat from the air.

The inter-war years provided active service on the fringes of the Empire, but the 1930s saw the Regiment once again arming for war. Full mechanisation now replaced the horses which had served the Regiment for so long. In the war which ensued, the Regiment again provided firepower in every theatre, on land, at sea in the Maritime Artillery, and in the air with Air Observation Posts. Gunners manned huge numbers of AA guns both in the field and in the home base. Many of the AA Regiments were formed from Territorial Army units. Most of the Light AA gunners began the war as infantrymen.

Despite the reduction of the Army in the post-war years, the Regiment has been armed with some of the most potent, long-ranged weapons it has ever manned. Today it uses the wide span of technology of all the Arms, with virtually no branch of military science unexplored.

But the Regiment's history is the foundation stone on which it rests. For over 280 years of unbroken service since 1716, and reaching back a further 400 years to the first bombard, artillerymen have provided the Army with the firepower it has needed in Defence and attack. In 1833, King William IV recognised that to continue granting Battle Honours to the Regiment would result in an excessive list, and granted instead a single Battle Honour, the motto Ubique (Everywhere), with an accompanying motto Quo Fas Et Gloria Ducunt (Whither Right and Glory Lead).

Today, the Royal Regiment of Artillery forms a powerful and complex branch of the Army. It is the only section of the Army which has employed Nuclear weapons, and during the Cold War formed one of the premier deterrents to a Soviet Armoured advance through Central Europe. US and British Lance missiles would have almost certainly been used to even the odds, the far-outnumbered NATO Armoured forces would have had to face.

Indirect fire forms the Artillery's second role, providing a depth of fire designed to disrupt, delay and destroy enemy forces before they can come into contact with friendly forces. And in the third role, defends the mobile Army from air attack. Although it did have the role of Anti-tank Swingfire operation for a time, that role has been absorbed by the Royal Armoured Corps.

The Royal Regiment of Artillery has operated in its existence everything from light cannon, to huge siege pieces, through to the end of the Cold War and Nuclear Weapons, and now onto the realm of smart munitions and the MLRS. Today the Royal Regiment of Artillery is combined with the Royal Horse Artillery to form the Royal Artillery.

Events from the History of the Royal Regiment of Artillery

- 1346 - Battle of Crécy. First recorded use of cannon.
- 1544 - Term "Train of Artillery" noted for the first time.
- 1678 - Appointment of Master Gunner of Whitehall and St James's park instituted.
- 1716 - First two Companies of Artillery formed by Royal Warrant at Woolwich.
- 1720 - Title 'Royal Artillery' first used.
- 1722 - Royal Regiment of Artillery of four Companies formed.
- 1741 - Royal Military Academy formed in Royal Arsenal at Woolwich.
- 1748 - Presidential Artilleries of Bengal, Madras and Bombay formed.
- 1756 - Royal Irish Regiment of Artillery formed.
- 1762 - RA Band formed in Minden (oldest British orchestra).
- 1782 - RA moved to current RA Barracks (Front Parade) on Woolwich Common.
- 1793 - First Troop of Royal Horse Artillery Formed.
- 1801 - Royal Irish Regiment of Artillery incorporated into the Royal Artillery.
- 1805 - Royal Military Academy moved to Woolwich Common for RA and RE Officers.
- 1819 - Rotunda given by Prince Regent to celebrate end of the Napoleonic Wars. - First military museum and training centre.
- 1832 - Regimental Mottoes granted.
- 1855 - Control of the Royal Artillery was transferred from the Board of Ordnance to the War Department.
- 1859 - School of Gunnery established at Shoeburyness, Essex.
- 1862 - Presidential Artilleries of Bengal, Madras and Bombay transferred to the Royal Artillery.
- 1920 - Rank of Bombardier instituted in the Royal Artillery.
- 1924 - The Royal Regiment once more became one Regiment.
- 1947 - The Riding Troop RHA was renamed The King's Troop RHA.
- 1951 - The appointment of Colonel-in-Chief became Captain General.

The Royal Regiment of Artillery

When guns were needed to serve at home or abroad, a train of artillery had to be authorized by a royal warrant, and it was disbanded again on the cessation of hostilities. This system led to much confusion and delay, and in the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715 it took so long to mobilize a train that the rebellion was over before the guns were ready.

It was then decided to organize a permanent force of artillery, and so on the 26th May 1716 two companies of artillery were created by royal warrant of King George I and were formed at Woolwich. Six years later on 1st April 1722 these two companies were grouped together with companies at Gibraltar and Minorca to form the Royal Regiment of Artillery, Colonel Albert Bogard being appointed as its first Colonel.

During the eighteenth century the Regiment continued to grow and by 1757 there were 24 companies apart from the Cadet Company formed in 1741. They were divided into two battalions of 12 companies each, with appropriate staffs. In 1771 there were four battalions consisting of eight companies and an additional two Invalid companies each, the latter being raised for garrison duties in order to free other companies for active service overseas.

Civilian wagons and horses were still being hired to move the guns and it was only in 1794 that the 'Corps of Captains Commissaries and Drivers' was formed to provide drivers and teams for the field guns. (The RHA formed in 1793 already had its own horses and teams for each troop). In 1801 this Corps was replaced by a similar organisation called the Corps of Gunner Drivers. This was also unsatisfactory, and in 1806 its title was changed to the Royal Artillery Drivers. Finally in 1822 this Corps (already greatly reduced in establishment since 1815) was disbanded and recruits were enlisted as 'Gunner and Driver'. This continued until after 1918 when enlistments were made as Gunner only.

In 1833 King William IV granted the Regiment the privilege of bearing the Royal Arms over a gun with the Motto UBIQUE (Everywhere), followed by QUO FAS ET GLORIA DUCUNT (Whither right and glory lead). In 1855 the Board of Ordnance was abolished, and the Royal Artillery, together with the Royal Engineers, came under the Commander-in-Chief and the War Office like the rest of the Army.

In 1859 the companies ceased to be organised into battalions, and were brigaded instead, at the same time being referred to as batteries instead of companies. In 1861 after the Indian Mutiny the Royal Artillery received the addition of 21 troops of Horse Artillery and 48 batteries from the three Indian Presidencies, and so now comprised 29 RHA batteries, 73 field batteries, and 88 garrison batteries.

On 1st July 1899 the Royal Artillery was divided into two distinct branches – mounted and dismounted. A royal warrant established the Royal Garrison Artillery as a separate Corps from Royal Horse Artillery and Royal Field Artillery, and decided that it was to man the Coast Defence Units, the Mountain Batteries, and the Heavy and Siege batteries. However, this decision was reversed in 1924 and both branches were united into a single Corps – The Royal Artillery.

In 1938 the decision was taken to mechanise the Horse and Field Artillery, and to adopt a new organisation for these units, and for the medium artillery. In place of 'brigade' the term 'regiment' was substituted.

On 1st April 1947 all batteries except RHA were placed on a single roll. Batteries were numbered on this roll throughout the whole regiment, so that there was only one battery bearing any particular number.

Changes after the second World War comprised the abolition of Anti-Tank Artillery, and in the middle of the 1950s the abolition of the Anti-Aircraft Command and the entire Coast Artillery organisation.

In 1993 after the Strategic Defence Review the Royal Artillery was cut down to 17 Full Time Regiments (Inc 4 RHA) and 7 Territorial Regiment.

The Royal Horse Artillery

Until the end of the 18th century gunners had to walk beside their guns, which meant that movement was slow. On many occasions the officers (who were mounted) had to manhandle the guns into action before their men arrived.

The solution was obvious and in January 1793 two troops of Horse Artillery were raised, differing from field units in that all personnel were mounted. Two more troops were formed in November 1793, and each troop had six 6-pounder guns with 45 drivers and 186 horses on their establishment, a self-contained mobile fighting unit of artillery had at last come into existence. The superior organisation of the RHA troops enabled them to develop from the first a very high standard of discipline and efficiency, which has never been allowed to weaken.

After Waterloo, seven troops of RHA were disbanded between 1816 and 1819 (including 2nd Rocket Troop) and the others were reduced to a skeleton establishment, barely sufficient to man two guns apiece. Nevertheless the corps survived, and after the Crimean War the Royal Horse Artillery was formed into a Horse Brigade. In 1861 the Horse Artillery batteries from the Indian establishment increased the strength by four brigades, making a total of five. In 1871, under the stimulus of the Franco-Prussian War, a further reorganisation took place, whereby one RHA battery was added to the Regiment, making a total of 31 batteries in the RHA. Six years later, however the RHA was again reorganised, this time into three brigades (10 batteries and one Depot Battery to each brigade). In 1882 the brigades were reduced to two (each of 13 batteries) and a depot (a reduction of 5 batteries). Following the outbreak of the South African War in 1900 there was an increase of 7 batteries, and during the 1st World War the Regiment expanded to 50 RHA batteries. But the end of the war brought the inevitable reductions, and by 1936 the strength was 3 brigades and five unbrigaded batteries, a total of 14 batteries. By 1940 the batteries were mechanised, except for a ceremonial RHA Troop in London (The Riding Troop).

In 1947 King George VI inspected the Riding Troop (which had been formed for ceremonial duties) at St. John's Wood. He created history by erasing the title of the troop and inserting the words 'The King's Troop' a title which Queen Elizabeth II was pleased to leave unchanged.

In 1959 there were five RHA Regiments with a total of 15 batteries and the King's Troop making the sixteenth. But by 1969 further reductions had taken place and the strength now comprises:

The King's Troop RHA
1st Regiment RHA
3rd Regiment RHA
7th Parachute Regiment RHA

The Cap Badge

In 1833 King William IV realised that if the artillery kept receiving battle honours then there would be too many, so instead granted a single battle honour, the motto *Ubique=everywhere* accompanied with the motto *Quo Fas Et Gloria Ducunt = "Whither right and glory lead"*.

The gun depicted on the cap badge is a 9pdr Rifled Muzzle Loader of about 1871, the rammer, which would be used to ram the charge down the barrel is also seen propped up against the left hand side of the gun.

The Colours

The Colours represent pride in the Regiment, so the guns are protected and retained at all costs. If the situation demands that they are left behind they must be disabled or destroyed.

Gun Salutes

Despite prior lengthy investigations, a definitive explanation of the form of the salutes remains elusive.

Even as early as the 18th century the authorities were at a loss for an explanation. In 1630 an enquiry held by DG and DAGRA at the War Office failed to show the reasons for different

number of guns fired as Royal Salutes, and stated '.... that there is no known principle on which the salutes vary'.

That the salute is a mark of respect is not in doubt. One explanation put forward by the Admiralty was that when a Man of War was visiting a foreign port, it would discharge all its guns (charges only) to show that its guns were empty and indicate friendly intentions. The ship's company would not have enough time to reload the cannons before coming into the range of the shore batteries.

We are not sure why 21 guns should be fired. Once again an explanation put forward by the War Office is that it is the next odd number after 19, which is the number of salutes fired at Field Marshal's/Admiral's funerals. Although again there is no clear evidence to support this.

Forty-one appears to be the number fired exclusively in St James's Park (and now at Hyde Park) and at the Tower of London. (Though the latter is also allowed to discharge a 62-gun salute). Whereas all other gun salutes are subject to King's/Queen's Regulations, the Tower of London has its own regulations on this matter.

One suggestion for the firing of 41 guns at St James's Park was 21 for Royalty and 20 for the Duke of Westminster: however, this idea was usually rejected by the appropriate authorities as unrealistic. One of our Civil Service forebears also put forward the reason for the 62-gun salute as 21 for Royalty, 20 for the City of London and 20 for the Tower Hamlets. Obviously he did not get his appointment on the strength of his mathematics.

Royal Gun Salutes are fired in London by the **King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery** in Hyde Park at 1200 hours (41-gun Royal Salute) and by the **Honourable Artillery Company** at the Tower of London at 1300 hours (62-gun Royal Salute), on the following dates and occasions:

6 February	- Accession Day
21 April	- Birthday of HM The Queen
2 June	- Coronation Day
10 June	- Birthday of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh
4 August	- Birthday of HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

If any of the above occasions fall on a Sunday the Royal Salutes will be fired on the following day as no Royal Gun Salutes are fired on Sundays.

Other events where Gun Salutes take place are:

June: Official Birthday of HM The Queen.

A 41-gun Royal Salute will take place in Green Park at 1100 hours and 62-gun Royal Salute at the Tower of London at 1300 hours.

April, July, November: State Visits

For all London state visits, a 41-gun Royal Salute will take place in Green Park and a 41-gun Royal Salute at the Tower of London. If the state visit is held in Windsor a 21-gun Royal Salute will be fired in the Home Park Windsor and a 41-gun Royal Salute at the Tower of London.

November: State Opening of Parliament.

A 41-gun Royal Salute will be fired in Green Park at 1108 hours and a 41-gun Royal Salute at the Tower of London at 1200 hours.

November: Remembrance Sunday.

2-gun Salute will be fired on Horse Guards Parade (one at the start of the 2 minutes silence and one at the end).

The Legend of Saint Barbara (The Patron Saint Of Artillerymen)

According to legend, Saint Barbara was the extremely beautiful daughter of a wealthy heathen named Dioscorus, who lived near Nicomedia in Asia Minor. Because of her singular beauty and fearful that she be demanded in marriage and taken away from him, he jealously shut her up in a tower to protect her from the outside world.

Shortly before embarking on a journey, he commissioned a sumptuous bathhouse to be built for her, approving the design before he departed. Barbara had heard of the teachings of Christ, and while her father was gone spent much time in contemplation. From the windows of her tower she looked out upon the surrounding countryside and marvelled at the growing things; the trees, the animals and the people. She decided that all these must be part of a master plan, and that the idols of wood and stone worshipped by her parents must be condemned as false.

Gradually she came to accept the Christian faith. As her belief became firm, she directed that the builders redesign the bathhouse her father had planned, adding another window so that the three windows might symbolize the Holy Trinity. When her father returned, he was enraged at the changes and infuriated when Barbara acknowledged that she was a Christian. He dragged her before the prefect of the province, who decreed that she be tortured and put to death by beheading. Dioscorus himself carried out the death sentence. On his way home he was struck by lightning and his body consumed.

Saint Barbara lived and died about the year 300 A.D. She was venerated as early as the seventh century. The legend of the lightning bolt which struck down her persecutor caused her to be regarded as the patron saint in time of danger from thunderstorms, fires and sudden death.

When gunpowder made its appearance in the Western world, Saint Barbara was invoked for aid against accidents resulting from explosions - since some of the earlier artillery pieces often blew up instead of firing their projectile, Saint Barbara became the patroness of the artillerymen.

Saint Barbara is usually represented standing by a tower with three windows, carrying the palm of a martyr in her hand. Often, too, she holds a chalice and a sacramental wafer and sometimes cannon are displayed near her. The red zigzag flash against a navy ground on the Gunner tie serves as a reminder. Her feast day in the Orthodox calendar is 4th December and in the Gregorian calendar 16th December.