

34th (Northern) Signal Regiment (Volunteers)



THE BOROUGH OF MIDDLESBROUGH

THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR
(Councillor Walter L. Ferrier)



**34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT
(VOLUNTEERS)**

Exercise their right and distinction to the
Freedom of Entry to the Borough

at a

FREEDOM PARADE

at

The Municipal Buildings, Middlesbrough

Saturday, 22nd March, 1975 at 2.50 p.m.

ABOUT THE PARADE

The ancient ceremony of conferring the freedom of entry to a town upon a regiment, has its origins in medieval days when fortified towns would fasten the town gates and man the defences in some alarm at the approach of a formed body of troops. Certain regiments however, came to be trusted by the citizens of the towns through which they passed and in recognition of that fact were accorded the 'right, title, privilege, honour and distinction of marching through the streets of the town with drums beating, colours flying and bayonets fixed.' This custom has survived as one of the most prestigious of our civic ceremonies and today many units of the British Army have the freedom of entry to towns with which they have particularly close ties. The freedom of entry to a town or borough is a highly prized honour as it implies a long and harmonious association between a regiment and the community in which it lives.

34th (Northern) Signal Regiment (Volunteers) was granted the Freedom of Entry to the County Borough of Teesside in May 1969 and regularly exercised its right to march through the Borough. Today however is the first time since the local government reorganisation of last year that the ceremony has taken place. It is unique in that the Regiment is for the first time exercising its rights in the newly formed Borough of Middlesbrough.

ORDER OF PARADE

1. The members of the Town Council, their guests and the guests of the Regiment are to be seated on the stands provided by 2.45 p.m.
2. A Fanfare of Trumpets at 2.50 p.m. is the signal for 34 (N) Signal Regiment (V) to march to their parade positions.
3. The parade of three squadrons, forms up in front of the Municipal Buildings with its Regimental Band.
4. A further fanfare of trumpets at 3.00 p.m. is the signal for His Worship the Mayor (Councillor W. Ferrier) to take up his position on the saluting base.
5. After a general salute the Mayor will be invited by the Parade Commander Major G. C. Mitchell Royal Signals (V) to inspect the parade.
6. The Mayor will then make a short address and then present on behalf of the Borough three lances bearing regimental and squadron pennants. They will be accepted by the Commanding Officer of the Regiment (Lt. Col. K. H. Olds, Royal Signals) and marched on to parade.
7. The Honorary Colonel (Brigadier C. C. Fairweather, C.B., C.B.E., T.D., J.P., D.L.) will make a short address and then present a crystal rose bowl to the Mayor as a present from the Regiment to the Borough.
8. After a general salute, the Regiment will move to the Elm Street area to reform and march past the Municipal Buildings where the Mayor is to take the salute.
9. The parade will then march through the Borough to a dispersal point at Park Road South.

ABOUT THE REGIMENT

INTRODUCTION

34th (Northern) Signal Regiment (Volunteers) was formed on 1st April, 1967 by the amalgamation of two famous Divisional Signals Regiments—49 (West Riding) and 50 (Northumbrian). 49 Regiment was based in Leeds and 50 Regiment has a history of over 60 years being directly associated with Middlesbrough.

50th (Northumbrian) Divisional Signal Regiment TA

The Northumbrian Divisional Signals Company RE, TF was formed in 1908 from previously existing Volunteer Units. The Unit served on the Western front in the 1914-1918 war and was reformed in 1921 as 50th Divisional Signals (TA). Two squadrons of the Regiment were located at Middlesbrough and the third at Gateshead. Early in 1940 50th Divisional Signals joined the British Expeditionary Force as part of the Tyne/Tees Division in France and was evacuated through Dunkirk. The Regiment served in Syria and the Western Desert in 1942 and in 1943 took part in the invasion of Sicily. The Regiment returned to the United Kingdom to take part in the Normandy landings where the Division was the spear-head of the assault. After the war, the Regiment returned to Middlesbrough, Gateshead and Darlington, with the Tyne/Tees Division until 1967 when it amalgamated with 49 (WR) Signal Regiment to form 34 (Northern) Signal Regiment.

49th (West Riding) Divisional Signal Regiment TA

49 (WR) Signal Regiment traces its history back to 1861, when William Child formed a Regiment of Engineers in Leeds. This Regiment provided communications throughout the 1914/1918 war and during the 1939/1945 war served in Norway, Iceland and Europe. In 1967 on amalgamation the Regiment was granted Honours by the City of Leeds.

34th (Northern) Signal Regiment (Volunteers)

The present Regiment is based in Brambles Farm TAVR Centre, Middlesbrough, with 90 (North Riding) Signal Squadron and HQ Squadron. 50 (Northumbrian) Squadron is based in Darlington and 49 (West Riding) Squadron is in Leeds. There are also detachments at Gateshead and Hull. The Regiment's Band is the only official Royal Signals Reserve Army Band and has given performances all over the North East, including the Teesside International Eisteddfod and Billingham Folk Festival.

The Regiment has been served by many well known personalities in the area including Brigadier Sir George Walton, KBE, CB, TD, DL who commanded from 1930-36 and Brigadier T. T. J. Sheffield, CBE, TD, DL who commanded from 1936-41. The Honorary Colonel is Brigadier C. C. Fairweather, C.B., C.B.E., T.D., JP, DL who served in the Regiment and who has been Chairman of the Territorial Auxiliary and Volunteer Reserve Association for the North of England.

The Commanding Officer of the Regiment is Lieut. Colonel K. H. Olds, Royal Signals, a Regular Army Officer who has served in Aden, Persian Gulf, Singapore, Malaya, Borneo and Germany.

On parade today are contingents from the two squadrons that are based at Middlesbrough (Headquarters Squadron and 90th (North Riding) Signal Squadron) plus a contingent of WRAC made up of girls from the Middlesbrough area. In support are men and women from the remainder of the Regiment.

PARADE PERSONALITIES

1. **Parade Commander**

Major G. C. Mitchell, T.D., R. Signals (V)
(Major Mitchell is a Project Technical Manager
in ICI at Wilton. He is married
and lives at Norton, Cleveland.)



2. **Officer Commanding No. 1 Squadron**

Major R. B. Atkinson, T.D., R. Signals (V)
(Major Atkinson is a School Teacher
at Bydales School Marske. He is
married and lives at Redcar)



3. **Officer Commanding No. 2 Squadron**

Major J. M. Thew, T.D., R. Signals (V)
(Major Thew is a school teacher at
Newcastle upon Tyne. He is married
and lives at Gosforth)



4. **Officer Commanding No. 3 Squadron**

Major D. Clark, T.D., W.R.A.C. (V)
(Major Clark is a Civil Servant
and lives at Consett Co. Durham)



5. **Parade Warrant Officer**

W.O.I J. T. Robinson
(W.O.I Robinson is employed by
British Steel Corporation at their
Cargo Fleet works. He is married
and lives at Brambles Farm.)



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



One of the early acts of the former County Borough of Teesside was to publicly acknowledge the esteem in which it held the 34th (Northern) Signal Regiment (Volunteers) by Conferring Honours upon it at a Ceremony on the 16th May 1969.

Upon the cessation of the County Borough of Teesside on the 31st March, 1974, the newly created Borough of Middlesbrough were proud to continue the relationship and to foster the bond which had become so firmly established between the Local Authority and the Regiment.

This we are delighted to do, as our tribute to all who serve, or have served, in this distinguished Regiment.

We have, therefore, invited the 34th (Northern) Signal Regiment (Volunteers) to exercise the Right and Privilege bestowed upon them, to march through the streets of Middlesbrough, with drums beating, colours flying and bayonets fixed, knowing that this will bring pleasure to the people of Middlesbrough and convey to the Officers and Men of the Regiment, the Council's desire to maintain the link between them.

W. Ferrier,
Mayor of Middlesbrough

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER



It is a great honour and pleasure for my Regiment to have been invited by the Borough to exercise our rights to the Freedom of Entry to the Borough. Middlesbrough and the Tees-side area is the home of nearly half of the men and women who serve in the unit as well as being my headquarters and I consider that we are extremely fortunate to be based in an area which produces so many excellent Volunteer soldiers and servicewomen and which gives such whole-hearted support, encouragement and help to us at all levels.

Signed: Keith Olds

*Lieutenant Colonel
Commanding Officer*