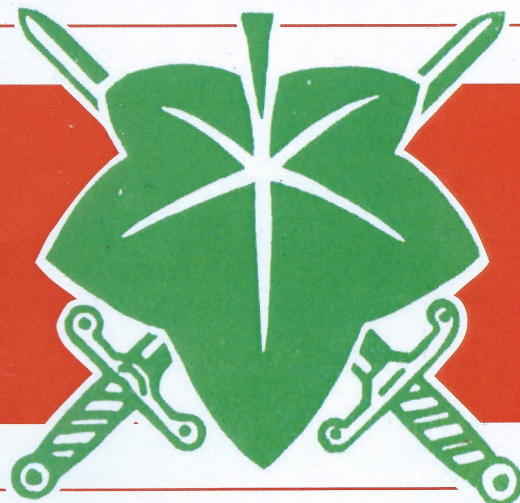


THE FORMATION SIGN

JOURNAL OF THE MILITARY HERALDRY SOCIETY



A Considerable Part of an Armoured Unit



In mid-1953 the REME's Corps Committee announced that it had no objection to REME personnel attached to other units or serving in Light Aid Detachments wearing their parent's unit headdress, shoulder titles or 'similar approved additional embellishments' – provided the Corps cap badge and embroidered arm titles were worn. Requests for such distinctions were to be submitted to the War Office by the Regiment or Corps with which attached personnel served. The resulting requests – service dress caps for REME serving with the Guards Brigade Depot and 4th Guards Brigade, brass shoulder titles for those with the 15th/19th Hussars and the regimental shoulder flash of 1st Royal Tank Regiment – caused that December's War Office Dress Committee meeting to refuse all the requests received and ask the REME to withdraw the Corps Instruction which had announced the policy.

When it next met the Director of Military Engineering asked the Committee to reconsider the matter; such requests he said were a response to enquiries from Commanding Officers regarding LADs wearing their embellishments and were intended to suggest that REME would support applications made by the COs of parent units. He pointed out that cavalry regiment COs felt strongly that REME attached should be permitted to wear the brass shoulder titles of the parent units and the REME designation as REME formed a considerable part

of an armoured unit. He was supported by the Director, Royal Armoured Corps (DRAC) who confirmed that REME attached to most cavalry regiments already wore the flashes or brass titles of the parent unit and the Chairman suggested that the claims of other attached personnel such as Signals and ACC should be considered. The Committee agreed that they could not approve a change of headdress, but would consider applications for regimental designations, lanyards, flashes or arm badges. The Directors of supporting Arms and Corps whose personnel were largely attached to other regiments were asked to give their views on the proposal.

At its April 1954 meeting only the Director of Infantry and DRAC were in favour of their attached REME personnel wearing the parent regiment's dress distinctions. The Committee, persuaded by DME's argument that approving such requests would do no harm provided they came from the parent unit and not the REME, agreed that attached personnel could wear any one of the following distinctions; the regimental arm or shoulder flash, the lanyard or the collar badges. The battle dress above shows that 4th Royal Tank Regiment serving in BAOR with 7th Armoured Division ignored the restriction and allowed its REME LAD soldiers to wear both regimental collar badge and its blue regimental flash.

That year's December meeting approved collar badges for those attached to the 3rd Carabineers, 8th Hussars, and lanyards for regiments including the 4th Hussars, but turned down two requests for brass shoulder titles, a ruling several cavalry regiments ignored by allowing REME personnel to wear them anyway. In the October 1992 Formation Sign, the late **Phil Buss**, a former RAEC 'schoolie', recorded seeing brass cavalry titles on the shoulder straps of RAEC attached to cavalry regiments and an RAEC Sergeant serving with the 9th Lancers wearing that regiment's twin red and yellow cloth strips below his RAEC title.