



A research note on the history of ships, places, organisations and events associated with the
Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA)

Battle Honours of the RFA

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Introduction

The Navy has a long and glorious history, so it is a little surprising to discover that the Admiralty did not define Battle Honours until October 1954. This is when they issued their first definitive list of Battle Honours and introduced standardization on how to display them. This they did in the form of an Admiralty Fleet Order (AFO). Since then many updates have been published, eg, FALKLAND ISLANDS 1982, KUWAIT 1991.

Battle Honours are generally awarded by the Admiralty for successful war service rather than as a record of service.

A Battle Honour will be granted for those actions resulting in the defeat of the enemy or when an action was inconclusive but well fought, and in an exceptional case where outstanding efforts were made against

overwhelming odds. The AFO of 1954 rates them as:

- Fleet or Squadron actions
- Single-ship or boat service actions
- Major bombardments
- Combined Operations
- Campaign Awards
- Area Awards

It has been rare for a Battle Honour to be granted to a Royal Fleet Auxiliary, the first coming in World War Two. However, that appears to overlook, eg, their action within Malta Convoys 1941-42 or the Arctic 1941-45.

Battle Honours granted to an HM Ship are not eligible for use by a Royal Fleet Auxiliary of the same name, eg, ARGUS and vice versa, eg DILIGENCE.



Battle Honours Board – Official Battle Honours are recognized formally by being displayed on a board known as a '*Scroll*'. This board is made of teak, the badge of the ship is displayed centrally and Battle Honours are displayed in BLOCK LETTERS.

Battle Honours boards are generally displayed in a position near a ship's quarterdeck, under the eyes of gangway staff. Such board is taken from ships that are being disposed off. They are returned to store for use in further ships of the same name.



The FALKLAND ISLANDS 1982 Battle Honours Boards for RFAs TIDESPRING (right) and TIDEPool (left).

Battle Honours Committee – the granting of a Battle Honour is formally ratified by the Board of Admiralty, now the Ministry of Defence Navy Board. This following a recommendation from the Battle Honours Committee. This Committee is made up of a senior officer representing the Second Sea Lord together with the Head of Naval Historical Branch.

Battle Honours and RFAs

In alphabetic order of the Battle Honour.

ENGLISH CHANNEL 1942

RFA ENNERDALE tanker

FALKLAND ISLANDS 1982

RFA APPLELEAF support tanker

RFA BAYLEAF support tanker

RFA BLUE ROVER fleet tanker

RFA BRAMBLELEAF support
tanker

RFA ENGADINE helicopter
support ship

RFA FORT AUSTIN fleet
replenishment ship

RFA FORT GRANGE fleet
replenishment ship

RFA OLMEDA fleet tanker

RFA OLNAL fleet tanker

RFA PEARLEAF support tanker

RFA PLUMLEAF support tanker

RFA REGENT fleet replenishment
ship

RFA RESOURCE fleet
replenishment ship

RFA SIR BEDIVERE landing ship

RFA SIR GALAHAD* landing ship

RFA SIR GERAINT landing ship

RFA SIR LANCELOT landing ship

RFA SIR PERCIVALE landing ship



FALKLAND ISLANDS 1982 (contd.)	RFA SIR TRISTRAM landing ship RFA STROMNESS stores support RFA TIDEPPOOL fleet tanker RFA TIDESPRING fleet tanker <i>RMAF TYPHOON ocean tug</i>	KUWAIT 1991 (contd.)	RFA FORT GRANGE fleet replenishment ship RFA OLANA fleet tanker RFA RESOURCE fleet replenishment ship RFA SIR BEDIVERE landing ship RFA SIR GALAHAD landing ship RFA SIR PERCIVALE landing ship RFA SIR TRISTRAM landing ship
KOREA 1950	RFA BROWN RANGER tanker 1950-52 RFA GREEN RANGER tanker 1951-52 RFA MAINE hospital ship 1950 RFA WAVE BARON tanker 1952 RFA WAVE CHIEF tanker 1951-53 RFA WAVE KNICHT tanker 1951-53 RFA WAVE LAIRD tanker 1950-51 RFA WAVE PREMIER tanker 1950-52 RFA WAVE PRINCE tanker 1950-53 RFA WAVE SOVEREIGN tanker 1952-53	NORTH AFRICA 1942	RFA ABBEYDALE fleet tanker RFA BROWN RANGER tanker RFA DERWENTDALE landing ship gantry RFA DEWDALE landing ship gantry RFA ENNERDALE landing ship gantry RFA NASPRITE small tanker RFA VISCOL small tanker
KUWAIT 1991	RFA ARGUS primary casualty receiving ship RFA BAYLEAF fleet tanker RFA DILIGENCE forward repair ship	NORTH AFRICA 1942-43 SALERNO 1943 SICILY 1943	RFA DINGLEDALE tanker RFA DERWENTDALE landing ship gantry RFA CEDARDALE tanker RFA DERWENTDALE landing ship Gantry



SICILY 1943
(contd.)

RFA ENNERDALE landing ship
gantry
RFA PEARLEAF support tanker

* SIR GALAHAD was a constructive total war loss.



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