



THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

Royal British Legion Standards

Symbolism

The Standard is a constant symbolic reminder to members of the Legion's motto 'Service not self'. The crosses of St George, St Andrew and St Patrick symbolise unity, chivalry and our loyalty to our Sovereign, community and nation. The blue indicates loyalty and fidelity and the gold signifies service - "as gold is tried by fire" - and reminds us of all those who gave their lives for our country. Standards are dedicated before being taken into use, and are laid-up in sacred or public buildings after service.

Appearance

The Standard's colours are blue and gold. In the upper left corner (for the observer) is the Union Flag, which is composed of the crosses of St George, St Andrew and St Patrick. The Branch name appears below The Royal British Legion name in the central gold band. Other features are listed below the images.



1. Jellicoe Cup and Shield: Scroll of Award for each Award (top right corner)
2. Haig Cup: Merit Star - one for each mention (bottom left corner)
3. Haig and Lister Cups: Scroll of Award (bottom centre)
4. Lister Cup: Merit Star - one for each mention (bottom right corner)
5. Maurice Cup: Scroll of Award - Lettered Maurice Cup and inserted in panel 3 (bottom centre).
6. Women's Section Branch Anniversary Diamond: 50/60/70/75/80/85 year anniversary honour (top right corner)

The size of standards, features listed above and associated equipment are detailed in the following table.

Description	Measurements (approximately or nominal)	
	Imperial	Metric
Standard	3' 9" x 3'	1143mm x 914mm
Jointed Pole	8' 7"	2617mm
Cords/Tassels - Adjustable	9'	2743mm
Slings	56", 68" & 76"	1422mm, 1728mm & 1930mm
Mourning Drapes	5' x 6"	153cm x 15cm
50/75th Anniversary Pennant	3' 4" x 4" x 2¼"	1116mm x 102mm x 56mm
Haig / Lister / Jellicoe Cup & Jellicoe Shield Scroll	11" x 2"	279mm x 51 mm
Haig/Lister Cup Star	2½"	63mm
Date Panel	4" x 1¼"	102mm x 32mm
Women's Section anniversary year diamond	6½" x 4"	165mm x 102mm

What colour are the Standard pennants?

The 50th anniversary pennant is in royal blue with figures in gold. The 75th anniversary pennant is in gold with figures in royal blue.

What is the protocol on wearing of mourning ribbons on Standards?

When Standards are draped at funerals or memorial services, the mourning drape (153cm x 15 cm) will be tied in a bow just below the spike on the head of the pole. Drapes cannot be carried on any other occasion without the permission of the senior formation taking part. Standards are not to be draped at Conference unless special instructions are issued.

How should a Standard be folded prior to dedication?

Prior to dedication, a Standard should be folded in half, then half again and again. A ribbon should be tied at the top and bottom, so that when the Padre unties the bottom ribbon first then the top one, the Standard will drop down the pole in the correct position.

How should a Standard be cleaned?

Washing, pressing or dry cleaning of Standards is NOT recommended at all, but if cleaning of the fabric is required, specialist advice should be followed.

How should a Standard be dried?

The following method is suggested for drying a wet or damp Standard:

- Keep the Standard on the Pole unfurled. (Unscrew lower part of pole.)
- Open wardrobe or cupboard doors and place one end of pole on each door. Allow the Standard to hang freely until dry.
- When the Standard is dry, remove from pole, fold and hang on a suit hanger, cover with a dust sheet and then place in a wardrobe.

How should a Standard be kept when it is not in use?

Standards should NOT be left rolled up in the carrying case. The following method is suggested for storing the Standard when not in use:

- Remove the Standard from the Pole.
- Fold the Standard into three, placing the two outside panels over the centre one and hang on a suit hanger.
- Cover with a dust sheet and hang in a wardrobe.
- Do not fold or roll up the Standard when damp or wet. As soon as possible hang up to dry naturally, not in front of a fire or radiator.

The Standard should be kept in a safe and appropriate place which is recorded in the appropriate minutes.

Where can a Standard be refurbished / repaired?

The Legion does not have any specific information on minor repairs. You should contact your local County Office as they may be able to put you in touch with a local Legion Branch that has experienced the same problem or the County Parade Marshal who may be able to assist.

Where can I buy a Standard?

Branches may ask any supplier to make a Branch Standard to the specifications given in the Ceremonial Handbook. It is common practice that various companies supply Branches with Branch Standards. The Branch Standards, regardless of supplier, do not need to be inspected by Trustees or staff at Head Office. One of the companies that provide RBL Standards is **JMS Porters**. To visit their website click [here](#).

Who funds the purchase of a new Branch Standard?

The Royal British Legion does not possess any central funds for the purchase of new Branch Standards. If a County has no funding available they may be able to advise on additional fundraising opportunities.

Who is responsible for the insurance of Standards?

The Legion's Corporate Insurance Policy includes cover for Legion Formation Standards. However, it must be remembered that the insurance policy will respond only to claims where the loss or damage has occurred fortuitously and through an extraneous cause. In other words, the circumstances giving rise to the loss or damage must have arisen outside the Formation or Standard Bearer's control. The policy also excludes damage to a formation Standard caused through its own wear and tear, gradual deterioration, rust or corrosion, insects, vermin, damp shrinkage, and change of colour or finish. Standard Bearers are expected to take all reasonable measures to safeguard formation Standards.

Insurers have declined to accept claims which have been made for formation Standards which have been irretrievably damaged by exposure to torrential rainfall whilst being used on parade. It is of course important to ensure that the Standards are properly dried after use, and wrapped before being put away. Again, insurers have declined to accept claims which have been made because Standards have sustained irreparable water staining, which seemingly occurred because the Standard had not been carefully dried before storage.

Details of the insurance provisions and benefits for all Standard Bearers whilst on authorised Legion business are contained in the Insurance Guide published by Head Office each year, usually in February. More detailed information can always be obtained direct from the Head of Finance at Head Office.

Where can I order the Jellicoe Shield badge?

You may order the Jellicoe Shield Badge from the same company that provided your Standard, or from **JMS Porters**. Click [here](#) to visit their website.

Where can I order a pennant?

You can order Pennants from the Poppy Shop. Click [here](#) for more information.

Who gives permission for a Standard to be paraded at events?

The National Chairman authorises the National Standard to be paraded at National events or where National Officers request its attendance at events. Counties/Districts that wish the National Standard to be paraded at an event should make the request through the Secretariat at Head Office.

The attendance of the National Youth Standard and the National Youth Standard Bearer at any event must be authorised by the Membership Council via the Youth, Sports & Membership Support Officer prior to the event. All such requests must be made in writing to the Youth, Sports & Membership Support Officer.

Authority for a County/District, Group or Branch Standard to be paraded should be given by the relevant Chairman and duly recorded in the relevant Committee minutes. In an emergency or at short notice a request to parade the Standard may be delegated to the Chairman, but the delegated authority should be minuted at the next Committee meeting. A County/District Officer should also be present when the County/District Standard is on parade. Provided authority is given formally by the Branch committee there is no additional requirement for a Branch Officer to attend. The Royal British Legion Women's Section recommends that a Branch Officer should accompany the Branch Standard where possible.

Who should be contacted to obtain permission to take the Standard abroad?

If a Branch wishes to take its Standard abroad it must apply to the Secretariat at Head Office, via the County/District, for permission to do so. Similarly, Counties/Districts also will require permission from Head Office for their Standard to go abroad. Should a Branch/County/District wish to take their Union Flag in addition to their Standard further, special permission is required from Head Office. It must be remembered that there should ever be only one Union Flag on any parade.

Can Royal British Legion Standards be paraded during other organisations' events (fundraising and non-fundraising)?

Standards may be paraded at all non-fundraising events. At fundraising and PR events, the Legion can offer ceremonial assistance and parade Standards **only if it gets a share of the proceeds**.

Who is entitled to have the Standard paraded at their funeral?

All members of The Royal British Legion are entitled to have the Standard paraded at their funeral. It is customary for the Branch Standard and that of the Women's Section Branch (if there is one) to form part of the procession, both into and from the church, chapel or other sacred building. The Standard should precede the coffin in the procession and, if space permits, stand abreast of it during the service. The same procedure should be followed at the place of interment, and the Standard should dip as an act of homage as the coffin is lowered into the grave.

There is no specific reference to ex-Service personnel who are not Legion members, but it is relatively common for a Legion Standard Bearer to be present at funerals of ex-Service personnel, especially if the family wishes a Legion Standard Bearer to be present. These cases are usually dealt with at the discretion of the local Legion Branch and local clergy. Please contact your local Branch if you wish the Legion to be represented at a funeral.

To request the attendance of a Standard Bearer at a funeral, you need to contact your local Branch.

The Union Flag is not paraded at a funeral service; however, many Branches keep a large Union Flag which is used to drape the coffin. Where this is done it is normal to place a wreath of poppies on top of the flag.

What is the order of precedence of Standards on a parade?

On parade, the senior Legion Standard must give precedence to the Union Flag. There shall be only one Union Flag on each parade normally carried by the senior Standard Bearer on parade. The precedence of Legion Standards follows the seniority of Legion formations i.e. National, County/District, Group (where relevant), Branch (normally led by the local Branch, followed by other Branch Standards). Members of the Board of Trustees will march behind the Union Flag and the National Standard. Members of the County/District Committee will march behind the County/District Standard.

When do we dip the Standard?

Standards should be dipped when receiving a Royal Visitor, when the National Anthem is played (Royal Salute), when foreign national anthems are played, during the sounding of Last Post (Act of Homage) and during the Silence.

How long should the Standard dip last?

During a Royal Salute and as an Act of Homage the total time for the dip is 20 seconds. In wet or muddy conditions the total time for the dip is 10 seconds. During the Exhortation the Standard will be dipped in homage and remain dipped until the silence is ended. Where a lone piper plays "The Lament" Standards will remain at the dip throughout and return to the carry on the first note of Reveille.

For competitions, the timing of the dip from completion of the word of command until the spike touches the ground should be 20 seconds (plus or minus 2 seconds).

What are the rules for laying-up and preservation of Standards?

Ideally Legion Standards, like regimental colours, should be laid-up in a cathedral or church provided that the church authorities agree. However, this may not be possible or practical for various reasons. Alternatively, Standards may be offered to such public places as regimental museums, public museums, town halls, council offices, a local military establishment including a military reserve forces centre, a local heritage centre, any local public building, a school, etc. Failing acceptance by any of the above, the Branch may display its old Standard within the Branch or Club premises; and a Group or County/District Standard may be preserved in local Legion Office. Once a Standard has been laid-up it may not be removed for any purpose.

Preservation of Standards: Professional museum curators are horrified when they observe how valuable historic relics like Regimental Colours and Legion Standards are displayed in cathedrals and churches because, since they are not protected from the ravages of air pollution and dust, they inevitably deteriorate over time. They recommend therefore that laid-up Standards should be hermetically sealed between glass plates, framed and attached directly to a wall, where they are not exposed to direct sunlight or neon lighting - thus preserving the colours and fabric in perpetuity. Formations are advised, when laying-up Standards, which they wish to be properly preserved, to seek advice from the curators of the nearest museum. The formal laying-up ceremony and service would, of course, precede any measures taken to preserve the Standard, the cost of which should be borne by the Legion unit involved.

What happens to the Standard if it cannot be laid-up?

Where Branches have been unable to lay-up their old Standard, it must be placed into the care of the County/District Committee. Old Standards placed in the care of the County/District may be used for training purposes with the approval of the County/District Committee, but must never be carried on parade.

Who pays for laying-up of a Standard?

If a Branch does not have any funds available to organise the laying-up of their Standard, they need to seek advice from the County Office. The Legion's Head Office does not have any central funds available for this purpose.

Can a Standard be moved after being laid-up?

Once a Standard has been laid-up it may not be removed for any purpose.

Can a new Standard be used before it is dedicated?

A new Standard must be dedicated before it is taken into use.