



## Royal Engineers

The **Corps of Royal Engineers**, usually just called the **Royal Engineers (RE)**, and commonly known as the *Sappers*, is one of the corps of the British Army. It is highly regarded throughout the military, and especially the Army.

It provides military engineering and other technical support to the British Armed Forces and is headed by the Chief Royal Engineer. The Regimental Headquarters and the Royal School of Military Engineering are in Chatham in Kent, England.

### Corps of Royal Engineers Cypher

The Royal Engineers trace their origins back to the military engineers brought to England by William the Conqueror, specifically Bishop Gundulf of Rochester Cathedral, a talented military engineer, and claim over 900 years of unbroken service to the crown..

In 1911 the Corps formed its Air Battalion, the first flying unit of the British Armed Forces. The Air Battalion was the forerunner of the Royal Flying Corps and Royal Air Force.

In 1915, in response to German mining of British trenches under the then static siege conditions of the First World War, the corps formed its own tunneling companies. Manned by experienced coal miners from across the country, they operated with great success until 1917, when after the fixed positions broke, they built deep dugouts such as the Vampire dugout to protect troops from heavy shelling.

The Corps has no battle honours. Its mottoes, *Ubique* (Everywhere) and *Quo Fas et Gloria Ducunt* (Where Duty and Glory lead), were granted by King William IV in 1832, signifying that the Corps had seen action in all the major conflicts of the British Army and almost all of the minor ones as well. The Royal Engineers Museum is in Gillingham in Kent.

Before the Second World War, Royal Engineers recruits were required to be at least 5 feet 4 inches tall (5 feet 2 inches for the Mounted Branch). They initially enlisted for six years with the colours and a further six years with the reserve or four years and eight years. Unlike most corps and regiments, in which the upper age limit was 25, men could enlist in the Royal Engineers up to 30 years of age. They trained at the Royal Engineers Depot in Chatham or the RE Mounted Depot at Aldershot.