



# THE GRANTING OF FREEDOM OF ENTRY TO THE TOWN OF RAMSEY TO HMS RAMSEY



## History

- ❖ The action of a town conferring upon a unit, 'Freedom of Entry with swords drawn, bayonets fixed, drums beating, bands playing, and colours flying', dates from the time when fortress walls were necessary to protect the inhabitants of the town from the incursions of outlaw bands and the attacks of feudal lords. Bodies of armed men were refused entry to the town unless the citizens were confident they meant no harm. Thus, the granting of permission for a formed body of armed men to enter a town became a mark of the trust and confidence in which that body was held by the residents of that town. Today, it is the highest honour that a city, borough, or town can bestow on the Royal Navy or one of Her Majesty's Ships.

## THE RAMSEY (1912 – 1915)

The first RAMSEY was originally built as the Duke of Lancaster and was owned by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway. She was owned briefly by the Turkish Patriotic Committee, before being bought by the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company in 1912, with a change of name to the RAMSEY. She was requisitioned by the Admiralty on 28<sup>th</sup> October, 1914, and commissioned on 20<sup>th</sup> November, 1914, for use as an armed boarding steamer.



## History of HMS RAMSEY continued

Attached to the Grand Fleet at Scapa Flow, she was employed on night patrols. On 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1915 she intercepted a steamship flying the Russian flag, but which was actually the German Auxiliary Minesweeper Meteor. After being crippled by point-blank gunfire, RAMSEY was struck amidships by a German torpedo and sunk. The Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Harry Raby, several Royal Navy Reserve Officers and fifty ratings were lost. A further four officers and thirty-nine ratings were taken prisoner. On the following day, the Meteor encountered superior British forces and scuttled herself. HMS RAMSEY'S crew ultimately returned home on the Undaunted.



Ramsey has many connections to HMS RAMSEY. Cleveland Perry's grandfather served on HMS RAMSEY in 1915 and was lost in action when the ship went down on 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1915. Cleveland's grandfather and father are both in the picture on the left. Cleveland has a shop in Ramsey and his son also is a local shopkeeper.

The second HMS RAMSEY was originally the USS Meade and was launched on 24<sup>th</sup> May, 1919. During the Second World War she was transferred to the Royal Navy and commissioned at Halifax, Nova Scotia, on 26<sup>th</sup> November, 1940 as HMS RAMSEY. After refit and trials at Devonport she joined the 5<sup>th</sup> Escort Group based at Liverpool, providing local escort for Atlantic convoys. In June, 1941 the ship joined the 22 Escort Group, based at St. John's, Newfoundland. After undergoing refit and repairs at Halifax, Boston and Charleston, she returned to the U.K. in Convoy HX 200. Further work was done at Belfast and Clyde and RAMSEY then joined the B6 Escort Group, Western Approaches Command. After one round trip the ship had a long refit at Grimsby which lasted until July, 1943. RAMSEY then become an Air Target Ship in the Irish Sea. This HMS RAMSEY was finally paid off in July, 1945 and was laid up at Grangemouth until being broken up in July, 1947. The Royal Ensign from the ship was presented to the Town in 1945 and may be seen in the Town Hall atrium.

The current HMS RAMSEY is the tenth of the Sandown Class of Single Role Minehunters to enter service and the third Royal Navy ship to bear the name.



Constructed by a sophisticated modular process, HMS RAMSEY was built from glass-reinforced plastic by Vosper Thornycroft (UK) Limited at their Southampton yard.

The ship was launched by Lady Alynne Dunt (who is attending the Parade today) on 25<sup>th</sup> November, 1999 and was accepted by the Royal Navy on 26<sup>th</sup> July, 2000. HMS RAMSEY has a ship's company of 5 Officers, 7 Senior Ratings and 22 Junior Ratings.

## History of HMS RAMSEY continued

HMS RAMSEY is affiliated to the Town of Ramsey on the Isle of Man; The Isle of Man Steam Packet Company; the Ramsey Charitable Trust; the Manx Sailing and Cruising Club, Ramsey Grammar School, the Ramsey Branch of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and the Sea Cadet Unit TS Whitehaven. In addition to the official affiliations that HMS RAMSEY has on the Isle of Man, she also has a strong link with Ramsey's Royal Naval Association.

## Outline of Events and Order of Proceeding

- 1 The following is a *guide* to the sequence of events for the Parade:
  - ❖ **10:35 a.m.** - Invited V.I.P.'s and other guests will have taken their seats in Parliament Square.
  - ❖ **10:40 a.m.** - The Parade including the Royal Navy Guard and Castletown Metropolitan Silver Band will form up at the assembly area in Market Square.
  - ❖ **10:55 a.m.** - Guard and platoons march into the reviewing area and onto pre-marked positions in Parliament Square. Guard will form into two ranks at open order.
  - ❖ **11:00 a.m.** - The Commanding Officer and Chairman will arrive on the dais, and receive the general salute.
  - ❖ The Commanding Officer will invite the Chairman to accompany him on the inspection of the Guard to a short melody by the Band.
  - ❖ On completion of inspection, the Commanding Officer and Chairman will return to the dais.
  - ❖ The Chairman will call upon the Town Clerk to read the Certificate of Admission to the Honorary Freedom.
  - ❖ Addresses to the Ship's Company:
    - Brig N. Butler CBE on the meaning of Freedom of Entry.
    - The Chairman will address the assembled Ship's Company.
  - ❖ The Chairman will present the illuminated Freedom of Entry scroll to the Commanding Officer, who will hand it into the custody of the Casket Party.
  - ❖ The Commanding Officer will reply on behalf of the Ship's Company.

- ❖ The Parade is brought to attention and the Freedom of Entry scroll will be marched to a position of honour in front of the Guard.
- ❖ A short religious message will be given by the Padre of the Royal Naval Association.
- ❖ The Guard fix bayonets and officers marching in charge of platoons will draw swords.
- ❖ The ceremonial white ensign is uncased and the Colour Party marched on.
- ❖ The Parade will give a salute to the Town and the Band will play the first verse of The Royal Anthem (God Save the Queen) followed by the first verse of the National Anthem of the Isle of Man, accompanied by the Cushag Choir.
- ❖ The Commanding Officer, Chairman, and small number of V.I.P.'s will, if they wish, leave to position for the march past. This will be 50 metres down Parliament Street on the right hand side, outside of the Britannia International Building Society's office. A small dais in this location will be for the Chairman of Ramsey Town Commissioners, the Commanding Officer and Lady Dunt.
- ❖ The Parade reforms for the march through the Town and will march past in the following order of march:
  - Band
  - Parade Commander
  - Colour Party
  - Casket Party
  - Guard of Honour
- ❖ The Parade marches off with swords drawn, bayonets fixed, colours flying, and drums beating in exercise of the privilege.
- ❖ The march will include a march past with the Chairman taking the salute.
- ❖ The Ship's Company arrive at the dispersal point, (Courthouse).
- ❖ When the Band finish playing, the ceremonial white ensign is marched off and cased.
- ❖ The Ship's Company dismiss.

The Parade and main ceremony should finish by 11:30 a.m. when the public are invited to the Town Hall to meet the Ship's Company and have refreshments.

NB: Minor alterations are possible, but these should not affect the basic structure of this event.