

## FREEDOMS AND ALLIANCES

### Freedoms

The practice of granting freedom of entry into a town (usually just referred to as 'The Freedom of ...') began in the Middle Ages. At that time most towns were fortified and the inhabitants were naturally suspicious of armed troops. Once mutual confidence had been established the town authorities would allow local troops to enter freely.

As government became more centralised it began to take full control over all armed forces raised in the country and the practice died out. It was revived later as a formal, ceremonial, honour.

This honour is not often granted. When it is it means a lot to both the local community granting it and to the regiment receiving it. The town usually creates an elaborate decorated scroll to record the grant of freedom, and the regiment exercises its right to march through the town with 'drums beating, bands playing, bayonets fixed and Colours flying'.

Subsequently freedom parades are held from time to time. These often mark specific events such as a battalion returning home from a tour of duty overseas or some significant regimental or civic anniversary.

As at 31 December 2013 the Royal Anglian Regiment has been granted, or has inherited from its predecessors, the Freedom (or equivalent) of 48 cities, boroughs or towns, as follows:

Barking and Dagenham	9 December 2009
Basildon	14 April 2011
Bedford	18 September 1946
Boston	29 May 1981
Brentwood	26 May 1993
Bury St Edmunds	1 August 1944
Cambridge	29 September 1946
Celle	15 July 2010
Charnwood	4 September 2006
Chelmsford	27 May 1946
Cleethorpes	19 September 1946
Colchester	30 May 1946
Corby	3 May 2012
Diss	16 November 2011
Dunstable	20 June 1964
Ely	22 November 1976
Grantham	21 September 1946
Great Yarmouth	30 April 1963
Grimsby	27 January 1958
Harborough	24 February 2011
Harlow	27 September 2012
Harpenden	12 September 2013
Havering (formerly Romford)	21 May 1947
Hertford	7 April 1954
Hinckley & Bosworth	20 May 1978
Huntingdon	21 January 2010
Ipswich	24 March 1948
Kettering	14 December 2011
King's Lynn	10 March 1983
Leicester	27 June 1944
Lincoln	8 June 1946
Lowestoft	2 June 1960
Luton	8 October 1996

Newham (formerly East Ham)	20 August 1946
Northampton	8 June 1946
Norwich	6 March 1945
Oadby and Wigston	20 July 2011
Peterborough	6 June 1953
Redbridge (formerly Ilford)	20 May 1947
St Neots	12 September 2013
Southend-on-Sea	19 February 1946
Stamford (Honorary Status)	29 April 2008
Stevenage	23 May 2012
Sudbury	10 February 1953
Thurrock	18 July 1990
Watford	4 July 1959
Wellingborough	27 April 1985
Wisbech	24 March 1949

The dates given above are those on which the formal council resolution granting the freedom was passed. Often, the scroll recording the grant of freedom is presented at a later date.

The 'Honours' section of the Regimental Museum at Duxford includes an interactive display giving full details of all civic honours granted to or inherited by the Regiment.

### **Alliances**

Formal alliances with various regiments of the Commonwealth have been established over the years, with both partners taking pride in a common esprit-de-corps, as follows:

#### **Australia - The Royal Tasmania Regiment**

In 1931 the Suffolk Regiment, formerly the 12th Foot, and the 12th Infantry Battalion (The Launceston Regiment) of the Australian Army formed an alliance based on the shared number 12. The latter was renamed The Royal Tasmania Regiment and is now part of the Australian Army Reserve.

#### **Barbados - The Barbados Regiment**

This alliance was originally established by the Royal Leicestershire Regiment in 1949, reflecting not only service by the Regiment in Barbados in the late 19th Century but also service by a number of Barbadians in the Regiment in the 1940s.

#### **Belize - The Belize Defence Force**

The Royal Anglian Regiment established a formal alliance with the recently-formed Belize Defence Force in 1988, reflecting the close cooperation which had grown up between the two regiments.

#### **Bermuda - The Bermuda Regiment**

Shortly after the First World War an alliance was established between the Lincolnshire Regiment and the Bermuda Rifles, reflecting the fact that 126 volunteers from Bermuda had served with the Lincolnshires during the war. World War Two saw a similar influx of volunteers, and a close relationship has been maintained between the 2 regiments ever since.

#### **Canada - The Sherbrooke Hussars**

In 1934 the Leicestershire Regiment, wishing to promote friendship and goodwill within the armed forces of the Commonwealth, established an alliance with the Sherbrooke Regiment. The latter subsequently became the Sherbrooke Hussars, and is now part of the Canadian Army Reserve.

#### **Canada - The Lincoln and Welland Regiment**

The 19th Lincoln Militia Battalion of Canada established an alliance with the Lincolnshire Regiment in 1912, based on the commonality of name. Subsequently becoming the Lincoln and Welland Regiment, they are now part of the Canadian Army Reserve.

#### **Canada - The Essex and Kent Scottish Regiment**

This alliance, originally between the Essex Regiment and the Essex Scottish Regiment of Canada, dates from 1926 and was based on their common county names. Following later reorganisation, the Essex and Kent Scottish Regiment is now part of the Canadian Army Reserve.

#### **Canada - The Lake Superior Scottish Regiment**

In 1933 the Northamptonshire Regiment, wanting to extend their links to the Dominions, established an alliance with the Lake Superior Regiment. Subsequently retitled, the Lake Superior Scottish Regiment is now part of the Canadian Army Reserve.

#### **Gibraltar - The Royal Gibraltar Regiment**

The alliance between the Royal Anglian Regiment and the Gibraltar Regiment, now the Royal Gibraltar Regiment, was established in 1968, reflecting not only the major part played by former regiments in the Siege of Gibraltar from 1779 to 1783 but also the cooperation which had grown up between the regiments in the 1960s.

#### **Malaysia - 1st Battalion The Royal Malay Regiment**

Officers of the Lincolnshire Regiment having helped set up the Malay Regiment in the late 1930s, a formal alliance between the Royal Lincolnshire Regiment and the 1st Battalion The Malay Regiment was established in 1954. The 1st Battalion The Royal Malay Regiment is now the senior regular battalion in the Malaysian Army.

#### **New Zealand - 3/6 Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment**

In 1913 a number of alliances were set up between units of the British Army and units of the New Zealand Army, including the Suffolk Regiment with the Auckland Regiment and the Northamptonshire Regiment with North Auckland (Northland) Regiment. These affiliations reflected the service of the 2 British regiments in New Zealand in the 19th Century. The two New Zealand Regiments subsequently underwent a series of amalgamations, today forming part of the New Zealand Reserve Army.

#### **Pakistan - 5th Battalion The Frontier Force Regiment**

Although the alliance between the Royal Anglian Regiment and the 5th Battalion The Frontier Force Regiment was only established in 1964 it reflected the lengthy service together, in World War One, of their predecessors the Leicestershire Regiment and the 53rd Sikh Regiment. The 5th Battalion The Frontier Force Regiment is a regular unit of the Pakistan Army.

#### **South Africa - The First City Regiment**

In 1928 an alliance was formed between the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment and the 4th Infantry (First City) Regiment of South Africa. Today the First City Regiment is a reserve regiment of the South African National Defence Force.

#### **South Africa - The Regiment De La Rey**

De La Rey was a Boer commander who fought with distinction against the Northamptonshire Regiment in the South African War. A regiment of the South African forces having been named after him, a formal alliance was established with the Northamptonshire Regiment in 1937. The Regiment De La Rey is now a reserve regiment of the South African National Defence Force.