

# THE FORMATION SIGN

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## Long to Reign Over Us



With very few of our members old enough to have memories of King George VI, most of us will have grown up with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II as our Sovereign.

The Queen's many military connections began on her sixteenth Birthday when her father appointed her Colonel-in-Chief of the Grenadier Guards, their full dress uniform shown here for the Sovereign's Birthday Parade which she first attended as Queen in 1952. Three years after becoming the Grenadier's Colonel, in February 1945 the Princess, enlisting as Elizabeth Windsor, joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service, trained as a Driver and Mechanic and reached the rank of Junior Commander. Appointed Colonel-in-Chief of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders on her 21st Birthday, Her Majesty eventually held more than fifty ranks and appointments and was Colonel of sixteen British regiments and Corps.

As the British Empire became the Commonwealth the Soldiers of The Queen – until 1962, many of them national Servicemen – served in action or as garrison troops around the world - in Aden, Afghanistan, Bermuda, Borneo, Bosnia, Brunei, Canada, The Caribbean, Cyprus, Egypt, The Falklands, Germany, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Korea, Kosovo, Libya, Malaya, Malta, Northern Ireland, Singapore and West Africa.

On 20th February 1953 the War Office Dress Committee approved the 'new St Edward's crown rank badge' which was to be adopted following the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II on 2nd June 1953. All badges bearing the crown subsequently changed to the new pattern, first recorded in print in the List of Changes of 28th February 1954 which introduced the Royal Arms rank badge for WOIs of the Light Infantry, with new large and small crown rank badges introduced for officers at the end of the year. The new designs did not automatically replace the old, badges carrying the Imperial or King's crown remaining in use for many years. The new crown introduced for Queen Elizabeth II brought changes to the cap badges of 54 regiments and corps, thirteen of them cavalry regiments.

Although the Garter King of Arms has said publicly that there is no requirement for "organisations" to change the design of their current Crown and Cypher, it seems likely that an extensive range of military insignia – from cap and rank badges to state dress – will carry the new crown and cypher shown, that of His Majesty King Charles III, recently appointed Captain-General of the Royal Marines. In FS 217 of 2005 our former Editor **Brian Davis** wrote an article on Cyphers and crowns. See the Members Newsletter.

