

Monthly Showcase - June 2010

An interesting Helmet Plate



General Order 31, March 1902:

By command of His Majesty the King, the Band of the Chatham Division of Royal Marines are to wear the White Rose of York upon the Regimental Badge of their helmet plate and cap....

This honour was in recognition of the band's attendance during the Duke of Cornwall and York's voyage to the colonies in 1901. Bandmaster John Wright was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant as a result of his work during the tour and this made him only the second Commissioned Bandmaster in the Corps. Whether the command to wear the White Rose of York applied to the Bandmaster is not clear but the museum has an Officer's helmet plate that might indicate that, either officially or unofficially, the Bandmaster might have assumed this honour. The plate has a Victorian crown and the white rose is, unusually, superimposed upon the globe. Lt Wright held the appointment of Chatham Division Commissioned Bandmaster throughout his short, but distinguished, career until his death in 1907.

This helmet plate was in the possession of perhaps the greatest authority on British military badges, Hugh King, until his death in 2005.